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## [CURRENT AFFAIRS - 2013]

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### **Crisis around the presidential election**

The controversial presidential election being held today has the potential to sour the political atmosphere for years to come. An uncalled for intervention by the Supreme Court (SC) and the weak-kneed abdication of its independence by the Election Commission of Pakistan has blighted the respect of both of these institutions. Pakistan People's Party (PPP), the major opposition party in the National Assembly and Senate, has boycotted the presidential election. Other parties such as the Pakistan Muslim League-Q and the Balochistan National Party-Awami have also joined the boycott to protest against what is being called a one-sided decision of the SC in favour of the ruling PML-N. These developments have adversely affected the political landscape of the country and may lead to a polarization that would prove deleterious to the working of democracy over the next five years. The Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) and PML-N's embrace, the resentment against it amongst the Sindhi nationalists and the Pakistan Muslim League-Functional (PML-F) with whom PML-N had only lately forged alliances, and Imran Khan's anticipation that the presidential crisis could lead to a grand opposition alliance in the future, are developments with serious political repercussions. True to its track record in recent years, the MQM, as the Chief Minister of Sindh, Syed Qaim Ali Shah also said, has once again embarked on fulfilling its constant desire to be part of the government. Senator Raza Rabbani, who was the PPP's presidential candidate, has dismissed the speculations that his party may support the PTI's candidate, saying outrightly that they do not intend to attend any session on July 30, so supporting any candidate is out of the question. The Senate, National and provincial Assemblies will be the venues for the presidential election today, where the electoral college for the president's election will vote. The presiding officer in the National Assembly would be the Chief Justice of the Islamabad High Court and in the provincial assemblies, the Chief Justices of the respective High Courts. The rules of the house have already been suspended temporarily yesterday through a motion in the National Assembly.

A strategy for the presidential polls has been discussed between Chief Minister Punjab Shahbaz Sharif and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. Similarly a meeting of the parliamentary party of the PPP has been arranged for today, but nothing is yet known about its agenda. One could speculate that it would reiterate its stance to boycott the presidential election and devise the party's future strategy. Although Imran Khan was inclined to boycott the election because of the SC's controversial order to hold the election on July 30 without hearing the other stakeholders, his party leadership and their presidential candidate, Justice (r) Wajihuddin Ahmed, prevailed in favor of participation.

In this backdrop, the presidential elections will leave nothing but a bad taste in the mouth. Are we going to see a replay of the days when presidential addresses were drowned out by the opposition's disrupting voices? The newly elected head of state might be hard put to it to prove that he will be a neutral and all weather President. That we would unravel our democratic dispensation at this stage on an issue as meaningless as the election date falling in the last leg of Ramazan was not expected by any sane mind.

## **India and Pakistan** **Together they can do a lot**

That India and Pakistan can't change their geo-political realities is true; however, that doesn't mean they can't make efforts to have a friendly and cordial relation. If China and India can have a working relation, with a huge commerce and trade volume despite their own set of issues, why can't Pakistan and India have a working relation? There is nothing that stops them except for at times a lack of political will on both sides. Yes, there are elements on both side of the border that don't want the peace process to move forward, but they can be tackled with patience and the desire to work for the joint cause of peace.

A report by the Times of India suggests that both countries are about to move forward with the composite dialogue process with Islamabad proposing dates for water secretary level talks — meant to address the Wullar Barrage issue — and New Delhi “actively considering it”. The dialogue process was thrown off the track by the January ceasefire violations which led to killings of both Indian and Pakistani soldiers. Those firing incidents caused tensions between the two countries, with leaders, both political and military, threatening each other. However, better sense prevailed and verbal threats didn't translate into actions. With the new government in Pakistan, Nawaz Sharif, the newly installed prime minister, invited his Indian counterpart Manmohan Singh for a visit to Islamabad which he politely rejected, mostly because of political pressure because of those border firing incidents, but agreed to meet on outlines of UNGA session in New York in September. Pakistan and India need to seize this opportunity and resume talks on vital issues like talks on water resources, border disputes, terrorism, dams and barrages on rivers that are supposed to be Pakistan's share of water, exchange of prisoners, a better framework to avoid border skirmishes, trade and commerce and people to people contacts. With the two being nuclear giants in the region, along with China and Russia, and Iran's ambitions being not so clear on nuclear power, this region has become a hodgepodge of political doctrines. With China and India developing at a fast pace, and Russia also rearing its head again economically, the region cannot afford any form of tension, particularly an armed conflict. Instead what it needs to do, what all of the regional players should do is to work together for a peaceful region by combining their strengths, turning the region into a stable, economic and political might.

Pakistan and India can do wonders if they work together. They can lay the foundation for a peaceful region, for trade and business opportunities, for a highly diversified and technical workforce, for better security in the region and by extension the world. However, for all this to happen, the way to go is through talks, discussions and dialogue process.

### **A bombshell from Guardian**

#### **Will the MQM sue the newspaper or accept its charges on Altaf Hussain?**

The write up by Owen Bennett-Jones in The Guardian about Altaf Hussain raises disquieting questions about the way he was given British citizenship, why no notice was taken for years of his provocative speeches delivered from London and why calls by Benazir Bhutto and Imran Khan to restrain him fell on deaf ears. The section of the write-up dealing with investigation into Imran Farooq's murder will hopefully not be ignored by the PML-N government. The British police, we are told, has a clearer understanding now of a conspiracy to kill Imran Farooq. "Their investigation, however, is complicated by the fact that the MQM has supporters deep within the Pakistani state who want to protect it, and more cynical actors such as Pakistan's main intelligence agency, the ISI, which want to control it."

The most damaging part of the write-up deals with the presumed nexus between Altaf Hussain and the British government. Why did British government offer favours to Altaf like issuing a British passport? According to Bennett-Jones, British officials admit off the record that the process by which he obtained nationality was flawed. A decision in January 1999 to grant him indefinite leave to remain in the UK was made as a result of a "clerical error". The writer links the grant of favour through "clerical error" to a letter written by Altaf Hussain soon after 9/11 to British Prime Minister Tony Blair offering his services and that of his party to bring hundreds of thousands of people on the streets of Karachi denouncing terrorism. Altaf Hussain also reportedly offered to organise human intelligence on the Taliban by setting up a network of fake aid workers in Afghanistan to back-up Western intelligence gathering efforts there. This is much more than the activity for which Dr Afridi was arrested and put behind the bars. Another highly injurious revelation is regarding the benefits provided to the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) which protects British interests overseas by the MQM's presence in coalition governments. "From the FCO's point of view, it's a great source of access. Right on their doorstep, in London, they have a man with ministers in the Pakistani government."

Britain is a country with strict defamation laws that impose heavy punishments on the offender. It would be reasonable to assume that The Guardian must have verified the facts in the write-up before its publication. The MQM is likely to reject the contents of the article. The real test is whether it takes recourse to a British court or not. If the MQM does not sue The Guardian, to many it would amount to a confession of guilt. Any Pakistani political party desiring to make an alliance with the MQM would do well to advise the ethnic outfit to first get the charges cleared up

## Israelis, Palestinians to launch talks aimed at peace deal, independent Palestinian state

Israeli and Palestinian negotiators shook hands Tuesday to resume long-stalled direct peace talks that Secretary of State John F. Kerry said will seek to give birth to an independent Palestinian state nine months from now.

The goal is ambitious and the history of failed talks daunting, Kerry said, but the consequences of not trying are worse. The United States will be a “facilitator,” he said, but he made clear that he will push both sides hard. He has already won concessions to get talks started after a lull lasting most of the past five years.

“Compromise doesn’t only mean giving up something or giving something away; reasonable, principled compromise in the name of peace means that everybody stands to gain,” Kerry said with the lead negotiators at his side. “Each side has a stake in the other’s success, and everyone can benefit from the dividends of peace.”

Israeli Justice Minister Tzipi Livni and Palestinian envoy Saeb Erekat will meet again within two weeks, either in Israel or the West Bank, Kerry said. It is not clear whether Kerry’s newly named chief envoy, veteran U.S. diplomat Martin Indyk, will attend.

The symbolic tableau of the Israeli and the Palestinian flanking the top U.S. diplomat closed two days of talks with Kerry, who has made the resumption of direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian Authority the signature effort of his tenure so far.

“It is time for the Palestinian people to have an independent, sovereign state of their own,” Erekat told reporters. “Palestinians have suffered enough.”

Livni shook Erekat’s hand and thanked Kerry for “not giving up” on the possibility of a peace agreement.

“We are hopeful, but we cannot be naive,” Livni said. “We owe it to our people to do everything we can for their security, with the goal of peace for future generations.”

Inaugural meetings were held in Washington on Monday night and Tuesday morning. President Obama and Vice President Biden also met briefly with the negotiators at the White House.

Obama has been far less visible than Kerry in U.S. efforts so far, but his imprimatur would be crucial to any potential settlement.

“Everyone involved here believes that we cannot pass along to another generation the responsibility for ending a conflict that is in our power to resolve in our time,” Kerry said.

Future generations, he said, “should not be expected to bear that burden. We should not leave it to them. They should not be expected to bear the pain of continued conflict or perpetual war.”

Kerry said all sides have agreed to directly address the “final-status issues” that have sunk past attempts at a deal, including the borders of a future Palestinian state, whether to establish a Palestinian capital in Jerusalem, and the claims of Palestinians and their descendants to homes they left in what is now Israel.

Talks will go ahead at the negotiator level for now, with an eventual goal of direct talks between Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas. Most meetings will be in the Middle East, with Kerry an occasional visitor.

The United States is expected to step in when bargaining gets particularly difficult, or should one side threaten to walk out.

The nine-month calendar represents the time the two parties have agreed in advance that they will stay at the table, a senior State Department official said, speaking on the condition of anonymity to provide some detail about the plan for talks. While not a formal deadline, the quick time frame is meant to focus both sides on the hardest issues from the start.

It is also meant to forestall the renewal of Palestinian attempts to seek statehood recognition outside of negotiations, through membership in United Nations and other international bodies — almost certainly a deal-breaker for Israel.

The new effort, if it endures, would be the most substantive since 2008, in the waning months of President George W. Bush’s second term, when Israel and the Palestinians came within sight of a deal before talks collapsed. An Obama-led effort to revive negotiations fell apart after only a few meetings in 2010.

Kerry’s frequent warning that time is running out for a “two-state solution” is mostly a reference to the increasingly thorny challenge posed by the growth of Jewish settlements in the West Bank. In the past five years, the population of settlers in the West Bank has grown by about 20 percent, and pro-settler politicians have become major players in Israel’s government.

Israel has observed an unofficial moratorium on most new housing announcements while Kerry worked to restart talks, but building has continued on previously announced projects. The Palestinians agreed to shelve a return to the United Nations.

Powerful political constituencies in both Israel and the West Bank are opposed to talks, or at least deeply suspicious of the other side’s motives. And there will be strong political pull on both Netanyahu and Abbas to reverse course.

## **Peace talks with Baloch militants Welcome decision from Balochistan CM but will it change anything?**

Talks are set to go ahead with militant groups operating in Balochistan after Eid, if the Balochistan chief minister Dr Abdul Malik Baloch is to be believed. There are of course many reasons not to believe him. The question that comes to one's mind is: which militant groups is he referring to? Is he just referring to Baloch separatists or does it include the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, Jandullah and the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan? If it is just Baloch separatists, then which groups within them are willing to come to the negotiating table? And of course, what has changed in Balochistan that has changed the position of Baloch separatists, who only recently targeted the symbolic Ziarat Residency and have been complaining that Balochistan is still being run by the security agencies?

Given all these questions, Dr Baloch's statement to the Balochistan Assembly that a "high-powered committee of Balochistan lawmakers will be formed to hold dialogue with all militants groups" could merely be a statement of the intent of the Balochistan government. This is much more than can be said for the federal government which is in a standoff over the formulation of a national security policy. The results of such a process are not guaranteed but the decision to appoint Dr Baloch as the chief minister could be vindicated if he manages to bring Baloch separatists on the talks table. The first step to build the trust of the Baloch is to start resettling members of Akbar Bugti's family in Dera Bugti, displaced since the operation in 2005. The removal of unnecessary check posts will be another good measure. The FC and other security bodies manning them were a perennial source of public complaint. However, Dr Baloch's uniform policy, "Whether sectarian or Baloch groups, we will hold talks with them," may not yield the same effect. Separatists and sectarian terrorists are completely different types of militant groupings; one, struggling for rights, the other, bent upon exterminating another group.

It is good that the Balochistan government has said that the use of force has not produced any positive result and has emphasised a political solution to all issues of the province. Dr Baloch has also suggested that the provincial and federal governments are on the same page regarding talks with militants. But an important question is whether the security agencies are on the same page? The targeting of the Shia Hazara community has claimed over a thousand lives while the dead bodies of alleged Baloch separatists have crossed 300 with many more still missing. Perhaps Dr Baloch has been given a signal by Baloch separatist groups but has a similar signal been received from the military and intelligence agencies? The role of the FC and other law enforcers is still murky as suicide bombers continue to enter high security areas. Nonetheless, the announcement is progress and all eyes are on the Balochistan government now



# Jailbreak! Security found lacking in Iraq, Libya, Pakistan.

By Jeremy Ravinsky, Correspondent / July 30, 2013

Nearly 250 prisoners have escaped from a Pakistani prison following a massive assault that killed 12 people, including five police officers.

Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), also known as the Pakistan Taliban, has claimed responsibility for the prison break, which took place in the town of Dera Ismail Khan in the northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, reports Dawn. Though Pakistan's government has promised to end its decade-long conflict with the TTP, which has killed more than 50,000 people, peace talks are looking less likely after several deadly attacks by the insurgent group.

The prison assault comes only days after similar attacks on prisons in Iraq and Libya saw hundreds of prisoners freed as well. Though thousands of miles apart from one another, the prison breaks in these three countries reflect dismally on the states' capacity to govern – and on US stabilization efforts, say analysts.

“We are watching countries that have crucial implications for US security,” says William C. Martel, an associate professor of international security studies at Tufts University's Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. “[Countries] that are in the throes of various forms of political, economic, and social disintegration.”

RECOMMENDED: Quiz: How much do you know about terrorism?

In Pakistan, the assault appears to have caught prison officials off-guard, despite reports indicating that intelligence services had been warned of prison attacks two weeks ago, according to the BBC. Some worry that the guards' inability to suppress the attack points to Pakistan's faltering capacity to maintain security and stability against the threat of insurgency.

Highly coordinated and sophisticated in their execution, the attackers cut the prison's power lines and breached the walls with explosive devices, reports Reuters. Dozens of attackers armed with bombs, grenades, and machine guns – many of them dressed as police – flooded the prison, freeing hundreds of inmates, including many TTP fighters.

This is only the latest in a series of prison breaks that have been carried out in the past week by Islamist insurgents.

In Iraq last week, coordinated attacks were carried out on the notorious Abu Ghraib and another nearby prison on the outskirts of Baghdad. According to The Christian Science Monitor, operatives from the Al Qaeda-aligned Islamic State in Iraq carried out simultaneous assaults on the two prisons, freeing hundreds of prisoners, many of whom were insurgents locked away during the US occupation and the civil war of 2006-2008

A few days later, a prison riot led to the escape of more than 1,000 inmates from a detention center in Benghazi, Libya. Angry about their proximity to the prison facility, residents near Kuafiya prison stormed the building as prisoners inside rioted. Since the reign of long-time dictator Muammar Qaddafi ended in 2011, Benghazi has been plagued by instability, writes Voice of America.

Benghazi has seen a wave of violence since last year, with numerous attacks on security forces, as well as foreign targets, including the assault on the U.S. mission last September in which the U.S. ambassador and three other Americans were killed.

Though there isn't evidence to suggest coordination between the three cases, the prison breaks cast doubts on these countries' ability to rule.

"[These events] suggest that the capacity of these countries to provide political, economic, and social order is fragile," says Dr. Martel.

The continued instability of these countries also calls into question the efficacy of US foreign assistance strategies.

Iraq, Libya, and Pakistan are all recipients of vast amounts of US foreign aid. Indeed, Pakistan and Iraq are consistently in the top five recipients of aid from the US. In 2012 alone, Pakistan received \$2.1 billion, down from 2010's \$4.3 billion, while Iraq received approximately \$1.7 billion.

Yet the countries have not yet gotten on their feet, and in some cases have appeared to have regressed. Yesterday, The Christian Science Monitor's Dan Murphy reported on an audit of US foreign aid to Afghanistan that showed how billions of taxpayer dollars have been wasted:

Last week, SIGAR reported that millions of dollars given to Afghan contractors to place grates over culverts to prevent explosives being hidden inside of them were misspent, likely leading to the deaths of US and other forces when grates were either not installed or installed improperly. At the end of June, SIGAR reported that the Pentagon was moving forward with a \$772 million purchase of aircraft for the Afghan military "even though the Afghans lack the capacity to operate and maintain them."

... And those are just the recent findings from SIGAR that have caught my eye. The government's inspector general, created to monitor the billions of dollars flowing to the Afghan war effort, has been churning out high quality reports for years, and if you read enough of them, the picture that emerges is one of weak monitoring, duplicitous contractors, hundreds of millions spent on facilities the US military won't use, or the Afghans don't want, or can't feasibly use.

However, this does not reflect on the utility of all foreign aid, says Martel, citing Germany, Japan, and South Korea as successful examples. Rather, "this does cast doubt on the foreign assistance strategies we are pursuing now."

"If it was a good idea to stay in Germany and Japan for a half century," asks Martel, "wouldn't it be a good idea to stay in Iraq and Afghanistan?"

## The Next Reset: U.S.-Pakistan Relations

Fresh off one overhyped “achievement”—forcing a restart of Israeli-Palestinian peace talks that have scant chance of success—Secretary of State John Kerry is apparently eager to achieve any empty triumph, namely a “reset” of relations with Pakistan. In article previewing his trip to Pakistan this week, the *Wall Street Journal* writes that “it provides an opportunity, U.S. and Pakistani officials said, to recast a relationship that in the past decade has been defined by massive U.S. military involvement in Afghanistan and Washington’s global antiterror campaign. The U.S. withdrawal, these officials say, will set the stage for a relationship with reduced engagement but also less rancor.”

Good luck with that. Granted, having fewer U.S. troops and civilians available in Afghanistan to serve as targets for Pakistan-supported terrorists will reduce a flashpoint in the relationship, but it is hard to see Washington and Islamabad finding much common ground. Their interests converge in very few areas, the biggest being the desire by both sides to prevent the Pakistani Taliban from seizing power in Islamabad, which would cut off Pakistan’s existing political and military class from the trough of public spending on which it has grown rich. But there is no indication that Pakistan will give up its support of the Afghan Taliban or the even more noxious Haqqani Network and other Islamist terrorist groups that are viewed by Pakistan’s army and its intelligence service, the ISI, as reliable proxies in Afghanistan, Kashmir, and beyond.

Back in 2011 there was a rare moment of candor in the U.S.-Pakistan relationship, normally wrapped in self-serving lies from both sides, when Admiral Mike Mullen, the outgoing chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, bitterly denounced Pakistani complicity in terror. “In choosing to use violent extremism as an instrument of policy, the government of Pakistan – and most especially the Pakistani Army and ISI – jeopardizes not only the prospect of our strategic partnership, but also Pakistan’s opportunity to be a respected nation with legitimate regional influence,” he told the Senate. “By exporting violence, they have eroded their internal security and their position in the region.”

Mullen was right then and nothing has changed today. Pakistan has been happy to pocket nearly \$26 billion in U.S. aid between 2002 and 2012 and in return has provided some small concessions such as allowing NATO supplies to cross its territory (with some interruptions) and allowing CIA drones to target al-Qaeda kingpins (with some limitations). But fundamentally the two countries remain far apart on major issues such as Afghanistan, where the U.S. would like to see the continuation of a pro-Western, reasonably democratic regime and the Pakistanis in all likelihood are hoping for a Taliban takeover. Kerry’s visit will change nothing, no matter how many headlines it produces about a supposedly improved relationship.

## Criticism alters US drone program in Pakistan

The United States has drastically scaled back the number of drone attacks against militants in Pakistan and limited strikes to high-value targets in response to growing criticism of the program in this country.

Those actions appear to have temporarily appeased Pakistan's powerful generals, who publicly oppose the covert CIA strikes, U.S. officials said. But some officials are still worried about pushback from Pakistan's new civilian leaders, who took power in June with a strong stance on ending the attacks altogether.

The future of the drone program is likely to be a key item on the agenda during U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry's visit to Pakistan, which is expected soon.

Only 16 drone strikes have taken place in Pakistan so far this year, compared with a peak of 122 in 2010, 73 in 2011 and 48 in 2012, according to the New America Foundation, a U.S.-based think tank.

The CIA has been instructed to be more cautious with its attacks, limiting them to high-value targets and dropping the practice of so-called "signature strikes" - hitting larger groups of suspected militants based purely on their behavior, such as being armed and meeting with known militants, said a current U.S. intelligence official and a former intelligence official briefed on the drone program.

The CIA embraced the measures, feeling the drone program may be under threat from public scrutiny, the officials said, speaking on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the classified program publicly.

Two other senior American officials said the U.S. scaled back the number of attacks and tightened up its targeting criteria as a concession to the Pakistani army, considered the most powerful institution in the country and the final arbiter on the future of the drone program.

Senior Pakistani army officers made it clear that the program could not continue at the tempo it was being carried out and expressed concern that civilian casualties were breeding more militants, said the U.S. officials, speaking on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk to the media.

The circumstances surrounding a strike on July 3 in Pakistan's North Waziristan tribal area illustrated Washington's intention to go after well-identified targets only, said one of the officials. The attack on a house, which killed at least 16 suspected militants, was backed up by "hugely detailed" intelligence laid out in a 32-page PowerPoint presentation.

The intelligence indicated the target was a gathering of militants from the Haqqani network who were plotting a second attack on the Ariana Hotel in the Afghan capital of Kabul, said the official. The Ariana Hotel has long been suspected of being used by the CIA as a listening post.

President Barack Obama signaled the administration's new approach to drones in a landmark speech in May in which he said attacks would be carried out only on "terrorists who pose a continuing and imminent threat to the American people" and when there is "near-certainty that no civilians will be killed or injured."

Senior U.S. officials insist they continue to have a secret agreement with Pakistan, or at least from the army, to conduct drone strikes.

But even that agreement seems to be based more on Pakistan's fear of what would happen if it stood up to the U.S. on drone strikes, rather than a real desire to see the program continue. Pakistan relies on the U.S. for hundreds of millions of dollars in civilian and military aid, and even more importantly, for support in getting a \$5 billion bailout the country desperately needs from the International Monetary Fund.

The two senior U.S. officials said Pakistani army chief Gen. Ashfaq Parvez Kayani recognizes that the White House views drone attacks as vital to its campaign against al-Qaida and the Taliban, but looks forward to a day when they can stop altogether.

The Pakistani army denied the allegation that Kayani consents to the strikes, calling it an attempt to malign the country and its security agencies.

Some Pakistani officials say the drone program has been useful in the past in killing militants but now draws too much attention and controversy, especially after the covert U.S. raid that killed Osama bin Laden in 2011 outraged Pakistanis who saw it as a violation of the country's sovereignty.

These officials believe Pakistan must be given greater participation in the strikes, or they must be replaced by attacks carried out by the Pakistanis themselves - either with drones given to them by the Americans or their own F-16s.

But past attempts to work more closely with Pakistani intelligence, or let the Pakistanis carry out attacks themselves, have resulted in militants being tipped off before strikes occur.

Pakistan's request that drone technology be transferred to the country is a non-starter because of U.S. fear that highly classified information would make its way to China, a close ally of Islamabad.

U.S. officials often point to Pakistan's failure to shoot down the slow-flying drones as evidence that they aren't sincere in wanting the program to stop, although this would likely cause a huge crisis in relations between the two countries. They also point to the failure of Pakistan to push the issue aggressively with the United Nations or other international organizations.



25<sup>th</sup> July 2013

But some U.S. officials are worried that Pakistan's new civilian leaders, especially Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan, may spark a crisis over the drone program. Khan said this month that Pakistan has conveyed to the U.S. that the drone strikes could lead to a "direct standoff" and "could have serious implications on the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan, as well as the post-withdrawal scenario," according to Pakistan's state news agency.

The U.S. military is trucking much of its equipment out of landlocked Afghanistan through Pakistan. Some Pakistani lawmakers have previously advocated preventing the U.S. from using the route unless they stop drone strikes.

Senior Pakistani civilian and military officials have publicly criticized U.S. drone attacks in the past while consenting to them in private. The officials and some rights activists have also claimed the attacks have killed large numbers of civilians, an allegation disputed by the U.S. The comments have whipped up overwhelming levels of opposition to drones among the Pakistani public.

Huma Yusuf, a columnist for Pakistan's Dawn newspaper, wrote on Monday that the current Pakistani government is well-positioned to address the issue of drone strikes "because it does not carry the baggage of almost a decade of `drone duplicity.'"

"As a good first step Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has said he will not privately sanction strikes while publicly condemning them," wrote Yusuf. "Going beyond routine condemnations, Sharif must now articulate a clear demand regarding drone strikes to take advantage of coalescing pressure."

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Associated Press Writer Deb Riechmann and AP Intelligence Writer Kimberly Dozier contributed to this report from Washington.

## **Drone strikes to end 'very, very soon': John Kerry**

**ISLAMABAD: US Secretary of State John Kerry hinted towards an end of the CIA-operated drone campaign in the tribal areas of Pakistan, as he said in a television interview on Thursday that the signature strikes could end “very soon”.**

“I think the programme will end as we have eliminated most of the threat and continue to eliminate it,” Kerry said in an interview with state-run Pakistan Television.

Pressed on whether a timeline was envisaged, Kerry replied: “The president has a very real timeline and we hope it’s going to be very, very soon.”

It is the first time that a senior US official has indicated that there could be a definitive end to the programme, which the CIA has in the past called an effective counter-terrorism weapon.

The statement was more than welcome in Islamabad, where the country’s top diplomat Sartaj Aziz demanded a complete halt to a series of drone strikes which has recently decreased.

Kerry’s comment, though was immediately downplayed by American aides.

State Department spokesperson Jen Psaki said that the number of drone strikes had declined owing to the drawdown of American troops from Afghanistan and because of progress in curtailing the al Qaeda threat.

“Today the secretary referenced the changes that we expect to take place in that programme over the course of time, but there is no exact timeline to provide,” she said in a statement.

The Secretary of State himself strayed from his television remarks when in a joint press conference with Aziz, he tackled complaints about drones by pointing the finger at al Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri, believed to be based in Pakistan.

“An al Qaeda leader like Al-Zawahiri is violating the sovereignty of this country. And when they attack people in mosques and blow up people in villages and market places they are violating the sovereignty of the country,” he said.

### **‘Pakistan has to overcome extremist forces’**

Kerry’s visit announced the resumption of strategic dialogue between Pakistan and the United States, and he invited the newly elected Sharif to hold talks with US President Barack Obama in the autumn.



It will be the highest level talks between the two sides since January 2011, after which US troops found and killed al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden in Pakistan in May 2011.

In November 2011, US air strikes mistakenly killed 24 Pakistani soldiers along the Afghan border, leading Islamabad to shut down NATO ground supply lines for seven months.

Kerry said it was time to put the relationship on a stronger footing. He said Pakistan's prosperity depends on doing more to eliminate militant havens.

"Pakistan cannot realise its full economic potential until it overcomes extremists," Kerry told the news conference.

"The choice for Pakistanis is clear: will the forces of violent extremism be allowed to grow more dominant, eventually overpowering the moderate majority?"

Kerry paid tribute to Sharif's election, which marked the first time that an elected civilian Pakistani government had completed a full term in office and handed over to another at the ballot box.

Sharif described Kerry as a "wonderful friend".

Kerry also met the outgoing President Asif Ali Zardari and army chief General Ashfaq Kayani.

### **Taliban broke their promise**

On the subject of Afghanistan, Kerry said that the "Taliban broke their word in Doha."

"They had accepted a certain set of requirements and they went back on their word."

He maintained, however, that Washington and Kabul would reach a long-term security agreement that would allow American troops to remain in the country beyond 2014.

"We're making progress, we're working on it. I am personally confident that we will have an agreement," Kerry said.

Afghan President Hamid Karzai suspended talks on the deal in June, furious that a Taliban liaison office in Qatar appeared to have been opened as an embassy for a government in waiting.

"Let me be clear: the US is drawing down not withdrawing," Kerry said.

There are concerns that a complete departure of foreign troops in late 2014 could leave Afghan government troops too weak to contain a Taliban insurgency and possibly see the country slide back into civil war.

## The Fraught Chinese-Pakistani Relationship

There is something not quite right about an interstate bilateral relationship when words such as “higher than the mountains, deeper than the oceans, stronger than steel, dearer than eyesight and sweeter than honey” are used repeatedly to describe it.

No other relationship depends so much on flowery language to underscore its significance as does the one between China and Pakistan.

Much like his predecessors in recent times, Nawaz Sharif in early July made his maiden trip as Pakistan’s prime minister to China where, at Beijing’s Great Hall of the People, he said his welcome reminded him of the words “our friendship is higher than the Himalayas and deeper than the deepest sea in the world, and sweeter than honey.”

In response, Chinese President Xi Jinping referred to Sharif as an old friend and a good brother, and said that strengthening strategic cooperation with Islamabad was a priority for China’s diplomacy.

A number of agreements were signed between the two sides during Sharif’s visit, including a “long-term plan” related to the upgrade of the Karakoram Highway as part of a proposed economic corridor between the two countries, as well as agreements on technology, polio prevention and solar housing. The two countries also agreed on a \$44 million project to erect a fiber-optic cable from the China-Pakistan border to Rawalpindi, aimed at giving Pakistan more connectivity to international networks.

Sharif lobbied with Chinese companies to invest in Pakistan’s power sector.

More interesting was an agreement for cooperation between Sharif’s Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) and the Communist Party of China. It showed how nimbly China can tilt its foreign policy to the political dispensation of the day.

The Pakistani government has suggested that Sharif’s visit will be helpful in transforming traditional foreign policy into economic diplomacy to give a new boost to trade and economic relations with neighbors and in laying a foundation of new strategic economic cooperation between both countries, leading to the integration of all economic engines in the region. Whether India will be part of this grand thinking remains to be seen.

To show China how seriously it is taken in Islamabad, Sharif has introduced a “China cell” in his office to speed up development projects in the country. This cell will supervise all development projects executed with the cooperation of Chinese companies in Pakistan.

This is an attempt to address Chinese concerns about the shoddy state of their investment in Pakistan because of the lackadaisical attitude of the Pakistani government. Meanwhile, Beijing too needs political and military support of the Pakistani government to counter the cross-border movement of Taliban forces in the border province of Xinjiang.

Expected to cost around \$18 billion, the “Pak-China Economic corridor” will link Pakistan’s Gwadar Port on the Arabian Sea with Kashghar in Xinjiang, northwest China. India, meanwhile, is left protesting as China continues to expand its presence in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. Amid plans to develop a special economic zone in Gwadar, there is the danger that India’s marginalization will only grow.

At a time when Pakistan is under intense scrutiny for its role in fighting extremism and terrorism, the world has been watching with interest to see how China decides to deal with Pakistan. China was the only major power that openly voiced support for Pakistan after American forces assassinated Osama bin Laden.

During the visit of the Pakistani prime minister, then Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao affirmed that “Pakistan has made huge sacrifices and an important contribution to the international fight against terrorism, that its independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity must be respected, and that the international community should understand and support Pakistan’s efforts to maintain domestic stability and to realize economic and social development.”

Wen went on to say that China would like to be an “all-weather strategic partner” and to strive to help the Pakistani government and people through their difficulties.

To underscore its commitment, China agreed to immediately provide Pakistan with 50 new JF-17 Thunder multi-role jets under a co-production agreement, even as negotiations continued for more fighter aircraft including those with stealth technology. Pakistan wanted more from China — underscored by its express desire to have China take over the operation of Gwadar Port and upgrade it to a naval base for Chinese use.

China, however, immediately rejected this offer so as not to antagonize the U.S. and India with the formal establishment of a base in Pakistan. Earlier this year, Chinese government-owned China Overseas Port Holdings Ltd. decided to purchase control of Gwadar Port from Singapore’s PSA International, which had won the contract in 2007 to operate the port for 40 years. With this purchase, operational control of the strategic deep-water Gwadar Port has gone to China.

The Sino-Pakistan relationship remains fundamentally asymmetrical: Pakistan wants more out of its ties with China than China is willing to offer. Today, amid Pakistan’s gargantuan domestic problems, China will probably be very cautious about involving itself further. And the closer China gets to Pakistan, the faster India will move into the American orbit.

Amid worries about the potential destabilizing influence of Pakistani militants on its Muslim minority in Xinjiang, China has taken a harder line against Pakistan.

The flow of arms and terrorists from across the border in Pakistan remains a major headache for Chinese authorities. Pakistan's ability to control the flow of extremists to China at a time of growing domestic turmoil remains a major variable.

As Western forces move out of Afghanistan by 2014, Beijing is worried about regional stability and is recognizing that close ties with Pakistan will not make it safer as recent troubles in Xinjiang have once again underscored.

But officially the two states will continue to view each other as important partners, especially as India's rise continues to aggravate Islamabad and cause anxiety in Beijing.

# Making the Bomb: Pakistan's Nuclear Journey

By ::: Shehzad H. Qazi

Developed in secrecy and tested in defiance, Pakistan's nuclear weapons program has been a point of pride for Pakistanis, a worrisome portent for Indians, a source of profit for nuclear proliferators, and a security concern for US policymakers. While much is feared, little is really known about Pakistan's nuclear program. Retired Brigadier General Feroz Khan's *Eating Grass* (the title comes from a 1965 statement by Pakistan's then Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto proclaiming that if India acquired the bomb, so would Pakistan, even if it had to "eat grass, or leaves or even go hungry") is important because it presents a complete account of Pakistan's quest for nuclear weapons, with close focus on the role played by culture, personality, domestic, regional, and global politics, and technical challenges in the development of the "Islamic Bomb."

The book's author is a former Pakistan Army officer and senior official in the National Command Authority. Khan was not only a key policymaker in Pakistan's nuclear command and control system, but played important roles in negotiations with American and Indian officials over the nuclear program, especially regarding Pakistan's force posture. Drawing on primary and secondary sources, his own experiences, and numerous interviews with decisionmakers and former scientists who were intimately involved in the program, Khan recapitulates Pakistan's nuclear journey. He analyzes key decisions by its leaders that shaped the trajectory of Pakistan's strategic capabilities and its foreign relations, bureaucratic disputes over the program, and competition between actors in the scientific community trying to put their individual stamp on the bomb.

*Eating Grass* begins in the 1960s, during General Ayub Khan's military dictatorship, when many Pakistani leaders were reluctant to pursue nuclear weapons because they felt the country could not afford them. The author then provides a blow-by-blow account of several major decisions that created a weapons program, and then the cold tests in 1983, and finally the testing of the bomb itself in 1998.

Inside this chronology, Khan also explores the technological and capacity challenges Pakistani scientists faced, especially as the global nonproliferation regime made nuclear trade increasingly difficult. He details how they developed uranium enrichment and plutonium production capabilities and the secret procurement networks to supply the clandestine program. Along the way, Khan reveals the intense rivalry that developed between the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) and the Khan Research Laboratories to develop and claim credit for the weapon.

The role of foreign countries was a significant part of this nuclear journey. Once Canada stopped supplying nuclear technology, Pakistan received loans and investments worth hundreds of millions of dollars from Libya, along with yellowcake from Niger and uranium from Chad. China provided high enriched uranium and a bomb design, and helped in missile production.

No history of Pakistan's march toward nuclearization would be complete, of course, without the sub-narrative of complications caused in relations between Pakistan and the US, which was initially strongly opposed to the nuclear program, but later became covertly complicit in it, only subsequently to punish Pakistan and ultimately grudgingly accept its membership in the international nuclear club.

Khan also discusses Pakistan's nuclear doctrine, the development of its command and control system, and the way the notorious scientist A.Q. Khan became the government's proliferator in chief, selling Pakistan's nuclear innovations to the North Koreans, Iranians, and others.

The fundamental question driving this book is why Pakistan decided to acquire nuclear weapons in the first place. Khan attributes this decision to "Pakistan's unique strategic culture"—that is, the beliefs, values, and historical experiences of the ruling elite that influenced how it perceives and responds to the security environment. He contends that the defeat and dismemberment of Pakistan in the 1971 war and India's 1974 nuclear tests, which altered the balance of power, became central components of Pakistan's strategic culture, leading to the perception that nuclear weapons were a national necessity.

But between the lines of the book is a slightly different story: that domestic politics rather than national security per se was key to the decision to go forward with a nuclear program. As Scott Sagan, a renowned scholar of nuclear weapons, has argued, countries acquire nuclear weapons because individuals within the nuclear energy establishment and research laboratories (who benefit financially and in terms of prestige), the military, and political leaders become chief advocates for acquisition of these weapons, seeing them as tools to accomplish parochial political or bureaucratic goals.

In the case at hand, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the prime minister (1973–77) who made the decision to go nuclear, already belonged to a coalition comprising PAEC scientists and some foreign-ministry bureaucrats who had been strongly advocating such a capability since at least 1965. By the time he took office, the military was also on board. Thus the desire to pursue nuclear weapons predated the 1971 war or India's 1974 tests. In Khan's own words, with Bhutto's rise, "the bomb lobby was now in power."

According to weapons specialist Bhumitra Chakma, Pakistan's nuclear program has faced two key challenges: the absence of a formally declared nuclear doctrine, including ambiguity about the "redline risks" that could prompt use, and the lack of an institutionalized and transparent command and control system.

Pakistan's ten-point nuclear doctrine is India-focused, and has three major principles: minimum credible deterrence, nuclear first use, and massive retaliation. While arguing that counterforce targeting is increasingly becoming a principle for both Pakistan and India, Khan also reports that Pakistan is operationalizing its minimal deterrence concept by continually improving its delivery means, by inducting ballistic and cruise missiles, and by developing a second-strike capability.

What's missing in this book is an investigation into Pakistan's redline risks beyond what is already known. Khan states that the nuclear program has two objectives: deterring India from overwhelming Pakistan with a conventional attack and using nuclear weapons in the event of an Indian invasion, the sizable destruction of its armed forces, or Indian-perpetrated political destabilization and economic strangulation. While Khan acknowledges that these criteria are "deliberately imprecise," the ambiguity, he argues, is a non-issue because with "the unlikelihood of Pakistan's accepting a no-first-use policy, the doctrinal puzzle of the Pakistani nuclear program is put to rest."

But the author does provide an insightful analysis of the most critical issue: Pakistan's nuclear command and control architecture. Since 2000 the National Command Authority, composed of chief civilian and military leaders, has been responsible for decisionmaking on the program's policy, planning, procurement, and use. Nevertheless this oversight and control system was developed almost forty-five years after the weapons program began. The author attributes A. Q. Khan's ability to erect an alternative universe of proliferation to this absence of oversight, explaining that Khan's significant autonomy in secretly procuring nuclear technology for Pakistan and immunity from regularly reporting to a government body allowed his private and illicit operations to go undetected.

In the aftermath of the "Khan Network" fiasco, Pakistan revised its export control laws, while the Strategic Plans Division (SPD) began using assessment tools, such as Personnel and Human Reliability Programs, to screen personnel, and created a security force with an intelligence unit to counter assaults, espionage, and other threats against nuclear installations and weapons.

But while the author describes the reforms in command and control, explains that Pakistan undertakes a variety of assessments to ensure the "secrecy, dispersal, and survivability" of its strategic weapons against foreign attacks, and mentions that safety measures are in place for weapons storage and transport, he inexplicably fails to address directly the threat of terrorists acquiring Pakistan's nuclear weapons and materials, perhaps the greatest concern among US and international policymakers today.

There has been a steady accumulation of books on Pakistan's nuclear weapons program, ranging from accounts by former Pakistani military officers giving their views about why Pakistan sought the bomb, to academic analyses exploring nuclear deterrence and stability in South Asia, to journalistic accounts focusing on Pakistan's covert acquisition of nuclear technology, the Khan Network's proliferation, and America's secret compliance in exchange for assistance during the Soviet-Afghan war and the War on Terror.

Khan's book is a bit of all of this, framed by an insider account of Pakistani decisionmaking that can help policymakers better understand how Pakistani leaders thought through some of the most crucial decisions of the country's history, what assumptions they made, and how they view the world. A nuanced narrative accessible to a general readership, *Eating Grass* is a comprehensive study on how and why Pakistan went nuclear.

*Shehzad H. Qazi is a research associate at the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding.*



# US-Pakistan Relations: Common and Clashing Interests

BY :: Shehzad H. Qazi

The last calendar year was by far the most tumultuous in a decade of tense and mistrustful relations between Pakistan and the United States. It began with CIA contractor Raymond Davis shooting and killing two Pakistanis in broad daylight in Lahore, then only worsened in May when Osama bin Laden was found and killed in a US raid at a compound near the Pakistan Military Academy in Abbottabad (an episode that severely angered Pakistanis and embarrassed the Army, which was domestically seen as unable to secure the homeland against foreign intrusion and internationally suspected of providing refuge to America's worst enemy). Tensions escalated further as the US began pressuring Pakistan to attack the Haqqani Network (HN), a Taliban group with safe havens in North Waziristan. Pakistan refused, and crisis hit when the HN launched a twenty-two hour assault on the US Embassy and NATO headquarters in Kabul. An infuriated Admiral Mike Mullen, outgoing chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, lashed out against Pakistan, saying the HN was a "veritable arm" of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency. Weeks of diplomatic efforts finally thawed relations, but just as the situation stabilized, a NATO attack on a Pakistani checkpoint in Salala in late November threw the relationship into a tailspin. Twenty-four Pakistani soldiers died in the two-hour assault. Pakistan was furious, immediately suspending NATO supply lines and boycotting the Bonn conference on Afghanistan held in early December.

The crises of 2011 prompted debates in both countries over how to move forward. In Washington, several administration officials and members of Congress have argued for sidelining Pakistan and giving India a larger stake in Afghanistan. Others insist that it is important to tread carefully and that Pakistan cannot just be dumped. In Pakistan, many are arguing for complete disengagement while others are pushing for new rules of engagement.

There are two fundamental problems undergirding US-Pakistan troubles. First, instead of a broad partnership that includes trade and cultural linkages, the two countries have a one-dimensional transactional relationship centered along security concerns, i.e., the war against the Taliban and al-Qaeda. In a way, General Jehangir Karamat, Pakistan's retired Army chief and ambassador to the US, underscored this point, saying that, in his assessment, "US-Pakistan relations were at their worst because relations between the Pentagon and the Pakistan Army were unstable." US-Pakistan relations are further complicated because of clashing security interests, especially vis-à-vis the Afghan Taliban.

These two problems will not yield to quick diplomatic fixes. Barring a fundamental re-thinking, Washington and Islamabad should get used to making the best of an ambiguous alliance, and one that, going forward, will be limited, transactional, and security-centered, featuring competition over the endgame in Afghanistan, cooperation in the fight against al-Qaeda, and a trimmed-down and conditional aid structure.

The main source of US-Pakistan tensions has been the war in Afghanistan, and recent scuffles are linked to the shifting American strategy there. In 2009, the Obama administration set a goal of reversing the momentum of the Taliban by carrying out counterinsurgency operations in southern Afghanistan. The main objective was not to defeat the Taliban, but to create a situation that could allow for a face-saving withdrawal. The 2009 troop surge was aimed at gaining control in major cities and roadways and imposing costs on the Taliban that would force them to the negotiating table. These objectives would be bolstered by the parallel Afghan-led national reconciliation program announced in January 2010, two months after the November surge. The US publicly supported the process and even established a special fund of \$1.5 billion to provide monetary incentives to Taliban fighters.

However, Pakistan's role was crucial in the success of this program. While NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) targeted the Taliban in Afghanistan, Pakistan was supposed to launch an operation against the group's bases in North Waziristan. It was to then follow this with political pressure that would force the Taliban to negotiate with the US and the Karzai government. Pakistan, whose security establishment has continued to provide refuge to the Afghan Taliban over the past decade, refused to comply. Leaders of all three major Taliban factions live in Pakistan, with a large part of the leadership of Mullah Omar's Quetta Shura having relocated to Karachi. According to a study published by the London School of Economics, ISI representatives sit in on the meetings and decisionmaking of the Taliban's major councils. Pakistani journalist Ahmed Rashid has written that members of the Taliban even travel abroad on Pakistani passports.

That Pakistan would support a Taliban insurgency should be hardly surprising. First, Pakistan sees the Taliban as the group in Afghanistan that is the least averse to its interests and most capable of blocking increased influence by India, which Pakistan's military-intelligence establishment fears might pick up the pieces in Kabul following a US withdrawal. It is this strategic calculation, more than anything else, that has prevented Pakistan from cutting the Taliban loose, and it was disastrously naive for US policymakers to think that they could buy off such a deeply held security obsession for temporary offerings of \$1.3 billion a year in aid.

It is also true that deviousness in this situation has not been a Pakistani monopoly. While it has been insisting that Islamabad press on with attacks against the Taliban over the past year, the US has held secret meetings with Taliban representatives in Germany and Doha, Qatar—and kept Pakistan out of those talks. This only increased Pakistani insecurity and reinforced the idea that Washington will ignore its interests in the Afghan endgame.

The US goal in Afghanistan now is to reach a negotiated settlement that allows it to withdraw most forces, leaving a few thousand behind on bases in the north and west to protect the government in Kabul and carry out limited counterterrorism operations against al-Qaeda and other groups that threaten the government or US interests. A Time magazine blogger captured the new strategy poignantly, saying, "Counter-insurgency is so 2007. . . . All the cool kids are into counter-terrorism now." Moreover, the US and Taliban are also moving toward more serious negotiations. Some initial confidence-building measures such as the opening of a Taliban political office in Doha and the release of Taliban prisoners from Guantánamo are being

undertaken.

Prospects of peace, however, cause disunity as much as prospects of war. Pakistan is already suspicious of the Qatar initiative because the US has kept it (and Afghanistan) out of the dialogue. It also won't hesitate to exercise its influence over members of the Taliban leadership in exile. It has jailed several members of the group and is keeping others under house arrest and will undoubtedly seek several preconditions and concessions before it releases them to participate in the reconciliation.

It is also true that while negotiations shimmer, mirage-like, on the horizon, the Taliban has continued to systematically assassinate people in Karzai's government to weaken the regime, and there is no guarantee that they will cease such attacks between now and 2014. Any future Taliban attack threatens to again raise the heat between America and Pakistan.

Finally, the negotiations themselves will prove a tough endeavor. During the bargaining process, the United States' rational goal will be to concede as little as possible in terms of power and control to the Taliban and other Pashtun groups being supported by Pakistan, while Pakistan's goal will be to draw away as much power as possible from the US and its Afghan allies, who are mainly composed of ethnic Tajiks, Uzbeks, and Hazaras and belong to the group formerly called the Northern Alliance. Moreover, Pakistan, like other countries in the region, would not want a long-term American military presence in Afghanistan and will also make that an issue that will continue to complicate the tug-of-war with the US over ultimate outcomes in Afghanistan.

While the US seeks a political settlement with the Taliban in Afghanistan, its policy against al-Qaeda is to "disrupt, defeat, and dismantle" the organization and prevent its return to Afghanistan or Pakistan. The war against al-Qaeda is an area in which the US and Pakistan have cooperated in the past and will continue to cooperate in the future. Since 2002, Pakistan has been steadily attacking al-Qaeda in the tribal areas and arresting its operatives in Pakistani cities. Several members of al-Qaeda, including senior member Younis al-Mauritani, were arrested in Pakistan in 2011.

The war against al-Qaeda, however, raises the key issue of drone strikes. Since 2004, the CIA has been conducting a drone campaign inside Pakistan that has eliminated hundreds of al-Qaeda fighters and their local allies. Last year alone, at least three top al-Qaeda operatives, including military chief Ilyas Kashmiri, were killed through drone strikes.

The drone program has, however, been an issue of contention for two reasons. First, these strikes are unpopular with the Pakistani public because of the civilians who perish in the collateral damage. A 2011 Pew survey found that sixty-one percent of Pakistanis disagreed that missile strikes were necessary and eighty-nine percent said strikes kill too many civilians. A survey carried out within the tribal areas by the New America Foundation found that seventy-six percent opposed US missile strikes and forty-eight percent said they kill civilians rather than militants.

While Pakistan's official policy has been to condemn drone strikes, the military and the civilian government have supported them behind the scenes. In one cable released by WikiLeaks, Prime Minister Yousaf Gilani was quoted as saying, "I don't care if they do it as long as they get the right people. We'll protest in the National Assembly and then ignore it." General Ashfaq Parvez Kiyani, the powerful head of the Pakistani military, was reported to have even requested more drone support in South Waziristan. Moreover, these strikes have occurred with intelligence sharing between the ISI and CIA, with the human intelligence that is required to conduct the strikes coming from Pakistan. Finally, until recently, the drones often flew from Pakistan's Shamsi Airfield.

But a shift in policy has now taken place with the forced vacation of the Shamsi air base and the Pakistani Parliament's recommendation that "no unauthorized incursions into Pakistan's airspace" occur. Based on Pakistan's new policy, drones can no longer fly out of Pakistani bases and Pakistan itself should have an increased role in the decisionmaking over the strikes. According to Zafar Hilaly, a retired Pakistani diplomat, "due to the indiscriminate and hugely counterproductive attacks of recent years, Pakistan wants to limit their number and also be informed of the strikes and the targets prior to their occurrence."

Despite these shifts, however, the drone program will continue to be an area of cooperation between the two countries. This point was clearly illustrated through the two strikes that took place on January 10th and 12th of this year. The strikes killed Aslam Awan, a senior al-Qaeda aide, and also allegedly targeted Hakimullah Mehsud, leader of the Movement of the Pakistani Taliban (TTP), an al-Qaeda allied group. Several more strikes have taken place since, and despite tensions over the Salala incident no sustained opposition has been voiced from Pakistani officials, evidencing continued cooperation in the drone program and the fight against al-Qaeda.

US aid to Pakistan, a third major issue between the two countries, has become contentious as relations have deteriorated and American policymakers and elected officials have often charged that Pakistan has been given more than \$20 billion in recent years in effect to bite the hand that was feeding it. But this is an issue, from Islamabad's point of view anyhow, that is not as simple as it appears. First, in terms of the breakdown of US financial transfers to Pakistan, based on figures compiled by the Congressional Research Service, from 2002 to 2011 Pakistan is supposed to have received approximately \$5.7 billion in security aid, \$7.47 billion in economic aid, and \$8.9 billion in Coalition Support Fund transfers. Thus, out of \$22 billion, US aid to Pakistan has totaled approximately \$13.2 billion in ten years. The remaining \$8.9 billion, or forty percent of the total, has actually been reimbursements to Pakistan for the costs it has incurred in fighting al-Qaeda and its allies, and not aid.

Second, aid disbursement has been chaotic. Many times payments have been delayed, millions have often remained stuck in the pipeline, such as money from the Kerry-Lugar bill, and Pakistan has been owed money from previous fiscal years.

Finally, US aid has not made enough of an impact on Pakistani civilians to provoke any significant gratitude. Most do not see the benefit of civilian aid, much of which goes to foreign contractors, or is distributed by the government to its cronies and supporters. Moreover, some



Pakistanis see US aid as a way to force Pakistan to fight America's wars. In the absence of tangible benefits and in the face of war weariness, many average Pakistanis are now said to favor the end of American aid so Washington loses the power to compel Pakistan to agree with its objectives.

In the aftermath of the bin Laden raid, and because of congressional desire to cut expenditures, the US-Pakistan aid relationship has changed in the last year. For example, \$700 million of military aid was frozen in July 2011, when Pakistan expelled American military trainers. Congress has also made economic and security aid conditional upon Pakistan fighting militants. Although the Obama administration was influential in tripling non-military aid to Pakistan through the Kerry-Lugar bill, experts are predicting a future shrinking of economic assistance as well. Currently there is a bill in the House of Representatives titled the Pakistan Accountability Act, which seeks to cut all aid to Pakistan, except for money for the protection of nuclear weapons. The bill has yet to be voted on, but it foreshadows where the aid relationship is headed. It is quite possible that, over the next few years, US aid to Pakistan will become minimal, except for funds for protection of nuclear weapons.

Pakistan is often described in Washington as “double-dealing” and “duplicitous.” Pakistani analysts describe their country's relationship with the US to me as “unequal” and “humiliating.” Najam Rafique, a US expert at the Institute of Strategic Studies, in Islamabad, said, “Pakistan has been treated with contempt by the US; it's been mistreated and ordered around.” Sadly enough, both characterizations are accurate. After 9/11, the US essentially coerced Pakistan to join the Global War on Terror and, since then, often forced it to act against its own perceived interests. Pakistan, on the other hand, accepted Washington's monetary incentives but undermined the US effort by providing safe havens to its enemies.

The lack of a broad partnership between America and Pakistan prevented the building of mutual trust or the alignment of interests. Instead, the two countries settled for a one-dimensional, transactional relationship centered along security concerns. What was missing was a synchronicity between the two countries' security calculus for the “AfPak” region. Nor is there much evidence that this state of affairs will change, a point painfully obvious to foreign affairs experts in the US and Pakistan alike. Bruce O. Riedel, a former CIA officer who authored the Obama administration's 2009 policy review for Afghanistan and Pakistan, was recently quoted in the *New York Times Magazine* as saying, “I can see how this gets worse . . . And I can see how this gets catastrophically worse. . . . I don't see how it gets a whole lot better.” Similarly, Zafar Hilaly, a retired Pakistani diplomat, recently said to me, “This relationship is not headed anywhere—our ways part, our paths are divergent.”

While disengagement is not an option—the continuation of relations today despite the horrors of 2011 illustrates this point—limited collaboration is the best that can be expected. Even as both countries cooperate to eliminate al-Qaeda, their positions in the Afghan endgame will be competitive. Pakistan will seek concessions before it allows the Afghan Taliban to fully participate in negotiations. Moreover, it will seek greater influence for its allies in a future Afghan government, while the US will push to secure the power of its Afghan allies. Finally, military and economic aid to Pakistan will be conditional and results-oriented.

It is important to point out that although such a relationship can accomplish short-term objectives, it cannot tackle mid-to-long-term challenges. That is why there is a crucial need for Washington to vigorously rethink relations with Pakistan. US regional interests and Pakistan's geopolitical importance warrant a pragmatic, complex, and dynamic Pakistan policy. The US plans to maintain sizable bases and a military presence in Afghanistan beyond 2014. It also has interests in Central Asia because of the region's vast reserves of oil and natural gas. On the other hand, Pakistan is a nuclear-armed state led by corrupt and unaccountable leaders and institutions, with a weak economy, growing population, and a youth bulge. Moreover, it suffers from resource scarcity and mismanagement (especially in water, gas, and electricity) and will need resources to provide postconflict stability in many parts of the country. In the long run, the US can scarcely afford a minimalist relationship with Pakistan. It must engage Pakistan on multiple dimensions and create partnerships to encompass the government, business, and financial sector and civil society. The alternative to such a creative rethinking is not pleasant to contemplate.

**Shehzad H. Qazi is a research associate at the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding.**

## Why Washington Should Stay Out of Somalia

By **Michael Shank**, Special to CNN

Last weekend, in response to a deadly attack on the Turkish embassy in Somalia that killed three and wounded nine, the U.S. government responded by saying that, “this cowardly act will not shake our commitment to continue working for the brighter, more democratic and prosperous future the people of Somalia deserve.”

The statement followed not one bombing in Somalia, but two. This past Saturday’s bombing was the second in under a week; a few days prior, a bomb blew up in a lawmaker’s car, killing one.

But while such a positive American response is assuredly better than *The Economist’s* this summer, which described Somalia as “a byword for conflict, poverty and ungovernability,” it is still riddled with problems. Indeed, ironically, it is exactly this kind of U.S. government-issued statement that fuels the sort of resentment that ultimately leads to more bombings. The U.S. State Department, and the Defense Department for that matter, have never been in the business of working effectively for a brighter, more democratic and prosperous future for the people of Somalia. Their legacy heralds quite the opposite, in fact.

Beyond the \$1.5 billion provided in U.S. security assistance since 2009, and the myriad air strikes that America has rained down on Somalia, the U.S. has created an untenable aid situation where any association with terrorist group Al-Shabaab, however remote, is illegal. Never mind the fact that much of Somalia is in dire straits and that Al-Shabaab, organizationally speaking, is fluid and amorphous. This makes basic support for many Somalis next to impossible.

More from CNN: [Help Somalia fight roots of piracy](#)

Useful American support is still possible, but is currently being implemented through top-down, government channels. Even as last week’s bombings occurred, round two of the New Deal donor conference, which will commit Somalia and its international partners to a three-year reconstruction plan, was taking place.

In a keynote speech last month, Somali President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud said that the New Deal is critical in bringing Somalia out of “its fragile situation.” Certainly, the president should know something about peacebuilding, having attended summer coursework at Eastern Mennonite University’s Center for Justice and Peacebuilding. And such remarks are more positive than those by African Union Special Representative for Somalia Mahamat Saleh Annadif, who said “we must intensify military operations that have unfortunately slowed down for a while now.”

Still, the fact is that Somalia needs help building its institutions, developing economically, and improving its legal and security infrastructure. In all the years that the West – America or Britain – aided and abetted war efforts in Somalia, very little money, time or skill was spent on building capacity in the country. Indeed, any capacity building was always undertaken primarily through an interlocutor, be it the African Union, or worse, a neighboring country like Ethiopia or Kenya.

This practice must stop. We must prevent not encourage neighbors preying upon Somalia's affairs. That Ethiopian troops are still sticking around in parts of Somalia is unacceptable. Discussions last month for an eventual departure were insufficient. They need to leave. Similarly, the African Union Mission of Somalia also needs an exit strategy, something that will only be possible after Somali security forces are properly trained. Only Somalia can secure Somalia's future. Ethiopian intervention has only ever exacerbated the problem of violence.

Next week I travel to Somalia. After writing for years about this country – from the devastating stories about the U.S. State Department's Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Jendayi Frazer, and her misguided policies for the Horn, to stories about the Defense Department's random and indiscriminate air strikes on southern Somalia – I wanted to finally see for myself the counter-productive consequences of our counter-terrorism policies.

Somalia can stand tall in spite of countless interventions by neighbors near and far. Perhaps the best byword for Somalia is “resilience,” a trait that is essential as the country looks toward a new dawn.



## **What Pakistan's New President Can Learn From India**

By Robert M. Hathaway

This season of political transition in Pakistan turned another page earlier this week with the election of Mamnoon Hussain as the country's next president. Hussain's election follows Pakistan's historic May 11 polls, which saw Nawaz Sharif's PML-N party swept into power. The nation's military chieftain and the influential Supreme Court chief justice will also step down before the end of the year.

Hussain is hardly a household name in Pakistan, let alone abroad. Indeed, it is striking how little public information exists about the man who will succeed the controversial Asif Zardari. Though briefly the governor of Sindh, Pakistan's second largest province, Hussain's Wikipedia profile was all of seven lines long when he was elected.

A textile manufacturer born in what is now India, Hussain is a Mohajir, the Urdu-speaking ethnic group whose forebears migrated from India at the time of the 1947 partition of the subcontinent, and who have dominated the affairs of Karachi for many decades. Sharif and other party leaders no doubt selected Hussain in part because he is from Karachi. The PML-N is primarily Punjab-based, and Hussain's elevation gives the party some claim to being a national and not simply a regional party.

More to the point, Karachi is the financial and economic hub of Pakistan. If the new prime minister is to succeed in righting Pakistan's rickety economy, there is no better place to begin than Karachi. Stated differently, Sharif will fail unless he can restore political stability, economic vitality, and law and order to Pakistan's largest city.

"I belong to Karachi," Hussain told a reporter shortly before this week's vote. "If elected, I'll try to resolve Sindh's issues and restore peace in Karachi." That may prove to be a task beyond his capabilities, but Hussain's many connections to individuals and political parties who did not back Nawaz Sharif in the May elections could play a more important role than many now anticipate in stabilizing Karachi and the surrounding province of Sindh.

Although Hussain has been widely described in recent days as a political lightweight, this is almost certainly an overblown characterization. He has, after all, not simply survived, but flourished, in the bare-knuckles arena that is Pakistani business. He disappeared from the political scene after the 1999 coup that toppled Sharif, but that does not mean he is without experience in deal-making and vote-counting.

Under the terms of the 18th amendment to the constitution, adopted in 2010, Hussain will possess only a fraction of the power wielded by some of his predecessors, including Ghulam Ishaq Khan in the 1980s and 1990s, Pervez Musharraf in the 2000s, and Zardari more recently, who even after adoption of the 18th amendment remained Pakistan's leading political force until the parliamentary triumph of the PML-N in May.

Nonetheless, Hussain need not be simply a ceremonial president, as most Pakistan-watchers expect. He could do worse than to follow the example of a former president of Pakistan's great

rival India. The Indian presidency is also largely a ceremonial position. Yet former President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam (2002-07) became a revered figure in India, inspiring his countrymen by his example, integrity, humor, lack of pretension, and force of character. Kalam led Indians to demand more of their politicians. They have frequently been disappointed, but the heightened expectations have provided Indian voters with a new yardstick with which to measure their leaders.

Following Kalam's example, Hussain might help bring a new tone to Pakistani politics. Using the bully pulpit provided by his office, he could take the lead in making clear that a politics based upon cronyism, patronage, and feudal privilege – long the hallmarks of Pakistani politics — is no longer acceptable.

The Pakistani political system is broken. Pakistan suffers from an absence of leadership and vision, and of equal importance, from a fatalistic acceptance by many Pakistanis of incompetence and corruption. This is extremely harrowing given that, as my colleague Michael Kugelman has pointed out on these pages, “two thirds of the country's approximately 180 million people are not yet 30 years old, and the median age is 21.” Further, the rot in the country's political system gives almost no one hope that this trend might be reversed.

If the new president, who at age 73 presumably has few political ambitions for himself, emulates the example set by his Indian counterpart a decade ago, he might help to establish a new standard for accountability, transparency, and integrity in government. He might even convince Pakistanis that politics is important, and can work for them. Were he to succeed in this task, he would do more than merely astound his skeptics; he would have provided a huge service to his country.

**Robert M. Hathaway is director of the Asia Program at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.**

# Pakistan's Balochistan Problem: An Insurgency's Rebirth

By ::: Aurangzaib Alamgir

Early in 2012, a small group of US congressmen looking for alternatives to the Obama administration's AfPak policy made recommendations for two changes in the region. The first, that instead of fantasizing about incorporating the Taliban into the Afghan political system the United States ought to rearm the Northern Alliance, had been discussed previously. The second recommendation was more novel and controversial: instead of trying to normalize relations with Pakistan's corrupt government and hostile military, the US ought to support the creation of a separate state of Balochistan in the southern part of Pakistan. US Representatives Dana Rohrabacher, Louie Gohmert, and Steve King went so far as to introduce a bill stating that the "Baloch nation" had a historic right to self-determination and called for Congress to recognize Baloch independence.

Although the congressmen involved are not seen as influential members of the foreign affairs establishment, the idea of dismembering the largest of Pakistan's four provinces, consisting of nearly half of the country's land mass and having a profound strategic importance because of a shared border with Afghanistan on the north, threw Balochistan into the US foreign-policy calculus almost overnight. Journalists and think tanks began to examine the Baloch nationalist movement and its heterodox idea that because ethnic identity trumps religious identity Muslim Pakistan is therefore not a nation. The controversy that has divided leaders of the Baloch nationalist movement—greater autonomy versus outright succession from Pakistan—began to receive new scrutiny. As with other sudden policy enthusiasms, however, the subject quickly got ahead of itself, racing past the deeper understanding of Balochistan's history and its place in Pakistani nationhood that is required to bring the independence movement into clear focus and understand the implications of its demands.

Among the ancient inhabitants of the central Caspian region, the Balochs were an independent tribal union until the nineteenth century. In 1893, the British drew the Durand Line, which divided British India and Afghanistan, as well as the Pashtun and the Baloch tribes on both sides of the new border. Indian independence in 1947 gave the tribes the choice of joining either Pakistan or India. Baloch leaders agitated for a third way: independence. Lord Mountbatten, the last viceroy of India, believed that Balochistan would not be able to survive on its own and forced it to join Pakistan. One of the Baloch leaders at that time, Suleiman Khan, later said: "We had no desire to be part of Pakistan but we were ignored and the agreement was eventually forced down our throats. Till the very last moment, they kept us in the dark. All the time we were assured that the Baluch would keep their independent state but instead we were sold down the river."

The alignment with Pakistan was initially based on an agreement that Balochistan would be autonomous and retain authority over land, resources, and political matters while the Pakistani government would oversee currency, foreign relations, and defense. But almost from the

beginning, the central government aimed at control, leading to violence between Baloch guerrillas and the Pakistani army sent into the province to subdue them.

One of the more dramatic confrontations came in 1963 when Baloch leader Sher Mohammad Marri resisted the central government's intention to establish military bases in the province, giving rise to an insurgency ranging over forty-five thousand miles. The insurgency ended after five years with a cease-fire agreement that promised greater political autonomy for Balochistan. But these promises were not kept and Baloch separatists mounted another insurgency in 1973, fighting for greater social and political rights and an end to exploitation of Balochistan's resources. Pakistan's military operations in the area, supported by forces of the Shah of Iran, exacted a high toll on Baloch insurgents. In 1973, an assault by the Pakistani Air Force ordered by General Tikka Khan, later referred to as the "Butcher of Balochistan," led to the deaths of five thousand guerrillas and more than three thousand soldiers.

A truce finally came after Pakistani President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto fell to a coup by General Zia-ul-Haq. General Zia initiated a policy of development that temporarily quelled that insurgency of Balochistan's people. But after three decades of unfulfilled promises for more effective local government and a greater share of state resources, another one broke out in 2005 and has yet to be contained.

It is obvious why the central Pakistani government has been obsessed with keeping tight control of Balochistan. It is not only the largest province in Pakistan in terms of area, with a population of roughly seven and a half million, but it has vast natural resources, especially energy resources, including an estimated nineteen trillion cubic feet of natural gas and six trillion barrels of oil reserves.

The central government controls tourism, environment, population, labor, welfare, the newspapers, and even the educational curriculum, which rigorously excludes the use of the Balochi language, which Pakistan's political elites ridicule as primitive.

Not surprisingly, Balochistan's literacy is the lowest among the four provinces. Despite being the major supplier of natural resources to other Pakistani provinces, the Balochs are behind the rest of the country not only in terms of education, but also in social development. They have the lowest per capita income among the four provinces, with sixty-three percent living below the poverty line, eighty-five percent lacking safe drinking water, and eighty percent without electricity. There are very few government civil servants from Balochistan working in Islamabad, moreover, and not even one Baloch in the Pakistani Foreign Service.

This deprivation has fueled the ongoing spirit of insurgency, whose causes scholar Frederic Grare summarizes as three-fold: expropriation, marginalization, and dispossession. Expropriation relates to the Balochs' claim that their resources are exploited by the Punjabi-dominated central government. Marginalization particularly relates to discrimination against Baloch labor in ongoing development projects, with workers often imported from the other provinces rather than hired locally. Dispossession is an issue because Balochs see the best of their land being taken over by "foreigners" from Islamabad.

The province is now in the middle of its fourth major episode of insurgency, following major outbreaks in 1948, 1963–69, and 1973–78. The central government has always claimed that these eruptions were the result of conspiracies to dismember Pakistan between Baloch leaders, the Soviet Union, and Iraq. It has used military force to deal with the guerrillas who have damaged gas pipelines, blocked coal shipment to Punjab, and made life tough for the Pakistani army in the mountains despite numbering at best some fifty thousand against the army's force of more than eighty thousand.

The current wave of insurgency began with the gang rape of a female doctor by army officers. The late veteran politician Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti voiced his anger and demanded punishment of the rapists. In response, the army launched an attack on Dera Bugti, the country's largest natural gas reservoir. Baloch guerrillas countered by firing rocket launchers at then President General Pervez Musharraf's helicopter during a visit to Quetta, Balochistan's largest city. A full operation by the Pakistani army then began in the province, particularly in Kohlu and Dera Bugti, in 2005. Several Bugti and Marri militants were killed, further fueling an insurgency that had already been complicated by the simultaneous rise of the Taliban, the War on Terror, and the decline of law and order in Punjab and Karachi. Taking advantage of the rapidly changing (and deteriorating) situation, the Baloch movement gained momentum, popularity, and support, locally and internationally, setting up a government in exile in 2006.

As the Balochs have gotten more serious about independence, the central government has responded with an heavier display of force. Nearly four hundred bullet-ridden bodies of Balochs have been recovered from mountains and roadsides in recent years—most likely, casualties of ISI, the powerful Pakistani intelligence service, which has been active in the province. Others suspected of ties to the insurgency have been “disappeared,” according to the Baloch Missing Persons Forum, which claims that some ten thousand individuals are assumed to have been confined and tortured by the Pakistani secret service agencies before being killed.

Over the past few months, a faction of American congressmen, minority Afghan groups, Baloch nationalists, and supporters have outlined a framework for an alternative US policy to Southwest Asia. US advocates for an independent Balochistan have yet to receive wide support, but their campaign, which now centers around secession, is receiving more attention among policymakers particularly because of three recent high-profile events: the congressional hearing on Baluchistan; the introduction of a Baloch self-determination bill in Congress; and a highly publicized meeting of the Balochistan National Front in Berlin earlier this year.

Supporters of the new approach note redrawing of Southwest Asia's political borders through Balochistan independence would advance American interests on several fronts, especially by creating valuable new economic opportunities that could offset the costs of the failed wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and spur economic growth after the global recession.

Meanwhile, the insurgents, particularly those in the government in exile, are reinventing themselves to attract more attention from the US. In its earlier phases, the insurgency was dominated by a Marxist ideology and to some extent (enough to be an irritant to Islamabad, but

not enough to involve an expensive commitment) supported by Russia. Many of the leading figures studied in Russia and styled themselves Marxist-Leninists. However, the latest outbreak of hostilities occurred after the death of the Soviet Union and has looked toward India, Great Britain, and especially America for support. That it now sees itself as a democratic movement is reflected in the recently drafted Charter for the Liberation of Balochistan: Article 1 stipulates “one person one vote.”

There is also a new sophistication about international opinion on the part of the insurgency’s leaders, especially Allah Nazar Baloch, the forty-four-year-old leader of the Balochistan Liberation Front. The eponymously named rebel trained as a medical doctor and is part of a new generation that has taken the cause of independence global, successfully espousing the cause in the British House of Lords and the American Congress.

The liberation movement has also been buoyed by the tides of war in the region. Pakistan’s hidden agenda has always involved secretly supporting the Taliban for its own strategic purposes. But the Karzai government in Afghanistan has found a chance to pay it back by providing safe haven to the Baloch guerrillas who shelter and train in camps there.

Pakistan today is facing unprecedented challenges: economic turbulence and rising poverty, a stalemated army operation in the Northern region, law-and-order issues in Sind and Punjab, an increasingly cold collaboration with the US in the War on Terror, spillover effects of Afghanistan’s insurgency, and, of course, the enduring rivalry with India. It cannot afford Balochistan’s insurgencies, which—owing to the province’s vast land, hostile terrain, arid climate, and a population unreconciled to Islamabad’s discriminatory and exploitive policies—have been difficult to suppress. Pakistan has attempted to drown the voices of the Balochs for more than sixty years, but they appear to be growing louder and more demanding with each passing day.

**Aurangzaib Alamgir is a Ph.D. student at the Asia-Europe Institute at the University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.**

# Judicial Activism Using SUO MOTU

## by Barrister Ahmed Uzair

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The question of “judicial activism” is of an increasing relevance to us in Pakistan; more so following the judicial “revolution” epitomized by the restoration of the Chief Justice of Pakistan. Judicial activism derives its existence from the judgments of the Chief Justice of the US Supreme Court John Marshall in the early 19th century. In the landmark case of Marbury vs. Madison, it was declared that “an act [of another branch of government] repugnant to the Constitution is void”. The term “judicial activism” derives its origin in American political and legal discourse of the 1950s where Arthur Schlesinger Jr. in an article titled "The Supreme Court: 1947" profiled the nine Justices as either “judicial activists” or “champions of self restraint.”

### 2. JUDICIAL ACTIVISM AND JUDICIAL RESTRAINT

As observed by Arthur Schlesinger Jr., two schools of thought emerged, i.e. those that ascribe a much limited role to the judiciary (they being the ‘champions of self restraint’), and those that argue in favour of greater judicial scrutiny (the ‘judicial activists’).

The champions of self restraint, jurists such as Alexander Bickel, John Hart Ely, highlight the anti-majoritarian nature of the judiciary, the fact that it is appointed and not directly accountable to the people and that by actively questioning the measures taken by the executive; the judiciary is usurping the power of the elected branches of the State. Since the judiciary is not elected it does not have any legitimacy to over-rule (let alone set) government policy, unless an action is in direct conflict with the Constitution.

On the other side of the scale, the followers of judicial activism justify going beyond and even against the intentions of those who have drafted the law. They argue that this greater role of the judiciary is vital to ensure a stronger democracy and a just and stable society. In other words; it is necessary to keep a check on transient majoritarianism (protection of minority rights and the underprivileged), and that it is necessary for the protection of liberty, property and life. The Judiciary does not act outside the democratic setup, rather it is a part of it, and its decisions are always under scrutiny by the people.

There is no denying that checks on the executive authority are absolutely essential for effective running of a democratic society. The question then is that of degree, extent and scope. Of particular interest to this author is the suo motu use of judicial powers in aid of judicial activism. It may be observed that judicial activism is by no means a recent phenomenon in Pakistan but suo motu exercise of judicial power is.

### 3. SUO MOTU

Judicial activism is invariably (but not necessarily) expressed in cases of judicial review i.e. people versus the State where an aggrieved person or group seek the court's intervention against an action – or lack thereof – on part of the State. Exercise of suo motu can be classified as an extension of judicial review. However, and more crucially, in cases of suo motu the judge takes cognizance of a matter on his/her own initiative. On other occasions, simple applications filed in the court are converted into/deemed to have been filed as petitions.

Another distinction may be drawn here. The courts, being a creation of the Constitution, derive their authority from the Constitution or other laws that confer jurisdiction. The Supreme Court of Pakistan has been expressly conferred powers under Article 184 (3) of the Constitution to take suo motu action for the enforcement of any of the Fundamental Rights conferred by Chapter I of Part II of the Constitution. The said article reads as follows:

(3) “Without prejudice to the provisions of Article 199, the Supreme Court shall, if it considers that a question of public importance with reference to the enforcement of any of the Fundamental Rights conferred by Chapter I of Part II is involved have the power to make an order of the nature mentioned in the said Article”.

No such power is conferred to the High Courts by the Constitution i.e. to take suo motu action against the executive. The Constitution in fact goes so far as to state in Article 175 (2) that:

(2) “No court shall have any jurisdiction save as is or may be conferred on it by the Constitution or by or under any law”.

Therefore while a lot of the arguments for and against judicial activism in general, and suo motu in particular, are also applicable to the apex court, I will restrict my observations to the suo motu exercise of judicial power by the High Court.

### 4. HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE: THE CONSERVATIVE VIEW

In the 1956 Constitution Article 170 defined the scope of the jurisdiction of the High Court conferred upon it; the Article read as follows:

Art 170: “Notwithstanding anything in Article 22, each High Court shall have power, throughout the territories in relation to which it exercises jurisdiction, to issue to any person or authority, including in appropriate cases any Government, directions, orders or writs, including writs in the nature of habeas corpus, mandamus, prohibition, quo warranto and certiorari, for the enforcement of any of the right conferred by Part II and for any other purpose”.

The Supreme Court has long maintained that the High Court is not competent to commence proceedings and issue directions suo motu. In the Supreme Court case of Tariq Transport Company, Lahore vs. Sargodha-Bhera Bus Service and other, while interpreting Article 170



(above) Chief Justice Muhammad Munir observed that "... high court, therefore, is not competent merely on information or of its own knowledge to commence certiorari proceedings or other proceedings of a similar nature under [Art. 170] ...". Mr. Justice Shahabuddin in the same judgement also observed that; "... The normal procedure is to 'move a Court by a petition, or a complaint or a plaint and in cases where power to act suo motu is given it is specifically conferred as in S. 115, Civil Procedure Code, and S. 435, Criminal Procedure Code. I can see no ground for thinking that the intention of the Constitution was to empower, 'the High Courts to send for the records of any of the proceedings before any executive or quasi-judicial authority and satisfy themselves that every department of the Government is functioning satisfactorily.'" Mr. Justice Cornelius made similar observation, holding that, "... I cannot conceive that the Article [175] can ever be thought to include a general power in the High Court to conduct searching enquiries into the internal working of such an institution as the R. T. A."

The reservations of the Supreme Court in this case were clear. If the High Courts started conducting inquiries into the affairs of government departments in order to "satisfy themselves" the State machinery would grind to a halt.

In two subsequent cases the Supreme Court reiterated the above mentioned position; first in the case of Fazole-e-Haq, Accountant-General, West Pakistan vs. The State and then in the case of Islamic Republic of Pakistan vs. Muhammad Saeed

In the 1962 Constitution the jurisdiction of the High Courts was defined in Article 98 that made it even more explicit that issuance of writ were subject to applications by aggrieved party; in case of certiorari and mandamus or any person in case of habeas corpus and quo warranto.

In the land-mark judgment titled Shahnaz Begum vs. The Honourable Judges of the High Court of Sindh and Balochistan and another the Chief Justice Hamood-ur-Rahman in respect of the Constitution of 1962 observed that; "... under the 1962 Constitution a High Court has been given the power of judicial review of executive actions by Article 98 in certain specified circumstances but even in such a case the High Court cannot move suo motu for, it is specifically provided in each of the sub-clauses (a), (b) and (c) of Clause (2) of Article 98 that only "on the application of an aggrieved party or of any person," the High Court may make the orders or issue the directions therein specified."

The Supreme Court made it clear that "... it is of the utmost importance to remember that a superior Court should not allow itself to be influenced by sensational reports in newspapers or by what he may have heard or read outside the Court, for in the first case it may unwittingly be encouraging a trial by the press and in the other case unnecessarily be exposing itself to criticism that its actions are motivated by bias."

Again the reservations of the Supreme Court are clear and they cannot be truer in this day and age when media organizations are in competition with each other over viewership and the reporting is invariably sensationalized.

The provisions on powers of the High Courts in the present Constitution more or less resemble those in the 1962 Constitution. The Supreme Court therefore reiterated its declaration of law in 1982 that the High Court does not have suo motu powers observing that "...It is settled law that in writ proceedings, the relief must be confined to the prayer made in the writ petition and the High Court cannot issue a writ suo motu."

## 5. POST-CONSERVATIVE POSITION

The above referred position is representative of self restraint; at-least so far as the High Court is concerned and has held fort for quite some time. However, since the judicial "revolution", it is clear that the judiciary sees a wider role for itself in the affairs of the State. In the last 5 years there have been many instances of suo motu actions by the High Courts, most notably, the Lahore High Court. The majority of the public has welcomed this development and has brought with it astronomical expectations from the judiciary. A number of cases were taken up suo motu by the previous Chief Justice of the Lahore High Court Mr. Justice Khuwaja Muhammad Sharif. These cases ranged from the negligence of doctors resulting in death, increase in bus fares, the government's decision to withdraw the promotion of prison department employees, the ZARCO Exchange fraud and the suo motu notice on the sugar price hike<sup>28</sup> just to name a few.

Mr. Justice Sharif reportedly remarked that suo motu powers of the judiciary [i.e. of the High Courts] was an effective way to check violations of law by the executive and to protect the rights and the lives of the poor in the country and that "I will take notice of every matter in which the executive is showing slackness, as justice should be dispensed at all costs."

Supporters of the post-conservative judicial activism highlight the inefficiencies of the other branches of government and state that people harbor greater expectations from the judiciary as most [government] departments have failed to deliver on what was expected of them.

Justice Shri V.R. Krishna Iyer of the Indian Supreme Court, on the question of judicial activism observed that "the true strength and stability of our polity is the society's credibility in social justice, not perfect 'legalese', and this does not disclose any difference to this fundamental value." This in effect represents the essence of post-conservative jurisprudence at the Lahore High Court. i.e. to do away with legal hurdles as "justice is to be dispensed at all costs."

Another important aspect of the modern approach is the perception of 'dispensation of justice'. An Executive that is constantly looking over its shoulder is starting to – albeit at a snail's pace – think twice before usurping the public trust.

Finally, the proponents of judicial activism can argue that there is a tacit consent on the part of the people of Pakistan when they (twice) took part in the campaign for the restoration of the judiciary.

## 6. JUDICIAL RESTRAINT IN PAKISTAN

With the advent of this post conservative trend a school of thought has emerged that opposes this development. They warn against greater judicial activism and by extension suo motu exercise of judicial power. They highlight the jurisprudence of the last five decades.

Secondly, they argue that the High Courts, by taking suo motu notice, are discouraging people from following the due process of the law i.e. the right of an aggrieved person to move the Court when his/her right is being infringed/violated.

Thirdly, cases that are already pending before the courts are delayed even further. As of 30th June 2010 there are nearly 1.65 million cases pending in the Courts in Pakistan, out of which more than 85,000 are before the High Courts. While the High Courts take suo motu notice of issues in the news, these cases are reprioritized]. Why would one - as a litigant - want to spend long and arduous years in courts following the procedure prescribed by law?

Fourthly, if the justification for suo motu action is “justice delayed is justice denied”, do those litigants whose cases are already pending before the High Court not have the same right

Then there is the question of practicality. It is simply not possible for the High Court to take suo motu notice of every indiscretion of the executive. Therefore the High Court is - in effect - choosing which matters to take notice of and which not. What is, in that case, the criterion for such a selection? What of those citizens whose plight is not taken up by the High Court?

Finally they argue that how can an unrepresentative and unaccountable body or person decide on policy matters that should be the exclusive purview of the elected officials? Clearly it is an inherent contradiction to the concept democracy that policy is determined by the judiciary.

In this regard the example of the suo motu notice taken by Lahore High Court’s Divisional Bench of the high price of sugar may be mentioned. The Court ordered the price of sugar to be fixed at Rs. 40 per Kg. This level of micro-management of public policy is quite alarming. The outcome has been that neither the price has been fully stabilized nor fully floated, as there is constant risk of artificial interference. Wouldn’t a long-term solution aimed against hoarders, by enforcement and strengthening of anti-trust and anti-monopoly laws be more effective?

## 7. CONCLUSION

Therefore it may be concluded that notwithstanding the nobility of the objective, it is simply not possible for a Court of Law to ensure effective running of each and every department of the government. Even with its widening sphere of influence - which is a reality - the judiciary must not overwhelm itself by this ever greater public expectation and not let itself get embroiled in micro-managing the affairs of the executive, or for that matter, the legislative. If the judiciary decides on policy matters such as the price of sugar or carbon levy, it should then expect to share the responsibility should things don’t go according to plan.

The judiciary cannot endeavor to cause a reformation of the society. It is not its role and for this reason that the Supreme Court, in the recent judgment on the National Reconciliation Ordinance observed that “... if the Court attempts to become the arbiter of what is good or bad for the people, it will inevitably enter the minefield doctrines such as the ‘law of necessity’ or *salus populi suprema lex.*”

While one cannot categorically state that there has been greater vigilance on the part of the executive, or that there will be any lasting effect of the *suo motu* use of judicial power, as only time will tell. The judiciary however needs to recognize its own limits and strike a balance. No rule ought to be laid down as to whether or when or to what extent judicial power may be exercised *suo motu*. It is my opinion that neither should there be an absolute bar, nor should it be unbridled authority and it is for the High Court for itself to recognize and lay down its own limitations.

# NATIONAL ECONOMY AND IMPACT OF FOREIGN AID

Ishrat Husain<sup>1</sup>

## OUTLINE:

- I. Types and Forms of Aid/Loans
- II. Role of Donor Agencies and their Conditionalities
- III. Impact of Foreign Aid on National Economic Policy
- IV. Current state of the Economic Policy
- V. Prospects and Challenges

## I. TYPES AND FORMS OF AID/LOANS

Foreign economic assistance broadly falls under the following two categories:

- A) Foreign grants
- B) Foreign loans and credits

### A) Foreign Grants:

Foreign grants provided by the donor countries/agencies comprise the following:

- i) **Project Assistance** - covers the cost of machinery and equipment for projects.
- ii) **Commodity Assistance** - represents imports of industrial raw material and essential consumer goods.
- iii) **Technical Assistance** - includes Experts/Advisory Services, training facilities abroad and Supply of equipment for purposes of training and demonstration.
- iv) **Other Grants** - such as Relief Aid, foreign aid received in cash.

### B) External Debt:

External Debt can broadly be viewed from three angles:

- a) **By Borrower Type**
  - i) Central Borrowing – Loans contracted by the government.

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<sup>1</sup> Lecture delivered at No. 18 Air War Course at PAF Air War College, Karachi on May 20, 2005

- ii) Guaranteed Loans – Loans contracted by the regional/provincial governments; autonomous bodies/corporations; financial institutions, credit agencies and industrial concerns etc. in the private sector guaranteed by the government.
  - iii) Private Non-Guaranteed – external obligation of a private debtor.
- b) By Utilization:**
- i) Project loans - to finance the cost of machinery, equipment and technical services for a specific project.
  - ii) Non-project commodity loans or program loans - to finance imports of industrial raw material and essential consumer goods and are always contracted by the national government.
- c) By Creditor Type**
- i) Official Creditors – includes multilateral (World Bank, ADB, IDB etc.) and bilateral loans (including governments and their agencies). This is also termed as Capital Aid or Official Development Assistance (ODA). These cover the cost of capital goods, machinery and equipment for the projects.
  - ii) Private Creditors – it mainly includes Suppliers’ credits from manufacturers, exporters, or other suppliers of goods; loans extended by private banks and other private financial institutions.

## **II. ROLE OF DONOR AGENCIES AND THE CONDITIONALITIES IMPOSED BY THEM/INFLUENCE OF AID ON ECONOMIC POLICY**

There are three leading multilateral agencies viz. IMF, World Bank and the ADB that provide loans and credit on soft and hard terms. The core function of IMF is to provide support to countries facing acute imbalances between their external payments and receipts. The World Bank or the ADB, unlike the IMF, are development banks dedicated purely for poverty reduction and improving the living standards of people. Nevertheless, all the three institutions pursue a common objective of promoting economic growth and reduce unemployment.

For Pakistan all the three agencies have contributed significantly in providing assistance and almost 50 percent of our external debt is owed to these to these institutions.

### **a) International Monetary Fund (IMF):**

The IMF was established in 1945 to promote international monetary co-operation, facilitate the expansion and balanced growth in international trade, promote exchange rate stability and orderly exchange arrangements among members, assist in the establishment of a multilateral system of payments in respect of current transactions, give confidence to members by making the general resources of the Fund temporarily available to them under adequate safeguards, etc. The Fund provides financial resources to its members to overcome temporary balance of payments difficulties through a variety of facilities and policies, which differ mainly in the type of BOP need they address and in the degree of conditionality attached to them.

### **IMF and its Conditionalities:**

- The primary objective of conditionalities in an IMF program is to restrain budget deficit and reserve money growth to address the macroeconomic imbalances faced by a country.

- The guidelines attached by the IMF with its credit programs generally include: *adopting policies of fiscal and budgetary austerity; exchange rate devaluation; "getting the prices right", stimulating investment instead of consumption; cuts in real wages; cuts in public expenditure; prioritizing external debt service; and import liberalization*. Indebted states are required to comply with these guidelines in return for balance of payments assistance.
- IMF's conditionalities are criticized for a number of reasons among which are:
  - imposing too many conditions on debtor countries in a time frame that is not always realistic.
  - The robustness of assumptions on which conditionalities are based is questionable.
  - Imposition of a large number of conditionalities that do not conform to the political economy conditions of the borrowing country generally results in higher probability of failure, deviations and slippages.
- The IMF has been the target of criticism for a number of years and it was heavily criticized in the wake of the 1997-98 financial crises for failing to predict these crises and its ensuing crisis management in the Asian countries.
- In case of Pakistan, it had to take a dozen prior actions, fulfil 30 performance criteria and structural benchmarks over a 15-month period in 2000-2001.
- The measurement of actual outcomes of conditionalities is quite difficult and problematic because of the role of exogenous variables.

### **Pakistan and the IMF:**

- Pakistan entered into nine different Agreements with the IMF during the period 1988-2000. There are one programs (SBA: Nov. 2000 to Sep. 2001) and the PRGF (Dec. 2001 to 2004), which were fully implemented. Although in the case of PRGF the Government chose not to draw down the last two tranches to which they were entitled.
- Pakistan did not accept the last of the 12 tranche PRGF program and seek any successor arrangement. The program was discontinued by the Government of Pakistan given the strong state of the economy and the foreign exchange reserves.
- The major factors which contributed towards the motivation of obtaining loans from IMF included: need to obtain financial resources for BoP problem, secure access of funds from other IFIs and bilateral donors, to get debt relief and rescheduling in the post 1998 period.
- During the period 1988-2000, the prolonged uses of Fund resources in Pakistan can be characterized as less successful in achieving the desired objectives. One of the major reasons was that the successive governments used foreign resources to fix the external payment imbalances but they did not adopt complementary policy reform.

Macroeconomic management was not prudent which resulted in high external debts and debt servicing problems.

- After 2000, the Stand-by Arrangement (SBA) was fully implemented and its progress on the poverty reduction has also been on track. This was mainly because of the concordance between ownership and conditionality as the agenda designed by the Government has the right mix of policy actions which can be reinforced and strengthened by conditionality of the IMF.

**b) International Bank for Reconstruction & Development (IBRD):**

The IBRD was established in 1945. Initially, it was devoted to post-war reconstruction in Europe and afterwards its aim has been to assist the economic development of member nations by making loans where private capital is not available on reasonable terms. In 1980, the Bank introduced an element of structural adjustment lending, which supports programs and changes necessary to modify the structure of an economy so that it can restore or maintain its growth. Subsequently, it enhanced efforts to alleviate poverty, mitigate the social effects of economic adjustment programs, promote productive employment, and provides the poor greater access to health care, education and physical infrastructure, environmentally sustainable development and to improve conditions of women.

**The World Bank's Role in Pakistan:**

- The World Bank has played an important and essential role in the development process of Pakistan particularly in modifying the structure of the economy to restore growth through the structural adjustment-lending program introduced in 1980.
- The Bank Group's assistance strategy focuses intently on supporting the government's development strategy and is organized around three mutually reinforcing pillars which are: Strengthening Macroeconomic Stability and Government Effectiveness, Strengthening and Enabling the Investment Climate and Supporting Pro-poor and Pro-gender Equity Policies.
- The Bank has contributed to alleviate poverty, mitigate the social effects of economic adjustment programs, and provides the poor greater access to health care, education and physical infrastructure, environmentally sustainable development and to improve conditions of women in Pakistan.
- The government of Pakistan has shown a strong commitment to reducing poverty and is receiving support from the World Bank through around US\$ 1.2 billion in financing for 18 active projects and, over the past five years, an additional US\$ 1.5 billion in adjustment lending to strengthen the government's broader reform programs.
- The Country Assistance Strategy (CAS), endorsed by the Bank in 2002, was designed to support Pakistan's reform program, which aimed at engendering growth, reforming governance, creating income-generating opportunities, and improving human development.



- The World Bank is the main financier of Pakistan's Poverty Alleviation Fund, which provides assistance to poor communities throughout the country. The Fund has been working with nearly 40 local organizations and has extended micro-credit loans to more than 275 thousand borrowers, of which 45 percent are women.
- Recently, Pakistan has sought additional soft-term loan facility from the World Bank for its infrastructure development and poverty alleviation efforts through a long-term development partnership to transform the country and facilitate second generation reforms.

c) **Asian Development Bank (ADB):**

The ADB, functioning since December, 1966, has been engaged in promoting the economic and social progress of its developing member countries in the Asia-Pacific region. The Bank's principal functions are: (i) to make loans and equity investments for the economic and social advancement of developing member countries, (ii) provide technical assistance for the preparation and execution of development projects and advisory services, (iii) promote investment of public and private capital for development purposes, and (iv) respond to requests for assistance in coordinating development policies and plans of member countries. The Bank's operations cover the entire spectrum of economic development, with particular emphasis on agriculture, energy, capital market development, transport & communications and social infrastructure.

**ADBs Role in Pakistan:**

- ADB in Pakistan is presently undertaking various initiatives to promote social protection and social safety mechanisms, capital market reforms, reforms at the Provincial level, support for Devolution, etc.
- Eleven loans totaling US\$870.7 million were approved in 2003 to (i) implement a public sector reform program in the province of Punjab, (ii) develop the road sector network in Balochistan, (iii) enhance social service provision in Sindh, (iv) reform the regulatory structure for small and medium enterprises, and (v) develop basic urban services in Southern Punjab. Twenty technical assistance projects totaling US\$10.0 million, including co-financed grants, were also approved.
- Cumulative ADB lending to Pakistan as of 31 December 2003 was US\$13.55 billion in the form of 213 public sector loans. Of this amount, \$6.4 billion was from the concessional Asian Development Fund (ADF) and \$6.8 billion from Ordinary Capital Resources (OCR).
- The ADB public-private infrastructure finance (PPIF) project is the first major effort of any institution to help accelerate infrastructure development through increased private sector participation in infrastructure development in Pakistan.

**III. IMPACT OF FOREIGN AID ON THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC POLICY:**

- Let us examine the facts about foreign aid and its importance in Pakistan's economy and particularly the widely held impression that we got a big bonanza after September 11, 2001. As I explained, foreign aid consists of loans and grants. Table I shows the picture about net resource flows and net transfers from all official sources – bilateral and multilateral. You can notice that the net flows as percentage of gross national income have gradually declined from 4.3% in 1970 to 1.5% in 2003 and net transfers from 3.6% to 0.7%. The deduction from this evidence is quite obvious – Pakistan's dependence on foreign aid is so low and insignificant that it won't make much of a difference to our national economy.
- The popular myth that the economic turnaround in Pakistan can be attributed to September 11, 2001 events can be exploded by looking at the net flows and net transfers for 2002 and 2003. For both these years they have actually declined as proportion of national income compared to 1999.
- Looking at external debt and debt servicing, it can be seen that there was a big jump between 1990 and 1999 and 2003. In terms of external debt indicators the burden has actually fallen in the last four years. The ratio for 2004 is even much lower.
- Similarly, there has been a big drop in the debt servicing as the country has to pay only 16 percent of export receipts as debt servicing compared to almost 29 percent in 1999. Foreign reserves which in actual fact demonstrate the strength of a country's capacity to manage its external payments now account for almost one third of the total external debt and liabilities. Four years ago this ratio was so precarious that we were not in a position to meet all our obligations. This strength has actually allowed us to say good bye to the IMF and regain our economic sovereignty.

#### **IV. CURRENT STATE OF PAKISTAN'S ECONOMY:**

- At the time of 1998-99 crises, Pakistan was facing multidimensional challenges which included: restoring investors' confidence, reinvigorating growth, restoring macroeconomic stability, serious external payments crisis threatening imminent default, reducing poverty, improving social indicators and improving governance.
- Since 1998-99, Pakistan has traversed the road from a difficult default situation on its external payments to a vigilant program under the IMF and finally reestablished access to international capital markets. This was possible mainly because of structural reforms,

which included: tax and tariff reforms, privatization, deregulation, financial sector reforms and high standards of economic governance.

- Pakistan's economy has gained more strength, underpinned by a buoyant private sector during the current fiscal year. Acceleration in growth accompanied by a sharp pick up in industrial production, a strong upsurge in investment, and a further strengthening of the external balance of payments have been the hallmarks of performance of Pakistan's economy in the current year.
- After a remarkably successful Euro bond issue in FY04, Pakistan re-entered the international capital markets with a US\$600 million offering in January 2005 named as Sukuk bond. The bonds have a five-year maturity period, ending 2010. This Issue was the first offshore sovereign debt offering from Asia in 2005 and this floatation is the largest Islamic bond ever issued internationally.
  - ⇒ To put Pakistan's name on the radar screen of the International capital market to enable international investors, credit rating agencies, and research analysts etc. to observe Pakistan's economic performance on a permanent basis and to test Pakistan's sovereignty in the financial global market, expand investor base, attracting the Islamic funds.
  - ⇒ Pakistan selected Sukuk to capture funds from international capital market because globally, the demand for Islamic products and financial instruments is currently growing at 15 percent a year. The present, globally accumulated investment in Islamic instruments is estimated at \$ 270 billion.

#### **Significant Achievements:**

- ⇒ **GDP** growth rate has exceeded 6 percent,
- ⇒ **Inflation** had remained under control for four out of five years,
- ⇒ **Fiscal deficit** has been reduced significantly,
- ⇒ **Public debt ratios** have declined,
- ⇒ **External debt burden** has been lowered,
- ⇒ **Exchange rate** has remained stable,
- ⇒ **Exports** have almost doubled,
- ⇒ **Tax revenues** are recording double digit growth,
- ⇒ **Interest rates** had never been at such low levels in the history,
- ⇒ **Remittances** of Pakistanis overseas have multiplied by a factor of four,
- ⇒ **Foreign exchange reserves** have expanded twelve times from their 1999 level.

**Can these impressive achievements be sustained in the years to come? It would depend how we would be able to tackle the future challenges.**

#### **V. PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE:**

- At present there are two major challenges in the short and the long run – to fight inflation (short run) and to eradicate poverty (long run).

- While inflation recently touched the double digit level, the persistence on inflation at higher levels during FY05, could fuel the inflationary expectations. Major reasons for the current hike include: rise in aggregate demand due to an unprecedented rise in private sector credit the oil price spike and the food shortages.
- Another challenge in the short run, though not as worrisome as inflation, is the increasing trade deficit. The trade deficit is widening due to an unprecedented rise in imports due (i) higher trade deficit and (ii) increase in imports of machinery. The higher oil import bill due to higher international oil prices is a source of concern but is beyond our control. The higher machinery import, on the other hand, is still welcome as it is a reflection of the growing capacity of the economy.

**Other Long Term Challenges Include:**

- Investment in developing human resources, which is the single most dominating factor that has kept the country below its potential. Technical and vocational education should be given priority to produce the skills that are required by the economy.
- Investment in infrastructure: Higher growth rates for an extended period of time in the range of 7 to 8 percent annually are possible only if energy, water resources and infrastructure needs are fully met.
- Growth alone will not suffice to reduce the incidence of poverty. It has to be accompanied by poverty-targeted interventions and social safety nets.
- We need to diversify our export base and export markets to insulate from fluctuations and volatility especially in cotton and textile output and trade.
- Judicial and legal reforms: Institutions Civil Service, Judiciary and Police need to be restructured and their capacity strengthened because these key institutions affect a common man's daily life.
- Widening the tax base: There is severe need to introduce tax reforms especially to widen the tax base in the country.

**CONCLUSION:**

- Although Pakistan has achieved major successes on the socio-economic front, the progress made so far is not commensurate with the country's considerable potential. Going forward, consistency and continuity of sound macroeconomic policies along with a credible reform program will be an absolute necessity to realize our full potential.
- The second-generation reforms aimed at strengthening the country's institutions and their capacity to deliver basic services and investment in human development and infrastructure will be able to steer the country on the right course.

**TABLE I****Net Official Development Assistance to Pakistan**US\$ Million

	<b><u>1970</u></b>	<b><u>1980</u></b>	<b><u>1990</u></b>	<b><u>1999</u></b>	<b><u>2001</u></b>	<b><u>2002</u></b>	<b><u>2003</u></b>
Net Flows	433	1,021	1,228	1,071	1,622	1,066	1,247
Net Transfers	369	819	778	263	525	511	596
Net Flows/Gross National Income	4.3	4.0	2.9	1.5	1.7	1.5	1.5
Net Transfers/Gross National Income	3.6	3.2	1.9	0.4	0.8	0.7	0.7

Source: World Bank

**TABLE II****Pakistan's External Debt and Debt Service**US\$ Million

	<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>
Total External Debt	3,407	9,931	20,663	33,891	32,779	31,704	33,672	36,342
Total Debt Service Paid	259	869	1,902	2,935	2,854	2,996	2,850	3,028
External Debt/Gross National Income	33.6	38.8	49.5	54.3	45.9	45.7	48.7	45.4
Debt Service/Exports	33.6	16.2	21.3	28.9	25.2	24.6	17.9	16.0
Reserves/External Debt	5.7	15.8	5.1	6.2	6.4	13.3	26.1	32.5

Source: World Bank

# Pakistan's foreign and security policies after the 2013 general election: the judge, the politician and the military

FRÉDÉRIC GRARE

Thirteen years after he was deposed and sent into exile by a military coup, Nawaz Sharif has returned to power in Pakistan. On 11 May 2013, contrary to opinion poll predictions of a hung parliament, the former Prime Minister's Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N) fell just short of the 137 seats required to secure a simple majority. Despite the unprecedented level of violence during the campaign, voter turnout was over 60 per cent, a marked improvement on the 44 per cent of the 2008 elections. The PML-N formed the new central government and also the provincial government of Punjab. Control of Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan went respectively to the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and the Baloch and Pashtun nationalists.

The election inevitably raises questions about the capacity of the new government to address the most pressing issues the country is facing. Reforming the economy will undoubtedly be Sharif's priority, especially since he enjoys the backing of a substantial part of the business community. But curbing—and eventually eradicating—political violence will also be among the chief concerns of the Prime Minister and his team. Moreover, the foreign policy orientations of the PML-N government will be closely scrutinized by foreign analysts and policy-makers alike. The new government takes office in an atmosphere of deep-seated anti-Americanism within Pakistan in which the imperatives arising from the western withdrawal from Afghanistan may clash with the new government's willingness to redefine its contribution to the US fight against terrorism, especially with regard to the use of drones and reconciliation with the Pakistani Taliban (TTP).

All these issues will play out against the background of civil–military relations. Although Sharif has benefited from the army's patronage in the past, his relationship with the military has always been difficult. He is the only prime minister to have sacked two chiefs of army staff, Jehangir Karamat and Pervez Musharraf; the latter subsequently toppled him in a coup after Sharif drew the generals' ire for reaching out to India.

Sharif himself has played down the possibility of conflict with the military. During the election campaign the PML-N's expressed views on security and foreign policy dovetailed with those of the military, suggesting that open disagreement is unlikely, at least in the short term. Relations with India, though, could

prove the greatest challenge to the government's relations with the military. Sharif has expressed his willingness to normalize relations with New Delhi, and his past record leaves no doubt about his sincerity.<sup>1</sup> But it remains to be seen just how much *rapprochement* the generals will allow.

Sharif is not without assets in his relationship with the military. The election results guarantee him a stable and legitimate central government, making him much less vulnerable to political pressures than his predecessor. His close relationship with Saudi Arabia, where he lived in exile until 2007, is also likely to provide him with an alternative source of economic assistance and a powerful ally that the military cannot ignore. But the relationship will also suffer from a profound ambivalence. The army will need the new Prime Minister to restore the economy and Pakistan's standing in the world, but if he is successful in this one result may be the marginalization of the military as a political actor, an outcome the generals would clearly prefer to avoid. On a structural level, therefore, the relationship will remain unstable.

This article examines some of the structural constraints the new government will have to face in the months and years to come. Based on a careful examination of the real divergences and convergences of civilian and military actors on security and foreign policy, it analyses how civil–military relations are likely to influence the new government and the potential impact of the resulting policies on the military's overall power. It does so by looking at three critical factors: the military's diminishing capacity to influence politics as the political class comes to show greater unity and responsibility; the assertiveness of the judiciary; and the relationship between policy-making and public opinion in foreign affairs and security matters. It concludes that the establishment of civilian dominance over the military will be at best an incremental process, and that the security and foreign policies of the new government are likely to reflect that reality. Nevertheless, a strong popular mandate and the prevailing strategic circumstances also give Nawaz Sharif a unique and historic chance to consolidate democracy in Pakistan.

## The 2013 elections and the evolution of civil–military relations

Sharif has a long and complex relationship with Pakistan's military institutions. He owed his start in political life in the mid-1980s to the former military dictator Zia-ul-Haq, and in the 1990 election, which brought him to power for the first time, he received money from the military intelligence agencies.<sup>2</sup> During his second term in office, however, as noted above, Sharif sacked two chiefs of army staff, precipitating his downfall. In 1999, a military coup toppled Sharif, who was jailed and sentenced to death for the attempted murder of Musharraf,<sup>3</sup> but

<sup>1</sup> Nawaz Sharif signed the Lahore Declaration with his Indian counterpart, Atal Behari Vajpayee, in 1999.

<sup>2</sup> Two decades later, on 19 October 2012, the Supreme Court condemned the army, the powerful Inter-Services Intelligence agency (ISI) and the Military Intelligence directorate (MI) for rigging the 1990 elections and announced an inquiry into the civilian beneficiaries of military largess. The case is known as the Ashgar Khan case, from the name of the retired air force officer who filed the complaint. For the full text of the Pakistan Supreme Court verdict, see *Express Tribune*, 19 Oct. 2012.

<sup>3</sup> While Musharraf was on his way back from Sri Lanka, Sharif prohibited the plane bearing him from landing



was finally sent into exile in Saudi Arabia under strong pressure from the Saudi government. The new Prime Minister will therefore have to become reconciled with the military, and indeed began to set about this task in the last months of his electoral campaign, toning down his usual anti-military rhetoric and putting the blame for the 1999 coup and his exile on Pervez Musharraf specifically, rather than on the military as a whole.<sup>4</sup>

However, questions regarding the future role of the military go beyond Sharif's own relationship with the generals. Most analysts see the Pakistani army as the authoritative decision-maker in matters of foreign policy and defence, and therefore question the relevance of the election outcome as an indicator of Pakistan's future direction. Since 2008, the military and its chief, Pervez Kayani, have professed their loyalty to the democratic system and renounced their historical habit of political interference; but examination of events over the past five years calls into question such claims of detachment from politics. As C. Christine Fair asserts: 'Kayani has been very much a part of Pakistan's political machinery even while cultivating meticulously the impression at home and abroad that he is a professional officer waiting for the civilian leaders to lead.'<sup>5</sup> He has never ceased to manipulate the system, shrewdly using the judiciary as a 'sword of Damocles' against the Asif Ali Zardari government to render it more vulnerable to army pressures. Although he was unable to coerce the President into stepping down, Kayani nevertheless succeeded in pressuring Zardari to forgo the use of considerable parts of his powers. In the process, he paved the way to Sharif's victory over Zardari and facilitated the rise of new political forces such as Imran Khan's PTI.

The so-called 'Qadri episode' is seen by many, in Pakistan and beyond, as a good illustration of the way the military exerts pressure on political actors. In December 2012 Tahirul Qadri, a Canadian religious cleric of Pakistani origin, returned to Pakistan and initiated a political campaign calling for a democratic revolution through electoral reforms aimed at preventing corrupt candidates from participating in the forthcoming elections. Interestingly, Qadri also asked for the election date to be advanced and for the participation of both the military and the judiciary in the interim caretaker government.<sup>6</sup> With apparently unlimited access to resources of unknown origin, the cleric sustained his campaign with numerous television advertisements and extensive organized rallies.<sup>7</sup> He then launched a 'Long March' from Lahore to Islamabad and staged a sit-in in front of Parliament House, calling for the immediate dissolution of the parliament, the provincial assemblies and the Election Commission of Pakistan.<sup>8</sup>

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on Pakistani territory, although the aircraft supposedly had insufficient fuel to reach a foreign airport. The military then seized the Karachi airport's control tower to allow the plane to land. This was the beginning of the coup. "Plot to kill" coup leader', BBC News, 14 Oct. 1999.

<sup>4</sup> Declan Walsh, 'Sharif vs. army, round 3', *New York Times*, 14 May 2013.

<sup>5</sup> C. Christine Fair, 'Why the Pakistan army is here to stay: prospects for civilian governance', *International Affairs* 87: 3, May 2011, pp. 571–88 at p. 580.

<sup>6</sup> The interim government was set up to ensure the impartiality of the state during the elections.

<sup>7</sup> For his 23 December rally in Lahore alone, Qadri's organization hired around 50,000 buses. See 'The mystery of Tahirul Qadri', *The Economist*, 12 Jan. 2013.

<sup>8</sup> See Anita Joshua, 'Qadri's picketing ends with "Long March Declaration"', *The Hindu*, 18 Jan. 2013.

Supreme Court lawyers declared Qadri's demands unconstitutional, and none of his goals were realized. However, some observers interpreted Qadri's campaign as an attempt by the security establishment to create the conditions for the indefinite postponement of the elections. If one accepts the idea that Qadri's anti-corruption operation was supported by the military, his failure is also the failure of the military and an indicator that something is changing in Pakistan's troubled politics. The mainstream parties all understood that they could not confront Qadri's anti-corruption argument openly and allowed him to save face through a 'Long March declaration' signed by the Prime Minister, but made no concessions. Imran Khan, who is known to have strong connections with the security establishment, and who initially asked for Zardari's resignation, backed off. This seems to indicate that although it still has considerable leverage, the military can no longer manipulate the political system as easily as it used to.

The Qadri episode may have been an attempt at a bloodless coup. The Pakistani military has always shown a strong preference for technocratic governments that master the state machinery without interfering in the army's political designs. Some commentators have also seen in the cleric's campaign a more ambitious project to carry out 'a socio-political re-engineering and bring about a forced ascendancy of what the GHQ [General Headquarters] and its partners consider as [the] middle-class',<sup>9</sup> a tendency already observed under Musharraf, who consistently supported the Muttahida Quami Movement, a middle-class political party, in its effort to become a national organization. As the army's top brass see themselves as middle class, the promotion of new actors belonging to that category would help the military in its confrontation with the traditional power structures.

Ayesha Siddiqi also posits a parallel with the mid-1980s, when the government led by Muhammad Khan Junejo disagreed with the military's approach to negotiations on Afghanistan, and suggests that the Qadri affair could have been the military's attempt to prevent a similar loss of control over negotiations leading up to the NATO withdrawal from Afghanistan.<sup>10</sup>

Whatever the reasons behind the Qadri campaign, it demonstrates that the military is not voluntarily disengaging from politics. The security establishment may no longer take a direct role in partisan games, but it is still playing politics by proxy. This is in no way a new tactic. Unlike many authoritarian regimes, the Pakistani military has never sought the complete elimination of its political opposition, but rather the creation of a situation in which it can be the ultimate arbiter of all political disputes. It has constantly sought to reinforce its own political power through a deliberate and effective effort to weaken civilian governments by creating or reinforcing new actors and dividing existing political forces, thereby keeping control over key forces to enable itself to continue orchestrating policy.

Under the Zardari government, the military found its power reduced when, for the first time, the main political forces respected the rules of the system. The

<sup>9</sup> Ayesha Siddiqi, 'Civil-military relations and the Qadri drama', *Express Tribune*, 16 Jan. 2013.

<sup>10</sup> Siddiqi, 'Civil-military relations and the Qadri drama'.

PML-N played its role as an opposition party but did not go along with the military when the latter tried to evict Zardari from the presidency. This relative unity allowed for the adoption of the 18th amendment to the constitution, which removed the president's power to dissolve parliament unilaterally. Although the move resulted from a strange convergence of interests between Zardari's need to survive politically and Sharif's need to see the Legal Framework Order repealed to allow him a third term as prime minister, the amendment in practice limited the capacity of the military to manipulate the political system, forcing the generals to seek new tools for political engineering. The Qadri anti-corruption campaign was one such instrument; but, spectacular as it may have been, it ended in failure.

Sharif inherits, therefore, a much stronger political situation than his predecessor did. His political restraint over the past five years allowed the democratic system to consolidate, while the latter benefits in turn from the large majority the PML-N achieved in the elections. This majority, and the power-sharing in the provinces that the elections delivered, should now facilitate the respect of the constitution by all political forces. The military keeps some powerful leverage, but it will have to adjust to the new reality.

## **Enter the judiciary**

This new situation undoubtedly gives new salience to the increasingly assertive judiciary. Unlike the Qadri episode, which was consistent with the military's technique of creating or bolstering third parties to undermine mainstream actors, the emergence of the judiciary as a seemingly independent actor represents a new phenomenon with uncertain potential consequences for the new government. Given the record of the past five years, there are reasons to suspect that the Supreme Court may side with the military should the latter find itself in conflict with the new government.

Pakistani researcher Haris Gazdar observes that, over the past five years, 'acts of judiciary activism have not been randomly distributed. There is a pattern: media-fuelled populism, encroachment upon the authority of the parliament and executive, helping political allies, and keeping mum where core interests of the military might be involved.'<sup>11</sup> Indeed, the judiciary has been ambivalent at best in its relationship with the generals, often extending its role beyond purely legal concerns, and never implementing unfavourable decisions relating to the military. On the contrary, the judiciary often demonstrated a deliberate bias against the Zardari government, and in so doing it bolstered the military's relative power, whether intentionally or otherwise.

The tensions came into particularly sharp focus on 19 June 2012, when Yousaf Reza Gilani, Pakistan's prime minister, was convicted of contempt of court and disqualified from office. Gilani's deposition was merely collateral damage, the result of his having refused to write a letter to the Swiss authorities to reopen

<sup>11</sup> Haris Gazdar, 'Judicial activism vs democratic consolidation in Pakistan', *Economic and Political Weekly* 44: 32, 8–14 Aug. 2009.

money-laundering allegations against Zardari, the court's real target. The court then ordered the arrest of the PPP's proposed replacement for Gilani, Makhdoom Shahabuddin, for importing chemicals used in the production of narcotics when he was health minister.

Surprisingly, though, the court accepted the nomination of Raja Pervez Ashraf, despite his suspected involvement in corrupt electricity deals when he was energy minister.<sup>12</sup> Ashraf agreed to write to the Swiss authorities, who refused to reopen the case, citing Zardari's presidential immunity. The court should have—and probably had—anticipated this outcome. Even so, the pressure on the government was not over; while accepting Ashraf's nomination, the Supreme Court ordered his arrest on the alleged corruption charges,<sup>13</sup> though he was released within hours.

Despite the predictions of many observers, the government ultimately completed its term in office, but the new judicial activism has generated strong criticism in Pakistan. Not surprisingly, political elites (and especially the PPP) have expressed outrage at what they see as the court's interference in politics, but members of Pakistan's civil society have complained as well.<sup>14</sup> For example, the leaders of the Lawyers' Movement that protested at Musharraf's marginalization of the courts in 2007 are dissatisfied with the current judiciary, and the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) has accused the judiciary of 'exercising its power rather than its jurisdiction and encroaching on political space'.<sup>15</sup>

The judiciary's fight against corruption in Pakistani politics was in line with general public opinion and long overdue, but its conduct of it appeared biased. In pursuing its campaign the judiciary favoured its own institutional interests and the interests of the Chief Justice, never hesitating to compromise or look the other way whenever it felt those interests so dictated.

It would be wrong, however, to conclude that the judiciary has been exclusively an instrument of the military, or even a consistent ally of the generals. On at least three notable occasions it acted against the military. First, in October 2012 the Supreme Court condemned the intelligence agencies for their interference in the 1990 elections, when they diverted public money to support selected parties and politicians.<sup>16</sup> Second, the Supreme Court has also investigated the 'enforced disappearances' of Baloch activists detained secretly, sometimes for years, without trial.<sup>17</sup> (But it is worth noting that none of the court's orders on this issue were ever implemented: when the a UN Commission visited Pakistan to enquire about the enforced disappearances, Chief Justice Muhammad Chaudhry joined the MI, ISI and army chiefs in refusing to meet the delegation.) Third, the court has brought charges against Pervez Musharraf, who returned from self-imposed exile in London in early 2013 in the hope of contesting the elections. Musharraf is charged with having violated the constitution in 2007 when he imposed martial

<sup>12</sup> See 'Pakistan politics: Gilani goes', *The Economist*, 22 June 2012.

<sup>13</sup> Declan Walsh, 'Internal forces besiege Pakistan ahead of voting', *New York Times*, 15 Jan. 2013.

<sup>14</sup> Aftab Ahmed Abro, 'Is our judiciary independent?', *News International*, 15 Aug. 2012.

<sup>15</sup> Jamal Shahid, 'Judiciary accused of encroachment on political space', *Dawn*, 5 April 2013.

<sup>16</sup> See 'Asghar Khan case short order: full text', *Express Tribune*, 19 Oct. 2012.

<sup>17</sup> Anas Malik, 'Pakistan 2012: an assertive judiciary in a pre-election year', *Asian Survey* 53: 1, Feb. 2013, pp. 34–46.

law and suspended not only Chief Justice Muhammad Chaudhry but also 110 other judges, and with the murders of Benazir Bhutto and the Baloch leader Akbar Bugti.<sup>18</sup> Whether or not Musharraf comes to trial will constitute a test of the judiciary's resolve in fighting the military's constitutional overreaches.

So far, Sharif's PML-N has largely benefited from the new judicial activism, but that could change; many of the party's most prominent members are not beyond suspicion in matters of corruption. Sharif himself could face heightened scrutiny now that he has returned to power. The court might choose to revisit cases related to bank loans on which his family defaulted in the 1990s, or it could reopen the investigation into the funds he received from the military in the 1990 election.<sup>19</sup>

Chief Justice Chaudhry is due to retire in December 2013, and nobody knows what will become of the Supreme Court's activism after his departure. Moreover, the 19th amendment to the constitution, promulgated at the end of 2010, introduced a parliamentary role in top judicial appointments, in effect limiting the potential sources of conflict between the judiciary and the executive.<sup>20</sup> But the new Prime Minister remains vulnerable and the judiciary could once more function as a political weapon for opponents of the civilian government.

## **Is public opinion a constraint for Pakistan's foreign policy decision-makers?**

The real extent of the military's control over foreign policy and, by contrast, the degree of freedom of elected governments in conducting foreign policy cannot be determined without assessing the impact of public opinion on foreign policy matters. Foreign policy is rarely a decisive electoral factor anywhere in the world, and Pakistan is no exception, but some authors argue that 'the effect of public opinion on the country's politics, including its foreign policy, may be critical'.<sup>21</sup> It is worth examining the potential impact of public opinion on both civilian and military decision-makers.

### *Political parties and public opinion on foreign policy*

On the basis of the 2013 general election campaign rhetoric, US–Pakistani relations can be seen as a case in point for those who consider that public opinion is decisive in foreign policy matters. According to an opinion poll conducted by the Pew Research Center shortly before the elections, 72 per cent of the Pakistani population has a unfavourable opinion of the United States, with only 11 per cent holding a favourable opinion. Negative sentiment towards the United States

<sup>18</sup> Interestingly, Pervez Musharraf has not been charged for the 1999 coup, a blatant violation of the constitution, after which the current Chief Justice took an oath and declared the 2002 constitution legitimate under the 'rule of necessity'.

<sup>19</sup> Walsh, 'Sharif vs army, round 3'.

<sup>20</sup> See 'Text of 19th amendment bill', *News International*, 21 Dec. 2010.

<sup>21</sup> William B. Milam and Matthew J. Nelson, 'Pakistan's populist foreign policy', *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy* 55: 1, 2013, pp. 121–34.

has been on the rise since the US intervention in Afghanistan began, peaking at around 80 per cent in 2012. Moreover, a 64 per cent majority of Pakistanis consider the United States an enemy of Pakistan.<sup>22</sup> Pakistani political parties from across the ideological spectrum did not hesitate to surf this wave of anti-Americanism during the campaign, but in practice their policies could prove more nuanced. All but the most radical organizations have expressed a desire for improved relations with the United States. Even though Pakistani public opinion about America has always been a strange combination of fascination and rejection and is therefore more complex than it looks, the attitude of the political parties indicates a significant distance from it.

Extremist organizations have little support among Pakistanis. Pakistanis generally agree that militant groups, especially those that target the Pakistani state instead of foreign powers, are a danger to their country.<sup>23</sup> However, despite broad agreement on the dangers posed by most militant groups, Pakistanis are divided over how best to fight extremism. In the Federally Administered Tribal Areas and in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 35 per cent are in favour of combating militancy by force of arms, while 29 per cent oppose this policy.<sup>24</sup> Campaign rhetoric does not coincide entirely with public opinion on this issue. The PML-N and the PTI support the creation of a dialogue with some extremist groups, a stance that does not have clear popular support.

Finally, public opinion and the political parties' positions are obviously out of sync on India. Over half of Pakistanis (52 per cent) consider India a serious threat to their country, with 38 per cent citing it as the greatest threat.<sup>25</sup> But India as a theme was largely absent from the campaign, and only radical religious organizations took an antagonistic stance towards New Delhi. When asked about relations with India, most political leaders, including Sharif and Khan, expressed their desire for improvement. All seek an expanded dialogue with New Delhi, further indicating that the correlation between public opinion and policy is in no way exact.

### *The military and public opinion on foreign policy issues*

Convergence between public opinion and military policy is more difficult to demonstrate and usually evident only in hindsight.

Some analysts present the army position on foreign policy as essentially reactive to Pakistani public opinion. Former US ambassador to Pakistan William Milam and Matthew J. Nelson argue, for example, that 'there have been attempts by the army, mainly through the ISI, to influence public opinion, but for the most part,

<sup>22</sup> Pew Research Center, 'On eve of elections, a dismal public mood in Pakistan', Pew Global Attitudes Project Pakistan Report, 7 May 2013, p. 12.

<sup>23</sup> Half (49 per cent) of Pakistanis consider the Taliban a serious threat to their country; only 11 per cent express a favourable opinion of the Taliban and 13 per cent of Al-Qaeda. Opinions are more mixed regarding the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), which 24 per cent of Pakistanis support. The Haqqani network receives a low 8 per cent. Pew Research Center, 'On eve of elections', p. 9.

<sup>24</sup> Pew Research Center, 'On eve of elections', p. 10.

<sup>25</sup> Pew Research Center, 'On eve of elections', p. 10.

the ISI can only shore up existing public beliefs by suppressing countervailing beliefs'.<sup>26</sup> The argument is debatable. For instance, the 'Pakistan studies' portion of Pakistani school curricula entertains only a casual relationship with historical reality, and is clearly an attempt to frame in negative terms the way in which young Pakistanis think about India. Similarly, the military has shown considerable skill in using the media to influence the way people think about current affairs.

Milam and Nelson's argument contains both an element of truth and an inherent contradiction. No Pakistani leader, civilian or military, can afford to fall foul of popular nationalism. But popular nationalism can evolve, and has done so. 'Suppressing countervailing beliefs' cannot be viewed in purely negative terms—it can also give rise to new sentiments, deliberately or otherwise. Such suppression has been historically a powerful means of influencing public opinion at home and abroad, with deep and lasting influence. It may not have created public beliefs independently, but it undoubtedly created the conditions which are at the origin of current domestic and foreign perceptions of Pakistan, including its own identity crisis. The roots of this crisis, and the military actions that helped foment it, date back at least to the mid-1970s.

A diverse and complex society, Pakistan has hosted a myriad political opinions and attitudes. Like every society, it generates its own extremism; and, like other Muslim countries with important Shi'i minorities, it had to confront the tensions generated by the Islamic revolution in Iran. The Zia-ul-Haq regime (1978–1988) marked a qualitative change in the evolution of Pakistan in which a policy of systematic Islamization brought about enduring change in the nature of civil–military relations. The dictator began to support proxy militant groups in Afghanistan and against India, establishing a trend that the military establishment continued under successive regimes. Domestically, this helped the military cast itself as a guarantor of political stability. Among westerners, it allowed the military to portray itself as a last rampart against Islamic extremism. Radical organizations thus not only helped to suppress countervailing beliefs: they became, at times, the only voice to be heard in the public space. Other voices were allowed only to the extent that they followed the line of the military.

In recent years, after the Taliban's defeat in Afghanistan, the military has used this same strategy to play a dual game, offering Taliban fighters sanctuary in Pakistan and supporting their operations in Afghanistan. Domestically, civil–military relations came to be increasingly mediated by religious extremist groups, which over the years distanced themselves from their military sponsors. The military more or less controlled the situation until the Red Mosque incident in July 2007, when the army had to intervene against Taliban extremists who had gone to ground in an Islamabad mosque. After the confrontation, which left scores of extremists killed or captured, Islamist groups turned against the military, precipitating the crisis the country is currently experiencing. These groups are trying to limit freedom of expression in Pakistan by targeting their opponents, especially the secular parties that bore the brunt of political violence

<sup>26</sup> Milam and Nelson, 'Pakistan's populist foreign policy', p. 128.

during the election campaign, while the army and a substantial part of the political class remain ambivalent. This, in turn, continues to generate an image of Pakistan abroad as an Islamist country and influences subsequent policies.

Given these conditions, it is difficult to believe that the military and its intelligence agencies have not, at the very least, helped frame the political debate and contributed to the current political reality in Pakistan.<sup>27</sup> Islamization policies and the use of Islamist proxies, both internally and externally, may have shored up existing beliefs, but they have also changed popular perceptions of the world within Pakistan. According to a survey conducted by the International Republican Institute (IRI) after the terrorist attacks of 26 November 2008, for instance, 62 per cent of Pakistanis believed that either India or the United States was responsible.<sup>28</sup>

It was the military's idea all along to substitute a broad Islamic nationalism for any sort of subnationalism, ethnic or tribal, but the generals were never able to give their preferred form a defined and positive content. This content emerged by default, with opposition to India and radical ideologies playing a larger role than the limited constituencies of radical Islamist organizations should have permitted. As a matter of fact, public opinion can be influenced and changed. In 2004, for example, part of the public became much more open to improving relations with India when Musharraf decided to begin a process of normalization. In 2013 the Kashmir issue, a perennial theme in Pakistan's foreign policy and, according to Musharraf, one of Pakistan's two core national interests, was totally absent from the campaign.

But even where fundamental elements of Pakistani national interest are concerned, public opinion never dictates the instruments of policy implementation. Political actors retain the ability to implement policies—be they confrontational or cooperative—as they see fit. It is here, more than in perceptions of threat, that the potential for conflict between the new government and the military lies. But whatever the evolution of the relationship between the new government and the military on foreign policy matters, Pakistan's public opinion will have very little to do with it.

<sup>27</sup> The new Prime Minister, who has repeatedly (and rightly) been accused of having been soft on militancy during the campaign, was once at the forefront of the fight against sectarianism in Punjab and survived an attack on his life for that reason.

<sup>28</sup> IRI Index, *Pakistan public opinion survey*, 7–30 March 2009, Washington DC, p. 27. Even educated Pakistanis suggested that the attacks were 'a Hindu–Zionist conspiracy backed by the United States', a conspiracy theory heard by the author on several occasions. The Islamization policy has also contributed largely to perceptions of Pakistan abroad. For a long time it legitimized foreign support to the military before the latter's duplicity in the war in Afghanistan was finally recognized. The notion that the Pakistani army may be a bulwark against extremism has not totally disappeared but has lost much of its strength, and the army is now regarded with much greater suspicion. Thus the argument which in the past generated support for Pakistan now contributes to its isolation.



## **Whither Pakistan's foreign policy?**

### *The PML-N's approach to radical Islam and political violence*

Reducing political violence will be one of the major concerns of the new government. When it took power in 2008, the PPP promised to rid Pakistan of violence, bigotry and terror. Five years later, extremist organizations are stronger than ever, targeting both religious minorities and the state apparatus, though this resurgence of activity can be blamed in part on the siege and killing of militants at the Red Mosque under Musharraf. Although the figures vary slightly among sources, almost 48,000 people have been killed in Pakistan since 2003.<sup>29</sup> Interestingly, despite General Kayani's pledge to eradicate extremism in a speech in August 2012, the military has proved unable to deliver on the issue either.

The electoral campaign of 2013 itself suggests the kinds of constraint that the new government will face in crafting its foreign policy. Few campaigns in Pakistan's history have been as violent as the most recent one. According to the Islamabad-based Center for Research and Security Studies, some 2,674 people were killed in 1,108 incidents between January and April 2013, with an unusual escalation of attacks against political parties and their candidates in April.<sup>30</sup> In this wave of violence many Hazara Shi'is were killed, but secular parties, especially those allied with the Zardari government and the PPP, were the targets of choice of the Pakistani Taliban, which sought to prevent them from running an effective campaign and to create a more favourable electoral landscape for the conservative parties. Neither Sharif's PML-N nor Imran Khan's PTI was threatened.<sup>31</sup>

But the complexity of the fight against radical extremist groups goes beyond the relations of some mainstream parties with the TTP. While the military and their intelligence agencies have come under scrutiny, there have also been reports of the PML-N working out deals with the Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat (ASWJ), the new name of the Sepah e Sahaba Pakistan (SSP), a banned sectarian grouping with a particularly lethal armed wing, the Lashkar e Jangvi (LeJ).<sup>32</sup> This approach, the logic goes, would allow the ASWJ a few seats in Saraiki Punjab in exchange for its support for the PML-N in other constituencies of Saraiki and Central Punjab.<sup>33</sup> Militant groups have indeed become kingmakers in Punjab. Even if their candidates are not in a position to win seats for themselves in the national and provincial assemblies, their popular support is sufficiently strong to swing the vote where contests are close. The overwhelming victory of the PML-N diminishes their practical power in the short term. But entering mainstream politics also gives

<sup>29</sup> At the time of writing, 12 May 2013.

<sup>30</sup> In Sindh alone, 701 people were killed; 418 died in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and 403 in Balochistan, though the violence subsided somewhat in the FATA during the same period. See 'Pakistan Conflict Tracker report (January–April 2013)', Center for Research and Security Studies (CRSS), Islamabad, 3 May 2013.

<sup>31</sup> The election authorities themselves have been ambiguous about the role of radical organizations in the elections, allowing candidates of sectarian groups to contest seats while disqualifying candidates with forged university degrees or having a supposedly anti-Pakistan 'ideology'. See Declan Walsh, 'Extremists pursue mainstream in Pakistan election', *New York Times*, 5 May 2013.

<sup>32</sup> Ayesha Siddiqa, 'Contextualizing militancy in Punjab', *Express Tribune*, 27 Feb. 2013.

<sup>33</sup> Ayesha Siddiqa, *The new frontiers: militancy and radicalism in Punjab*, Centre for International Strategic Analysis (SISA) Report no. 2, 4 Feb. 2013, p. 31.

them enhanced legitimacy and new means of action which will help them extend their influence over time.

According to Ayesha Siddiqi, this situation is the result of a process over the past decade during which a relatively large number of militant organizations gradually coalesced into a few larger ones. Although officially banned, these organizations were allowed by the security establishment to go underground and spread into society. According to Siddiqi, the intelligence agencies are now trying to mainstream these groups to draw them away from violence. Civilian officials have objected to this course of action, but nonetheless must account for it in their own political calculations.<sup>34</sup> The deals made by the PML-N are likely only to facilitate this mainstreaming process.

This would not necessarily have been a negative phenomenon, had the timing been different. Mainstreaming extremist movements has sometimes proved to be an effective way of diverting them from violence. This can be successful, however, only when the movements concerned are already in decline. This is not the case in today's Pakistan, where extremist violence—and especially sectarian violence—is on the rise all over the country.

Moreover, Sharif has refused to condemn the Pakistani Taliban and, although he is more careful than Imran Khan, has suggested that options other than military action must be explored to deal with them.<sup>35</sup> By avoiding criticism of the TTP, the PML-N has largely escaped the violence that afflicted its mainstream political opponents, but the bloodshed inflicted by the TTP has in no way diminished. The combined impact of violence and political activism has been to strengthen the political standing of the extremists, who now occupy a much larger area of public space.

Irrespective of the actual intentions of the government in foreign policy matters, the PML-N's relations with some extremist groups are likely to constrain it on two levels. On some key issues, it will be difficult to completely ignore the militants' demands, at least when they resonate with general public opinion. Sharif had to take such opinions into account even during the campaign, when he said that Pakistan 'should reconsider its support for the US war on Islamist militancy and suggested he was in favour of negotiations with the Taliban', a comment likely to anger Washington,<sup>36</sup> though Sharif has never condemned drone strikes in terms as harsh as those used by other politicians, such as Imran Khan. Moreover, according to Ayesha Siddiqi, these groups were and are still supported by Pakistan's intelligence agencies, giving the military an additional source of leverage over the new government. The question therefore remains open how heavily the relative proximity of the new Pakistani Prime Minister to radical organizations, even if purely instrumental, is likely to weigh on his foreign policy.

The relationship between the government and the TTP could in fact moderate, if not minimize, the possibility of a dialogue with the extremist organization

<sup>34</sup> Siddiqi, 'Contextualizing militancy in Punjab'.

<sup>35</sup> *Jerusalem Post*, 5 May 2013.

<sup>36</sup> *Jerusalem Post*, 5 May 2013.

damaging US–Pakistani relations. On the domestic level, it may prove difficult to translate electoral tactics into a peace deal with the TTP. Gone is the time when Pakistan's security establishment controlled most Islamist groups within its borders. According to the French researcher Mariam Abou Zahab, the TTP has no intention of negotiating with the regime.<sup>37</sup> In this context, appeasing the TTP could be an extremely risky strategy that would weaken state control over substantial parts of Pakistan's territory in the volatile provinces adjacent to Afghanistan. The new government may be faced with no option other than fighting the TTP or trying to accommodate it. The latter choice would be equivalent to condoning it—and with it, all radical anti-state organizations, with potentially disastrous long-term consequences.

The change of government is therefore unlikely to produce a sudden, dramatic improvement in the security situation of the country. As if to underline the previous government's lack of a coherent anti-terror strategy, the PML-N announced shortly after the elections that a national policy on terrorism would be made and implemented by the government after consultations with all political parties.<sup>38</sup> On the same day, Sharif reiterated his determination not to let Pakistani soil be used for terrorist attacks against any country in the world,<sup>39</sup> a message clearly directed to India. Like its predecessor, however, the new government will be confronted with the inherent contradiction of Pakistan's relations with the jihadists: the tolerance, if not active promotion, of pro-state terrorist actors in the face of the difficult fight against anti-state extremist organizations at a time when the lines between the two categories are increasingly blurred.

### *What foreign policy for the new government?*

Given the military's remaining influence, the wild card of judicial assertiveness and the complexities of extremist violence in Pakistan, the diplomatic freedom of the civilian government will inevitably be limited. The civilian role in foreign policy is not absent, but its scope should be carefully defined.

A number of high-ranking civil servants and party officials, as well as a substantial part of the population, share the military's threat perceptions and broad foreign policy objectives. School curricula and manipulation of the media, as discussed above, help to create this minimal consensus on security and foreign policy issues.

Real differences exist, however, in views on the conduct of foreign policy. Mainstream parties have in the past demonstrated a greater tendency than military government to try to resolve issues peacefully, and it is reasonable to expect that the new government will try to act accordingly. Sharif, who signed the Lahore Declaration on peaceful coexistence and nuclear disarmament with his Indian counterpart Atal Behari Vajpayee in 1999, has already stated that he intends to resume relations with India where he left off in 1999. In this endeavour he is

<sup>37</sup> *Le Monde*, 13 May 2013.

<sup>38</sup> *Deccan Herald*, 14 May 2013.

<sup>39</sup> Wang Zhaokun, 'Pakistan to fine tune anti-terror strategy', *Global Times*, 14 May 2013.

likely to have the support of part of the business community which, especially in Punjab, has been pushing for closer trade relations with India. But making peace with India remains a dividing line between civilians and the military. Facing threats from internal sources and along the border with Afghanistan, the military needs to improve relations with India; it remains to be seen, however, how far the generals will allow political overtures to be pursued.

The new government also inherits a diplomatic situation that limits its own margin for manoeuvre but also protects it. Consistent with his anti-American rhetoric during the campaign, Sharif has promised to recalibrate Pakistan's counterterrorism cooperation with the United States,<sup>40</sup> and may be tempted to reopen the drone question, although he has been less vocal on the issue than his PTI counterpart. It remains to be seen how the victory of the PTI in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa will play out in relations between Pakistan's central government and the TPP and in the overall trajectory of the Afghan conflict.

But the issues which poisoned US–Pakistani relations in 2011 (in particular the Salala incident, in which US troops inadvertently killed 24 Pakistani soldiers, resulting in the closure of Pakistan's overland supply routes to US troops in Afghanistan for several months) have now been addressed and are unlikely to be reopened. The US–Pakistani agenda over the next two years will be dictated by the constraints generated by the US withdrawal from Afghanistan and, unless forced by some unforeseen crisis, neither the Pakistani military, the Sharif government nor the United States will allow the process to be derailed.

Relations with Afghanistan itself may prove more difficult, as demonstrated by the various border incidents, including exchanges of artillery fire, during the past few months. Moreover, the Pakistani military, whose policy in Afghanistan is still driven essentially by concerns about Indian ties with Kabul, is unlikely to let any civilian government interfere in its own operations, overt or covert, in the country. It is also unclear whether the new government fundamentally disagrees with the military on the type of policy that should be pursued in Afghanistan.

But Afghanistan also creates an indirect opportunity for the new government to assert itself in international affairs. Constant interference in its neighbours' affairs over the past three and a half decades through the use of Islamist proxies has generated suspicion of Pakistan among all of Afghanistan's neighbours, as well as among the wider international community. Islamabad officially maintains relatively good relations with most of the countries concerned, but its diplomatic room for manoeuvre is limited. Pakistan is in effect isolated (although this isolation is not absolute), while its economy is deteriorating. This situation is likely to persist, and Pakistan will not be able to reverse the trend unless it rebuilds meaningful relations with its neighbours. This necessity creates a diplomatic space for the new government.

Sharif's predecessor benefited from a similar situation in 2011, when the prospect of a 'divorce' from the United States and a growing economic crisis allowed President Zardari to distance himself from the military and initiate a process of

<sup>40</sup> Richard Leiby, 'Has Pakistan's Nawaz Sharif changed his stripes?', *Washington Post*, 9 May 2013.

*rapprochement* with India.<sup>41</sup> The policy shift would have probably been impossible without at least tacit military acceptance, but it was nevertheless a civilian initiative. A similar situation prevails today and, although it remains the dominant power in foreign policy, the military will need the civilian power to break the vicious circle of economic regression and international isolation in which they have locked up the country.

Sharif seems to have understood the opportunity and sent the right message to India. On 6 May 2013, five days before the elections, in an interview with Indian journalist Karan Thapar, he professed his goodwill towards India. He indicated his willingness to resolve all pending issues, including Kashmir, peacefully; not to let Pakistani soil be used by extremist organizations to attack India; to forbid all anti-India speeches, 'including by Hafez Saeed'; and to launch investigations into responsibility for the Kargil war and for the 2008 Mumbai terrorist attacks. In making these assertions, Sharif was undoubtedly trying to reassure India and international public opinion at large; it remains to be seen, however, whether he will have the capacity to carve out sufficient political space to implement this agenda. President Zardari started his term with similarly good intentions, but was soon prevented from translating them into concrete action by the balance of power within the country.

The 1999 military coup against Nawaz Sharif was prompted by differences over policies *vis-à-vis* India. The military was already preparing for the Kargil incursion when the Prime Minister was signing the Lahore Declaration. The situation might be different this time, because the military needs some degree of *rapprochement* with India and because every move Pakistan makes is now watched internationally with suspicion. Nawaz Sharif will probably also be more careful.

Relations with the ASWJ will be an additional constraint and will force the new Prime Minister to tread a fine line on terrorism-related questions with clear implications for relations with India and Pakistan's other neighbours. The two factors—*rapprochement* with India and the relationship with extremist groups—are not of equal importance, but do in part condition each other. Better relations with India are an economic imperative, but it would not take much to rekindle the suspicion between the two countries should the military decide that *rapprochement* has gone too far. Religious parties and extremist organizations could again be an effective tool in exerting pressure on the government.

Even a limited success in controlling terrorism would go a long way towards redefining regional relations. It would help Pakistan break out of its current isolation and consolidate the new government, as well as, by extension, the democratic Pakistani political system.

<sup>41</sup> He actually initiated the policy in 2008 but was prevented from implementing it by the consequences of the 26 November 2008 terrorist attack in Mumbai.



**INSTITUTIONS, ECONOMIC STRUCTURE  
AND POVERTY**

**By**

**Akmal Hussain**

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# **INSTITUTIONS, ECONOMIC STRUCTURE AND POVERTY**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Pakistan's economy since the early 1990s has had a protracted period of slow GDP growth, acute fiscal pressures and increasing poverty. This paper examines these features through a historical analysis of the relationship between the processes of institutional decay, deterioration in the structure of the economy, and the process of poverty. These processes accelerated during the 1990s and began to be manifested in terms of acute poverty, sharp slow down in the GDP growth, unsustainable fiscal deficits and intense pressures on governance. The analysis in this paper therefore focuses on the pattern of growth, fiscal deficits and poverty creation in the context of the politics and the economic policy of various regimes in the period 1958 to 1999<sup>1</sup>.

### **I. THE AYUB REGIME: WEAKENING INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE, ECONOMIC GROWTH AND SOCIAL CONFLICT (1958-69)**

The Constituent Assembly in 1954 made the first attempt to give a constitution to the nation. The failure of this attempt signifies the conflict between the greed for personal power of individual leaders and the imperatives of strengthening institutions: a conflict of interest that was to underlie the process of institutional decay in the next five decades. On October 28, 1954, the Constituent Assembly was scheduled to formally vote on the published draft of Pakistan's first constitution, a draft that had been approved in the previous session of the Constituent Assembly. On this fateful day Governor General Ghulam Mohammad who felt that the draft constitution did not suit his power interests, ordered the police to bar members of the Constituent Assembly from entering

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<sup>1</sup> Some of the research for this paper was used by the author in Chapter 2 of his work embodied in the Pakistan National Human Development Report. Sub sections I.2, II.2, III.2 and IV.3 in chapter 2 of the Report are also included in this paper. See, UNDP, Pakistan National Human Development Report 2003, Poverty Growth and Governance, UNDP, Islamabad, Oxford University Press, Karachi, 2003.



their meeting room in Karachi<sup>2</sup>. The passage of the first constitution was thus aborted. Subsequently a weakened form of parliamentary democracy was restructured from the remnants of the first Constituent Assembly until it was terminated by Ayub Khan's coup d'etat in 1958. The significance of this conflict between individuals and institutions was to resonate through Pakistan's subsequent history. It was summed up in a prescient remark by a social scientist: "Once the first constitution is destroyed, it is doubtful that any succeeding one, no matter how successfully drafted will ever be truly accepted. A tradition which makes it possible for new leaders to replace old documents with others which appear preferable to them not only denies constitutionalism but makes reference to it little more than a sham"<sup>3</sup>.

The military coup d'etat which brought General Ayub Khan into power established the dominance of the military and bureaucracy in Pakistan's power structure. The associated political system concentrated power in the person of Ayub Khan and gave pre eminence in the decision making process to certain sections of the elite in the military bureaucratic oligarchy. Through a series of political measures dissent in the civil society was suppressed and the independence of the judiciary undermined. The economic strategy undertaken by this government, while it accelerated GDP growth, sharply accentuated inter personal and inter regional economic inequalities. Thus the foundations were laid for the rise of provincial and class tensions which were to erupt in a conflict along the rich/poor divide in West Pakistan and a war of independence in East Pakistan. These conflicts led to the downfall of the government and the emergence of independent Bangladesh. In this section, we will briefly examine the political and economic policies of the government that eroded Pakistan's nascent democratic institutions and created explosive regional and class tensions by marginalizing the majority of the population from the political and economic processes. We will indicate how an economic structure emerged in this period

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<sup>2</sup> Allen Mc Grath: The Destruction of Pakistan's Democracy, OUP, Karachi 1996, Page X.

<sup>3</sup> Lawrence Ziring: The Enigma of Political, Development, Westview Press, Boulder, 1980, Page 220. Cited in Allen, Mc Grath: The Destruction of Pakistan's Democracy, Op.cit.

that was to lock Pakistan's economy into a narrow and inefficient industrial base, slow export growth and increasing loan dependence in the next four decades.

### **I.1. Political Repression and Popular Revolt**

The fatal flaw of the political system established in the period 1958-69, was that while its support was drawn from a relatively narrow social stratum through state patronage, it did not have an institutional mechanism for accommodating opposition<sup>4</sup>. Power was concentrated in the hands of Ayub Khan who relied on the bureaucracy for running both economic *and* political affairs<sup>5</sup>. The central and provincial legislatures were severely constrained by the narrow scope for parliamentary legislation. The President could also veto any legislation without the legislatures having the power to “over-ride”<sup>6</sup> his veto.

The system of “Basic Democracy” consisted of elected union councilors (called “Basic Democrats”) from 80,000 constituencies who formed a safe electoral college for electing the President, and were provided access over state resources. The candidates for election to the position of “basic democrats” (B.Ds.) were selected by the bureaucracy which also disbursed state resources to elected B.Ds. for a variety of social and economic functions at the local level. Thus, “Basic Democrats” provided the bureaucracy an institutional mechanism for a patron-client relationship with sections of the rural elite.

While the legislatures were subject to Presidential veto, dissent from individuals and institutions in civil society was suppressed by a series of administrative measures. For example in April 1959 a Martial Law Ordinance was promulgated under which the government could take over any newspaper which in the “opinion of the government” contained material that threatened national security. The government then proceeded to take over the Pakistan Times and Imroze which were two of the most influential English and Urdu daily newspapers respectively. Subsequently control over the press was

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<sup>4</sup> See Omar Noman: *The Political Economy of Pakistan, 1947-85*, Routledge Kegan and Paul, London 1988, Page 28.

<sup>5</sup> See S.J. Burki: *Pakistan: Fifty Years of Nationhood*, Vanguard Books, Lahore 1999, Page 32.

<sup>6</sup> See S.J. Burki *op.cit.* Page 32

institutionalized through the establishment of an official body called the National Press Trust. Individuals in academic institutions were prevented from publishing or even verbally expressing dissenting opinions in public. The judiciary which was the last remaining institution, which could provide a check over governmental authority, was also brought under administrative control. This was done by means of the “Law Reforms” which gave the government control over judicial appointments, and subjected judges to political scrutiny<sup>7</sup>.

In a culturally diverse society when the people of Bengal, Sindh and Baluchistan were not significantly represented within state institutions, and when political and cultural expression was suppressed, the tendency for the assertion of linguistic or ethnic identities was intensified. This was reinforced by the growing regional economic inequalities so that by the late 1960s political pressures on the state began to explode: in East Pakistan in the form of the assertion of Bengali nationalism and in West Pakistan in the form of mass street demonstrations against the government.

## **I.2 Economic Growth, Inequality and the Roots of Financial Dependence**

Following the Korean boom in 1953, the government introduced a policy framework for inducing the large profits of traders in jute and raw cotton to flow into the manufacturing sector. This was done through a highly regulated policy framework for import substitution industrialization in the consumer goods sector. The policy combined tariff protection for manufacturers of consumer goods together with direct import controls on competing imports. It has been estimated that the average rate of effective protection was as high as 271% in 1963-64, and fell to 125% in 1968-69.<sup>8</sup> This enabled the emerging industrial elite to make large profits from the domestic market without the competitive pressure to achieve higher levels of efficiency and an export capability.

During the 1960s import substitution industrial growth in the consumer goods sector, was more systematically encouraged by the government. This was

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<sup>7</sup> All Pakistan Legal Decisions (PLD) 1963, XV, Cited in Omar Noman op.cit. Page 29.

<sup>8</sup> Dr. A.R. Kemal: Patterns of Growth in Pakistan’s Industrial Sector, in Shahruckh Rafi Khan (ed.): Fifty Years of Pakistan’s Economy, O.U.P., Karachi, Page 165.

done by means of high protection rates to domestic manufacturers of consumer goods, cheap credit, and direct import controls on competing imports. At the same time, there was removal of import controls (established earlier in the 1955) on industrial raw materials and machinery. In addition to various forms of protection, new incentives were offered for exports. These included the Bonus Voucher Scheme, tax rebates, tax exemptions and accelerated depreciation allowances to increase post tax profits.

The Bonus Voucher Scheme enabled exports of certain manufactured goods to receive in addition to the rupee revenue of their exports, bonus vouchers equivalent to a specified percentage of the foreign exchange earned. The vouchers could be sold in the market (to potential importers) for a price usually 150 to 180 percent above the face value. Thus the exporter not only earned the rupee revenues from exports but also an additional premium through sale of the bonus vouchers.

The Bonus Voucher Scheme essentially constituted a mechanism for enabling domestic manufacturers to earn large rupee profits on exports which brought no gain to the economy in terms of foreign exchange. It has been estimated<sup>9</sup> that during the 1960s, Pakistan's main industries (when input costs and output values are both measured in dollar terms) were producing negative value added.

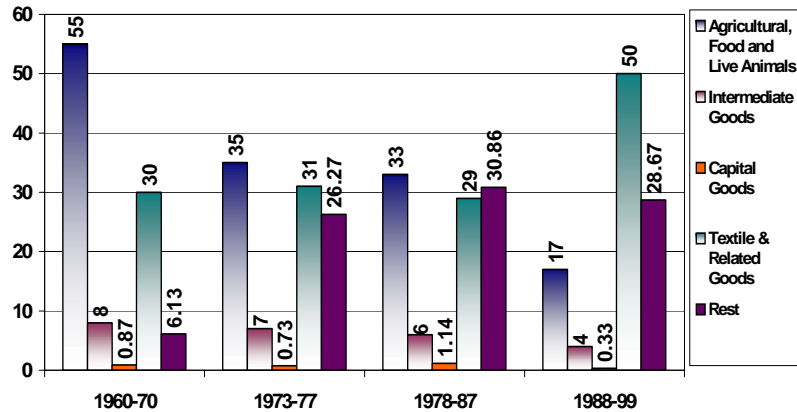
It has been argued that the phenomenon of negative value added in industry was an important reason why during the 1960s, inspite of import substitution and large export volumes, foreign exchange shortages persisted<sup>10</sup>. This set the "mould" for Pakistan's narrow export base (concentration on low value added end of textiles) and the debt problem, that remains till to-day. For example (see chart 1), the share of the traditional textile industry in total exports far from falling, in fact increased from 30% in the decade of the 1960s to 50% in the decade of the 1990s.

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<sup>9</sup> Soligo, and J.J. Stern, Tariff Protection, imports substitution and investment efficiency, The Pakistan Development, 1965, Pages 249-70.

<sup>10</sup> Sikander Rahim: Myths of Economic Development, Lahore School of Economics, Occasional Paper No.10, February 2001.

**Chart 1**  
**Period Averages of Exports of Various Commodity Groups**  
**as a % of Total Exports of Pakistan**



In a broader perspective, it can be argued that the government through a range of protection measures and concessions in the 1960's, enabled the emerging industrial elite to make large rupee profits from domestic and export sales, without the market pressures to diversify into high value added industries or to achieve international competitiveness. Thus, the experience of the 1960s is illustrative of the nature of both government and the economic elite. In the pursuit of securing its power base, the government by means of subsidies, manipulation of tariffs and the exchange rate mechanism, transferred rents to the industrial elite. This reinforced the tradition bound propensity of the economic elite for risk aversion, lack of innovative dynamism and dependence on governmental patronage.

The economic policies and processes during the 1960s, illustrate the sociological propensity of the ruling elite to seek rents from government which in turn reinforced its power through such patronage. These sociological propensities are rooted in the region's history stretching back to the eighteenth century<sup>11</sup>. These tendencies persisted in varying degrees for the next four decades. Yet they were at an economic cost that became a growing burden on an increasingly fragile economy: It has been estimated for example that even in 1990-91 by which time the rates of effective protection had been considerably reduced, the

<sup>11</sup> See: Government Patronage and Rent Seeking Elites: A Longer Historical View: Pakistan NHDR, UNDP, Oxford University Press, Karachi Pages 48-49.

increase in the share of manufacturing attributable to protection amounted to 5% of GNP.

As we have seen, the government during the 1960s adopted a deliberate policy of concentrating national income in the hands of the upper income groups.<sup>12</sup> The economic basis of this policy was the assumption that the rich save a larger proportion of their income and hence a higher national savings rate could be achieved with an unequal distribution of income (the target savings rate being 25% of GDP). In practice while the policy of distributing incomes in favour of the economic elite succeeded, the assumption that it would raise domestic savings over time failed to materialize. It has been estimated that 15% of the resources annually generated in the rural sector were transferred to the urban industrialists and 63 to 85 percent of these transferred resources went into increased urban consumption.<sup>13</sup> Far from raising the domestic savings rate to 25%, the actual savings rate never rose above 12%<sup>14</sup>.

The failure of the economic elite to save out of their increased income resulted during the 1960s, in a sharp increase in the requirement of foreign aid. According to official figures, gross foreign aid inflows increased from US \$ 373 million in 1950-55 to US \$ 2,701 million in 1965-70. The rapid increase in foreign aid was accompanied by a change in its composition from grants to higher interest loans<sup>15</sup>. Consequently the debt servicing burden rose dramatically. Debt servicing as a percentage of foreign exchange earnings was 4.2% in 1960-61 and increased to 34.5% by 1971-72. The magnitude of this figure did not fall for the next three decades and by the year 2000, it was even higher at 40%.

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<sup>12</sup> "It is clear that the distribution of national production should be such as to favour the savings sectors", Government of Pakistan, Planning Commission, The Third Five Year Plan, 1965-70, Karachi, Page 33.

<sup>13</sup> K. Griffin: Financing Development Plans in Pakistan, in K. Griffin and A.R. Khan, Growth and Inequality in Pakistan, Macmillan, London Page 41-42.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. Page 133.

<sup>15</sup> For example, during 1950-55 grant and grant type assistance constituted 73% of total foreign aid. By 1965-70 this type of assistance had declined to only 9% of total foreign aid. See: Economic Survey, Government of Pakistan, Finance Division, Islamabad, 1974, Page 133.

Given the policy of re-distributing incomes in favour of the rich, it is not surprising that by the end of the 1960s a small group of families with interlocking directorates dominated industry, banking and insurance in Pakistan. In terms of value added 46% of the value added in the large scale manufacturing sector originated in firms controlled by only 43 families.

In banking, the degree of concentration was even greater than industry. For example, seven family banks constituted 91.6 percent of private domestic deposits and 84.4 percent of earning assets. Furthermore, State Bank compilation of balance sheets of listed companies indicates that the family banks tended to provide loans to industrial companies controlled by the same families.<sup>16</sup> The insurance industry, although smaller in size than banking, also had a high degree of concentration of ownership. The forty-three industrial families controlling 75.6 percent of the assets of Pakistani insurance companies tended to favour industrial companies owned by the same group.<sup>17</sup>

The major industrial families and entrepreneurs were a fairly closely-knit group. Not only did many of them have caste and kinship relations, but members of the families tended to sit on each other's boards of directors. For example about one-third of the seats on the boards of directors of companies controlled by the forty-three families were occupied by members of other families within the forty-three.

Not only were the forty-three families dominating industry, insurance and banking, but also had considerable power over government agencies sanctioning industrial projects. PICIC (Pakistan Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation) was the agency responsible for sanctioning large-scale industrial projects. Out of the twenty one directors of PICIC, seven were from the forty three leading industrial families and were actively involved in the public sector financial institutions that directly affected their private economic interests.

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<sup>16</sup> L.J. White: Industrial Concentration and Economic Power in Pakistan, Princeton University Press, Page 63.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid. Pages 74-75.

During the process of rapid economic growth of the 1960s, while an exclusive and highly monopolistic class was amassing wealth, the majority of Pakistan's population was suffering an absolute decline in its living standards. For example, the per capita consumption of foodgrain of the poorest 60 percent of Pakistan's urban population declined from an index of 100 in 1963-64 to 96.1 in 1969-70. The decline was even greater over the same period in the case of the poorest 60 percent of rural population. In their case, per capita consumption of foodgrain declined from an index of 100 in 1963-64 to only 91 in 1969-70.<sup>18</sup> There was an even larger decline in the real wages in the industry: In the decade and a half ending in 1967, real wages in the industry declined by 25 percent.<sup>19</sup> According to one estimate, in 1971-72 poverty in the rural sector was so acute that 82 percent of rural households could not afford to provide even 2,100 calories per day per family member.<sup>20</sup>

In an economy where there were significant differences in the infrastructure facilities available in the different provinces, there was a tendency for investment based on private profitability to be concentrated in the relatively developed regions. Consequently regional disparities would tend to widen over time. This is in fact what happened in the case of Pakistan. The Punjab and the Sind provinces, which had relatively more developed infrastructure, attracted a larger proportion of industrial investment than the other provinces. In Sind, however, the growth in income was mainly in Karachi and Hyderabad. Thus, economic disparities widened not only between East and West Pakistan, but also between the provinces within West Pakistan.

During the 1960s, the factor which accelerated the growth of regional income disparities within what is Pakistan today was the differential impact of agricultural growth associated with the so-called 'Green Revolution'. Since the yield increase associated with the adoption of high yield varieties of foodgrain required irrigation, and since the Punjab and the Sind had a relatively larger proportion of their area under irrigation, they experienced much faster growth in

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<sup>18</sup> N. Hamid, *The Burden of Capitalist Growth, A study of Real Wages in Pakistan*, *Pakistan Economic and Social Review*, Spring 1974.

<sup>19</sup> K. Griffin and A.R. Khan, *op.cit.* Pages 204-205.

<sup>20</sup> S.M. Naseem: *Rural Poverty and Landlessness in Asia*, ILO Report, Geneva, 1977.



their incomes, compared to the Baluchistan and the North West Frontier Province.<sup>21</sup>

In a situation where each of the provinces of Pakistan had a distinct culture and language, the systematic growth of regional disparities created acute political tensions. Addressing these tensions required a genuinely federal democratic structure with decentralization of political power at the provincial level.<sup>22</sup> Only such a polity and large federal expenditures for the development of the under-developed regions could ensure the unity of the country. In the absence of such a polity, the growing economic disparities between provinces created explosive political tensions.

The failure to conduct an effective land reform in Pakistan has resulted in a continued concentration of landownership in the hands of a few big landlords. Thus, in 1972, 30 percent of total farm area was owned by large landowners (owning 150 acres and above). The overall picture of Pakistan's agrarian structure has been that these large landowners have rented out most of their land to small and medium-sized tenants (i.e., tenants operating below twenty-five acres).

In my doctoral thesis<sup>23</sup> I had shown that given this agrarian structure, when the 'Green Revolution' technology became available in the late 1960s the larger landowners found it profitable to resume some of their rented out land for self-cultivation on large farms using hired labour and capital investment. Consequently there was a growing economic polarization of rural society. While the landlords' incomes increased, those of the poor peasantry declined relatively, as they faced a reduction in their operated farm area and in many cases growing

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<sup>21</sup> Naved Hamid and Akmal Hussain: "Regional Inequalities and Capitalist Development", *Pakistan Economic and Social Review*, Autumn 1974.

<sup>22</sup> Akmal Hussain, *Civil Society Undermined*, in: *Strategic Issues in Pakistan's Economic Policy*, op.cit. Page 374.

<sup>23</sup> Akmal Hussain: *Impact of Agricultural Growth on changes in the Agrarian Structure of Pakistan, with special reference to the Punjab Province*, D.Phil. Thesis, University of Sussex 1980. Also see: Akmal Hussain: *Strategic Issues in Pakistan's Economic Policy: Technical Change and Social Polarization in Rural Punjab*, Chapter 4, Progressive Publishers, June 1988.

landlessness.<sup>24</sup> For example in the case of farms in the size class 150 acres and above, the increase in the farm area during the period 1960 to 1978, constituted half their total farm area in 1978. In terms of the source of increase, 65% of the increase in area of large farms came through resumption of formerly rented out land. That this resumption was accompanied by growing landlessness of the poor peasantry is indicated by the fact that in the period 1960 to 1973 about 0.8 million tenants became landless wage labourers. Of the total rural wage labourers in Pakistan in 1973, as many as 43% had entered this category as the result of proletarianization of the poor peasantry<sup>25</sup>.

The polarization of rural society and increased landlessness of the poor peasantry was associated with increased peasant dependence in the face of rural markets for agricultural inputs and outputs that were mediated by large landlords. In the pre “Green Revolution” period, the poor tenant relied on the landlord simply for the *use* of the land but used the government’s canal water, his own seeds and animal manure. In the post “Green Revolution” period however, since the political and social power of the landlord remained intact, the peasant began to rely on the landlord for the *purchase of inputs*. (e.g. HYV seeds, chemical fertilizers, pesticides, the landlord’s tube-well water, for a seasonally flexible supply of irrigation, and credit). Thus, in many (though not all) cases, the dependence of the poor peasant intensified with the commercialization of agriculture in the sense that now his very *re-constitution of the production cycle* annually depended on the intercession of the landlord. At the same time due to the reduction in his operated area following land resumption, the tenant was obliged to complement his income by working as a wage labourer part of the time at a wage rate below the market rate in deference to the landlord’s power. (Conversely, the landlord’s management of the owner cultivated section of his land was facilitated through this tied source of labour supply). This phenomenon persists till to-day<sup>26</sup>. (It was first analyzed in my doctoral study 1980)<sup>27</sup>. Finally,

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<sup>24</sup> See: Akmal Hussain, D. Phil Thesis, op.cit.

<sup>25</sup> See: Akmal Hussain, Strategic Issues in Pakistan’s Economic Policy, op.cit. Page 187

<sup>26</sup> For the latest survey evidence, see: Akmal Hussain et.al, Pakistan National Human Development Report, 2003, Chapter 3, Section IV, UNDP, Oxford University Press, Karachi, 2003.

the peasant's income was further constricted as he was obliged to sell a large part of his output at harvest time when prices were low (in order to pay back loans for input purchase). Near the end of the year, when he ran out of grain, he had to purchase his remaining consumption requirements at high prices from the market.<sup>28</sup>

Thus, the “commercialization of agriculture” in a situation where landlords and the local power structure controlled markets for inputs and outputs, brought new mechanisms for the reproduction of rural poverty, even though overall agricultural growth accelerated. As we will see, the high rate of agricultural growth during the Ayub regime could not be sustained in subsequent years. Yet the mechanisms of reproducing rural poverty that had emerged in this period, persisted over the next four decades.

## **II. THE BHUTTO REGIME: 1973-77**

### **II.1 Power and Patronage**

The Ayub regime had instituted policies which resulted in a concentration of incomes in the hands of a nascent industrial elite while real wages declined and poverty increased. In the resultant social tensions, Z.A. Bhutto emerged as a champion of the poor to lead a mass movement for overthrowing the Ayub government. Support for the newly formed Pakistan People's Party (PPP) led by Bhutto came not only from workers and peasants but also from elements of the urban middle classes seeking reform. Conservative landlords also gravitated to the PPP, because of their antagonism to an industrial elite that was appropriating a growing share of economic resources.

The radical stratum of the middle class was dominant in the Pakistan People's Party until 1972. This was evident from the manifesto which was anti-feudal and against monopoly capitalists. The same stratum played a key role in devising a propaganda campaign that aimed to present the manifesto as “revolutionary”, thereby mobilizing the support of the workers and peasants. The

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<sup>27</sup> See Akmal Hussain, D. Phil Thesis, op.cit.

<sup>28</sup> For a more detailed analysis of the squeeze on poor peasant incomes see: Akmal Hussain: Technical Change and Rural Polarization in: Strategic Issues in Pakistan's Economic Policy, op.cit. Pages 150 to 156.

radical stratum was drawn from diverse social origins and its members therefore related with the party leader as separate factions. The inability of these different radical factions to constitute themselves into a united bloc within the PPP facilitated the purges that came later. By 1972 the balance of social forces within the PPP began to shift in favour of the landlord groups. This shift was rooted in the imperatives of mobilizing popular forces on the one hand and the practice of politics within the traditional power structure on the other. In the pre-election period, the dominance of the urban middle class and its radical rhetoric was necessary if the PPP was to get a mass base for its election victory. After the election, the proclivity of the top party leadership to contain demands for radical change within the existing power structure combined with the dominance of the landed elite within the party, led to a purge of radical elements from the PPP. Consequently there was an institutional rupture between the PPP and its mass base amongst the workers and peasants. This set the stage for economic measures that were socialist in *form*, while actually serving to strengthen the landed elite and widening the base for state patronage.

One of the most important initiatives of the PPP government was the nationalization in 1972 of 43 large industrial units in the capital and intermediate goods sectors such as cement, fertilizers, oil refining, engineering and chemicals. Just three years later the government nationalized the cooking oil industry and then flour milling, cotton ginning and rice husking mills.

While the first set of nationalizations impacted the “monopoly capitalists”, the second set of nationalizations in 1976 by contrast hit the medium and small sized entrepreneurs. Therefore nationalization in this regime cannot be seen in terms of state intervention for greater equity. Rather the rapid increase in the size of the public sector served to widen the resource base of the regime for the practice of the traditional form of power through state patronage. This involved the state intervening to redistribute resources arbitrarily to those who had access to its patronage.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Omar Noman, *The Political Economy of Pakistan*, op.cit., Page 79.

## II.2 Investment, Growth and the Budget Deficit

Let us now briefly indicate the implications of the economic measures in this period on investment, growth and the budget deficit. Private investment as a percentage of GDP in the Bhutto period (1973/74 to 1977/78) declined sharply to 4.8% compared to 8.2% in the preceding period 1960/61 to 1972/73. (See table 1). The nationalization of heavy industries shook the confidence of the private sector and was a factor in the declining investment. The trend may have been reinforced by a second set of measures during this period. These included a devaluation of the exchange rate which placed large and small scale industry at par with respect to the rupee cost of imported inputs (i.e. the indirect subsidy provided to large scale manufacturing industry through an overvalued exchange rate, was withdrawn). At the same time, direct subsidies to manufacturing were significantly cut down, import duties on finished goods were reduced and anti-monopoly measures along with price controls were instituted. It is not surprising that domestic manufacturers who had been bred on government support, responded by further reducing investment.

It may be pertinent to point out here that the decline in private sector manufacturing as a percentage of the GDP, had already begun eight years before the Bhutto period, after the 1965 war.<sup>30</sup> So while the nationalization and subsequent economic measures cannot be said to have *caused* the decline in private investment, they certainly intensified it.

The decline in private sector investment in the post 1965 period as a whole, (as opposed to its sharp deceleration during the nationalization phase), can be attributed<sup>31</sup> to three underlying factors: (i) foreign capital inflows fell sharply after the 1965 war, (ii) the manufacturing sector in a situation of declining domestic demand was unable to meet the challenge of exports due to high production costs in traditional industries, and (iii) entrepreneurs did not diversify into non traditional industries where there was considerable growth potential.

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<sup>30</sup> See A.R. Kemal: Patterns of Growth in Pakistan's Industrial Sector, in Shahrukh Rafi Khan (ed.). Fifty Years of Pakistan's Economy, O.U.P, Karachi 1999, Page 158.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, Page 158.

Thus the declining trend in private sector manufacturing investment in the post 1965 period, a trend that persisted right into the 1990s, can be said to be rooted in certain sociological features that characterized most of Pakistan's entrepreneurial elite: (a) its reliance on foreign savings rather than its own thrift, (b) its dependence on state patronage and subsidies of various kinds, and (c) its tradition bound nature, risk avoidance and in many cases lack of innovativeness for breaking new ground.

**TABLE 1**

**PERIOD AVERAGES OF GROSS INVESTMENT\* AS A % OF GDP**

Average During	GFCF(Total) as % of GDP(Current Prices)	GFCF (Private) as % of GDP (Current Prices)	GFCF (Public) as % of GDP (Current Prices)
1960-1973	15.28	8.21	7.26
1973-1978	15.50	4.79	10.71
1978-1988	16.77	7.10	9.66
1988-1993	17.95	9.22	8.73
1993-1998	16.3	9.32	7.36
1998-2000	13.26	8.10	5.31

SOURCE: Economic Survey, Government of Pakistan (G.O.P.), Economic Advisor's Wing, Finance Division, Various Issues.

Note: \*GFCF is Gross Fixed Capital Formation

We find that unlike manufacturing investment, the decline in the *total* private sector investment as a percentage of the GDP was more than compensated by an increase in the total public sector investment. Thus, the overall investment/GDP ratio during the Bhutto period reached 15.5%, which was slightly higher than in the preceding period (see Table 1). Yet inspite of an increase in the total investment/GDP ratio, the growth rate of GDP declined compared to the preceding period (as table 3 shows, GDP growth during the Bhutto period was about 5% compared to 6.3% in the earlier 1960-73 period). This is indicative of a decline in the productivity of investment (i.e. an increase in

the incremental capital output ratio). The question is, what caused the decline in the capacity of investment to generate growth? The answer lies in the fact that not only was most of the investment in the period emanating from the public sector, but that a large proportion of this investment was going into unproductive spheres: Defence and public administration were the fastest growing sectors of the economy (11.4%) while the commodity producing sector was growing at only 2.21% during the period. Even in the productive sector, the lion's share of the public investment went into the Steel Mill project beginning in 1973. The project using an obsolete Soviet design, involved a technology that was both capital intensive and inefficient. Consequently, the tendency of declining productivity of investment was exacerbated.

Even in the existing manufacturing industries in the public sector while some industries showed good profits to start with, there was a sharp decline in the rates of return on investment, due to a combination of poor management of existing units and improper location of new units on political grounds<sup>32</sup>. Thus, the lowering of GDP growth in spite of an increase in investment in the Bhutto period occurred because of two sets of factors: (a) concentration of public sector investment in the unproductive sectors of defence and administration, and (b) economically inefficient investment decisions in the public sector industries based on political considerations, with respect to technology choice, geographic location, and production management.

Let us now briefly discuss the implications of the political and economic measures of the government during this period for the budget.

The problem of the government's dependence on financial borrowing as we have indicated, started in the Ayub period, when the obligation of maintaining a large military and bureaucratic apparatus combined with the imperatives of providing huge subsidies to both agriculture and industry: For agriculture in the form of subsidized inputs (water, fertilizer, pesticides) as part of the elite farmer strategy; for industry in terms of explicit and implicit subsidies such as an over-

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<sup>32</sup> Omar Noman: *The Political Economy of Pakistan*, op.cit. Page 80.

valued exchange rate, subsidized credit and tax incentives to an industrial sector that was inefficient and lacked export competitiveness.

In the Z.A. Bhutto period, budget deficits widened further as expenditures on defence and administration increased sharply. Higher defence expenditures were part of the policy of refurbishing the defence establishment. Large expenditures on government administration arose mainly out of the decision to build new para military institutions such as the Federal Security Force.<sup>33</sup> The bureaucracy was also enlarged and re-structured through the policy of 'lateral entry' which enabled loyalists outside the civil services cadre to be appointed at the upper and middle echelons. The attempt to build a demesne of patronage within the state apparatus had huge financial consequences. For example, defence expenditure as a percentage of GDP increased from 2.7% in 1965 to 6.7% in 1974-75. Similarly general administration as a percentage of GDP increased from 1.1% in 1964-65 to as much as 1.8% in 1974-75<sup>34</sup>

Apart from the increased expenditures on defence and administration, the budget was additionally burdened by the losses of the public sector industries. The deficits in these industries were generated by their poor performance on the one hand and the pricing policy on the other. Nationalized units under official pressure to suppress price increases inspite of rising costs, were recovering not much more than their operating costs. Consequently, internally generated funds could finance only 7%<sup>35</sup> of the investment undertaken, thereby necessitating heavy borrowing from the government.

As government expenditures increased, the ability to finance them from tax revenue was constrained by two factors: (a) The slow down in the GDP growth, and (b) the government's inability to improve the coverage of direct taxation. As a consequence, the deficit increased rapidly. The government attempted to control the rising budget deficit by reducing subsidies on consumption goods and increasing indirect taxation. However even these

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<sup>33</sup> For a more detailed discussion on the nature of changes within the state structure see: A Hussain: Strategic Issues in Pakistan's Economic Policy, op.cit., Pages 378 and 379.

<sup>34</sup> Hafiz Pasha in Shahrukh R. Khan (ed.), op.cit. Page 209, Table-3.

<sup>35</sup> Omar Noman, Op. cit. Page 82.



measures failed to reduce the budget deficit in the face of rising current expenditures. So monetary expansion was resorted to, resulting in accelerated inflation.

The financial constraint following the large non development expenditures, severely restricted the funds available for development, and hence enfeebled the two initiatives that were designed to benefit the poor: the National Development Volunteer Programme (NDVP) and the Peoples Work Programme. The former aimed at providing employment to the educated unemployed and the latter to generate employment for the rural poor through labour intensive projects. Both programmes were marginalized due to budgetary constraints.<sup>36</sup>

The social consequences of these financial measures were to have a profound impact on the political strength of the Bhutto regime. Withdrawal of subsidies on consumption goods together with higher inflation rates squeezed the real income of the middle and lower middle classes. This served to accentuate the resentment that had followed the nationalization of the small and medium sized food processing units in 1976. Ironically these very urban petit bourgeois elements had in 1968-69 fuelled the anti-Ayub agitation that had catapulted Bhutto into power. They now joined the street demonstrations in 1977 that led to his downfall.

### **III. THE ZIA REGIME (1977-1989)**

#### **III.1 The Rise of Islamic Fundamentalism**

Each regime that came into power sought to legitimize itself through an explicit ideology: The Ayub regime propounded the philosophy of modernization and economic development. The Z.A. Bhutto regime donned the mantle of redeeming the poor through socialism. Zia ul Haq having come into power through a coup d'etat, sought to institutionalize military rule through the garb of a coercive and obscurantist version of Islamic ideology.

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<sup>36</sup> Omar Noman, op.cit. Page 122.

In the absence of popular legitimacy, the Zia regime used terror as a conscious policy of the government.<sup>37</sup> In the pursuit of this policy, the democratic constitution of 1973 was set aside and draconian measures of military courts, arbitrary arrests, amputation of hands and public lashing were introduced. Pakistan's society, by and large, was historically characterized by cultural diversity, democratic aspirations and a religious perspective rooted in tolerance and humanism. This was one of the reasons why the founding father, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah conceived of Pakistan's polity as democratic and pluralistic with religious belief to be a matter concerning the individual rather than the state.<sup>38</sup>

“You may belong to any religion or caste or creed \_\_\_ that has nothing to do with the business of the state.... We are starting with this fundamental principle that we are all citizens and equal citizens of one state.... Now, I think we should keep that in front of us as our ideal and you will find that in the course of time Hindus would cease to be Hindus and Muslims would cease to be Muslims, not in the religious sense, because that is the personal faith of each individual but in the political sense as citizens of the state.”

In attempting to restructure such a state and society into a theocracy, the government undertook two kinds of initiatives: First, measures designed to subordinate to executive authority, institutions of state and civil society such as the judiciary and the press, which if allowed to function independently could check governmental power. In the case of the judiciary its essential powers to scrutinize the legality of martial law or the orders of military courts were abolished. The judicial protection against arbitrary detention of a citizen embodied in the right to Habeas Corpus was eliminated for the first time in Pakistan.

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<sup>37</sup> President Zia ul Haq publicly stated: “Martial law should be based on fear”. In the same vein, Brigadier Malik wrote: “Terror struck into the hearts of enemies is not only a means, it is the end itself”. See: Omar Noman, op.cit., Page 122.

<sup>38</sup> Speech of Mohammad Ali Jinnah as President of the Constituent Assembly, August 11, 1947, cited in Muhammad Munir, from Jinnah to Zia, Vanguard Books, Lahore 1979, Page 29-30.

In the case of the press, an attempt was made to subordinate it to State authority.<sup>39</sup> In the pursuit of this policy, press control measures were introduced. The government constituted committees at the district level to ensure that articles repugnant to the ideology of Pakistan were not published. Those members of the press who had refused to acquiesce faced state repression. A number of newspapers were banned and journalists were arrested and given flogging sentences by military courts.

The second set of measures towards a theocratic state sought to inculcate obscurantist views and induced a narrowing of the human mind. It involved a suspension of the sensibility of love and reason underlying the religious tradition signified in Pakistan's folk culture<sup>40</sup>.

Advocacy for a theocratic social order<sup>41</sup> was conducted through the state controlled television and press<sup>42</sup>. Individual and group behaviour and society were sought to be controlled through the enforcement of coercive measures such as the amputation of wrists and ankles for theft, stoning to death for adultery and 80 lashes for drinking alcohol. Apart from this, in 1984 a law was passed to officially give women an inferior status compared to men.<sup>43</sup> In August 1984 the government began a national campaign involving the direct physical intervention of the state into the personal life of individuals. For example the Nizam-e-Salat Campaign was launched through the appointment of 100,000 "Prayer Wardens" for rural and urban localities. The task of these state functionaries was to monitor religious activities of individuals and to seek their compliance in religious practices.

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<sup>39</sup> President Zia ul Haq declared: "Democracy means freedom of the Press, Martial Law its very negation". The Daily Dawn, 12<sup>th</sup> July 1977, cited in Omar Noman, op.cit. Page 124.

<sup>40</sup> The hero Ranjha is celebrated as the synthesis of love and reason, See: Najam Hosain Syed, *Recurrent Patterns in Punjabi Poetry*, Punjab Adbi Markaz, Lahore, Second edition, 1986.

<sup>41</sup> In the absence of a popular mandate, Zia claimed that his mission to bring an "Islamic Order" in Pakistan had a divine sanction: "I have a mission given by God to bring Islamic Order to Pakistan". Omar Noman, op.cit.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

The institutional roots of “Islamic Fundamentalism” were laid when government funds were provided for establishing mosque schools (madrassas) in small towns and rural areas which led to the rapid growth of militant religious organisations. This social process which later came to be known as “Islamic Fundamentalism” was catalyzed by the Afghan war. As measures were undertaken to start building a theocratic State, and society was brutalized, the isolation of the government from the people as a whole was matched by increased external dependence. Political, economic and military support was sought from the U.S. by offering to play the role of a front line state in the Afghan guerilla war against the occupying Soviet army. Accordingly, Pakistan obtained a package of U.S. \$ 3.2 billion in financial loans and relatively sophisticated military hardware. Moreover, with the support from the U.S., Pakistan was able to get additional fiscal space by getting its foreign debt rescheduled, and increased private foreign capital inflows. These official and private capital inflows played an important role in stimulating macro economic growth in this period. They also helped establish a political constituency both within the institutions of the state and in the conservative urban petit bourgeoisie, for a theocratic form of military dictatorship.

As the government under President Zia ul Haq engaged in a proxy war, some of the militant religious groups together with their associated madrassas were provided with official funds, training and weapons to conduct guerilla operations in Afghanistan. While they helped fight the war in Afghanistan, the religious militant groups were able to enlarge the political space within Pakistan’s society as well as in its intelligence and security apparatus. Since the late 1970s with the steady inflow of Afghan refugees into Pakistan and its use as a conduit for arms for the Afghan war, two trends emerged to fuel the crisis of civil society: (a) A large proportion of the weapons meant for the Afghan guerillas filtered into the illegal arms market in Pakistan. (b) There was a rapid growth of the heroin trade<sup>44</sup>. The large illegal arms market and the burgeoning heroin trade injected both weapons and syndicate organisations into the social life of major urban

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<sup>44</sup> According to an estimate which is really in the nature of a “guesstimate” the narcotics trade amounted to US \$ 3 billion, See the weekly “The Economist” (London), April 10, 1985.

centers. At the same time the frequent terrorist bombings in the Frontier province together with a weakening of state authority in parts of rural Sindh, undermined the confidence of the citizens in the ability of the State to provide security of life and property. Increasing numbers of the under-privileged sections of society began to seek security in various proximate identities whether ethnic, sectarian, biraderi or linguistic groups.<sup>45</sup>

From 1987 onwards sectarian violence mushroomed in the Punjab province (which till then had been relatively peaceful) and later spread across the country. The phenomenon of large scale sectarian violence conducted by well armed and trained cadres was closely associated with the rapid growth of Deeni Madrassas (“religious” schools). While historically, such schools merely imparted religious knowledge, in the late 1980s a new kind of Deeni Madrassa emerged, which engaged in systematic indoctrination in a narrow sectarian identity, and inculcated hatred and violence against other sects. In 1998 there were 3,393 Deeni Madrassas in the Punjab alone and 67% had emerged during the period of the Zia regime and after. The number of Pakistani students in these madrassas were 306,500 in the Punjab. Between 1979 and 1994, many of the madrassas were receiving financial grants from Zakat funds. According to an official report of the police department, a number of madrassas were merely providing religious education. Yet as many as 42% of them were actively promoting sectarian violence through a well conceived indoctrination process<sup>46</sup>. The students predominantly from poor families were given free food and lodging during their term at the madrassas. As poverty increased in the 1990s, the burgeoning madrassas provided a growing number of unemployed and impoverished youths with the security of food, shelter and an emotionally charged identity: a personality that felt fulfilled through violence against the other.

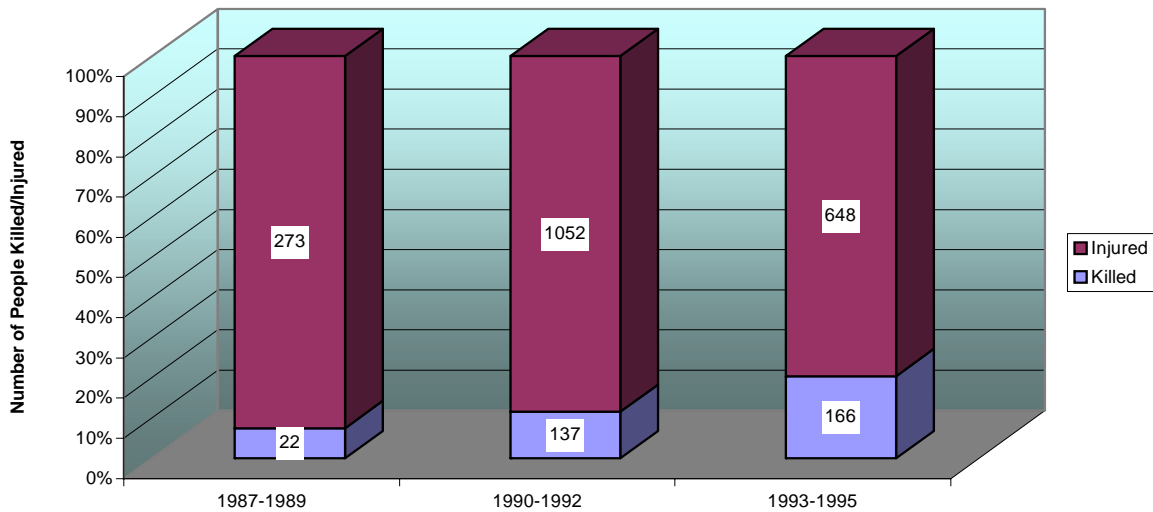
As the new kind of sectarian madrassas emerged and grew during the Zia regime so did sectarian violence. As chart 2 shows the number of sectarian

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<sup>45</sup> Akmal Hussain, *Civil Society Undermined*, in, *Strategic Issues.....*, op.cit., Page 386.

<sup>46</sup> Zia ul Hasan Khan, *Rise of Sectarianism in Pakistan: Causes and Implications*, Research Paper (Mimeo), Pakistan Administrative Staff College, Lahore 1995.

**Chart 2  
Casualties in Sectarian Violence**



killings increased from 22 during the 1987-89 period, to 166 during the 1993-95 period (See Table 2). Thus violence against the other became both the expression and the emblem of the narrowed identity.

**TABLE 2**

**CASUALTIES IN SECTARIAN VIOLENCE**

YEARS	KILLED	INJURED	TOTAL CASUALTIES
1987 to 1989	22	273	295
1990 to 1992	137	1052	1189
1993 to 1995*	166	648	814

SOURCE: Zia ul Hasan Khan: Rise of Sectarianism in Pakistan: Causes and Security Implications. Research paper, Pakistan Administrative Staff College, Lahore 1995

Note\* Figures for 1995 upto October 1995.

The mobilisation of these narrow identities involved a psychic disconnection from the well springs of universal human brother hood within the Islamic tradition. Its liberating elements of rationality and love, were replaced in

the narrowed psyche, by obscurantism and hatred. Violence against the “other” became an emblem of membership within these identities. Thus, civil society divorced from its universal human values began to lose its cohesion and stability

### III.2. Economic Growth and the Prelude to Recession

The rapidly growing debt servicing burden together with a slow down of GDP growth and government revenues that had occurred at the end of the Bhutto period would have placed crippling fiscal and political pressures on the Zia regime but for two factors: (a) the generous financial support received from the West, and (b) the acceleration in the inflow of remittances from the Middle East which increased from US \$ 0.5 billion in 1978 to US \$ 3.2 billion in 1984. These remittances not only eased balance of payments pressures, but also potential political pressures, directly benefiting about 10 million people, predominantly in the lower middle class and working class strata.<sup>47</sup>

**TABLE 3**

**PERIOD AVERAGES OF THE PERCENTAGE SHARE OF SELECTED MACRO-ECONOMIC INDICATORS IN THE GDP OF PAKISTAN.**

Average During	Real GDP Growth % (Market Prices)	Domestic Savings as % of GDP	Average Export Growth %	Exports as % of GDP	Trade Balance as % of GDP	Workers Remittances as % of GDP	Debt Servicing as % of GDP
1960-1973	6.26	12.99	16.19	4.57	-5.11		1.28
1973-1978	4.99	7.29	10.31	8.79	-7.27		2.04
1978-1988	6.6	8.15	14.33	9.59	-8.66	7.71	2.44
1988-1993	4.92	12.99	9.19	13.01	-5.00	4.54	3.02
1993-1998	3.14	14.98	5.15	13.50	-3.99	2.55	3.48
1998-2000	4.17		0.16	13.69	-2.33	1.71	2.55

SOURCE: Economic Survey, Government of Pakistan (G.O.P.), Economic Advisor’s Wing, Finance Division, Various Issues.

<sup>47</sup> As many as 78.9% of emigrants to the Middle East were production workers See: Jillani et.al. Labour Migration PIDE, Research Report No. 126.

As it was, the easing of budgetary pressures together with good harvests and the construction and consumption booms associated with Middle East remittances, helped stimulate economic growth. As table 3 shows, GDP growth increased from about 5% during the Z.A. Bhutto period i.e. (1973-77) to 6.6% during the Zia period (1978-88). The data show that this acceleration in the GDP growth was induced to some extent by increased investment: The gross fixed capital formation as a percentage of the GDP increased from 15.5% in the Bhutto period to 16.8% in the Zia period. (Table 1).

There was a strategic shift from the “socialist” policies of nationalization, and the large public sector in the Bhutto period, to denationalization and a greater role assigned to the private sector in the growth process. In this context the Zia regime offered a number of incentives to the private sector such as low interest credit, duty free imports of selected capital goods, tax holidays and accelerated depreciation allowances. These inducements combined with high aggregate demand associated with consumption expenditures from Middle East remittances, and increased investment in housing, created a favourable climate for new investment. Private sector gross fixed investment increased from 7.1% of the GDP in the Bhutto period to 9.2% in the Zia regime (See Table 1). The public sector gross fixed capital formation as a percentage of the GDP however declined slightly from 10.7% in the preceding period to 9.7 % in the Zia period. The data on the manufacturing sector is also consistent with these findings and show a substantial acceleration in the growth of overall manufacturing from 5.5% in the 1970s to 8.21 % in the 1980s. In terms of the composition of investment in the large scale manufacturing sector as table 4 shows, there appears to be a significant acceleration in the investment in the intermediate and capital growth sectors, whose percentage share in the total manufacturing increased from about 43% at the end of the Bhutto period to about 50% in the mid 1980s. (The share fell again in the late 1980s and 1990s). This is consistent with the boom in the construction sector and the secondary multiplier effects in the intermediate and capital goods sectors.

Although the GDP growth rate during the Zia period did increase, yet this higher growth rate could not be expected to be maintained because of continued poor performance of three strategic factors that sustain growth over time: (i) The



domestic savings rate continued to remain below 10% compared to a required rate of over 20%. (ii) Exports as a percentage of GDP continued to remain below 10% and did not register any substantial increase (see table 3). (iii) Inadequate investment in social and economic infrastructure. As defence and debt servicing expenditure increased, the Annual Development Programme (ADP) through which much of the infrastructure projects were funded, began to get constricted. As table 5 shows, ADP expenditure as a percentage of GDP fell from an average of 7.4% in the Z.A. Bhutto period, to 6.2% in the Zia period.

It is not surprising that when the cushion of foreign loans and debt relief was withdrawn at the end of the Afghan War, the underlying structural constraints to GDP growth began to manifest themselves: Debt servicing pressures resulting from the low savings rates, high borrowings and balance of payments deficits related with low export growth and poor infrastructure, combined to pull down the GDP growth into a protracted economic recession in the 1990s. Similarly the seeds of social conflict sown with the breeding of religious militant groups, began to erupt and feed off the growing poverty and unemployment.

**TABLE 4****TOTAL INVESTMENTS IN VARIOUS INDUSTRIES AS A % OF TOTAL INVESTMENT IN ALL INDUSTRIES IN THE LARGE SCALE MANUFACTURING SECTOR OF PAKISTAN.\***

Years	Investment in All Consumer Goods	Investment in Intermediate & Capital Goods	Investment in Textile & Related Goods	Investment in all other Industries
1964-65	22.7	25.2	41.1	11.1
1966-67	28.7	30.8	37.3	3.1
1970-71	31.8	27.3	38.0	2.9
1976-77	31.2	22.1	17.9	28.8
1977-78	23.6	43.2	23.7	9.6
1982-83	18.0	49.7	21.5	10.7
1983-84	24.5	57.2	17.9	0.3
1987-88	29.4	21.8	37.4	11.4
1990-91	28.7	24.6	44.4	2.2

SOURCE: Census of Manufacturing Industries, FBS, Statistics Division, Govt. of Pakistan. Various Issues.

**Notes:**

1. The CMI data represents only the large scale manufacturing sector in the economy.
2. The compilation of CMI data is conducted through mail enquiry supplemented by field visits. The questionnaires are issued to the factories as per list of manufacturing establishments maintained on the basis of monthly statements of registrations and cancellations received from the provincial Chief inspectors of Factories, Directorates of Labour Welfare of the Provinces.
3. Large scale manufacturing industries are those which employ 20 workers or more on any one given day of the year for manufacturing activity.
4. Investments here refer to all fixed assets consisting of land and building, plant and machinery and other fixed assets which are expected to have a productive life of more than one year and are in use by the establishment for the manufacturing activity.
5. Investments for a year include additions made during the year minus any sales of fixed assets during that year. These consist of, both Pakistan made and imports, and assets made for own use.

\* Data refers to the figures obtained from the industries/establishments included in the census and does not represent the figures as a whole for the economy of Pakistan.

**TABLE 5****ADP AS A PERCENTAGE OF GDP PERIOD AVERAGES**

Average During	ADP as a% of GDP
1972/73 to 1976/77	7.4
1977/78 to 1986/87	6.24
1987/88 to 1996/97	4.26
1997/98 to 1999/2000	3.5

SOURCE: Economic Survey, GOP, Economic Advisor's Wing, Finance Division, Various Issues.

#### **IV. POLITICIANS, POWER AND PELF: THE DEEPENING CRISIS 1989-1999**

##### **IV.1 Institutions Undermined: Pursuit of Power**

At the end of the Zia regime a new triumvirate of power emerged that came to be known as the “Troika”. This was an essentially informal arrangement of power sharing in the *actual* as opposed to *formal* conduct of governance, between the President, the Prime Minister and the Army Chief (Chief of Army Staff).

A fundamental feature of the “Troika” was that precisely because the power sharing arrangement was informal, the contention for increasing the relative share of power by each protagonist was inherent to its functioning. Without precisely specified domains of decision making, or even the confidence that each protagonist would pursue a shared perception of “National Interest”, periodic breakdown of the arrangement amongst a given set of members was a predictable feature. This is in fact what happened, so that between 1988 to 1999 an elected Prime Minister was dismissed on four occasions, three Presidents were changed and one Chief of Army Staff (General Jehangir Karamet) was pressurized into resignation.<sup>48</sup> A second army chief (General Pervez Musharraf) faced dismissal. This was the final act in the dramatic conflict within the informal “Troika”, that brought the curtain down on the formal democratic structure itself: General Musharraf took over power through a coup d’etat on 12<sup>th</sup> October 1999.

The government headed by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in its second term came with a two third majority in the National Assembly. This parliamentary strength could have been used to deepen democracy by reviving the economy, establishing transparent governance, bringing extremist militant groups within the law, and ensuring the independence of the judiciary<sup>49</sup>. Instead

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<sup>48</sup> The contention for power expressed itself in some cases in terms of the appointment and dismissal decision of key positions in the military. The contention also occurred on the issue of the legally correct application of Article 58 2(b) under which the President could dismiss the government and dissolve the national assembly “if in his opinion a situation has arisen in which the government of the Federation cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution”.

<sup>49</sup> As the UNDP Human Development Report 2002 points out: “Whether the judiciary can maintain its independence is often the litmus test for whether democratically elected rule can avoid turning autocratic.”

an attempt was made to enhance the relative power position of the Prime Minister within the structure of state institutions.

A systematic attempt was made to undermine and control institutions such as the Presidency, the Parliament, the Judiciary, the Press and (in the end) the Army, in order to lay the basis of authoritarian power within the democratic structure.

An attempt was made not only to weaken the office of the President and relegate it to a purely ceremonial role but also to control members of the ruling party in parliament. This was done by passing the constitutional amendments thirteen and fourteen. Under the thirteenth Amendment the dreaded Article 58-2 (b) was withdrawn. (This article of the constitution gave the President powers to dismiss the government and hold fresh elections in case of extreme misgovernance). Under the fourteenth amendment the ability of elected members of the majority party to vote or even speak against the official position of the majority party in Parliament, on any legislative issue, was also withdrawn.

Conflict between the government and the Judiciary soon followed. Tensions between these two institutions began when the government asserted its claim to judicial appointments, a claim that was resisted by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court on grounds of the independence of the judiciary.<sup>50</sup> A political campaign against the Judiciary was launched during which disparaging remarks were made against it, both inside and outside the parliament. Subsequently, the Supreme Court decided to hear a writ petition for contempt of court against the Prime Minister and some of his associates, which if it had been decided against the Prime Minister, could have resulted in his disqualification. According to independent observers, an attempt was then made to “engineer a division within the apex court”.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court at the time, Sajjad Ali Shah, later stated: “the independence of the judiciary can be maintained only when the Chief Justice has some kind of control over the appointment of judges.....the appointment of judges should not be made by executive for political reasons.....”. See: Interview, published in the monthly Herald, January 1998, Page 48.

<sup>51</sup> Cover Story, the monthly Newsline, December 1997, Pages 24, 25.

In spite of the consequent division and conflict amongst judges of the Supreme Court, the Chief Justice resolutely went ahead with the trial of the Prime Minister. On the day fixed by the Supreme Court for the hearing, the ruling Pakistan Muslim League (PML) transported thousands of its supporters to stage a protest against the Chief Justice. The charged mob<sup>52</sup> broke the gate of the Supreme Court building and ransacked it, forcing the Supreme Court Judges to abandon the trial and retire to their chambers.

The unprecedented mob attack on the Supreme Court by a ruling political party brought in its wake a major constitutional crisis. President Leghari accused the Prime Minister of inciting the attack and warning that “he would not allow the law of the jungle to prevail”.<sup>53</sup> The Prime Minister retaliated by moving an impeachment notice against the President in Parliament and also sending him a summary advising him to sack the Chief Justice. The President was now faced with the choice of getting impeached or signing what he regarded as an illegal order against the Chief Justice. In a situation where the Army appeared unwilling to step in to resolve the crisis, the President decided to resign.<sup>54</sup> Thus, the powers that were earlier distributed between the Chief Justice, the President and the Prime Minister, were now concentrated in the hands of the Prime Minister.

After the Judiciary the next target became the Press. The Government began to harass journalists who had exposed a series of corruption scandals.<sup>55</sup> This harassment reached a dramatic stage when the Jang Group of newspapers (one of the largest in the country) which had been critical of the Prime Minister, was targeted by his regime. The publisher of the Newspaper was specifically

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<sup>52</sup> The mob attack, was evidenced in the video record of the court. This was also widely reported in both the international and national press. See for example: Monthly Newline, December 1997, Page 26.

<sup>53</sup> Newline op.cit. Page 26.

<sup>54</sup> The indication that the Army had decided to stay aloof came when the Army ignored requests by both the Chief Justice and the President to provide physical security to Chief Justice Sajjad Ali Shah following the mob attack on the Supreme Court.

<sup>55</sup> The editor of the Friday Times, a respected liberal weekly newspaper, Mr. Najam Sethi reported that his printers were served with notices threatening closure. Thugs were sent to soften him up and rape and kidnapping threats were made to his wife and children. See: The Friday Times, October 9-15, 1998.

pressurized to dismiss nine journalists from its staff, whom the government found “unacceptable”.<sup>56</sup>

The Press in Pakistan received another shock when the regime abducted the editor of an influential weekly newspaper, the Friday Times in a midnight raid on his home.<sup>57</sup>

After enhancing the power of the Prime Minister relative to some of the other institutions, focus now shifted to the Army. The Chief of Army Staff, General Jehangir Karamet, voiced the Army’s concern at the deteriorating economic, political and law and order situation in a letter to the Prime Minister. As the contention for power within the State structure continued, the underlying crisis worsened. On October 5, 1998 in his annual address at the Pakistan Navy War College in Lahore, General Karamet expressed his worries publicly as a prelude to stepping down rather than initiating military intervention. He argued that Pakistan could not afford “the destabilizing effects of polarization, vendettas and insecurity driven expedient policies”.<sup>58</sup> The Prime Minister responded by indicating his intent to order premature retirement of the Army Chief. General Karamet chose to leave gracefully and tendered his resignation.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Income tax notices were served, the Jang Group’s bank accounts were frozen, newspaper godowns sealed, its journalists threatened and sedition cases lodged. That the government’s conflict with the Jang Group did not hinge merely on the non-payment of income tax, became apparent when an audio tape of a telephone conversation between Nawaz Sharif’s top aides dealing with the Press and Mir Shakil ur Rehman (the Jang Group’s chief editor) was revealed. One of the government’s aides issued clear threats on the phone and the policy that his newspapers should follow. This audio tape was played to a public audience at the Lahore Press Club. Also See: The Friday Times, February 5-11, 1999: Ejaz Haider: Press Government or State-Society Struggle? Editorial: Well Fought Shakil-ur-Rehman.

<sup>57</sup> The daily News, Tuesday, May 11, 1999, Front Page. The editor’s bedroom was broken into, at 2:45 a.m., by a security agency of the civil establishment, and he was handcuffed, dragged out of bed and taken away without a warrant of arrest.

The democratic elements in civil society, were outraged both by the manner of Mr. Sethi’s “arrest” and the subsequent failure of the government to bring him to trial before a court of law. Apart from Mr. Sethi’s case, which got wide publicity, there were other less famous cases of journalists being persecuted for expressing a dissenting opinion. In spite of attempts at intimidation and illegal detention of the journalists, the press withstood the pressure and emerged a stronger institution.

<sup>58</sup> Quoted in the article titled: General Discontent, by Zafar Abbas, in the monthly Herald, October 1998, Page 44.

<sup>59</sup> Zafar Abbas, op.cit. Page 45.

Not long after the appointment of the new COAS General Musharraf, tensions between the Prime Minister and the Army intensified. In August 1999, matters came to a head when an attempt was made to appoint a new Army Chief without consulting with the existing one. Having given appointment orders to a new Army Chief (General Zia ur Rehman) while the existing one was in Colombo on an official trip, action was initiated (unsuccessfully as it turned out) to prevent the landing in Karachi of the PIA aircraft on which General Musharraf was returning. This brought to a dramatic head, the confrontation between the Prime Minister and the Army. The Army swiftly launched a coup d'etat that brought the military government of General Pervez Musharraf into power.

It is perhaps indicative of the gravity of the national crisis, that there was no significant public protest at the overthrow of the popularly elected government.

The Supreme Court in its validation of the military take-over referred to the crisis explicitly: "On 12<sup>th</sup> October 1999 a situation arose for which the constitution provided no solution and the intervention of the Armed Forces through an extra constitutional measure became inevitable which is hereby validated...".<sup>60</sup> In establishing the grounds of its verdict, there were three key elements in the Supreme Court judgment:

- (1) ".....all the institutions of the state were being systematically destroyed and the economy was in a state of collapse due to the self serving policies of the previous government.....".<sup>61</sup>
- (2) "..... a situation had arisen where the democratic institutions were not functioning in accordance with the provisions of the constitution....." and ".....there was no real democracy because the country was by and large under one man rule".<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Text of the Supreme Court Verdict in the Military Take-over Case published in the daily Dawn, 13<sup>th</sup> May 2000 Page-5.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

- (3) “..... An attempt was made to politicize the Army, destabilize it and create dissension within its ranks, and where the judiciary was ridiculed.....”<sup>63</sup>

Governance during the late 1990s intensified to a critical level the three key elements of the crisis that threatened the state: (i) A collapsing economy. (ii) The threat to the life and property of citizens resulting from rampant crime, and the emergence of armed militant groups of religious extremists. (iii) The erosion of many of the institutions of democratic and effective governance.

Given the dynamics of Pakistan’s power structure and the greater strength of the military relative to other institutions within it, when a democratic regime fails to deliver on these issues, power would be expected to flow to the military.<sup>64</sup> In spite of the adverse international environment for a coup d’etat, in October 1999, power did flow to the military when the crisis of the state had reached a critical level and the democratic government was seen to be exacerbating rather than resolving the crisis.

#### **IV.2 Public Office for Private Wealth: The Macro Economics of Corruption**

Whatever the institutional weaknesses in the democratic edifice of 1989, it was brought down by the individualized pursuit of power and the use of public office for private gain. The establishment of honest and competent governance, and the strengthening of institutions could have preserved democracy. The relative strength of the Prime Minister within the power structure essentially depended on demonstrating that the government was turning the country around from its descent into economic collapse, religious extremism and the break down of law and order. It was delivering on these counts that could have deepened democracy by winning greater legitimacy and space to the undoubtedly constrained democratic structure. As it was, the failure to deepen democracy undermined even its existing fragile form.

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> For an analysis of these dynamics, see: Akmal Hussain: *The Dynamics of Power: Military, Bureaucracy and the People*, in K. Rupasinghe and K. Mumtaz (ed.): *Internal Conflicts in South Asia*, Zed Books, London (1996).



During the mid 1990s, large amounts of funds were siphoned off from public sector banks, insurance companies and investment institutions such as the National Investment Trust (NIT) and the Investment Corporation of Pakistan (ICP). The evidence was found in the non-performing loans, which the state controlled financial institutions were forced to give to the friends of the regime, in most cases without collateral<sup>65</sup>. During this period the NIT and ICP were forced to lend to patently unviable projects which were then quickly liquidated. The purpose of such lending apparently was not to initiate projects but to transfer state resources into private hands. The case of an oil refinery in Karachi and a cement plant in Chakwal have been quoted as examples of infeasible projects funded by the NIT on political grounds and both projects declaring bankruptcy<sup>66</sup>.

According to a reliable estimate, the cost of such corruption to the banking sector alone was 10 to 15 percent of the GDP in 1996-97. It has been estimated that the overall cost to the country of corruption at the highest level of government, was 20% to 25% of the GDP in 1996-97, or approximately US \$ 15 billion. The estimate includes the losses incurred due to corruption in public sector corporations such as the Pakistan International Airlines, Sui Northern Gas, Pakistan State Oil, Pakistan Steel, Heavy Mechanical Complex, the Water and Power Development Authority, and the Karachi Electric Supply Corporation. The losses of these public sector corporations had to be borne by the government and constituted a significant element in the growing budget deficits.<sup>67</sup>

The device of forcing state controlled banks to lend to family members or family owned companies was persistently used during the 1990s. This contributed to increasing bad debts of nationalized banks, and reducing the credit available for genuine trade and investment.

Occurring at a time when GDP growth had already begun to fall below its historical trend rate, widespread governmental corruption may have been a significant factor in intensifying the slow down in investment, increasing the

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<sup>65</sup> See: S.J. Burki. op.cit. Page 174.

<sup>66</sup> S.J. Burki, op.cit. Page-175.

<sup>67</sup> S.J. Burki, op.cit. Page 132.

economic burden on the poor and perpetuating the inadequacy of basic services during this period.

The World Bank in its recent literature has focused on the link between good governance and greater and more equitable development.<sup>68</sup> Conversely it can be argued that widespread corruption in Pakistan during the 1990s adversely affected investment and growth in at least three ways: (1) The uncertainty and lack of transparency in government policy and the loss of time and money associated with governmental corruption would create an unfavourable environment for private sector investment. (2) Widespread corruption implied that following an investment decision, the investor would have had to pay bribes at various stages of project approval and implementation thereby raising project cost. A significant proportion of private sector savings directed at new projects would flow to corrupt government officials rather than into productive investment. The consequent decline in the overall productivity of capital in the economy would lead to lower GDP growth for given levels of investment. Evidence shows that such a decline in the productivity of capital did indeed occur in the 1990s. Recent estimates show that in Pakistan's manufacturing sector, the productivity of capital has been declining since 1992-93.<sup>69</sup> (3) Since banks and investment finance institutions were being forced to lend on political grounds and there were substantial defaults as a result, it is clear that a significant proportion of banking capital was being transferred as rents to corrupt individuals. This would adversely affect private investment in two ways: (a) There would be lesser credit available for investment. (b) Due to the increased "transactions cost" of banks following defaults, the interest rate for private investors would increase.

Corruption during the 1990s, may have not only slowed down investment and growth but also increased inequality and the economic burden on the lower income groups. This happened in three ways: (1) Increased corruption and mismanagement in government meant that for given levels of development expenditure, there were fewer and poorer quality of public goods and services. This was clearly manifested in the deterioration of the irrigation system with

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<sup>68</sup> Governance and Development World Bank, Washington DC. Page 3.

<sup>69</sup> See: Nomaan Majid. Pakistan: An Employment Strategy, ILO/SAAT, December 1997.

lesser water available at the farm gate<sup>70</sup>, as well as a reduced availability and quality of health, education and transport services provided by the government. (2) The total development expenditure (as a percentage of GDP) itself fell sharply during the 1990s, partly due to budgetary constraints induced by low revenues. The problem of the narrow tax base was accentuated by the massive leakage in the tax collection system due to corruption. According to one estimate this leakage amounted to 3 percent of the GDP, about twice the level ten years earlier.<sup>71</sup> The consequent low revenues, combined with slower GDP growth and high levels of government's current expenditure, led to unsustainably high levels of budget deficits. (3) Since the government was unable to plug the leakage in the tax collection system, or reduce non development expenditure, it had to resort to increased indirect taxation to deal with the fiscal crisis. Evidence on the incidence of taxation during the late 1980s and early 1990s shows that the tax burden as a percentage of income was highest at 6.8 percent for the lowest income group (less than Rs.700 per month) and lowest at minus 4.3% for the highest income group (over Rs.4,500 per month)<sup>72</sup>. Thus, the burden of governmental mismanagement and corruption was passed on to the poorest sections of society.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Out of the 93 MAF of water extracted from the rivers as little as 31 MAF reached the farmer, i.e. 67% of the water was lost due to deterioration in canals and water courses.

<sup>71</sup> Shahid Javed Burki: Governance, Corruption and Development: Some Major obstacles to Growth and Development, The Banker, Lahore Spring 1998.

<sup>72</sup> See: Overcoming Poverty, Report of the Task Force on Poverty Alleviation, May 1997.

<sup>73</sup> Corruption by successive governments during the 1990s was not only a factor in undermining the economy, and intensifying the deprivation of the poor, but also in eroding the very legitimacy of the political system.

Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's government in August 1990, and Nawaz Sharif's government in April 1993 were both dismissed by President Ishaq Khan under Article 58.2(b) of the constitution on charges of corruption and economic mismanagement. In July 1997, during her second tenure as Prime Minister, Bhutto's government was dismissed on similar charges, this time by President Farooq Leghari who had been her close political associate. President Leghari in his dismissal order charged that the corruption under Benazir Bhutto's government had seriously damaged state institutions. Furthermore, he believed that mismanagement and corruption had brought the entire political system "close to collapse". (S.J. Burki, Pakistan: Fifty Years of Nationhood, op.cit. Page 171).

### **IV.3. Economic Growth, Employment and Poverty in the Decade of the 1990s**

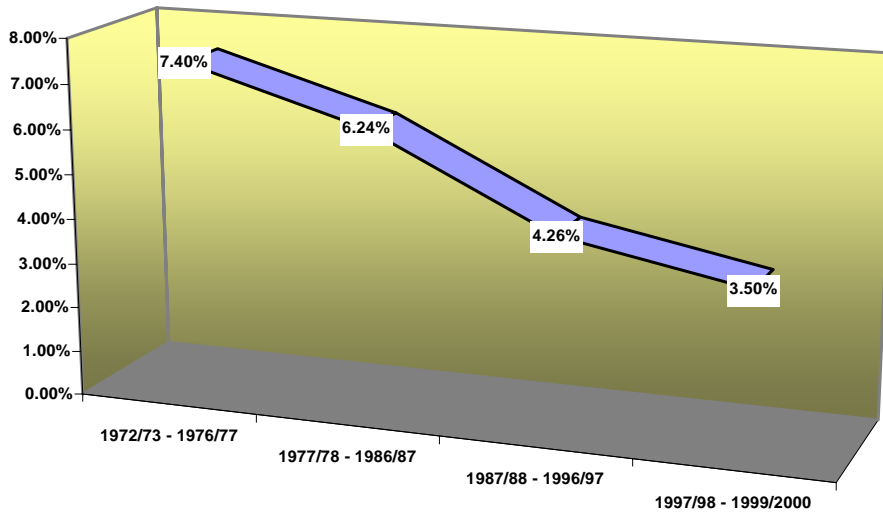
During the decade of the 1990s, political instability, historically unprecedented corruption in governance, and the worsening *law and order* situation perhaps had a significant adverse effect on private investment and GDP growth. Yet these factors merely accentuated the tendency for declining growth that was rooted in structural factors, which were manifest even in the 1980s. The failure of successive governments in this period to address the deteriorating infrastructure and the emerging financial crisis further exacerbated the unfavourable environment for investment. As table 1 shows, total investment (as a percentage of GDP) declined from 17.9% in the period 1988-93 to 16.3% in the period 1993-1998. The decline in the overall investment was due to the fact that while the private sector investment did not increase (it remained around 9%), the public sector investment declined sharply from 8.7% at the end of the 1980s to 5.3% at the end of the 1990s. The decline in the public sector investment was to an extent due to “budgetary constraints”: successive governments being unable to reduce their unproductive expenditures chose instead to reduce development expenditure which fell from an average of 7.4% of GDP in the Z.A. Bhutto period (1973-77) to only 3.5% of GDP in last Sharif regime, 1997-98 to 1999-2000 (See Table 5). The chart 3 shows development expenditure as a percentage of GDP in various periods. This percentage falls from 7.4% in the Z.A. Bhutto Regime to 3.5% in the last Nawaz Sharif regime. By contrast, chart 4 shows that unproductive expenditure on government remained at a high level.

The sharp decline in the investment and the GDP growth for such a protracted period in the 1990s though unprecedented in Pakistan’s history, had nevertheless been predicted. My study in 1987 had argued that the high growth experience of the preceding three decades may not be sustainable in the next decade due to structural constraints rooted in the deteriorating infrastructure, low savings rates and slow export growth.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Akmal Hussain in his 1987 study predicted:“.....if present trends continue, we may be faced with the stark possibility that high GDP growth may not be sustainable over the next *five years*.....” (Emphasis added). See: Akmal Hussain: Strategic Issues in Pakistan’s Economic Policy, Progressive Publishers, Lahore 1988, Page xviii.

**Chart 3**  
**Development Expenditure (ADP) as a Percentage of GDP in Various Periods**



While GDP growth declined during the 1990s (from 6.3% in the 1980s to 4.2% in the 1990s), employment growth has continued to remain at a low level of 2.4% since the 1980s. This indicates that the employment problem persisted during the 1990s. At the same time the growth of labour productivity declined (see Table 6), which would be expected to push real wages downwards. The available evidence shows that this is indeed what happened in the 1990s: an ILO study suggests that real wages of casual hired labour (which is the predominant form of hired labour in Pakistan) declined in both agriculture and industry, during the 1990s.<sup>75</sup>

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Declining growth in the next decade could be predicted because: “..... the strategic variables and sectors through which growth is sustained over time seem to show a declining trend: For example the growth rate of fixed investment, the domestic savings rate, the growth rate in the value of exports, and finally the weight of the commodity producing sectors in the economy.....”, Akmal Hussain, op.cit. Page-4.

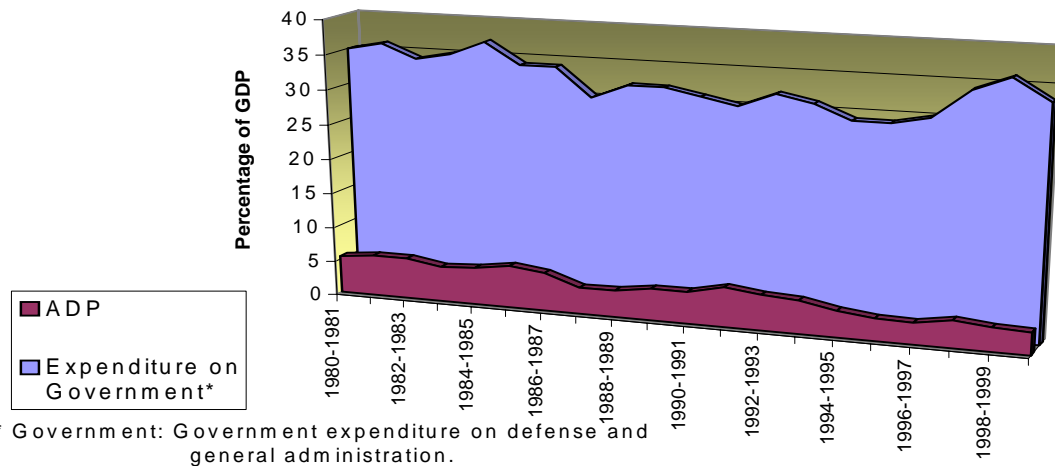
<sup>75</sup> Nomaan Majid: ILO/SAAT, op.cit. Pages 34, 35.

**TABLE 6****GROWTH OF GDP, EMPLOYMENT AND PRODUCTIVITY IN TWO DECADES**

<b>GROWTH</b>	<i>Percent</i>	
	<b>1980s</b>	<b>1990s</b>
1. GDP GROWTH	6.3	4.2
2. EMPLOYMENT GROWTH (TOTAL)	2.4	2.4
(i) Agriculture	1.9	1.6
(ii) Manufacturing	1.4	-0.4
3. PRODUCTIVITY GROWTH (TOTAL)	3.9	1.8
(i) Agriculture	2	1.7
(ii) Manufacturing	7	4.6

*SOURCE:* NOMAAN MAJID, PAKISTAN: AN EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY, ILO/SAAT, DECEMBER 1997 (Mimeo), TABLE A5, PAGE 58.

**Chart 4**  
**Expenditure on Government\* Compared to Development Expenditure (Percent of GDP)**



An examination of the evidence on employment elasticities in various sectors shows that the employment elasticity in the manufacturing sector declined sharply from 0.17 in the 1980s to minus 0.10 in the 1990s, while in agriculture it declined only slightly. However employment elasticities in construction and trade increased substantially over the two decades (see Table 7). This evidence of declining employment elasticities in agriculture and manufacturing when combined with the evidence of declining output growth in these two sectors, suggests a crisis of employment and poverty emerging during the 1990s.<sup>76</sup> The

<sup>76</sup> Agriculture and manufacturing have historically absorbed the bulk of the employed labour force in Pakistan. For example in 1969-70, 72.6% of the total employed labour

**TABLE 7****EMPLOYMENT ELASTICITIES OF OUTPUT BY SECTORS IN TWO DECADES**

<b>EMPLOYMENT ELASTICITY</b>	<i>Percent</i>	
	<b>1980s</b>	<b>1990s</b>
Agriculture	0.49	0.48
Manufacturing	0.17	-0.10
Construction	1.05	1.81
Electricity & Gas	-0.39	0.32
Transport	0.48	0.14
Trade	0.37	1.22

*SOURCE: NOMAAN MAJID, PAKISTAN: AN EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY, ILO/SAAT, DECEMBER 1997. PAGE 48*

fact that there were slower economic growth rates, declining employment elasticities and falling real wages in both agriculture and industry during the 1990s, had an important implication for the mechanism of poverty creation: It meant that increasingly, the second family members of households on the margin of poverty could not get adequate wage employment. This could have been a significant factor in pushing increasing numbers of households into poverty.

A second important dimension of the dynamics of poverty creation in this period was located in the increased fluctuations in agricultural output which was pointed out in a recent study.<sup>77</sup> It indicates that under conditions of declining input productivity, when higher input/acre is required to maintain yields, the subsistence farmers with fewer resources are likely to suffer a greater than average decline in yields compared to large farmers. At the same time, due to

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force was employed in these two sectors. By the mid nineties this percentage fell, but was still over 60%.

<sup>77</sup> Akmal Hussain: Employment Generation, Poverty Alleviation and Growth in Pakistan's Rural Sector: Policies for Institutional Change, ILO/CEPR, Mimeo, 1999. This study analyses the structural factors that slowed down agricultural growth and increased its variability from year to year.



lack of savings to fall back on, they are relatively more vulnerable to bad harvests under conditions of unstable growth.<sup>78</sup> Consequently, slower and more unstable growth during the 1990s could be expected to be accompanied by growing poverty and inequality. The evidence shows that this is precisely what happened during the 1990s: The Gini coefficient, which is a measure of the degree of inequality, increased from 26.85 in 1992-93 to 30.19 in 1998-99. Similarly the percentage of the population below the poverty line (calorific intake basis) was 26.6% in 1992-93, and increased to 32% in 1998-99<sup>79</sup>.

#### **IV.4 Postscript: The Military Regime and After**

The multifaceted crisis of economy, society and state, as we have seen in this paper, reached a critical point by the end of the 1990s. The collapse of the formal democratic structure within which the contention for power by the informal “Troika” had been conducted, created the space for yet another military intervention in Pakistan’s politics in October 1999. In view of the gravity of the crisis the Supreme Court validated the military take over and gave General (later President) Musharraf permission to run the government for upto three years and hold general elections by October 2002.

During the extra constitutional interregnum President Musharraf’s government formulated a comprehensive set of reforms aimed at addressing the crisis of poverty, reviving the economy and establishing the institutional basis of good governance. At the same time through a number of constitutional amendments the political system was restructured. The powers of the President were enhanced and a National Security Council was established to ensure that the newly elected government maintains the “continuity” of reforms initiated by the military government. The new political dispensation signifies the institutionalization of military power within the political structure. What was previously an informal presence in the conduct of governance (see Section IV.1 of this paper) has now become formal. It therefore embodies a shift in the balance of political power from the civilian to the military domain within the political

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid. Page 4.

<sup>79</sup> Federal Bureau of Statistics, Government of Pakistan, April 2001, (Mimeo).

system. As we have seen in this paper, this is a shift that was the result as much of the failure of democratic governments to pursue public interest in the 1990s, as it was by the military to maintain its influence in politics.

It appears that the issue of the relative power enjoyed by the military in Pakistan's political structure may be resolved through a process of the development of institutions and political culture in Pakistan's polity.

For the latest elected government, the challenge at the political level lies now more than ever before in translating the vision of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah into specific policies and institutions to build a modern democratic state. Moderation, tolerance and humanness are required to build a dynamic Muslim community that can enrich human civilization in the contemporary world. These features in Pakistan's polity are indeed necessary if Pakistan is to flourish by acquiring the support of the international community for reviving the economy, and achieving both human security and the security of the State.

At the economic level the challenge is to win international financial and technical support to launch a three-pronged initiative for poverty alleviation and economic revival. The first prong would consist of a major development program that can provide health, education, basic services and employment opportunities to the people. The second prong would consist of giving a jump-start to the economy by acquiring international financial and technical support for building infrastructure projects such as ports, highways, medium sized dams, and projects for improving the delivery efficiency of irrigation. The third prong would consist of facilitating foreign and private sector investment projects in high value added small-scale industries that can generate both higher employment and higher exports per unit of investment.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

In this paper we have traced through various political regimes, the dynamic interaction between the processes of deterioration in the institutions of governance on the one hand and the structure of the economy on the other. The

purpose was to understand the emergence of the process of increasing poverty, the tendency for loan dependence and slow GDP growth.

The Ayub regime was characterized by denial of political rights to the people and economic policies that induced acute social and regional economic disparities. The resultant political tensions exploded into a civil war and the emergence of independent Bangladesh. We saw how the mechanisms of rural poverty observable to-day, were rooted in the increased peasant dependence on the landlord, and asymmetric markets for inputs and outputs that resulted from a particular form of agricultural growth during the Ayub period. The analysis also showed how the tendency for the economy's loan dependence so manifest to-day, may have originated in the policies of the Ayub regime. The government by providing state subsidies locked the economy into an industrial structure which was dominated by low value added industries, incapable of generating adequate foreign exchange for the country.

The structural constraints to fiscal space were exacerbated as successive governments engaged in financial profligacy, and allocation of state resources based on considerations of political patronage rather than economic efficiency. Nationalization of industries during the Z.A. Bhutto period enlarged the domain of power and patronage for the regime. However the consequent growing losses of nationalized units laid the basis of subsequent fiscal haemorrhaging of the government. The sharply rising budget deficits during the Z.A. Bhutto period were accentuated by a huge increase in expenditures on the State apparatus as part of the attempt to build a domain of patronage and power within the State structure.

The military regime during 1977 to 1987 sought to establish dictatorial rule by means of an obscurantist and retrogressive version of religious fundamentalism. State resources were used for the first time to foster armed groups of religious extremists and to finance religious seminaries (madrassas) many of which, systematically indoctrinated young minds to hate and kill. The politics of the Zia period therefore laid the basis of the emergence of armed militant groups in society and sectarian violence which was to undermine the process of investment and growth as much as the institutions of governance.

During the Zia regime State funds were directed to establishing a theocratic State instead of urgently needed investment in the maintenance of the irrigation system and technical training of the human resource base. Consequently, when the cushion of foreign financial assistance was withdrawn after the Afghan war, investment and growth declined, budget deficits increased sharply, and poverty intensified.

The decade of the 1990s was marked by democratically elected leaders using public office for private gain. The resultant misallocation of national resources during this period accentuated the fiscal crisis. We have analyzed how the widespread corruption during this period was an important factor in not only reducing private sector investment, but also reducing the productivity of capital, thereby sharply slowing down GDP growth. During this period the structure of GDP growth also underwent further adverse changes as both capital and labour productivity fell sharply, together with declining employment elasticities. A reduction in capital productivity led to slower growth, while reduction in labour productivity led to falling real wages. As both GDP growth and real wages fell, poverty tended to increase. This tendency was reinforced by declining employment elasticities. Thus, bad governance and associated adverse changes in the structure of the economy, in this period, laid the basis for a rapid increase in poverty and unemployment.

We have seen how the military regimes of Ayub Khan and Zia ul Haq laid the structural basis for the deterioration in both the polity and economy of Pakistan. We have also seen that the democratically elected regimes in various periods not only sought authoritarian forms of power within formally democratic structures, but also accelerated the process of economic decline. The crisis of poverty and human development in Pakistan therefore is located as much in the deterioration of institutions and the economy, as it is in the failure of individual leaders to pursue public interest rather than their own.

The military regime of President Musharraf even though it institutionalized the role of the military in the political structure made progress towards the financial stabilization of the economy. The crisis in the real economy of poverty and slow growth however persists. The question is whether the present

elected government can pull Pakistan out of the national crisis of poverty, economic recession and the severe law and order situation. Focusing on these issues may well determine not just the success of the elected government but the evolution of democracy itself.

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# THE ROLE OF POLITICS IN PAKISTAN'S ECONOMY

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Ishrat Husain

Economic and social outcomes in Pakistan over the last sixty years are a mixture of paradoxes. The economic growth rate has averaged 5 percent annually since 1947—a feat achieved by very few countries. Politically, however, the interplay of religious fundamentalism, sectarianism, ethnic cleavages and regional economic disparities has made the country volatile and unstable. Various East Asian countries that were behind Pakistan in the 1960s have surged far ahead in most economic and social indicators. Pakistan has thus been unable to realize its potential.

It is usually believed that economic growth can take place only in the presence of political stability, but the Pakistani case contradicts conventional wisdom. In order to explain these paradoxes and contradictions, this article attempts to address the following questions:

- » How can a country that has suffered from political volatility and instability for such a long period achieve high economic growth?
- » Have periods characterized by stable authoritarian regimes in Pakistan provided the means for long term economic performance?
- » Have external influences, particularly the United States, played a constructive role?

Despite sharing a common historical, cultural and social milieu, Pakistan and India have pursued different paths since independence in 1947. Both countries have done reasonably well in improving their economies and reducing absolute poverty levels. India has, however, emerged as a stable and vibrant democracy while Pakistan has spent half of its post-independence years under military dictatorships and is currently struggling to quell an Islamic insurgency in the northwest part of



the country. The democracy–development nexus appears to be well entrenched in the case of India, while it is faltering in Pakistan. A great deal of recent literature has suggested that China and India are the typical representatives of authoritarian and democratic regimes, but fewer attempts have been made to resolve this puzzle in the case of India and Pakistan, two countries that are more akin to each other and share a common legacy.

In order to address these questions it is useful to revisit the essential dimensions of Pakistan’s economic and political history, a history which can be divided into six distinct periods:

- » The Flat Fifties, 1947 to 1958
- » The Golden Sixties, 1958 to 1969
- » The Socialist Seventies, 1971 to 1977
- » The Revivalist Eighties, 1977 to 1988
- » The Muddling Nineties, 1988 to 1999
- » The Reforming Hundreds, 1999 to 2007

#### PERIOD I: THE FLAT FIFTIES, 1947 TO 1958<sup>1</sup>

Pakistan came into existence as a moth-ridden country at the time of the partition of India. The British-controlled provinces of Punjab and Bengal were

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The physical separation between eastern and western Pakistan, with Indian territory in between, put Pakistan at a serious disadvantage from its inception.

each divided into two parts. East Punjab and West Bengal formed part of modern-day India; West Punjab and East Bengal, along with three other provinces, together formed Pakistan. The physical separation between eastern and western Pakistan, with Indian territory in between, put Pakistan at a serious disadvantage from its inception.

The foundation of an authoritarian streak in the polity was laid fairly early in Pakistan’s history. After the death of the first prime minister, Liaquat Ali Khan, and the ascent of bureaucrat Ghulam Mohammed to the office of Governor-General, the supremacy of politicians in the political order was lost.<sup>2</sup> In February 1953, martial law was imposed in Lahore to quell the anti-Qadiani movement.<sup>3</sup> Prime

Minister Khwaja Nazimuddin was dismissed by the governor general. Scholar Keith Callard termed this a “governor-general’s coup.”<sup>4</sup> He observed that three major conventions—the impartiality of the governor general, cabinet and party solidarity and the role of legislature as the maker and sustainer of government—had

been destroyed or gravely weakened.

Pakistan's ambassador to the United States, Mohammed Ali Bogra, was foisted as the new prime minister and six of the nine ministers of the dismissed cabinet joined the new government. Changing political loyalty has since become one of the main causative factors of political instability. Pelf, patronage and power have dominated the political scene.

The seeds of separation were further sown when the Muslim League lost the 1954 provincial elections in East Bengal due to a growing disaffection with the ruling political elite in West Pakistan. This elite from the Punjab province, instead of coming to grips with the grievances of East Bengal, adopted a confrontational strategy to consolidate their power by merging all four western Pakistan provinces into one province. As a result, East Pakistanis were antagonized when their province, which contained the majority population, was forced to accept parity with newly-formed West Pakistan in the Parliament.

The three smaller consolidated provinces—North-West Frontier Province (NWFP), Sindh and Baluchistan—also protested Punjab's attempt to establish hegemony.

The political atmosphere was too vitiated; political instability was too acute; tensions between the different tiers of the government were so damaging; the challenge of setting up the organs of a new state was so formidable; and the influx of millions of refugees from India was too demanding. As a result, economic management took a back seat in this formative phase of Pakistan's life.

## PERIOD II: THE GOLDEN SIXTIES, 1958 TO 1969<sup>5</sup>

Ayub Khan, the first military dictator of Pakistan, assumed complete control of the state in October 1958 and reigned over the golden period of Pakistan's economic history. With the help of Harvard advisors, Khan vigorously implemented the Planning Commission on Economic Management and Reforms with impressive results.<sup>6</sup>

GDP growth in this decade jumped to an average annual rate of 6 percent from 3 percent in the 1950s. The manufacturing sector expanded by 9 percent annually and various new industries were set up. Agriculture grew at a respectable rate of 4 percent with the introduction of Green Revolution technology. Governance improved with a major expansion in the government's capacity for policy analysis, design and implementation, as well as the far-reaching process of institution

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Changing political loyalty has since become one of the main causative factors of political instability. Pelf, patronage and power have dominated the political scene.

building.<sup>7</sup> The Pakistani polity evolved from what political scientists called a “soft state” to a “developmental” one that had acquired the semblance of political legitimacy.<sup>8</sup> By 1969, Pakistan’s manufactured exports were higher than the exports of Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia combined.<sup>9</sup> Though speculative, it is possible that, had the economic policies and programs of the Ayub regime continued over the next two decades, Pakistan would have emerged as another miracle economy.

However, the perception that income inequalities between the East and West had increased substantially and that wealth was concentrated in the hands of twenty-two families fuelled resentment among Bengalis who accused Ayub’s regime of reducing the East to an internal colony.<sup>10</sup>

Authoritarian regimes devoid of legitimate political power use the instruments of state power to win or maintain coalitions, build up new alliances or take coercive measures against recalcitrant individuals and groups. Ayub’s attempt to win legitimacy, introducing the Basic Democracies system, in fact caused his regime a loss of popularity and credibility. This disaffection with the military regime was exploited by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his Awami League Party. The arrest and trial of Mujibur under the Agartala conspiracy case turned him into a popular leader in East Pakistan. His six-point agenda of autonomy became the manifesto of the Awami League which swept the 1970 elections in East Pakistan with a

resounding majority. The reimposition of martial law and transfer of power to the Army chief, Yahya Khan, exposed the fragility of the guided democracy system.

Yahya Khan’s reluctance to transfer power to Sheikh Mujibur, the elected majority leader, reinforced Bengali suspicion and mistrust toward the Pakistani Army and West Pakistan. The post-25 March 1971 events led to a civil war that, with India’s strong backing, ended in the emergence of the independent state of Bangladesh.<sup>11</sup> The break-up of Pakistan had a traumatic effect on the national psyche and negated the very concept upon which Pakistan was founded. Although East Pakistan benefited from Ayub’s economic reforms, the fact that these benefits were perceived as a dispensation from

a quasi-colonial military regime to its colony—East Pakistan—proved to be lethal. According to I.A. Rehman, “[The] Central Establishment decided on a trade-off between autonomy and development but this maneuver failed in East Pakistan and it is unlikely to succeed in Balochistan and the tribal areas. The lesson is: no

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The overthrow of Ayub’s political system also reversed the economic system that had served the country so well. To outsiders, Pakistan had been a model developing economy.

federating unit will surrender its rights to autonomy in exchange for any development works however huge their fall out.”<sup>12</sup>

The overthrow of Ayub's political system also reversed the economic system that had served the country so well. To outsiders, Pakistan was a model developing economy to emulate, but domestically there was a total rejection of this economic model.

### PERIOD III: THE SOCIALIST SEVENTIES, 1971 TO 1977<sup>13</sup>

Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto took advantage of the resentment against Ayub's economic policies and promised to restore the principles of distributive justice and equity to the forefront of Pakistan's development strategy under the slogan of Islamic socialism.<sup>14</sup>

Bhutto's populist policies of nationalizing industries, banks, insurance companies, educational institutions and other organizations, derailed Pakistan's journey toward modernization and faster economic development. This setback hit Pakistan so badly that the East Asian countries that were lagging behind Pakistan in growth and economic indicators in the late 1960s not only overtook it but also became huge success stories. The oil price shock of the 1970s as well as droughts, floods and the withdrawal of external assistance did not help the situation, either. The growth rate in the 1970s fell to 3.7 percent per annum from the 6 percent recorded in the 1960s. Worst of all, the main plank on which the Bhutto government came to power—social justice—proved to be extremely weak. Income inequalities rose compared to the previous period while inflation accelerated, averaging 16 percent between 1971 to 1977, thereby hurting the poor.<sup>15</sup> The large-scale manufacturing sector performed very sluggishly, netting a growth rate of only 3 percent, primarily sparked by vast public sector investment.

The idea that government control of the commanding heights of the economy can best spearhead industrial growth, allocate resources and invest in the activities that it considers a priority not only failed to materialize but antagonized the private sector. The lesson learned from this experience was that good populist politics are bad for the economy.<sup>16</sup>

### PERIOD IV: THE REVIVALIST EIGHTIES, 1977 TO 1988<sup>17</sup>

The overthrow of the Bhutto government by a military coup in July 1977 and the ascendancy of a right wing military leader, General Zia ul-Haq, halted the socialist experiment. Political party activity was soon banned, thereby limiting political participation to the local level only. This small liberty, however, could not mask the centralization of political power in the hands of one man.

Zia ul-Haq used religion to provide legitimacy to his takeover and subsequent

rule, asserting that Islam should be a unifying force for overcoming ethnic, linguistic and other propensities prevailing in the country. Centralization and personal control over the affairs of the state thus became easy to manage under this paradigm. The nexus between the military regime and components of the religious right, such as Jamaat-e-Islami, was extended to engulf the Islamic militant groups that participated in the Afghan war against the Soviets. The roots of present Islamic fundamentalism in Pakistan can be traced to this period.

Zia benefited from participating in the campaign to overthrow the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, as large amounts of military and economic assistance from the United States flowed into Pakistan. The long-term costs were, however, colossal. The spread of *Kalashnikovs* and drug culture, ethnic and sectarian violence, the smuggling of goods and the emergence of *jihadist* parties can all be traced back to the 1980s.<sup>18</sup> *Madrassahs* and training camps for militant groups proliferated during this period. State laws were modified, new Shariah courts were established and the educational curriculum was revised to inculcate a more hard-line or radical Islamic way of life.

Economic conditions, however, did improve: GDP grew at 6.6 percent annually, with agriculture at 4 percent and the manufacturing sector at 9 percent. Fiscal deficits, however, widened to 8 percent of GDP despite a decline in development expenditure. Domestic borrowing to finance these deficits did not weaken growth immediately but had serious repercussions for public finances and macro-economic stability in the 1990s. As a consequence, Pakistan had to approach the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for assistance in 1988.

#### PERIOD V: THE MUDDLING NINETIES, 1988 TO 1999<sup>19</sup>

Nine different governments (four interim-appointed, four elected and one following the military coup of October 1999) ruled Pakistan in this period. Like the 1950s, when eight successive governments were formed, this period saw heightened political instability. Despite far-reaching reforms introduced in 1991, economic indicators once again fell sharply in contrast with the 1980s for several reasons other than political instability.

The failure to implement successive agreements led to the loss of Pakistan's credibility among the international financial community. The confidence of local investors eroded when the foreign currency deposits of Pakistanis were suddenly frozen. Foreign investors were unhappy as all the power purchase agreements were re-opened and criminal action was initiated against Hubco, Pakistan's largest foreign-owned power generation company. The GDP growth rate decelerated to 4 percent. While the agriculture sector recorded higher output, growth of the manufacturing sector was low. The investment ratio fell to 13.9 percent during 1998 and 1999 as foreign savings, which formerly bridged the gap between national savings

and investment, dried up in May 1998.

The persistence of fiscal (above 7 percent of GDP) and external deficits (4 to 5 percent of GDP) led to the accumulation of large levels of domestic and external debt throughout the decade. Development expenditures took a major hit and GDP dropped to 3 percent from 8 percent in the first half of the 1980s. Social sector expenditures were squeezed to accommodate higher debt service and defense expenditures. Total external debt levels became unsustainable, rising from \$20 billion in 1990 to \$43 billion (47.6 percent of GDP) in 1998. Exports stagnated and Pakistan lost its market share in a buoyant world trade environment. The incidence of poverty nearly doubled from 18 to 34 percent, and the unemployment rate rose as well. Social indicators lagged behind other countries in the region. The Human Development Index of the United Nations Development Programme ranked Pakistan in one of its lowest development categories.<sup>20</sup>

At least four main factors determined Pakistan's economic performance in the 1990s. First, political instability and frequent changes in the government followed by a reversal of decisions taken by the preceding government created an environment of uncertainty and a lack of predictability. Second, there was widespread misgovernance by the two major political parties ruling the country during this period. Personal, parochial and party loyalty considerations dominated decision-making while institutions were bypassed. Third, there was a lack of political will to make timely and difficult decisions. The cumulative effect of avoiding and postponing such decisions, coupled with the failure to correct the distortions at the right time, proved too costly. Fourth, there were unforeseen exogenous shocks, such as the nuclear testing in May 1998 that shook investors' confidence, accelerated the flight of capital, led to the imposition of economic sanctions and disrupted external economic assistance.

An interesting paradox is that the economic policies of both major political parties, the Pakistan Muslim League (PML) and the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), who took turns ruling during the 1990s, were similar and could not be faulted. Both parties were committed to deregulation, privatization, liberalization, greater reliance on market forces and other economic reforms. The supporters of PML and PPP argued that the dismissal of the Nawaz Sharif government in 1993 and of the Benazir government in 1996 did not allow positive trends to persist. It can only be speculated whether the economic output for the decade would have been better had these governments completed their terms in office. Poor governance would

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The failure to implement successive agreements led to the loss of Pakistan's credibility among the international financial community.

have been largely offset by the continuity in policies, programs and projects. The stop-and-go cycle faced by Pakistani economic actors imposed enormous costs in terms of macroeconomic instability.

#### PERIOD VI: THE REFORMING HUNDREDS, 1999 TO 2007<sup>21</sup>

In October 1999, the incoming military government was faced with four main challenges: heavy external and domestic indebtedness; high fiscal deficit and low revenue generation capacity; rising poverty and unemployment; and a weak balance of payments with stagnant exports.

The country faced a serious external liquidity problem as its reserves were barely sufficient to buy three weeks of imports and could not possibly service its short-term debt obligations. Workers' remittances decreased by \$500 million, foreign investment flows dwindled by \$600 million, official transfers turned negative and Pakistan had no access to private capital markets. In the domestic sector, the declining tax-to-GDP ratio and inflexible expenditure structure, whereby 80

percent of revenues were preempted to debt servicing and defense, constrained the government's ability to increase the level of public investment.

Structural policy reforms combined with an improvement in economic governance laid the foundations for accelerated growth from 2002 to 2007.<sup>22</sup> The economic growth rate averaged 7 percent, up from 3.1 percent in 2001 to 2002. Poverty was reduced by between 5 and 10 percentage points, depending upon the methodology used. The unemployment rate also fell from 8.4 percent to 6.5 percent and approximately 11.8 million new jobs were created between 1999 and 2008. Gross and net enrollment ratios at the primary school level recorded upward

movement. The re-profiling of the stock of debt brought down the debt-to-GDP ratio from 100 percent to 55 percent. Foreign exchange reserves increased to cover six months' imports from a few weeks' imports. The fiscal deficit remained below or slightly above 4 percent of GDP. The investment rate grew to 23 percent of GDP and an estimated \$14 billion of foreign private capital inflows financed many sectors of the economy. The exchange rate remained fairly stable throughout the period.

Since then, the elected government has not pursued the unfinished agenda of reforms with the same vigor and commitment. Governance issues that charac-

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During the Reforming Hundreds, lack of attention to economic issues by the incoming government further contributed to an atmosphere of crisis.

terized the 1990s have begun to rear their ugly heads once more. The situation worsened after March 2007, when the government became embroiled in a judicial crisis. The preoccupation with the impending elections resulted in serious lapses in economic management as key adjustment decisions to escalating international oil and commodity prices were postponed. The assassination of the most popular leader of the country, Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, plunged the country into a state of uncertainty while the transition from the military to the civilian-elected government was not managed properly. Lack of attention to economic issues by the incoming government further contributed to macroeconomic instability and created an atmosphere of crisis in the country. The global financial turmoil and the recession in OECD countries did not help either. So while domestic factors were mainly responsible for Pakistan's economic crisis, adverse external conditions worsened the problem; the global financial turmoil hampered foreign private inflows and the recession in OECD countries reduced the demand for Pakistani exports.

#### POLITICAL INSTABILITY AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

Pakistan has seen twenty-three governments in the past sixty years, including: fourteen elected or appointed prime ministers, five interim governments and thirty-three years of military rule under four different leaders.<sup>23</sup> Excluding the military and interim governments, the average life span of a politically elected government has been less than two years. If the five-year period of Bhutto is excluded, then the average span falls to 1.6 years.

The economic policy regime, on the other hand, has only changed twice in all of Pakistan's history.<sup>24</sup> The liberal private sector-led growth model that was put in place in the 1950s and accelerated in the 1960s was rolled back by Bhutto in the 1970s and became the socialist economic model. Since the rejection of this model in 1977 and the revival of the liberal model, the general thrust of economic policy has remained unaltered. There has been a broad consensus among all major political parties on the general principles that should underpin Pakistan's economic direction, namely:

- » Central planning and bureaucratic judgment are poor substitutes for the market's judgment in the allocation of scarce resources.
- » Licensing to open, operate, expand and close business by government functionaries should be discouraged.
- » Public sector ownership and management of business, production, distribution and trade leads to inefficiency, waste and corruption.
- » Over-regulation, controls and restrictions of all kinds on the private sector hike up the cost of doing business.



- » High tax rates on individuals and corporations are counterproductive as they discourage effort and initiative.
- » Banks and financial institutions owned and managed by the public sector offering cheap credit and/or directed credit have a pernicious effect on economic growth.
- » Administered prices of key commodities are the worst possible means of insulating the poor segment of the population from the onslaught of market forces.
- » Subsidies on inputs such as fertilizers, seeds, water, etc., incur heavy budgetary costs and benefit the well-to-do classes rather than the poor.
- » Foreign investment and multinational corporations are to be encouraged as they are important conduits for the transfer of technology, managerial skills and organizational innovation.<sup>25</sup>

While the government's implementation of policies, programs and projects has seen uneven and mixed results, the initiative in driving the economy can be credited to the private sector.

The agricultural sector, representing 20 percent of GDP, is owned and managed by private farmers. Manufacturing, with a few odd exceptions, is under the control of private firms. Wholesale and retail trade, transportation (with the exception of railways and Pakistan International Airlines), personal and community services, finance and insurance, ownership of dwellings and the construction sector all fall within the purview of the private sector. Only public administration, defense services and public utilities are directly managed and operated by the government. Imports and exports of goods and services are also privately managed. A rough approximation would indicate that goods and services produced, traded and distributed by the private sector amount to 90 percent or more of the national income while the government directly or indirectly owns, manages, controls or regulates the remaining 10 percent of national income. So it is the strength of private initiative, with all its flaws, operating in a relatively liberal policy environment, that has been the main driver of long-term economic growth in Pakistan.

In Pakistan, transitions from one political regime to another have been quite difficult, causing uncertainty and short-term reductions in the speed of economic growth. The transfer of power from the military to civilian regimes in 1971, 1988 and 2008 were marked with macroeconomic instability, a slow down in economic activities, rising unemployment and inflation and the adoption of a wait-and-see attitude by investors. But economic recovery has also been resilient; short-term losses caused by political volatility have not been large enough to offset the positive long-term secular economic movement.

## AUTHORITARIAN VS. DEMOCRATIC REGIMES

In Pakistan, the debate over whether authoritarian or democratic regimes have delivered better results in terms of economic performance has been quite fierce since General Khan took power in 1958. The spurts in economic growth during the 1960s, 1980s and 2000s, when the country was governed by military dictators, have led many to conclude that authoritarian regimes are better suited to bring about economic development. Parallels are drawn with China, Indonesia, Korea and Singapore.

Detractors of the authoritarian regimes, however, have skillfully torn apart the economic performance record of the Ayub, Zia and Musharraf periods. Since the legitimacy and perpetuation of these regimes were justified on the basis of good economic outcomes, those opposed to these regimes have assailed the very economic record that has been espoused as their achievement. Such detractors lay out three arguments.

First, they argue that the United States had always been more favorably disposed toward Pakistan's military dictators, as they are relatively more obsequious and subservient to the American interests. Thus, it is the acceleration of inflows of foreign assistance to Pakistan that led to the observed higher growth rates rather than sound economic policies, better governance and the efficient utilization of resources. Although empirical evidence to substantiate this argument hardly exists, it has become popular folklore: Ayub was rewarded for his close economic and military ties with the United States in confronting the Soviet Union; Zia ul-Haq received a boost as \$5 billion was channeled through Pakistan for Afghanistan's *mujahideen*; and Musharraf's decision to openly support the United States in the war on terror brought in approximately \$10 billion of military assistance.

Second, the solid record of high growth rates under military regimes is believed to result invariably in adverse distributional consequences. The Ayub period is blamed for the widening regional disparities that led to the secession of East Pakistan. Zia ul-Haq's policies were criticized for their failure to deal with structural weaknesses or reverse the damage done by the policies of nationalization. According to Parvez Hasan, "Zia's economic policies represented a rather sharp contrast between reasonably satisfactory short-term economic management and an almost total neglect of long-term policy issues. The long period of political stability

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and sustained growth under Zia ul-Haq offered major opportunities for dealing with the underlying structural issues but these were not exploited.”<sup>26</sup> Musharraf’s economic strategy, which made Pakistan one of the fastest growing Asian economies, was also dismissed on the same grounds: that consumer-led, credit-induced, service-focused growth neglected agriculture and the manufacturing sectors, making the rich richer and the poor poorer.<sup>27</sup> While the World Bank and Asian Development Bank publicly acknowledged a significant decline in the incidence of poverty and International Labor Organization (ILO) experts validated the fall in the unemployment rate, the authenticity of the poverty and unemployment data

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has been challenged. It became the norm to practice selective acceptance of government-produced data showing negative trends and outright rejection of the data from the same source showing positive trends.

The third line of argument is quite persuasive. Economic accomplishments devoid of political legitimacy, however impressive they may be, prove to be short lived. Without the involvement and participation of the people, elegant and technically sound economic solutions developed by authoritarian regimes are quickly replaced once the regime changes, causing irreparable losses to the economy. The recent example

whereby good initiatives taken by the Musharraf regime were either suspended, deprived of funds or abolished completely attests to this phenomenon. Some of these initiatives, such as revitalizing higher education and expanding adult literacy and health programs have been brought to a grinding halt. The Devolution Plan of 2001, which decentralized the delivery of basic services to local levels, is at serious risk of abandonment.

The phenomenon of abandoning the previous government’s plans and policies is not confined to the military-civil transitions but also from one elected civilian government to the other. Benazir Bhutto rightly embarked upon public-private partnerships by inviting independent power producers (IPPs) from the private sector to set up electricity generation plants to overcome power shortages. The IPPs were put on hold by the new government, which alleged that corruption was involved in the awarding of contracts. In another example, the incoming Bhutto government suspended the motorway project initiated by the Nawaz Sharif government. By the time the project had resumed, time delays, cost over-runs, contract cancellations and legal entanglement had reduced the efficacy of the project.

Both the civilian-elected and military regimes have demonstrated the same characteristics and weaknesses—personality cult leadership, centralized decision-

making, repression of opponents and cronyism. When one goes beyond labels and examines the actual behavior of military and civilian regimes, most distinctions appear superficial.

Pakistan has over the last sixty years been an authoritarian polity both under the civilian as well as military regimes. 'Authoritarianism' involves great reverence and obedience to authority and stands opposite to individualism and freedom that come with it. Both the civilian leaders coming from an agrarian and feudal social background and military leaders from the Command and Control structure of the armed forces have demanded absolute loyalty and compliance with their institutions of origin.<sup>28</sup>

#### EXTERNAL INFLUENCES

The international community showed skepticism at the creation of Pakistan. Liberal Western democracies were unable to reconcile themselves with the partition of a country on the basis of religion. Scholars such as Christopher Jaffrelot believed that Muslim historical heritage was an insufficient bond to glue ethnically diverse groups into a nation.<sup>29</sup>

In any case, the structural deficiency in the creation of Pakistan, the adversarial relationship with its large neighbor India, the internal fissiparous tendencies among the various ethnic and linguistic communities and a weak economic base with no significant natural or human resources all added to Pakistan's insecurities and pushed it toward finding a strong ally. The United States was more than happy to oblige and found that Pakistan's strategic location fit in well with its desire to build a *cordon sanitaire* around the Soviet Union, China and Eastern Europe.

Pakistan viewed U.S.-sponsored pacts, including the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) and the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO), as guarantees that the United States would come to its rescue if its territorial integrity was threatened by India. Thus the marriage between a new, insecure state wanting to protect its territorial integrity, and a superpower looking for key strategic assets and alliances in Asia and the Middle East was quite convenient.

During the Cold War, Pakistan aligned itself with the United States while India aligned itself with the Soviet Union. Despite lofty ideals for democracy promotion, the United States found the efficiency of an obsequious military regime, with its unified command and control structure, to be more suitable for its larger geopolitical goals as opposed to dealing with a messy, dispersed and ineffective democracy. Would a democratic regime have allowed U.S. access to an air base in Peshawar to fly spy planes to the Soviet Union? Would the U.S. strategy of

removing the Soviets from Afghanistan have been so successful absent a military regime's help? Would the Bush ultimatum in the aftermath of 9/11 have been accepted by a political leadership that did not combine the command of the military and the constitutional authority of the civilian government? The answers to these questions are unclear at best.

In turn, Pakistan allowed U.S. policymakers considerable space for intervening in domestic public policy matters. The United States became actively engaged in Pakistan's economic development through its bilateral military, development and food assistance. The most critical and enduring intervention was the induction of the Harvard Development Advisory Service in the planning machinery. The Ford Foundation became actively engaged in the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE). A large number of young economists, planners and civil servants were sent to leading U.S. universities for advanced degrees and occupied key policymaking and technocratic positions in the government. This combination of foreign advisors, Pakistanis trained in U.S. universities and policy-oriented research

at PIDE laid the foundations of economic thinking for a market-friendly, private sector-led liberal, neoclassical model.

As political uncertainty and instability are anathema to a market-based economy, something had to be done to fix this supposed problem. The solution was the strengthening of the military, which even today remains professionally the best institution in the country. Because of its merit-based induction and promotion system, coupled with superb professional training and conduct, the Pakistani military was considered the real guardian of the nation's territorial and ideological frontiers. It believed it had the best interests of the country at heart and therefore knew exactly how to bring about the reforms needed to spur

economic development. Every military dictator removed the preceding elected governments on the pretext that they were damaging the economy. Transparency, continuity, consistency and predictability are needed by the markets, and the military regimes thought they were the only ones who could provide those enabling factors.

The empirical evidence to the above hypothesis is provided by the relative economic outcomes during the three military regimes compared to the dozen civilian governments. Economic development under Ayub was a high point in U.S.-Pakistan relations as Pakistan was presented as a model for other developing

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The United States became actively engaged in Pakistan's economic development through its bilateral military, development and food assistance.

countries to follow. Zia ul-Haq and Musharraf pursued the same set of policies over longer periods of stability, producing impressive results. Nawaz Sharif's reforms in 1991 were even more far-reaching and were followed by Benazir Bhutto and now by the Zardari government. But the outcomes under these civilian regimes have been disappointing; it was weak governance and not policy direction that created the deviations from the trend under various regimes.

Stephen Cohen also echoed the popular belief that the two most dramatic spurts in economic growth during the Ayub and Zia ul-Haq years were accompanied by high levels of aid from the United States, military grants from China and subsidies from Saudi Arabia.<sup>30</sup> The facts, unfortunately, do not substantiate this belief. In 1968, under the military government of Ayub, foreign aid commitment was 5.8 percent of GDP, while under the democratic regime of Bhutto it almost doubled to 10.5 percent.<sup>31</sup> Foreign savings comprised 21 percent of financing investment in the 1980s while from 1990 to 1994 it rose to an average of 25 percent.

The strained relationship with India, which has existed since 1947, has resulted in three wars and can be seen as one of the factors behind the erratic performance of Pakistan's economy. It is popularly believed that a high level of defense spending has had a detrimental effect on the economy. The wars fought with India over Kashmir are presumed to have led to substantial increases in defense expenditure. Parvez Hasan estimates that economic growth and social progress would have been faster if defense spending had been reduced by 2 percent of GDP and the liberated resources were utilized to increase public development spending by more than one-third.<sup>32</sup>

Pakistan's quest to acquire nuclear capability, conventional weapons, delivery systems and other defense mechanisms, was also a reaction to India's move to become a nuclear power. Whether this objective was achieved by sacrificing investment in education and social development remains a debatable but unsettled question. According to Hussain Haqqani, the intermittent flow of U.S. military and economic assistance encouraged Pakistan's military leaders to overestimate their power potential.<sup>33</sup> This, in turn, has contributed to their reluctance to normalize relations with India even after learning through repeated misadventures that Pakistan can, at best, hold India to a draw in military confrontations.


## CONCLUSION

Ten years ago, I argued that the failure of governance and the consistent domination of political power and the state apparatus by a narrowly based elite seeking to advance its private and parochial interests lay at the heart of the problem in Pakistan.<sup>34</sup> Regime changes, either military or civilian, did not make any substantive difference.

The experience I gained as an economic policymaker between 1999 and 2005 has fortified my belief in the validity of this proposition. Many far-reaching structural reforms were successfully carried out during this period, particularly in the initial three years. This was a period of relative political stability steered by technocrats, away from the civilians and the military. It has, however, been painful to see some of these reforms unravel, slow down or be relegated to the back burner since 2002, when a quasi-political regime assumed power.

On the basis of superficial empirical evidence it may be tempting to make a spurious correlation between economic growth and authoritarian regimes. But in reality the country has always paid a heavy price in the aftermath of non-democratic regimes in the form of severe economic disruptions, policy reversals, complete breakdowns of institutions and a lack of accountability. An orderly transition of power at regular intervals through a predictable democratic process is the least damaging means of keeping the economy moving on an even keel.

The *tour d'horizon* of the past sixty years of Pakistan's economic history lends credence to the argument that interruptions to the orderly political process whereby elected governments were dismissed, forced to resign or overthrown further accentuated the tendency of risk aversion. Besieged with a feeling of uncertainty over their future, elected representatives have indulged in distribution of patronage to their supporters as well as to self-enrichment. Both the preoccupation with keeping power—applied to both the military rulers and the elected regimes—and fending off attacks from the opposition by co-opting them through state patronage or by coercion has led to laxity in fiscal and monetary policies and to the concentration of economic and political power. The excessive use of discretion in case-by-case policymaking to favor narrow interest groups has derailed institutionalized decision-making based on well-established rules and transparency in transactions.

The lesson to be learned from this experience is quite obvious but worth repeating. Democracy, with such flaws and shortcomings as corruption and patronage, may cause economic disruptions and slow down development in the short-term. But it should be allowed to run its course as the inherent process of fresh leadership and governmental accountability through new elections provides a built-in stability to the system that eventually brings the economy back to equilibrium. Interruptions to the democratic process in the name of economic efficiency have created more problems than solutions in Pakistan. 

NOTES

<sup>1</sup> For substantive discussion of the political and economic developments in this period, see: Khalid Bin Sayeed, *Pakistan: The Formative Phase* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968); Lawrence Ziring, *Pakistan in the 20th Century: A Political History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); Safdar Mahmood, *Pakistan: Political Roots and Development 1947-99* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Hamid Yusuf, *Pakistan: A Study of Political Developments 1947-97* (Lahore: Sange Meel Publications, 1999); Andrus, J. Russell and Aziz Ali Mohammed, *Trade, Finance and Development in Pakistan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966); and Viqar Ahmed and Rashid Amjad, *The Management of Pakistan's Economy 1947-82* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984).

<sup>2</sup> Yusuf, *Pakistan: A Study of Political Developments 1947-97*.

<sup>3</sup> Qadiani is a religious minority sect that is not accepted as truly Islamic by orthodox Islamic groups.

<sup>4</sup> Keith Callard, *Pakistan: A Political Study* (Oxford: Allen & Unwin Ltd. 1968).

<sup>5</sup> This interesting period has been scrutinized by a number of scholars. Altaf Gauhar, *Ayub Khan: Pakistan's First Military Ruler* (Lahore: Sange Meel Publications, 1994); Hasan Askari Rizvi, *The Military and Politics in Pakistan* (Lahore: Sange Meel Publications, 2000); Saeed Shafqat, *Civil-Military Relations in Pakistan* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997); Herbert Feldman, *From Crisis to Crisis: Pakistan 1962-69* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972); Rushbrook Williams, *The State of Pakistan* (London: Faber and Faber, 1966); Mahbulul Haq, *The Strategy of Economic Planning: A Case Study of Pakistan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963); Irving Brecher and S.A. Abbas, *Foreign Aid and Industrial Development in Pakistan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972); and Stephen Lewis Jr., *Economic Policy and Industrial Growth in Pakistan* (London: Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1969).

<sup>6</sup> The two books produced by the Harvard advisors, G.F. Papanek, *Pakistan's Development: Social Goals and Private Incentives* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1967); and W. Falcon and G.F. Papanek, *Development Policy II/The Pakistan Experience* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971), summarize the philosophy that underpinned the Ayub era's economic policies and management.

<sup>7</sup> S.J. Burki and Laporte R., *Pakistan's Development Priorities* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1984).

<sup>8</sup> Omar Noman, *The Economic and Political Development of Pakistan* (London: Routledge, 1991).

<sup>9</sup> World Bank, *Pakistan Development Policy Review—A New Dawn?* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2002).

<sup>10</sup> Raunaq Jahan, *Pakistan: Failure in National Integration* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972).

<sup>11</sup> For an authoritative account see Hasan Zaheer, *The Separation of East Pakistan* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1994).

<sup>12</sup> I.A. Rehman, Editorial, *International News* (Pakistan), 19 July 2009.

<sup>13</sup> The narratives of this period can be found in: Anwar Syed, "The Pakistan's Peoples Party" in Lawrence Ziring, R. Braibanti and H. Wriggins, eds., *Pakistan: The Long View* (Durham, NC: Duke University Center for Commonwealth and Comparative Studies, 1977); Gilbert T. Brown, "Pakistan's Economic Development after 1971" in the same volume; S.J. Burki, *Pakistan under Bhutto 1971-77* (London: Macmillan, 1980); and Mahbulul Haq and Moin Baqai, *Employment, Distribution and Basic Needs: Essays in honour of Jawaid Azfar* (Lahore: Progressive Publications, 1986).

<sup>14</sup> Farzana Shaikh, *Making Sense of Pakistan* (London: Hurst & Co., 2009).

<sup>15</sup> The widespread perception that income inequalities rose during the high-growth period of Ayub Khan and declined during the socialist period of Z.A. Bhutto is belied by the following data: the Gini coefficient in 1963/64: 0.355; in 1968/69: 0.328; in 1979: 0.375. Presented by researchers A.R. Kemal and Moazzam Mahmood, "Poverty and Policy in Pakistan" in Tariq Banuri, Shahrulkh Rafi Khan and Moazzam Mahmood, eds., *Just Development: Beyond Adjustment with a Human Face* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

<sup>16</sup> For a more sympathetic view see Haris Gazdar, "Poverty in Pakistan: A Review," in Shahrulkh Rafi Khan, ed., *Fifty Years of Pakistan's Economy: Traditional Topics and Contemporary Concerns* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).



- <sup>17</sup> For a review of this period by a close aide and confidant of Zia, see K.M. Arif, "The Role of the Military in Politics 1947-97" in Hafeez Malik, ed., *Pakistan: Founder's Aspirations and Today's Realities* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2001); K.M. Arif, *Working with Zia: Pakistan's Power Politics 1977-88* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1995); other analyses include S.J. Burki and Craig Baxter, *Pakistan under the Military: Eleven Years of Ziaul Haq* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1991); Mohammad Waseem, *Pakistan Under Martial Law 1977-1985* (Lahore: Vanguard Books Ltd., 2002); and Zingel Lattlemant, ed., *Pakistan in the 1980s* (Lahore: Vanguard Books Ltd., 1985).
- <sup>18</sup> Hassan Abbas, *Pakistan's Drift into Extremism* (London: M.E. Sharpe, 2005).
- <sup>19</sup> The tumultuous history of this period can be found in Craig Baxter, ed., *Pakistan on the Brink: Politics, Economics, and Society* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2004); Lawrence Ziring, *Pakistan at the Crosscurrent of History* (Lahore: Vanguard Books Ltd., 2004), particularly the chapter on Democracy and Hypocrisy; Owen Bennett Jones, *Pakistan: Eye of the Storm* (Lahore: Vanguard Books Ltd., 2002); S. Akbar Zaidi, *Issues in Pakistan's Economy* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1999); and Ian Talbot, "The Destruction of Democracy in Pakistan" and "Democracy in Crisis: Pakistan Politics 1993-98" in Ian Talbot, ed., *Pakistan: A Modern History* (Lahore: Vanguard Books Ltd., 1999).
- <sup>20</sup> United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report 1990* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).
- <sup>21</sup> S.J. Burki, in Shahrukh Rafi Khan, ed., *Pakistan under Musharraf, 1998-2002: Economic Reform and Political Change* (Lahore: Vanguard Books 2004); and Ahmed Faruqi, "Musharraf's Crisis of Legitimacy" in S.F. Hasnat and A. Faruqi, eds., *Pakistan: Unresolved issues of State and Society* (Lahore: Vanguard Books Ltd., 2008).
- <sup>22</sup> Ishrat Husain, *Economic Management in Pakistan* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2003).
- <sup>23</sup> Allen McGrath, *The Destruction of Pakistan's Democracy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).
- <sup>24</sup> For the long-term economic history of Pakistan, see M.L. Qureshi, *Planning and Development in Pakistan: Review and Alternatives 1947-82* (Lahore: Vanguard Books Limited, 1984); S. Akbar Zaidi, *Issues*; Shahrukh Rafi Khan, *Musharraf*; Parvez Hasan, *Pakistan's Economy at the Crossroads: Past Policies and Present Imperatives* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1998); Ishrat Husain, *Pakistan: The Economy of an Elitist State* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1999); S.J. Burki, *Pakistan: Fifty Years of Nationhood: Third Edition* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999); and Aftab Ahmad Khan, "Economic Development," in Rafi Raza, ed., *Pakistan in Perspective 1947-1997* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2001).
- <sup>25</sup> Ishrat Husain, "The Economy of Pakistan: Past, Present and Future," in Robert Hathaway and Wilson Lee, eds., *Islamization and the Pakistani Economy* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2004).
- <sup>26</sup> Hasan, *Pakistan's Economy at the Crossroads*.
- <sup>27</sup> Kaiser Bengali, paper presented at a conference on Pakistan's economy at the National Defence University, Islamabad on 4 November 2008.
- <sup>28</sup> Rasul Bakhsh Rais, "Political Culture and Democracy," *Friday Times*, 31 August 2007.
- <sup>29</sup> Christopher Jaffrelot, ed., *Pakistan: Nation, Nationalism and the State* (Lahore: Vanguard Press, 2002). For an excellent review of Pakistan's relations with the United States over a five-decade period, see Dennis Kux, *The U.S. and Pakistan, 1947-2000: Disenchanted Allies* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2001).
- <sup>30</sup> Stephen Philip Cohen, *The Idea of Pakistan* (Lahore: Vanguard Books, 2005), 249.
- <sup>31</sup> Omar Noman, *Economic and Social Progress in Asia* (Lahore: Oxford University Press, 1997).
- <sup>32</sup> Hasan, *Pakistan's Economy at the Crossroads*, 352.
- <sup>33</sup> Hussain Haqqani, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military* (Lahore: Vanguard Books, 2005), 323.
- <sup>34</sup> Husain, *Pakistan: The Economy of an Elitist State*, 353.

## Egypt violence sparks protests across Muslim world

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM/CAIRO: Protesters across the Muslim world rallied Friday against a deadly crackdown in [Egypt](#) that cost the lives of hundreds of supporters of ousted Islamist President Mohammad Morsi.

In neighboring Sudan, hundreds of people chanted against Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi, the army chief who orchestrated the July 3 ouster of Egypt's first elected president after millions protested to demand an end to his turbulent year in power.

An AFP reporter said about 500 people from various Islamic organizations rallied near Sudan's presidential palace, carrying pictures of Morsi and Egyptian flags.

"Al-Sisi: Israeli and USA agent," they shouted.

Nearly 600 died Wednesday when security forces moved to disperse two [Cairo](#) protest camps of Morsi's [Muslim Brotherhood](#) supporters, drawing global condemnation.

Riot police monitored the demonstration but did not intervene, which they routinely do against other protests.

Bigger protests took place in [Turkey](#) where 2,000 demonstrators waving Islamic flags and chanting anti-U.S. slogans took to the streets in Turkey's two biggest cities.

In the capital Ankara, around 1,000 protesters marched from the largest mosque after Friday prayers to the U.S. Embassy, where the crowd, angered by Washington's failure to call Morsi's ouster a coup, chanted "Murderer America, get out of Turkey."

Like in Sudan, riot police stood watch nearby but there was no intervention by the security forces.

In Istanbul, hundreds of protesters gathered in the conservative district of Eyup, shouting pro-Morsi and Islamic slogans and waving Egyptian, Palestinian and Syrian opposition flags.

Turkey has emerged as one of the fiercest international critics of what it has called an "unacceptable coup" after the military toppled Morsi last month. On Thursday it recalled its ambassador, prompting Cairo to reciprocate.

Elsewhere in Jerusalem, some 600 people affiliated with the Hamas movement that rules the Gaza Strip held the demonstration after Friday prayers, an AFP correspondent said.

The demonstrators held posters of Sisi and Hitler, with captions stating the Nazi leader had “killed Jews for his people,” while the Egyptian army chief “killed his people for the Jews.”

In Pakistan, demonstrators also condemned the use of force against the Muslim Brotherhood, witnesses said.

The rallies were mostly organized by Islamic political parties including Jamaat-e-Islami, which has ideological links to the Brotherhood.

In Pakistan’s conservative northwestern province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a total of more than 1,000 JI activists held rallies in four cities, including the main city Peshawar.

Similar pro-Morsi rallies took place in Tunisia, Yemen and Indonesia after Friday prayers.

The worldwide protests came as Egypt’s tourism industry was facing meltdown as foreign governments ordered visitors to stay in their hotels and tour operators began canceling trips to the country.

German travel groups TUI and [Thomas Cook](#) announced Friday that they were canceling all holidays to Egypt until Sept. 15 in light of the uncertain security situation.

Russia, which has more than 50,000 of its nationals currently on holiday in Egypt and a similar number booked to go there in the coming months, advised travel agents to stop selling packages to the North African state.

Britain, which had previously excluded the popular [Red Sea](#) resorts from its travel advisory, Friday told its nationals visiting the resort of Hurghada to stay in their hotels, in line with advice received from the Egyptian police.

The warning followed a death in Hurghada Wednesday.

British travel association ABTA estimates that there are currently around 40,000 Britons in Red Sea resorts such as Hurghada and Sharm el-Sheikh, which is an eight-hour drive from Cairo.

Tour operator Thomas Cook said it had canceled excursions from the Red Sea resorts to Cairo, Luxor, Moses’ mountain and Saint Catherine’s monastery.

Italy, which has an estimated 19,000 citizens in Egypt, advised them not to venture out on excursions.

The federation of Italian tour operators Fiavet said earlier this week that there had been an 80-percent drop in the number of Italians visiting Egypt this year.

The warnings issued by Britain and Italy were mirrored in France, Germany and Spain.

## **Decoding the Central Asian 'spillover'**

### **A diminished Western military presence in Afghanistan has some fearing of increased regional instability.**

As the 2014 withdrawal looms, a new buzzword has taken hold in the Central Asian capitals to the north: "spillover". The theory is that with a diminished Western military presence, Afghanistan's security forces will be unable to keep the country from descending into anarchy or a Taliban takeover - neither of which Central Asian governments want at their doorstep.

Central Asia's leaders [repeatedly](#) voice this fear. And on the face of it, the concern seems justified. Borders in the region are porous, especially the 800-mile long Afghanistan-Tajikistan border, which is almost entirely unguarded. And during the 1990s, before the Western presence in Afghanistan, a variety of Islamist groups successfully carried out a [number of attacks](#) in Central Asia.

And yet, the fear of post-2014 "spillover" is based on little evidence. The most prominent terror group in Central Asia, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, is now based in the Pakistan-Afghanistan borderlands and seems to have moved on entirely from its namesake. Scholars who study the group say that while it has kept the name, it now expresses [no interest in Central Asia](#). And even when Central Asian Islamists were at their most active, they never posed a serious threat to the governments of the region. Nearly a century of Soviet-driven modernisation made the vast majority of Central Asians into secular citizens with little taste for Taliban-style conservatism.

Two or three years ago, the main question between Tajikistan and US representatives was economic questions, human rights, democracy, and stability. But now, the main topic is military cooperation, transit.

Muhiddin Kabiri, Tajikistan's leading opposition figure

Additionally, there will likely be little from Afghanistan to spill over: while the details are still being worked out, the US and NATO will still maintain a [substantial presence](#) in Afghanistan after 2014, at least enough to keep a lid on any serious instability. And even during their heyday, the Taliban were concentrated in southern Afghanistan and had little to do with their northern neighbours.

Yet, the narrative of "spillover" survives because it serves every powerful constituency involved in Central Asia. For Central Asia's dictatorial governments, it both attracts aid from foreign partners and allows them to tar any opposition in their countries, including legitimate political dissent, as dangerous and destabilising.

Scholar Sebastien Peyrouse [notes](#) how "Central Asian governments... secure outside support by emphasising the risk of terrorism and presenting themselves as victims, weakened by 'spillover' from Afghanistan. This diverts attention from their own responsibility for the drug trade and legitimises the repression of local Islamist movements by fusing notions of political opposition, Islamist extremism, and the drug trade." For the Kremlin, "spillover" provides a justification for re-establishing influence in their former Soviet satellites. And for the US State Department and military officials dealing with Central Asia it provides a pretext for maintaining involvement in the region in the face of US government budget crunch.

Most notably, the US has [substantially increased](#) military and other security assistance to Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan over the last several years, despite the fact security forces there are corrupt and used more commonly against political opponents than against real threats. And it's used the spillover narrative to justify the aid. In the case of Uzbekistan, for example, cooperation with the US has "raised their profile with international terrorist organisations, who may want to target Uzbekistan in retribution. So, it is very much in our interest to help Uzbekistan defend itself against such attacks," [said Robert Blake](#), the State Department's top diplomat for Central Asia.

As it leaves Afghanistan, the US has promised to leave some of its military equipment behind in Central Asia to help these governments protect themselves. And recently, CENTCOM [revealed](#) that it is planning to increase intelligence sharing with its partners in its area of responsibility, including in Central Asia. This, despite the fact that as regional military expert Roger

McDermott pointed out in a recent piece in *Jane's Intelligence Review* , Central Asian intelligence services "primarily look after the interests of the ruling regime... spying on the domestic political opposition, or on the activities of groups or individuals promoting human rights".

CENTCOM, however, cites spillover as a justification for its military engagement in the region. Lloyd Austin, CENTCOM's new commander, said in his [confirmation hearing](#) earlier this year that "there are several violent extremist organizations (VEOs), to include Al Qaeda and other Afghanistan - or Pakistan-based groups such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan that have expressed interest or intent to operate from and within Central Asia."

As Moscow doesn't even pretend to have qualms about arming dictatorships, the Kremlin's policy is even more cynical. Through its new post-Soviet security alliance the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), Russia has promised more than \$1bn in military assistance to Kyrgyzstan and \$200m to Tajikistan. The CSTO also has taken on [missions](#) in Central Asia like monitoring the Internet and preventing anti-government demonstrations. And it's justified its moves by invoking the specter of spillover.

"The forthcoming withdrawal of the International Security Assistance Force will only make the situation worse: radical regional and nationalists will intensify their activities in [CSTO] member states," [said Nikolai Bordyuzha](#) , the CSTO's secretary-general and formerly a top KGB official in Russia. "The Afghan factor is still responsible for a wide range of [security] threats in the Eurasian region. This country is where drug trafficking routes originate, from its territory armed groups and illegal migrants cross into neighbouring states and fundamentalist ideology is being exported."

The United States rarely talks about its military ties to Central Asia, preferring instead to promote its "New Silk Road Initiative" as its overarching strategy for Central Asia post-2014. And the talking points for that programme try a little rhetorical jiu-jitsu, emphasising "[positive spillover](#)" from regional trade. But whatever the merits of the strategy (and there [aren't many](#) ), it's clear the officials who tout it aren't actually dedicated to the idea: US officials emphasise that they [don't intend](#) to fund the initiative, just provide coordination. (Though, as the example of the bridge shows, lack of funding may be a virtue.)

Meanwhile, security assistance has [steadily grown](#), both in real terms and as a proportion of total US aid to Central Asia: from around 5 percent throughout the 1990s to more than 30 percent every year since 2007. The true motivation behind this funding is at least as much a desire to buy access for transit routes as it is a genuine response to the "spillover" threat. But the latter provides public cover for a policy that would otherwise be hard to sell.

Central Asian leaders hardly need help oppressing their populations, but arming them doesn't improve the situation. A Tajikistan military operation last summer [using US-trained-and-equipped special forces](#) in the city of Khorog was a [debacle](#) in which soldiers shot indiscriminately at civilians. One international official in Dushanbe said Tajikistan felt "emboldened" by US military aid to carry out the operation. And a human rights lawyer in Khorog, Manuchehr Kholiqnazarov, complained that "If the US gives money to our army and law enforcement agencies, they need to control where these funds go.... The Americans should ask why their money is being used to attack civilians instead of attacking terrorists and drug traffickers."

More generally, the American focus on security has shown the region's leaders that their priority is Afghanistan and security, and as long as Central Asia cooperates on that, anything else can be swept under the rug. Muhiddin Kabiri, Tajikistan's leading opposition figure, told me last year: "Two or three years ago, the main question between Tajikistan and US representatives was economic questions, human rights, democracy, and stability. But now, the main topic is military cooperation, transit. And human rights, democracy, free elections, these kinds of problems, maybe they will touch these questions, but only last, only for protocol. So our leaders are very lucky that the United States is not raising these sensitive questions."

The unfortunate irony of all this is that it is allegedly in the service of an effort to bring democracy and responsible government to Afghanistan. That goal still seems a long way off, but the true legacy of the war may be emboldened dictatorships in the countries next door.

*Joshua Kucera is a regular contributor to EurasiaNet, Jane's, Slate, and The Wilson Quarterly; his articles also have appeared in The Atlantic, ForeignPolicy.com, The International Herald Tribune, Al Jazeera English, The Diplomat, and U.S. News and World Report. He blogs on Eurasian defense and security at [The Bug Pit](#).*



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*The views expressed in this article are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect Al Jazeera's editorial policy.*

## **Economic prowess: In a non-polar world, Pakistan needs a fresh foreign policy**

By Yousuf Nazar

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### **Pakistan must redefine security to include energy, water, and economic security.**

That militancy is the biggest near term threat Pakistan faces is obvious. What may not be obvious is that the roots of militancy go deeper than just Pakistan's links with the Afghan Taliban or its support of various other militant groups.

They can be traced to Pakistan's foreign policy since 1947. The greatest challenge for Pakistan is to transform itself from a client national security state to a modern viable nation state. Pakistan cannot meet this challenge without making major changes in its foreign policy, the centre-piece of which would be a gradual shift in its focus from the West to the East. Although Pakistan must continue to expand ties with China, it should not think in terms of replacing the US with China as the largest source of aid.

An eastward-looking policy would attach the highest priority to the normalisation of relations with India and secure peace on the western borders because the 'peace dividend' alone can unlock the full potential of the region which is home to about one-fifth of humanity.

As the US prepares to withdraw from Afghanistan and reduce its involvement in the region in the backdrop of serious economic crisis, Pakistan has got more diplomatic space to make fundamental changes in its foreign policy based on long-term interests of the people than just expediency or the next tranche of US aid. Pakistan is at the crossroads. Unless it makes a clean break with its turbulent past, it may descend further into chaos and anarchy. It has an opportunity to disengage from all conflicts but this would have to entail getting rid of historical baggage and a fresh and realistic assessment (sans ideology and illusions) of changing global political economy and power dynamics.

It is instructive to review the historic context of Pakistan's policies. The first India-Pakistan War of 1947-1948 was fought over Kashmir. Following a Muslim revolt in the Poonch and Mirpur area of Kashmir, on October 22, 1947, a Lashkar of tribals from the north-western Pakistan, some five thousands strong, led an incursion into the valley from Abbottabad. Even as the Indian army came to the rescue of Kashmir's maharaja, the joint incursion of the Lashkars and regular troops enabled Pakistan to acquire roughly two-fifths of Kashmir which it established as Azad

Kashmir. On October 30, 1947, Mir Laik Ali, a special emissary of Quaid-e-Azam, met with the US state department officials in Washington and requested American financial assistance.

The two events, use of tribal Lashkars and request for US financial assistance, took place within three months of Pakistan's birth and were to cast a long shadow over Pakistan's foreign policy. Ironically, it was Mr. Jinnah, a proponent of peaceful and constitutional independence movement and opponent of the British colonialism, who went for a military solution and sought the help of then rising neo-colonial power, the United States, when Pakistan's very survival was at stake.

Pakistan's policy was India-centric and militaristic since its inception and sought to take advantage of the West's need for a regional ally against Communism. This cold war mindset to play a proxy in the "Great Game" dominated Pakistan's foreign policy for decades and also impinged on its domestic polity and policies. A key characteristic of this was cycles of friendship and estrangement with America. The US provided considerable military and economic assistance from 1954 to 1965 but suspended its military assistance in 1965 during the Indo-Pak war. The relations became strained in the mid to late sixties to a point where it was alleged that there was 'collusion' between China and Pakistan. The suspension of US military assistance during 1965 war brought home the point to Pakistani rulers that all the defense treaties – bilateral or multilateral – with the US won't help her in the event of any confrontation with its principal rival India. Actually, it was China and Muslim countries like Iran, Turkey, and Indonesia that supported and helped Pakistan during 1965 war. Despite this, Pakistan naively expected that the US might come to her assistance when India attacked former East Pakistan in 1971. Again, it was to be disappointed.

I would not go into details of the so-called 'Afghan Jihad' in the 1980s but Pakistan's success in continuing its nuclear program – ignored by the Reagan administration as a quid pro quo for Pakistan's support against the Soviets- during this period convinced the military establishment that it could pursue its ambition to 'liberate' Kashmir and dominate Afghanistan because it was a "frontline" state. Apparently, it forgot about the US stance during 1965 and 1971 wars. Emboldened by what Pakistani establishment mistakenly saw its 'success' in Afghanistan, it made militancy an integral part of Pakistan's foreign policy. That was a monumental blunder. Pakistan came close to being declared a terrorist state in the 1990s while straining relations with neighboring India, Iran, and a large segment of Afghan population.

This set of policies continued throughout the 1990s and till 9/11 even as Cold War became history. The world's political and economic map changed dramatically after disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991. During the 1990-2010 period, many developing countries focused on economic reform and grew rapidly as a consequence of the liberalisation of international trade in increasingly globalised financial markets. The combined output of the developing economies overtook the developed world in 2008 (on purchasing power parity basis) and is now around

55% of world GDP, almost twice its share in 1990. Asia's 27 developing countries with 18% of world gross domestic product have overtaken the 17-nation euro area this year. Ten years ago, the European Union made up 21% of the total and the Asian countries 8%.

### The immediate

The decade after the new millennium saw the emergence of China and India as global economic powers. What was a uni-polar world in 1991 transitioned to a non-polar world. Richard Hass, President of the Council on Foreign Relations, described it as a world dominated not by one or two or even several states but rather by dozens of actors possessing and exercising various kinds of power. "This represents a tectonic shift from the past", he wrote in 2008. However, Pakistan struggled for political stability while indulging in foolish adventures like the Kargil. It behaved as if the Cold War was not over and Americans would continue to tolerate its development of the nuclear weapons program and use of the militancy as a foreign policy tool because of its unique "geo-strategic" location even as it faced sanctions from the US. Musharraf's decision to join the War on Terror was partly motivated by his desire to end Pakistan's growing international isolation and increasing discomfort of the US with Pakistan's relationship with the Talibans.

Now, as the US prepares to unwind its costly misadventure in Afghanistan, which failed to defeat the Talibans, Pakistan must seize the initiative to help shape the events to the maximum possible extent it can. The immediate near-term goal has to be the attainment of peace and stability in Afghanistan which faces an uncertain future and possibly civil war. This cannot be achieved by working with the US alone. Regional powers particularly China, Russia, India, and Iran have a natural stake in a peaceful Afghanistan. None of them has ever been comfortable with Pakistan's close relationship with the Talibans. While China and Russia have been basically happy to let the US fight the Talibans, India and Iran have provided hundreds of millions of dollars to Afghanistan since 2002. Although it may be a bitter pill to swallow, peace is not possible without the Talibans. But it is also inconceivable without the participation of the non-Taliban groups and support of the regional powers. Pakistan may have the greatest leverage with the Talibans but that is not enough to secure peace. Actually, the war has hurt Pakistan so much, it would be wise to engage even India in a multilateral peace effort. Pakistan's establishment should treat it as a lesser evil compared to the confused policies and hostile attitude of the US military establishment. Ultimately, durable peace in the region would rest more on Indo-Pak relations than the so-called AfPak or US with its diminishing influence, although it would remain the biggest military power for decades. But for now, it is on the retreat.

More importantly, at a broader and strategic level, Pakistan must redefine security to include energy, water, and economic security. Pakistan has pushed itself into a corner where the West considers it relevant mainly because it is a politically unstable nuclear power in a troubled region. It does not figure much in the US Middle East policy, which is focused on nuclear non-

proliferation, energy security, Israel, and preventing Iran from building a nuclear bomb. Pakistan needs to have friendly ties with Iran which is not only an important neighbor but a potential source of energy having one of the five largest hydrocarbon reserves in the world. Although the proposed Pak-Iran gas pipeline has been a sore point in Pak-US relations, Pakistan's Middle East policy should focus on its energy needs with strictly a neutral stance vis-à-vis the dangerous and destabilizing regional rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran. Pakistan cannot afford to be a battle ground of proxy conflicts and must do all it can to prevent that.

South Asia is one of the least developed regions in the world and conflicts have held it back from realising its full potential. Pakistan needs friendly relations with India to access a big market but also to find a peaceful solution for its water needs because armed conflict is just not an option. Paradoxically, it is not the alliance with the US but the recent estrangement (perhaps a blessing in disguise) that has led the military establishment to support normalisation process with India.

#### The choice

In the Asia-Pacific region, the containment of China has emerged as America's top foreign policy priority. Myanmar was the first foreign trip of President Obama after his re-election. While both the US and China need each other, probably more than either needs Pakistan, it is China that now dominates Asia-Pacific and even traditionally pro-US countries like South Korea and Singapore have adopted a more neutral posture with the rise of China as a major trading partner and source of capital.

Pakistan is in Asia and its long-term security and economic interests will be best served by promoting regional peace and not by stockpiling conventional and nuclear weapons. It desperately needs massive investment capital flows, a large proportion of which are contributed by private transnational corporations (TNCs) and the developing countries. Revenues of just the foreign affiliates of these TNCs at \$28trillion were nearly double the size of the US GDP in 2011. Both the US and Europe are mired in serious and prolonged economic slump and the ability of their governments to help the developing countries has been seriously impaired by crippling sovereign debt levels.

The role of the World Bank and the IMF has shrunk sharply in the last three decades. The developing countries, that provide hundreds of billions of dollars every year in international investments, are a much bigger source of global capital than these once mighty multilateral institutions ever were. For example, the developing countries made a total of \$384 billion in foreign direct investments in 2011 compared to the World Bank's total lending of \$43 billion. Pakistan's ability to attract foreign investments would depend mainly on the peace prospects in the region and how private transnational corporations and some of the largest capital exporting countries like China, Norway, Saudi Arabia, Russia, Qatar, Kuwait, Hong Kong and Singapore

view its prospects. All of them attach high priority to developing economic ties with India and would like to see and support improved relations between India and Pakistan.

In 2011-12, foreign direct investment exceeded \$5 billion in each of these countries: India, Brazil, Indonesia, Malaysia, Turkey, Chile, Colombia, Peru, South Africa, Thailand and Czech Republic; compared to just over a billion dollars in Pakistan despite being the six most populous country in the world. This can't and won't change regardless of the US policy toward Pakistan. Few realise that Pakistan has the potential to attract more capital in just a few years than the entire US aid during the past decade only if it would disengage from all conflicts and work with India and Afghanistan for peace in the region.

A confluence of trends including emergence of a non-polar world, changes in the world balance of economic power, diminishing Western influence in the Middle East in the aftermath of Arab Spring, and a more assertive Russia make it an imperative for Pakistan to shift its foreign policy focus from the West to the East and make expansion of trade and economic ties with China, India, and the rest of Asia a corner stone of this shift.

Pakistan's military establishment and political elites need a new vision for foreign policy, a vision that recognises that in today's non-polar world the economic size and strength of a country is the single-most important and primary determinant of its standing and influence in the international community. Hence, a principal goal of foreign policy should be to grow economic power. The choice is before Pakistan whether it wants to end up like nuclear-armed but bankrupt North Korea or aim towards becoming a modern Asian economic power.

**The writer is author of *The Gathering Storm, Pakistan: Political Economy of a Security State* (Royal Books, 2008) and a former head of emerging markets investments, Citigroup**

## **National security strategy**

Author: Ikram Sehgal

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National security is divided into state security and societal security. The former is based on territorial security, the latter centred on identity. Globalisation has led to vanishing frontiers and, thus, weakening of territorial security, with identities far more exposed and threatened. The new currency of national security is economics. A weak economy means poverty and misery for the people.

Countries do not aim to conquer lands in today's world but to dominate and control markets. Most of today's wars or regional conflicts have all been about oil, the backbone for a very strong economy. Moreover, powerful countries are able to dictate terms in the economic context and every country has to adapt as best as it can to be able to survive and compete. A strong economy means greater productivity, with all sectors given the necessary thrust to usher in economic prosperity as well as social equality for the masses.

Certainly holding enough potential for articulating sound and effective economic policies, the PML-N leadership must ensure strict adherence to transparency for all business transactions in the public sector. The lurking danger is that if 'friends' of the political hierarchy's inner circle get involved in taking over ownership or transacting public sector business the public perception will be unfavourable. Even if the intention and consequent results are good, it will give rise to the 'robber baro' syndrome.

The way certain formidable institutions were privatised created doubts. The insatiable greed of the robber barons makes them callous when dealing with human beings. That is the fundamental flaw where good governance becomes bad, giving importance to material assets over human lives. With growth and industrialisation closely linked, pragmatic measures are required to initiate macroeconomic reforms. Once considered the exclusive preserve of the state, 'services'

have been privatised or semi-privatised or a corporate model created for them to function more effectively like a private entity.

The media is increasingly becoming a vital part of national security, being divided into three concentric spheres. In the centre are concepts and values that are accepted without question – the ‘sphere of consensus’. The ‘sphere of legitimate controversy’ comprises arguments contained within particular parameters. Legitimacy is decided by institutions and bodies, which determine when and what ‘change’ is approved. Outside of this is the ‘sphere of deviancy’, to where people and issues unworthy of serious consideration are relegated.

The media’s influence is today greater because the ‘media reality’ has gained ground from conventional reality, especially in political life. The problem is made especially serious because there is evidence that media persons and/or institutions can influence governance, which compromises national security. The names of all those in the media who have benefitted from state funds or the largesse of the rulers must be made public property. There is also need for some type of media monitoring.

The national aim envisages an economically strong Pakistan, free of foreign debt and tax evasion, consisting of a balanced economy with strength and self-sufficiency in industrial, consumer and agriculture products. On the psychological front, it envisages all ethnic groups, sects and religious groups living in harmony and an atmosphere of flexibility and mutual respect. On the social side, it conceives of minimum class tensions, social justice and a system of meritocracy. On the military front, the defence services must be capable of effectively deterring external aggression and dealing with internal security problems – but only as a last resort.

The strategic vision must necessarily include: (1) Domestic and foreign interests, goals and objectives vital to the national security of Pakistan; (2) foreign policy, the commitments thereof and the minimum defense necessary to deter aggression, to implement the country’s security objectives by political, economic, military, and other elements of national power; (3) the potential and capability to carry out the national security strategy and support its implementation. Quite simply put, the strategic vision entails taking stock of the situation to correctly evaluate



what we are, setting out a clear intent of what we want to be and formulating a cohesive road map with the consensus of all the stakeholders on how to get there.

National aims (conditions in future) envisage a stable political system ensuring grassroots participation and genuine devolution of power, and political continuity that guarantees law and order and encourages economic activity optimising the potential of the country in all spheres of life. They also envisage balanced civil-military relations with the superiority of civilian authority, as well as a united effort in all state activities and decision-making including the conduct of foreign policy, intelligence gathering, administrative/economic/financial decision-making effectively eliminating state within state type agencies or agencies whose tasks are duplicated by other agencies.

A national security strategy must serve five primary purposes: (1) communicating strategic vision to both the executive and parliament, and thus legitimising the rationale for resources. Both parliament and the executive, as the elements of national power, need a common understanding of the strategic environment and the administration's intent as a starting point for future dialogue; (2) communicating the same common vision to the citizens of the country, the intelligentsia and masses alike; (3) communicating coherence and farsightedness in the security policies of the government – which all citizens fully support; (4) documenting a strategy where none exists. We must have the ability to forge consensus among these competing views on direction, priorities and pace; and (5) contribute in substance and presentation to the overall agenda of the chief executive of the government. What follows is an interactive, interagency process to resolve differences and approve the final document.

The canvas encompassing national security politics, the environment, ideology, economics and the media. The national interests (continuing ends) obtained from the strategic vision envisage the preservation of Pakistan's integrity as a sovereign Islamic democratic state in a hostile regional environment. They also visualise guarding the country's economic, territorial and ideological boundaries without making loud claims or indulging in rhetoric. While national power has to be expressed in an integrated strategy, each region will have certain tactical situations to be handled separately but within the overall framework of the national security

strategy. The present modus operandi of ‘adhocism and/or containment’ must be replaced by a policy of ‘engagement and enlargement’.

The three national security goals are: (a) enhancing our security; (b) promoting prosperity at home; and (c) promoting democracy – under which all of the government’s efforts to advance Pakistan’s interests would be integrated. The problem with laying down a national security strategy is that its simple aims and objectives are mostly overwhelmed by rhetoric.

Straitjacketed by fixed mindsets and unable to think out of the box in crafting a real road map, we resort to ‘adhoc’ and/or ‘containment’ measures, reacting and fire-fighting instead of adhering to a well-crafted comprehensive policy.

(Based on excerpts from lectures at the NDU, Islamabad, PAF Air War College, Karachi and PN Naval War College, Lahore, over the years)

## **Pakistani PM Calls for Improved Relations with India** **amid Kashmir Tensions**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on Monday expressed resolve of the government to eliminate terrorism, improve economy, address power crisis and pursue good neighbourly relations with all countries of the region including India for regional peace and prosperity.

The premier, in his first official televised address to the nation, said Pakistan today was facing serious challenges like terrorism, endangering the very survival of the country and worst kind of power shortfall that has paralysed the national economy.

“The very foundations of the country have been shaken due to lack of administrative skills, rampant corruption in every sphere and inefficiency of the last fourteen years that has brought national institutions like PIA, Pakistan Steel, Railway and WAPDA to the verge of virtual collapse,” he said.

“These institutions are inflicting huge losses of five billion rupees annually to the national exchequer.”

He said national debt which stood at just Rs3000 billion in June 1990 has now soared to 14,500 billion rupees.

The prime minister said that one can gauge insensitivity of the previous regime and the level of corruption from two instances of Nandipur and Neelum-Jhelum power projects.

“Their execution was either obstructed or criminally delayed leading to massive increase in the cost and delay in their completion at a time when the country badly needed electricity,” he said.

Nawaz Sharif recounted the measures taken by the present government to overcome the electricity crisis. He said despite financial constraints the government arranged retirement of circular debt worth 480 billion rupees as a result of which electricity generation has increased by 1700 MW.

He said another factor of loadshedding was massive electricity theft and gas ranging between 150 to 250 billion rupees annually and that is why the government has launched an aggressive campaign against line losses. The campaign would continue with full resolve, he added.

The premier said a consensus national energy policy has been approved with input from the provinces which was an important milestone in efforts to overcome the electricity crisis.

He said long term measures are also being initiated to mitigate the electricity shortage and soon coal-based power plants with aggregate capacity of 6600 MW would be inaugurated at Gadani followed by establishment of plants at Thar.

Sharif expressed the confidence that the menace of loadshedding would be over during constitutional tenure of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government.

Referring to terrorism, he said the government was determined to tackle the problem either through dialogue or with full might of the state and all state institutions are on the same page on the issue.

He said the government has more than one options to tackle the problem but wisdom demands that there was no loss of innocent lives. PM Sharif invited those treading the path of terrorism to dialogue to end the vicious cycle of bloodshed.

The prime minister said it was time for bold review of our foreign policy as without the scant national resources cannot be exploited for the good of the poor and progress and prosperity of the country.

He said his dream to make Pakistan an Asian tiger is deeply linked to this.

The prime minister reiterated that Kashmir was a national issue and jugular vein of Pakistan and resolution of the problem was as dear to him as other Pakistanis. He, however, said without strengthening economy of the country, progress was unattainable.

“Alongside Kashmir issue we will have to pay attention to strengthen our economy resolve our internal and external problems and tackle power crisis and terrorism,” he said.

He said Pakistan and India will have to joint their heads together so that they can address common issues like poverty and ignorance.

“History bears testimony to the fact that progress and development of a nation is deeply linked to cordial relations with neighbours. It is because of this that we want good relations with all neighbours including India.”

The premier said he has always wanted good relations with India and people supported his contention during recent elections. He said that both countries should realise that instead of

wasting their energies and resources on wars they should wage war against poverty ignorance and disease.

He said the nation was fully prepared to defend the motherland along with its valiant armed forces.

On Afghanistan, the prime minister said a strategy that highlights bright face of the country in the comity of nations will adopted by his government.

He said the government has a clear stance on drone attacks which are violation of Pakistan's sovereignty and this was directly communicated to US Secretary of State John Kerry urging him to stop these attacks.

He said the Un Secretary General has also expressed concern over killing of peaceful civilians in these attacks.

On Balochistan unrest, the prime minister said situation in Balochistan was of concern for every Pakistani– PPI

# **The Taliban in Afghanistan – A Western Look**

Authors: Jayshree Bajoria, and Zachary Laub, Associate Writer

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## **Introduction**

- *Rise of the Taliban*
- *Opposition, Then and Now*
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## **Introduction**

The Taliban is a Sunni Islamic extremist group that ruled Afghanistan from 1996 until 2001, when a U.S.-led invasion toppled the regime for providing refuge to the al-Qaeda terrorist group and its erstwhile leader Osama bin Laden. Though it has been out of power for more than a decade, the Taliban remains resilient in the region and operates parallel governance structures aimed at undermining the U.S.-backed central government. Meanwhile, Pakistan's support and safe havens for the Taliban have stymied international efforts to end the conflict across the border. Since 2010, both U.S. and Afghan officials have pursued a negotiated settlement with the insurgent group, but with the planned withdrawal of NATO forces at the end of 2014, many analysts say the prospects for such an agreement remain dim.

## **Rise of the Taliban**

The Taliban was formed by Afghan mujahideen who fought against the Soviet invasion in the 1980s and Pashtun tribesmen who studied in Pakistani religious schools (madrassas) and received assistance from Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence agency (ISI). The Taliban (Pashto for "students") emerged as a force in national politics in 1994 in the midst of the country's civil war. After a series of territorial gains, it captured Kabul in September 1996, ousting the government of Burhanuddin Rabbani. Before its overthrow by U.S.-led forces in November 2001, analysts say the Taliban controlled some 90 percent of the country.

In power for roughly five years, the Taliban applied an austere form of Islamic law, requiring women to wear head-to-toe veils, banning music and television, and jailing men whose beards were deemed too short. The feared Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice violently enforced prohibitions on behavior deemed un-Islamic. Many analysts say the Taliban's destruction of the colossal, ancient Buddha statues in Bamiyan in 2001 was indicative of the regime's intolerance.

## **Opposition, Then and Now**

The Taliban was isolated long before the 9/11 attacks, when only Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates recognized the extremist regime in Kabul. As explained in this CFR Backgrounder, Pakistan supported the Taliban in its quest for "strategic depth" in Afghanistan in order to offset India, its foremost rival.

But world powers moved to censure the Taliban government not long after its rise to power. A pair of UN Security Council resolutions in 1998 urged the Taliban to end its abusive treatment of women, and in 1999, the bloc imposed sanctions on the regime for harboring al-Qaeda. (These have been updated periodically since. In order to facilitate peace negotiations, the sanctions were split in 2011 to distinguish between the Taliban and al-Qaeda and its affiliates.) In the late 1990s, various factions in northern Afghanistan opposed to Taliban rule, including former president Rabbani, formed the Northern Alliance. Predominantly Tajiks, Uzbeks, and Hazara Shiites, the alliance assisted U.S. forces in routing the Taliban after 9/11. Some analysts

say the Taliban's fear of fighting a reconstituted Northern Alliance in the wake of the planned U.S. withdrawal in 2014 is a factor driving it to negotiations.

### **Leadership and Support Structure**

Mullah Mohammed Omar, an Islamic cleric and military leader who lost his right eye fighting the Soviets, ruled Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001 as "commander of the faithful." Omar initially granted al-Qaeda sanctuary on the condition that it not directly antagonize the United States. However, bin Laden reneged on this agreement, orchestrating the 1998 embassy bombings in East Africa, an episode that analysts say was indicative of tensions between the two groups prior to 9/11. Yet, believing the U.S. threat of invasion was not credible, Omar did not give up bin Laden after the attacks.

Reportedly based in Pakistan, Omar and many of his top advisers continue to form the Taliban's central leadership, known as the Quetta Shura Taliban (QST), after the city where they took refuge after the U.S. invasion. The group's second-in-command, Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, was captured in a U.S.-Pakistani raid in Karachi in 2010. Some military analysts estimate that there are approximately 25,000 Afghan insurgents with varying degrees of allegiance to the Taliban, but assessments of the group's relative strength vary.

Crisis Guide: Pakistan A strategic partner of the Taliban remains the Haqqani Network, a U.S. designated terrorist group whose operations, including major attacks on NATO forces, straddle the Durand Line—the border that separates Afghanistan and Pakistan, cutting through Pashtun and Baloch tribal areas. The group's founder, Jalaluddin Haqqani, had ties to bin Laden in the mid-1980s and joined the Taliban in 1995, according to the U.S. State Department. "The Haqqani Network has been more important to the development and sustainment of al-Qaeda and the global jihad than any other single actor or group," said a 2011 report by the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point. There are some three thousand Haqqani fighters and supporters. Meanwhile, many experts suspect the Pakistani security establishment continues to support the Taliban, though Islamabad has routinely dismissed these claims. (The Pakistani Taliban, organizationally distinct from the Afghan group, emerged in 2002 in response to the Pakistani



army's incursions into that country's tribal areas to hunt down militants.) Despite initial injunctions by Mullah Omar, opium production and trafficking have financed the Taliban's resurgence, netting the insurgency some \$200 million annually, according to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime. Afghanistan is the world's top producer of opium, accounting for about 75 percent of the global heroin supply in 2012.

### **Public Opinion of the Taliban**

Public reaction to the Taliban's rule was not wholly negative, at least initially. Though rigid social standards fostered resentment among much of the Afghan public, the Taliban cracked down on the corruption that was rampant prior to its rule. It also brought relative stability to Afghanistan, reducing fighting among warlords that had devastated the civilian population during the Soviet invasion and subsequent civil war.

More than a decade since its fall from power, the Taliban continues to enjoy some, if declining, support. An Asia Foundation survey found that in late 2012, 30 percent of Afghans had sympathy for antigovernment groups, a figure that has dropped over the past four years. Meanwhile, 81 percent of Afghans surveyed favored the government's efforts at reconciliation and negotiation with armed insurgents—a number that has remained relatively steady since 2009. Popular support for the Taliban has been further eroded in 2013 by perceptions that the group is a proxy for Pakistan.

Afghan support for the insurgency stems, in part, from grievances directed at public institutions. While the Asia Foundation found the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police garner high public confidence—93 percent and 82 percent, respectively—militias linked to the Afghan Local Police garnered just 39 percent, the justice system 50 percent, and government ministers 55 percent. The insurgency has greater public support in areas where military gains have not been coupled with robust development programs and governance reforms, as well where militias—many backed by the United States under the ALP program—have preyed upon civilians.

## **A Resilient Insurgency**

As the Obama administration wound down the war in Iraq, it recommitted the United States to counterinsurgency operations in Afghanistan. In a December 2009 speech to West Point cadets, the president announced a military surge of 30,000 troops to supplement the 68,000 in country, and redoubled civilian efforts and diplomacy with Pakistan.

However, the insurgency continued largely unabated in 2013 as the Pentagon reduced its military footprint, including handing lead security authority over to Afghan forces in June. The United Nations documented nearly four thousand civilian casualties in the first half of 2013, a 23 percent increase over the same period a year prior. Suicide attacks, a tactic virtually unheard of in Afghanistan prior to 2001, have remained steady since 2009 at an average of 150 per year. Meanwhile, the Taliban has escalated "green-on-green" and "green-on-blue" attacks, in which Taliban infiltrate the Afghan police and army and turn their weapons on fellow Afghan or NATO forces, respectively. These accounted for 15 percent of NATO deaths in 2012, more than double the prior year.

U.S. military action and Pakistani arrests have put pressure on Mullah Omar, but experts say the Taliban is biding its time, believing that though it might not be able to pursue a monopoly of power after NATO's departure, it can consolidate footholds in the south and east. The future of the insurgency hinges, to some degree, on the nature of U.S. military involvement after the 2014 withdrawal, which will likely entail several thousand residual personnel devoted to training Afghan forces and conducting counterterrorism operations. The Pentagon will likely end combat operations against the Taliban once its drawdown is complete, as the insurgent group renounced international terrorism.

Some military analysts see the Pentagon's complete withdrawal from Iraq in late 2011—after Washington and Baghdad failed to reach a bilateral security agreement—as a cautionary tale. In 2013, sectarian violence approached levels not seen since 2008, and al-Qaeda in Iraq gained momentum. A security vacuum in which groups like al-Qaeda find shelter would threaten U.S. and Afghan interests alike.

However, U.S. officials have sought to play down these concerns. Unlike Iraq, "the Afghans actually need us to stay ... Most Afghans want us to stay. And we have promised to stay," U.S. special representative to Afghanistan and Pakistan James Dobbins told the Senate in July.

### **An Elusive Endgame in Afghanistan**

Since 2010, Washington's endgame has included a negotiated settlement with the Taliban largely out of recognition that the insurgent group cannot be crushed by force alone—particularly when it receives sanctuary in Pakistan. The Taliban, for its part, is fatigued by war, concerned about its domestic standing, and eager to gain independence of Pakistan and influence in Afghanistan. Timeline: U.S. War in Afghanistan According to the Congressional Research Service, Mullah Omar is surrounded by pragmatists who "reportedly blame their past association with al-Qaeda for their loss of power" and are open to compromise with the West, having made the calculation that international legitimacy is necessary for their long-term survival. But others remain ideologically committed to an outright takeover of Afghanistan, a cleavage that may intensify as NATO departs.

Opposite Omar's representatives at the negotiating table, the seventy-member Afghan High Peace Council, established by Kabul in 2010 to broker peace, insists that the Taliban stop the insurgency, disarm, and accept the Afghan constitution, which the Taliban sees as an illegitimate document imposed by foreigners.

Talks have suffered numerous setbacks since they were confirmed in July 2011. In September of that year, Kabul's chief peace negotiator, former president Rabbani, was assassinated. Meanwhile, 'the potential for backsliding on human rights—particularly women's rights—has raised objections from civil society despite the Taliban leadership's gradual moderation on social issues.

In June 2013, loyalists of Mullah Omar opened a political office in Doha to facilitate talks. Skeptics say that the office is a government-in-exile established by the Taliban to attain international legitimacy and conduct diplomatic business. Whether a peaceful transition of power follows upcoming presidential elections, scheduled for April 2014, will be an important test for Afghan democracy. Some observers anticipate fraud, violence, and the possibility that Karzai, though term-limited, may resist ceding power.

RAND Corporation expert Seth G. Jones says conditions are not ripe for a grand bargain, but negotiations on such issues as "local cease-fires, reintegration, and the exchange of prisoners" can all take place at local levels. August 2013 brought some measure of hope for the peace process, when it was revealed that Taliban leaders and the Afghan government held preliminary, unofficial talks. However, Mullah Omar announced that the insurgent group would boycott the 2014 elections and continue its fight until foreign troops depart

## The internal crisis

Author: Najmuddin A Shaikh  
Posted On: Wednesday, August 21, 2013  
Source/Reference: Dawn.com

**THE annual survey of ‘failed states’ covering 2012 has just appeared in Foreign Policy. Using data on elements such as ‘demographic pressures’, ‘refugees’, ‘public services’, ‘economic decline’, ‘factionalised elites’, ‘security apparatus’ etc it places Pakistan in the 13th position with a total score of 102.9 (It had the same score in 2010).**

According to the compilers any figure above 80 puts the country in the ‘critical’ category. For purposes of comparison, Bangladesh stands at 24th with a score of 96.1, Sri Lanka at 25th with a score of 95.7 and India at 79th with 77.5. Many of the criteria can be disputed but few would question the conclusion that Pakistan is in danger of becoming a failed state. Just look at the facts.

Estimates vary but according to one compilation, there were a total of at least 6,211 terrorism-related fatalities, including 3,007 civilians, 2,472 militants and 732 security forces personnel in 2012 as against 6,303 fatalities, including 2,738 civilians, 2,800 militants and 765 security forces personnel in 2011. This year, reports of daily mayhem suggest the figure will be much higher.

For six hours, a deranged individual brought normal life to a halt in an important part of the capital in which vast sums have been expended on creating security forces and security structures.

In April last year Bannu Jail was attacked and numerous hard-core terrorists escaped. This year, even after timely intelligence warnings, an escapee from the Bannu Jail masterminded an attack on the Dera Ismail Khan jail releasing a further 40-45 high-value prisoners.

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Last year, Khalid Chishti was arrested after some witnesses, including Hafiz Zubair who was the muezzin in the mosque where Chishti was imam, testified that Chishti had put pages of the Holy Quran in the bag containing burnt papers carried by a mentally challenged Christian girl so that she could be convicted of blasphemy. Now the court has freed Chishti, because the prosecution failed to prove the case against him. There was, however, no direction that those who provided the sworn testimony should now be prosecuted for perjury, which is the action that the court should have ordered if Chishti was being released because of false testimony.

The elections have proved that this is not a political problem or an ideological divide. This represents only a breakdown of law and order. The deterioration in the quality of the civil administration, the guardian of law and order is one factor, but more importantly such elements of competence as have survived cannot act because of the ambivalence of the power centres that created this menace to achieve unrealisable foreign policy objectives and because other power centres choose to exploit rather than fight this menace.

I would question our interior minister's recent assertion that the "war on terrorism" was thrust upon us but there can be no questioning his other assertion that this is now "our war". What is needed is that all power centres must now be united in tackling on a war footing this law and order problem.

Unrealisable foreign policy objectives must no longer be permitted to determine how we handle this nor should foreign policy issues be allowed to distract our leaders from establishing the writ of the state in all parts of the country and thus creating the conditions in which our battered economy can recover.

Admittedly, ignoring foreign policy appears difficult given the new tensions in India-Pakistan relations after the killing of five Indian soldiers near the Line of Control and the harsh rhetoric from Indian politicians looking to the next election. But again, let's look at the facts.

Pakistan traditionally kept all its troops on the Indian border or in cantonments from where they could be deployed to that border. The threatened Indian adoption of the Cold Start doctrine notwithstanding, 150,000 troops moved to our tribal agencies to fight the war against terrorism

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without any discernible increase in the threat perception. India has a defence budget of \$40bn clearly outmatching us even when all our troops are on the Indian border. Our ‘nuclear deterrent’, however, remains largely unaffected by the vast discrepancy in conventional forces or by redeployment away from the Indian border. Our need is to maintain the credibility of that deterrent.

In the meanwhile, I would suggest that barring extreme provocation, large-scale military operations on India’s part are unthinkable particularly at this time when the world (read Nato powers) needs Pakistan for a graceful exit from Afghanistan, and India needs the world’s goodwill as it seeks recognition of its major regional if not global power status.

As we tackle our internal problem the prospect of such an extreme provocation will decline because our actions will reduce the capabilities of those intent on sabotaging any movement towards normalisation of Indo-Pak relations.

Afghanistan is our other major foreign policy issue. The major terrorism threat within Pakistan is that the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and its leaders aver that they have sworn loyalty to Mullah Omar. This loyalty may be more theoretical than real but it illustrates the point that as we tackle the TTP we will also be tackling the problem of cross-border activity that puts us at odds with the Afghans and more importantly with Nato. If we sincerely fight the TTP and by extension the foreign terrorists to whom they provide sanctuary we will earn the goodwill of the powers on whose economic and technological assistance we will depend as we seek to fix our economic malaise. A stable Afghanistan, no matter who is at the helm, will help relieve our drug and other smuggling problems, perhaps even secure the return of some of the five million refugees whose presence has strained our economy.

How far will the growth of Indian influence in Afghanistan complicate Pakistan’s security dilemma? In a subsequent article, I will attempt a dispassionate analysis of what India can do through Afghanistan, which it cannot do otherwise and what we should expect from a Karzai now fighting for political survival.

*The writer is a former foreign secretary.*

# The Failed State Index and South Asia: Revisiting the White Man's Burden

**Salma Malik**

Department of Defence & Strategic Studies,  
Quaid-i-Azam University,  
Islamabad, Pakistan

The failed state phenomenon is much like the proverbial Humpty Dumpty, which once it falls off the wall becomes pretty difficult for the king's men to pick up off the floor and put back together again. Thus making the global community weary and watchful of another Humpty Dumpty take a tumble, as firstly this creates a huge splatter that certainly leaves marks on everyone around it. And the closer the state is, the worst is the impact and secondly the size of the problem becomes mammoth and no longer possible to handle or contain.

This is a very simplistic take on the national security doctrine initiated by the American president George Bush back in 2002. From president Bush's statement that "America is now threatened less by conquering states than we are by failing ones," the same dilemma continues to haunt the Obama administration and security aides as well as policy makers, which is evident from Robert Gates' prophetic words in 2011 that "in the decades to come, the most lethal threats to the United States' safety and security —are likely to emanate from states that cannot adequately govern themselves or secure their own territory." Therefore, failed or failing states considered as a clear and present threat to US safety and security are to be prevented or rather preempted.



Thus encompassing a dangerous trend providing the US the legitimacy and approval to intervene in any country, such as Libya on humanitarian grounds, in order to prevent the spread of more such cases.

This somewhat resonates of the “white man’s burden” that neither served its colonial masters in the past, nor could deliver any relief to any of the antagonists under the current scenario, but exacerbated the overall security situation. It ended up turning stressed yet stable countries into totally chaotic, free for all battlefields which spelled disaster for not only the countries themselves but for all concerned, on the pretext of regime change. The question that pops up in one’s mind is, would this moral argument be equally applied to every fragile, weak and failing state? Or is it case specific? Unfortunately the trend appears tilted more towards the latter. Where on one hand, global powers such as the US definitely find threats emanating from failing states inimical to their security, not all such cases acquire a high priority status. Nor every failing state poses a direct threat to the US and its allies.

One of the most glaring examples could be that of complete inaction by US and the world community during the hundred day long genocide and complete failure of state apparatus in Rwanda, which claimed approximately 800000 lives. Rwanda neither in the past nor today holds significant interest for the global community, to the extent that it did not even merit a UN preventive meeting during the height of the 1994 genocide, until it was too late.

So why should the global powers be alarmed about state failure? How is it gauged and assessed? And how absolute is this failure to start seeking an alternate universe in case we are entitled to be members of an endangered species. It was not only incidents like Rwanda, but a direct attack on US homeland security in the shape of monumental 9/11, and its long-spread roots in Afghanistan that led to the development of this new discourse. Besides the new emerging “green arching crescent of crisis,” the “failed” status of Afghanistan as an aftermath of post Geneva accord’s civil war was cited as the biggest reason. Ironically, however, the totalitarian regime of Taliban took over Kabul and events fast led to 9/11. The total collapse of state and governance, rampant warlordism, near to absent human security and the rights of a population either displaced or residing near abroad as refugees, made Afghanistan a classic case study where all

types of non-state actors operated openly and became the masterminds of terrorism, did not elicit any global action, until their interests demanded.

In South Asia unlike the West, social discourse is still more qualitative than quantitative. Therefore, each year the Failed State Index (FSI), a brain child of Fund for Peace, is dreadfully anticipated like a year end result card by the 178 pupils (states) registered, who are judged against two categories that hold a total of twelve performance criterion. As expected, the South Asian neighbors have invariably ranked in the first 100s. The six categories against which they are judged are: demographic pressures, refugees and IDPs, uneven economic development, group grievance, human flight and brain and lastly poverty and economic decline amongst the socio-economic indicators and state legitimacy, public services, security apparatus, human rights and rule of law, factionalized elites and lastly external intervention amongst political and military indicators.

For 2011 as well as 2012, these neighbors have predictably shown more or less consistent positions, Starting from the high alert category, Afghanistan has moved up from the 6th to 7th position, Pakistan remained a constant 13, Nepal improved from 27th to 30th position in the alert category, Bangladesh a consistent 29th, Sri Lanka slipped down one slot to 28 from its previous 29. Whereas, in the very high warning category, Bhutan moved from 59th to 62. Lastly India, which occupies the high warning slot bettered to 79 from 78, whereas Maldives retained its 88th position in the same category. In individual categories, only Afghanistan has the worst indicators with regard to external intervention and security apparatus. The latter indicator also includes Pakistan, however even the better ranking countries on the FSI failed to make it to the best performers profile.

The South Asian countries couldn't but be more diverse. Starting with Afghanistan, despite billions of dollars worth of investment and a continued Western presence which wants to leave the country as a functional and stable democracy, still retains the factors that contributed to its total breakdown and failure a decade plus back, and may unfortunately fare worse on the Index after 2014. How much should Afghanistan be blamed for this state of affairs, as US along its Western Allies have been working very hard for the past 12 years on "Project Afghanistan" as

they deem fit, ignoring some critical fundamentals, which they realized too late and are now on a timeline, which can never ensure desired results. America's initial no compromise, no dialogue and military heavy strategy, proved unsuccessful, despite friendly advice from neighboring states to engage in dialogue with opposition forces. In fact the colonial expeditions into Afghanistan which proved disastrous for the British also had similar military heavy approach to it, and ended in similar failures. The US attempts to engineer a new system of governance and politics has also not been successful. The latter was put more in place in order to redeem for the sins of the faulty Geneva Accord that caused the extremely weak post conflict Afghanistan to fail completely during the decade of the 1990s.

Sharing the High Alert Category alongside Afghanistan is neighboring Pakistan. Though conveniently clubbed as a singular war and strategic zone "Af-Pak" by the US administration, and having equally bad security indicators as Afghanistan, is Pakistan condemned to be a failed state? There is no denying that proximity to a minimum of three decades long war zone, inherent contested borders and territory, long drawn conventional conflict, colonial legacy, refugee pressure compounded later by IDP presence and indigenously poor governance leave Pakistan in a very fragile situation, yet none of these problems are incurable. Interestingly the FSI does an excellent job in highlighting the bad indicators, what it doesn't highlight are the factors that can positively impact. A proactive media, democracy becoming stronger, judicial activism and civil society awareness are few of the positives the country has to show. Where Pakistan is a classic case of poor governance, with external and internal stress compounding, by no means, it can be considered a failed state, as selectively projected.

Maldives which ranks 79 is already looking for a new land to settle, as oceanic water levels are posing a big threat to the archipelago's future survivability, whereas Bangladesh with similar issues is indexed 29. Unfortunately at times such indices are selectively applied as well, for countries with better relations with US have managed to fare better despite questionable human rights, poverty indicators and large scale grievances, case in point being the Kashmiri population as well as now evident and much discussed "genocidal actions" of Sri Lankan government, while crushing the Tamil insurgency.

Pitching developing countries such as those in South Asia with the developed world will always yield drastic indicators. Secondly the notion of “failure” makes the entire situation much dire and morbid. Perhaps more appropriate would be to assess the fragility or weakness of a given state, which may have inherent or acquired traits that could lead to state collapse. The much touted Arab Spring which has been widely celebrated by the West was never a revolution but initially an indigenous protest against repressive regimes, which was later captured and manipulated by external actors for their vested interests. The discomfort of Western elites was palpable when Egyptian elections brought Muhammad Morsi in to power with overwhelming majority, and his recent removal shows a lack of comprehension of domestic dynamics by the global powers.

Will countries on very high alert status fall and splatter like Humpty Dumpty, compelling the king’s men to scramble to the rescue? To take the worst case indexed, i.e. Afghanistan and applying formulae such as division of ethnic-sectarian grounds despite the internal chaos have totally been rejected and aggressively resisted. Similar cartographies are planned, shelved and reconsidered with regards Pakistan. Can such experiments work? Is it so easy to break a country and experiment with it? How long will the ‘White Man’ shoulder the mercenary zeal to correct and reform the global pagans?

The takeaway of the FSI for individual countries is to work out their weaknesses and improve their holistic security and governance indicators. The road to reforms and civilian oversight is long and tedious but not impossible. For the bigger powers, the need is to understand and empathize with the local dynamics rather than impose and enforce solutions made in a sterile briefing room of a policy making outfit. In the global chess game, the States may be a pawn with calculations assessed through such indices, but on the ground, States are real entities with populations adversely affected by ill planned moves and strategies.

## **US and Pakistan after Kerry's Visit: Strategic Dialogue, Afghan Exit and a Nuclear Deal**



**D Suba Chandran**  
Director,  
Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies,  
New Delhi  
Email: [subachandran@ipcs.org](mailto:subachandran@ipcs.org)

The much awaited strategic dialogue between the US and Pakistan has now resumed after the visit of US Secretary of State John Kerry. Resuming the dialogue is important for both countries, for different reasons. More than the visit by Kerry (and whom all he did or did not meet) and the decision to resume the Strategic Dialogue between the countries, it is important to focus on the following two important questions.

Has Pakistan agreed to help the US in easing the exit in Afghanistan especially by reducing its support to the Taliban, primarily the Haqqani network? In return, is the US willing to provide a civilian nuclear deal to Pakistan, along the lines of the Indo-US nuclear deal?

Other questions, involving the drone attacks, Pak-Iran cooperation on gas pipelines, economy and the new military leadership after General Kayani, are all likely to be secondary and tertiary issues in the strategic dialogue.

As of now, Pakistan holds the trump card. The Americans need Pakistan more than the other way around. The Afghan exit, perhaps, is one of the most important strategic choices that Obama's administration has to make at the global level. Certainly, the Obama administration does not want Afghanistan to become another Iraq – towards the end of the American presence, and after the exit.

One of the primary objective for Obama’s administration in Afghanistan is to exit with a “face”, without much of a violence and mayhem, tarnishing the American reputation in achieving its military interest in a third country. The US may have the maximum number of nuclear weapons, ICBMs, air-craft carriers, nuclear submarines and B-52 stealth bombers and be the most powerful nation in the history of mankind. But come 2014, Afghanistan will be seen as a huge American military failure. How will history record the US presence, its success (if any) and its failure in Afghanistan? Will it be seen as worse than Vietnam and Iraq?

Even more importantly, what will happen to Afghanistan after 2014? Will it remain stable, or go the Iraqi way? How will national and regional history see American presence in Afghanistan? What will the international reputation of the US be?

The immediate concerns of the Obama administration in Afghanistan are twofold: first, to have a decent and face-saving exit from Afghanistan, without losing much blood on the ground, and more importantly, its international image. And second, to ensure that there is a semblance of stability in Afghanistan after 2014.

For both the above concerns, the US needs Pakistan. In fact, the Pakistani support to the US efforts to reach out to the Taliban in Doha is a calculated move. Without the tacit support of the military and ISI Chiefs in Pakistan, US would not have reached Qatar. It is ironic that the process failed, primarily because of the same reason. Karzai and his administration were aware of the Islamabad and Rawalpindi link to Doha, and were afraid that there was an external solution being imposed on Afghanistan with Pakistan’s active inputs.

Pakistan is well aware of American needs; obviously, neither Islamabad, nor Rawalpindi are less likely to provide Washington what the latter wants, without getting their pound of flesh. Why would they? For the US has been using and abusing Pakistan in the last six decades, for its own strategic interests; and in return, Pakistan has been smart enough to push its own little regional game, and get away with it. The US was well aware of the genocide in East Pakistan, pilferage and Islamization under Zia and the subsequent nuclearization; but looked the other way, looking at the “larger” picture.

What would Pakistan want in return? To stop drone attacks? Economic assistance and aid? Or a civilian nuclear deal?

There is a huge misperception that preventing American drone attacks is the most important issue for Pakistan. Utter nonsense. To expect Pakistan's military of being incapable of shooting down the drones would be impossible. Forget about shooting the drones down – how many times were they fired against, either as a warning or as a strategy? Is Pakistan incapable of firing, does it lack sufficient fire power, or is it simply afraid?

Remember the Salala raid by the Americans inside the Pakistani territory, resulting in the killing of multiple Pakistani soldiers? After that, Pakistan upped the ante, stopped the NATO supply line and the strategic dialogue. Did the Americans cross the Durand Line again? The Americans are aware of Pakistan's red lines; drones are certainly not one of them. There has always been a clear understanding between the US and Pakistan's leadership (political and military) on the drone attacks.

Internal protests and statements are purely for domestic consumption. Even if Pakistan raises the drone attacks in the dialogue – it will remain rhetoric, but the ultimate aim will be something else.

It is likely that Pakistan will pitch for a civilian nuclear deal with the US. There have already been proposals from American think tanks that Pakistan should also get a similar nuclear deal from the US. Pakistan is bound to insist to the US: If you want a decent exit from Afghanistan, give us a nuclear deal.

As of now, the cards are in Pakistan's favour. Will the US yield?

## The hidden reefs in China-US relations

While China and the US seek to elevate their military ties, some old stumbling blocks still stand in the way and new issues keep rising, Chen Weihua reports from Washington.

When Chinese Defense Minister Chang Wanquan was greeted with a smile and a warm handshake from his US counterpart, Chuck Hagel, along with an honor guard and marching band outside the Pentagon entrance facing the Washington Monument across the Potomac River, the mood did not mirror the rivalry between the two militaries that has often appeared in the press. Rather, it felt more like a welcome of a friendly ally.

Their talk on Monday, which was originally scheduled for 90 minutes, was extended by another one and one-half hours because, as one aide later said, the two new defense chiefs felt they had so much to talk about.

At a news press conference after the meeting, the two both expressed a strong willingness to increase military exchanges and cooperation to reflect the spirit of the Sunnylands summit, referring to the meeting in early June between President Xi Jinping and President Barack Obama in California when they vowed to defy the historical precedents of clashes between an existing super power and a rising power.

Chang summarized the talks by referring to a "five-point consensus" agreed to by the two sides at the meeting: that a bilateral military tie is an important part of relations between the two nations; a boosting of high-level visits by both countries; that both sides shoulder a heavy responsibility in ensuring peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region; cooperation in non-traditional areas such as humanitarian assistance and cooperation in military archives.

Hagel said he "enthusiastically accepted" Chang's invitation to visit China next year. In addition, other senior military leaders from both sides will also exchange visits.



The Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) will for the first time participate in the 2014 Rim of the Pacific Exercise, the world's largest naval exercise, in Hawaii.

However, for the Chinese, the warming-up of a bilateral military relationship may not sail smoothly if some hidden rocks are not removed.

### **Taiwan sales**

Guan Youfei, director of the foreign affairs office of the Ministry of Defense, said the Chinese have expressed deep concern over three major stumbling blocks: US arms sales to Taiwan, air and naval surveillance off the Chinese coast and a host of US laws that bar military cooperation and exchange with China.

To Chinese on the mainland, the continuous and expanding US arms sales to Taiwan is simply unacceptable, especially as the relationship across the straits has turned better than ever since 2008 when Ma Ying-jeou became the leader in Taiwan.

While the US sold arms amounting to only a few billion dollars in the first of the past three decades, the last two decades saw sales balloon to \$27 billion from \$19 billion, according to Guan.

China announced it was suspending military contacts with in the wake of the US arms sales to Taiwan in 2010 and 2011.

## Egypt crisis strains US-Saudi ties

**Some analysts believe Saudi Arabia's strong support for Egypt's military government has put Washington in a bind.**

**Washington, US** - As the administration of President Barack Obama continues wrestling with how to react to the military coup in Egypt and its bloody aftermath, officials and independent analysts are increasingly worried about the crisis's effect on US ties with Saudi Arabia.

The oil-rich kingdom's strong support for the coup is seen here as having encouraged Cairo's defence minister Gen. Abdel Fattah el-Sisi to crack down on the Muslim Brotherhood and resist western pressure to take a conciliatory approach that would be less likely to radicalise the Brotherhood's followers and push them into taking up arms.

Along with the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait, Saudi Arabia did not just pledge immediately after the July, 3 coup that ousted President Mohamed Morsi to provide a combined \$12bn in financial assistance, but it has also promised to make up for any western aid - including the \$1.5bn dollars with which Washington supplies Cairo annually in mostly military assistance - that may be withheld as a result of the coup and the ongoing crackdown in which about 1,000 protestors are believed to have been killed to date.

Perhaps even more worrisome to some experts here has been the exceptionally tough language directed against Washington's own condemnation of the coup by top Saudi officials, including King Abdullah, who declared Friday that "[t]he kingdom stands ...against all those who try to interfere with its domestic affairs" and charged that criticism of the army crackdown amounted to helping the "terrorists".

## **'Unprecedented' comments**

Bruce Riedel, a former top CIA Middle East analyst who has advised the Obama administration, called the comments “unprecedented” even if the king did not identify the United States by name.

Chas Freeman, a highly decorated retired foreign service officer who served as US ambassador to Riyadh during the Gulf War, agreed with that assessment.

“I cannot recall any statement as bluntly critical as that,” he said, adding that it marked the culmination of two decades of growing Saudi exasperation with US policy - from Washington's failure to restrain Israeli military adventures and the occupation of Palestinian territory to its empowering the Shia majority in Iraq after its 2003 invasion and its abandonment of former Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and its backing of democratic movements during the “Arab awakening”.

“For most of the past seven decades, the Saudis have looked to Americans as their patrons to handle the strategic challenges of their region,” Freeman said. “But now the Al-Saud partnership with the United States has not only lost most of its charm and utility; it has from Riyadh's perspective become in almost all respects counterproductive.”

The result, according to Freeman, has been a “lurch into active unilateral defence of its regional interests”, a move that could portend major geo-strategic shifts in the region. “Saudi Arabia does not consider the US a reliable protector, thinks it's on its own, and is acting accordingly.”

## **Russian relations**

A number of analysts, including Freeman, have pointed to a July 31 meeting in Moscow between Russian President Vladimir Putin and the head of the Riyadh's national security council and intelligence service, Prince Bandar bin Sultan, as one potentially significant "straw in the wind" regarding the Saudi's changing calculations.

According to a Reuters report, Bandar, who served as Riyadh's ambassador to Washington for more than two decades, offered to buy up to \$15bn in Russian arms and coordinate energy policy - specifically to prevent Qatar from exporting its natural gas to Europe at Moscow's expense - in exchange for dropping or substantially reducing Moscow's support for Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

While Putin, under whom Moscow's relations with Washington appear to have hit a post-Cold War low recently, was non-committal, Bandar left Moscow encouraged by the possibilities for greater strategic co-operation, according to press reports that drew worried comments from some here.

"[T]he United States is apparently standing on the sidelines - despite being Riyadh's close diplomatic partner for decades, principally in the hitherto successful policy of blocking Russia's influence in the Middle East," wrote Simon Henderson, an analyst at the pro-Israel Washington Institute for Near East Policy (WINEP).

"It would be optimistic to believe that the Moscow meeting will significantly reduce Russian support for the Assad regime," he noted. "But meanwhile Putin will have pried open a gap between Riyadh and Washington."

As suggested by Abdullah's remarks, that gap has only widened in the wake of the Egyptian military's bloody crackdown on the Brotherhood this month and steps by Washington to date, including the delay in the scheduled shipment of F-16 fighter jets and the cancellation of joint US-Egyptian military exercises next month, to show disapproval.

US officials have told reporters that Washington is also likely to suspend a shipment of Apache attack helicopters to Cairo unless the regime quickly reverses course.

### **'Wake-up call'**

Meanwhile Moscow, even as it joined the West in appealing for restraint and non-violent solutions to the Egyptian crisis, has also refrained from criticising the military, while the chairman of Foreign Affairs Committee of the Duma's upper house blamed the United States and the European Union for supporting the Muslim Brotherhood.

“It is clear that Russia and Saudi Arabia prefer stability in Egypt, and both are betting on the Egyptian military prevailing in the current standoff, and are already acting on that assumption,” according to an op-ed that laid out the two countries' common interests throughout the Middle East and was published Sunday by Alarabiya.net, the news channel majority-owned by the Saudi Middle East Broadcasting Centre (MBC).

Some observers argue that Russia and Saudi Arabia have a shared interest in containing Iran; reducing Turkish influence; co-operating on energy issues; and bolstering autocratic regimes, including Egypt's, at the expense of popular Islamist parties, notably the Brotherhood and its affiliates, across the region.

“There's a certain logic to all that, but it's too early to say whether such an understanding can be reached,” said Freeman, who noted that Bandar “wrote the book on outreach to former ideological and geo-strategic enemies”, including China, and that his visit to Moscow “looks like classic Saudi breakout diplomacy”.

But reaching a deal on Syria would be particularly challenging. While Riyadh assigns higher priority to reducing Iran's regional influence than to removing Assad, some analysts believe there are ways an agreement that would retain him as president could be struck, as Moscow insists, while reducing his power over the opposition-controlled part of the country and weakening his ties to Tehran and Hezbollah.

But Mark Katz, an expert on Russian Middle East policy at George Mason University, is sceptical about the prospects for a Russian-Saudi entente, noting that Bandar has pursued such a relationship in the past without success.

“I'm not saying it can't work, but this has been his hobby horse,” he said. “Whatever happens in Saudi-American relations, however, the Saudis don't trust the Russians and don't want them meddling in the region. Everything about the Russians ticks them off.”

He added that Abdullah's harsh criticism was intended more as a “wake-up call” and the fact that “the Saudis are on the same side [in supporting the Egyptian military] as the Israelis has emboldened them”.

## **The ‘swinging seventies’ in Pakistan: An urban history**

Nadeem F. Paracha

On December 9 and 17 of 1970, Pakistan held its very first elections on the basis of adult franchise.

Participating political parties and independent politicians had been campaigning for the event ever since January 1970, and Bhutto’s Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and Mujibur Rahman’s Awami League (AL) were drawing the largest crowds in West and East Pakistan respectively.

This did not seem to deter the Yahya Khan military regime that did not trust either of the two parties.

The regime had suspiciously read the two as being anti-status quo, but even though Yahya’s intelligence agencies had predicted a victory for Mujib’s AL in East Pakistan, the same agencies had almost entirely rubbished the idea of Bhutto’s PPP sweeping the polls in West Pakistan.

Hopeful of the elections generating a hung verdict that would be in the interest of the military regime, Yahya nevertheless decided to not only support various industrialist and feudal backed Muslim League factions, but also gave a nod of approval and support to the staunch right-wing Islamic parties, especially the Jamat-i-Islami (JI).

*General Yahya Khan who took over power in 1969 after Ayub Khan’s dictatorship collapsed due to a widespread student and political movement.*

Consequently, all that was brewing on the fringes of Pakistani urban youth cultures between 1966 and 1969, exploded onto the mainstream scheme of things in 1970.

During the PPP campaign, new-found youthful middle-class infatuations, such as radical leftist politics and revolutionary posturing, and its romance with the ways and culture of the working

classes met with the street-smart moorings of the pro-Bhutto proletariat and the passionate music and mores of Sindh and Punjab's rural and semi-urban 'shrine culture.'

The shrine culture, pertaining to the devotional, recreational, and economic activity around the shrines of ancient Muslim saints, had been around in the subcontinent for almost a thousand years.

The saints' Islam was more accommodating than dogmatic, and a largely permissive culture of ecstatic devotional music, innovative rituals and indigenous intoxicants started to take shape around the shrines, mostly involving poor farmers, the dispossessed, (and later,) the urban lumpenproletariat.

This culture was largely tolerated and even patronised by various Muslim dynasties that ruled the subcontinent, and by the end of the Mughal Empire in the mid-19th Century, it had become a vital part of the belief and ritual system of a majority of Muslims in the region.

However, from the 1950s, urban middle-class Pakistan had begun to simply dismiss this culture as being the domain of the uneducated and the superstitious.

But just like the hippies of the West (in the 1960s), who had chosen various exotic and esoteric Eastern spiritual beliefs to demonstrate their disapproval of the materialism and "soullessness" of the Western capitalist system, young, middle-class rebels of urban Pakistan increasingly began to look upon Sufism and the shrine culture as a way to make a social, cultural and political connect with the "downtrodden and the dispossessed."

*A 'malang' dances outside a Sufi shrine in Punjab.*

Such a connect became more interesting when middle-class leftist youth supporting the PPP came into direct contact with the boisterous masses of rural peasants, small shop owners and the urban working classes at PPP's election rallies.

These elements brought with them the music, the emotionalism, the bohemianism; and the devotional sense of loyalty of the shrine culture that they had been close to for centuries.



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The cultural synthesis emerging from such mass-level fusion of ideas was one of the frontal reasons behind Bhutto's image leaping from being that of a "brave patriot" (who as Ayub's Foreign Minister had stood up to his boss in 1966), to ultimately being perceived by his supporters as the embodiment of a modern-day Sufi saint!

When PTV began showing clips of various 1970 election rallies, standing out in vibrancy and uniqueness were PPP gatherings.

Though dominated by Bhutto's animated populist (and at times demagogic) oratory, these rallies also became famous for almost always turning into the kind of boisterous and musical fanfare usually witnessed outside the many shrines of Sufi saints across the country.

On the other hand, the country's middle-class popular culture had emerged in the mid-1960s as Pakistan's reflection of the era's youthful romance with leftist ideals and radical student action. Along the way, this culture started to elaborate this idealism with the bohemian and organic antics of the shrine culture.

## **Pak-India Relations in 21st Century**

### **The way forward**

**'Composite dialogues', is the right direction to make effective headway that will eventually ensure peace and stability in the region and will also pave the way for the early resolution of unresolved conflicts.**

By: Waleed Farooq

Article Source:

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No two countries in the world have so much in common like India and Pakistan and yet so poles apart. A physicist might put it as 'like poles repel each other'. But a political scientist will compare it with the mending of fences between France and Germany – two arch rivals in the past. In reality, if there are differences of such a magnitude which have led both the countries to fight three wars and caused the nuclearization of the subcontinent then obviously there must be solid reasons for it.

A bird's eye view of the history of both the countries, crisscrossed with conflicts and reconciliations, will highlight those factors that led to the present state of affairs. The pattern and trajectory of mutual relationship have shown that they owe their origin to the tumultuous chaos of the partition and little was done to focus on the commonalities than to highlight and magnify the differences. This provided a good culture medium for the breeding and growth of extremism in both the countries.

The geographical disputes – mainly Kashmir and water sharing issues – are at the heart of the problem. There are many possible solutions to these problems that are also practical and should be acceptable to all the

stakeholders but the question is that are they acceptable? And is there any will on both sides of the divide to make courageous decisions?. For instance, the solution of Kashmir problem can be found in the form of shared sovereignty like France and Spain found vis-à-vis Andorra or complete autonomy as was found in case of territory of Trieste (Italy) or a mix of these two extremes. Mir Waez Umar Farooq, in a statement, once said that almost 36 possible solutions to the Kashmir problem are on the table. Similarly in case of water sharing issues, the world has found different ways to share the international rivers so that each stakeholder should get its equitable share.

But sadly in case of Pakistan and India, disputes coupled with low priority attached to their peaceful solution have led both sides to assume stilted positions. This further ensures that the real solution to those problems eludes the wisdom of indolent leadership of both the countries which has proved itself to be short-sighted and timid. The leaders have displayed the tendency to cave in when the time comes to take a courageous leap. The ear-jammed and ritual istic bureaucracy never wants a change in the status quo and the egoistic warlords, who are genetically designed to see things in the perspective of winning and losing will never let it happen unless an initiative is taken from the top as per the genuine desires of the citizens of both the countries.

### **A theoretical perspective**

Viewing this relationship in the light of two major schools of thought — Realist and Neo-realist and Idealist and neo-idealist — of International politics offers interesting explanations and may help in predicting the future. Realist policy prescriptions involve preparations for war, perpetual vigilance,

persistent involvement and intervention, preparedness with arms, preserving the balance of power (BoP) and preventing arms races to ensure that the BoP must not be shifted in other's favour. In this context, all the conflicts and the lack of will to solve them make sense because both sides are weary of conceding ground to each other and thus are inclined maintain the status quo — 'no war no peace' after trying 'war and peace'.

This thought after nuclearizing the subcontinent, has given way to dangerous strategies. The Cold Start Doctrine (CSD), devised by Indian Military, amply exposes its thinking that a quick, decisive and surprise attack on vital and strategic installations of Pakistan — a nuclear rival — is still possible. For those who are not aware of Indian CS Doctrine, let me add that it was devised after the Kargil episode and the main element of this strategy is to reduce the operational time of the military by deploying it closer to international borders and keep it ready for quick mobilization. The concept was first tested in 1967 and 1973 Arab-Israel conflicts. In present settings, Indian army adopted it as its official doctrine to make sense out of war that can be fought within the nuclear threshold of Pakistan. On the other hand, Pakistan has maintained an ambiguous and intolerant nuclear threshold as a deterrence which means any such misadventure by India might escalate the events to a nuclear Armageddon.

Henry Kissinger once said, "there can be no war without Egypt and there can be no peace without Syria", there can be no peace and stability in Afghanistan without Pakistan and without Pakistan's cooperation, India cannot go global.

Moreover, influenced by thinking of this school, both the countries are spending heavily on their defense and are maintaining huge armies at the expense of ignoring the deplorable plight of their citizens — one fourth of world's population. The failure of this school to provide a sanguine future to the citizens of both the countries has promoted and strengthened the alternate argument that favours establishing trade relations, opening up of markets for each other, promoting interdependence and allowing people to people contact.

The idealist school argues that 'evil' institutions tempt humans to behave selfishly and give disarmament as a solution to ensure peace. In its continuation, Neo-Liberals focus on the anarchic structure of international system (since there is no supreme authority above sovereign states) but believe that interdependence through trade etc. can ensure peace and stability in the world. Moreover, it also specifies a role to the Non-States such as Multinational corporations (MNCs) in binding the states together. The unification of Europe, expansion of regional trade and the emergence of Free Trade Areas (FTAs) can be cited as successful examples in favour of this school.

In the context of India-Pakistan relations, so far both the countries were playing in the hands of powerful hawks and realists and thus the basic problem i.e. peaceful mutual coexistence remained elusive. Now the new regional and global dynamics have started to insinuate, if not dictate, choices to both the countries. The matrix appears to be complex but is quite simple. India is gaining importance through sustained economic progress and its political system – the largest democracy in the world – is the feather in its crown. Moreover, the emerging geo-political realities – approaching end game in Afghanistan war theatre and US policy of China's containment –

necessitate a greater role to be played by India. On the other hand, Pakistan's stability and the potential role it can play cannot be ignored either. As Henry Kissinger once said, "there can be no war without Egypt and there can be no peace without Syria", there can be no peace and stability in Afghanistan without Pakistan and without Pakistan's cooperation, India cannot go global. Moreover, a stable and prosperous Pakistan can stem the tide of extremism and terrorism that is being spread from its western borders.

Hence, it is necessary that both the countries should realign their objectives and ensure that most of their strategic objectives, if not all, should complement each other. In this regard the peace process started in 1999 by the then Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mr Nawaz Sharif and his Indian counterpart, Mr Vajpayee and the Composite Dialogue that was started in 2004 by the former President Gen. Musharraf with Mr Vajpayee is the right direction to make effective headway that will eventually ensure peace and stability in the region and will also pave the way for the early resolution of these unresolved conflicts. Under composite dialogues, following issues were identified: Peace and Security including CBMs, Jammu and Kashmir, Siachin, Sir Creek, Wullar Barrage, Terrorism and Drug Trafficking etc. Though no concrete solution of any of these issues has been found but if allowed to continue, this approach, slowly but surely, will achieve an acceptable solution of these disputes – a solution which will not be based on winning or losing but mutual peaceful coexistence and jointly sharing in the benefits of economic growth and prosperity.

## **The way forward**

In a nutshell, without being unreasonably optimistic or unrealistic, it can be stated that establishing trade relations and mutually investing political and social capital will enormously benefit both the countries. It will result in evolution of a future that population of both the countries, currently reeling under inflation, unemployment and poverty, which it rightly deserves, is awaiting so badly.

Lastly, let me point out an interesting psychological phenomenon that is prevalent in the thinking pattern of both the countries. Take an example of a cricket match between India and Pakistan. Even if you field an inexperienced and relatively young Pakistani team against India, it will perform or at least will exert to its last stretch of endurance and willpower. It is because there is a psychological impression among us: if India can do it, we can also do it. So this perhaps explain why India failed to dominate us despite being 3 times bigger in every aspect or why Pakistan successfully became a nuclear power despite having little resources commensurate with its ambition (keep in mind that Iran is still struggling despite being rich in oil and gas) or how Pakistan managed to survive the aftermath of partition when it started its journey from a naught and in the face of hostile neighbor! Hence, if India is democratically strong and is economically progressing, Pakistan will surely follow the suit and the day is not far when the region will match the progress made in other parts of the world.

## Pakistan's War on Terror - Up To & Beyond 2014

*By Rizwan Zeb (05/01/2013 issue of the CACI Analyst)*

While Pakistan continues to be a frontline state in the global war on terror, it is simultaneously fighting domestic terrorism in a war that will seemingly continue well beyond 2014. In recent months, terror attacks targeting the Shia Hazara minority in Baluchistan indicate a transformation of the terror problem in Pakistan. The Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi present two different sides of Pakistan's terrorism problem, however, the two organizations have increasingly converged operationally to the extent that Pakistan cannot eliminate one without simultaneously confronting the other.

**BACKGROUND:** The September 11 terrorist attacks on the U.S. in which thousands of innocent lives were lost led Pakistan to join the U.S.-led global war against international terrorism in which Pakistan has over the years made an invaluable contribution. However, with the passage of time, Washington increasingly came to view Islamabad as part of the problem rather than the solution. Most U.S. and European policy makers believe that Pakistan is providing a safe haven for the Taliban and Al-Qaeda. Western media is full of stories about a presence of the Taliban leadership in Pakistan, including of Mullah Omar's alleged base in Quetta. Since the summer of 2008, U.S. military and intelligence agencies are sharing minimal intelligence with its Pakistani counterparts, instead focusing on drone attacks against suspected terrorist movements and hideouts.

Pakistan is a signatory to the UN's Palermo Convention. At the regional level, Pakistan has signed and ratified SAARC Regional Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism and the SAARC Convention on Narcotic Drugs Substances and the ECO Protocol against drugs. It has extradition treaties



with 29 countries and bilateral agreements or MOUs on terrorism with 50 countries. Pakistan has played a major role in eliminating a number of terror networks such as the Al-Qaeda Anthrax network, the Alghuraba network, the UK-based Anglo-Pakistani group and Jundullah. Prominent targets captured include Khalid Sheikh Muhammad, Abu Alfaraj Alibi, Al Shib, Abu Zubaida, Abu Talha, Khalid bin Attash or Walid bin Attish, Ahmed Khalfan Ghailani, Mohammad Naeem Noor Khan, Abu Laith al-Libi, Hasan Bana, Hamza Rabbi, Sharif Al Masri, Abu Mushab Masri, Jaffar Uttayyar Alkashmiri Yassir Al-Jaziri, and Abdul Rehman Al-Masri. Umar Patek was arrested in Abbottabad by Pakistani forces and may have provided important leads to Osama bin Laden's whereabouts.

Since 9/11, Pakistan has also become a victim of terrorism. The direct and indirect cost suffered by Islamabad in the war on terror has been around US\$ 35 billion. There has been a constant increase in the number of terror attacks in Pakistan since 9/11 and a number of prominent Pakistanis have lost their lives in such attacks. These include the two-time Prime Minister of Pakistan Benazir Bhutto and the former head of the Pakistan Army's Special Service Group, Maj. Gen. (Rtd) Ameer Faisal Alvi.

Most of the jihadists in Pakistan, especially the splinter groups of various organizations, are now operating under the umbrella of TTP, a Deobandi Sunni organization established in December 2007. TTP's objectives include cleansing Pakistan of foreign, meaning the U.S. and overall Western, presence, implementing Sharia and establishing a Caliphate. Over the years, TTP has been involved in a number of suicide bombings, rocket attacks, remote controlled bombs, abductions, and beheadings. It has widened its area of operations beyond Pakistan's tribal areas and targeted a number of government installations and organizations in the mainland, including the Federal Investigation Agency's Lahore office, the Naval War College in

Lahore, the Marriott Hotel in Islamabad, the Wah ordinance Factory, the Sri Lankan cricket team in Lahore, a police training school, the GHQ Rawalpindi and the Navy's Mehran base in Karachi. It is also involved in kidnapping for ransom, bank robberies, forced taxes and drug trade.

**IMPLICATIONS:** Since 9/11, the TTP has increasingly converged with the staunchly anti-Shia militant group Lashkar-e-Jhangvi. A number of prominent TTP operations were conducted by known Lashkar-e-Jhangvi operatives. In recent months, the Hazaras in Baluchistan are increasingly becoming a prime target of the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi. Both TTP and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi consider Shias kafirs (infidels) and hence legitimate targets.

Terrorist activities showed no sign of receding in 2012, indicating that after more than a decade of fighting terror, Pakistan is nowhere close to the finishing line in this war and the problem is taking an even uglier shape. According to various sources, Pakistan suffered more than 6000 casualties in different terror attacks in 2012. More than 450 terror attacks were recorded in 2012 in which at least 39 were confirmed suicide attacks. Another important development in 2012 was the increasing operational alliance between the TTP and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, although the two groups have cooperated with each other also in the past, the group led by Amjad Farooqi in 2003-2004 being a case in point.

However, in 2012 the two groups largely converged operationally in the sense that they declared a war against Shias. This convergence has resulted in the worst attacks to date against Shias, especially the Hazaras in Baluchistan. In 2012, Shias were targeted in 113 attacks in which 396 people lost their lives, indicating the increasingly sectarian features of Pakistan's terrorism problem. So far, more than a thousand terror-related deaths have occurred in 2013.

Apart from a closer alliance emerging between TTP and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, TTP has also established Ansar Al-Aseerian (Helpers of the prisoners) in partnership with the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan. According to media reports, Adnan Rasheed has been appointed the head of this group. The purpose of this group is to free all militants held in custody by Pakistani security forces and in various jails. TTP is also attempting to expand its activities and area of influence to Karachi, Pakistan's major financial hub. Karachi, which is also considered to be Pakistan's major Pashtun center, has been a preferred hideout for TTP, while some TTP and other jihadi activists have received medical treatment in Karachi.

2013 also witnessed two developments that will have long lasting effect on Pakistan's war against terrorism. Firstly, Pakistan's national Assembly unanimously passed the National Counter Terrorism Authority Bill 2013 on March 8, 2013. The establishment of a National Counter Terrorism Authority (NCTA) will play an important role in the efforts to combat terrorism. According to the mandate given to NCTA, it will "coordinate counter terrorism and counter extremism efforts in view of the nature and magnitude of the terrorist threat; and to present strategic policy options to the government for consideration/implementation by the stakeholders after scientifically studying the phenomenon of extremism and terrorism in historic and professional perspective." Secondly, Pakistan's army is taking a tougher stance and increasing its attention to the terrorism problem, as indicated by the decision of Pakistan's army chief to treat the problem of terrorism as an operational priority.

2013 is also an election year in Pakistan, with national and provincial elections scheduled for May 11, 2013. TTP has already targeted a number of political events in Khyber Paktunkhwa and especially the Awami National Party's election campaign. The political party or parties that will form the

next government will not only inherit a crisis in the energy and financial sectors but will also have to make hard decisions about the country's war against terror.

**CONCLUSIONS:** Developments in Pakistan suggest that the country's terror problem will only increase in the lead-up to 2014 and Pakistan will have to fight its war on terror well beyond 2014, if concrete and decisive steps against TTP and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi are not taken. Both organizations want Pakistan to be a Sunni state and are increasingly targeting Shias. The Pakistani people and armed forces have paid a huge price in people and material in this ongoing war. Unless Pakistan addresses the root causes of the problem, it will not only persist but also get worse.

**AUTHOR'S BIO:** Rizwan Zeb is based at the Centre for Muslim States and Societies (CMSS), University of Western Australia. He was previously a Benjamin Meaker visiting Professor of Politics at IAS, University of Bristol and a visiting scholar at the Brookings Institution.

## TAPI: Time for the Big Push

*By Gulshan Sachdeva (07/10/2013 issue of the CACI Analyst)*

Despite many positive developments in the last few years, the future of the ambitious TAPI gas pipeline project is still in doubt. All four partner countries are making serious preparations for the project. However, the uncertainty surrounding post-2014 Afghanistan has dampened the motivation among major energy companies to act as lead consortium partners of the project. In these circumstances, multilateral agencies like the Asian Development Bank may have to play a crucial role in salvaging the project. Likewise, if the U.S. administration is serious about its support for TAPI, it should put its full diplomatic and financial weight behind it.

**BACKGROUND:** In the last fifteen years, there has been much discussion on the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline. Earlier, analysts highlighted many uncertainties concerning the project. These included gas reserves in Turkmenistan; the security situation in Afghanistan; and strained relations between India and Pakistan. Despite all these challenges, all parties have seriously considered the proposal. In the last couple of years, the project has been up for discussion at almost every major international meeting concerning Afghanistan. This has been one of the main items on the agenda at every Regional Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan (RECCA).

As per the latest reports, the proposed 1,700 km pipeline will run from the South Yolotan Osman fields in Turkmenistan to Afghanistan, from there it will be constructed alongside the highway running from Herat to Kandahar, and then via Quetta and Multan in Pakistan. The final destination will be to Fazilka in Indian Punjab. The project can transport up to 30 billion cubic

meters of natural gas annually from Turkmenistan to South Asian countries. The agreement signed by the involved countries envisage the delivery of 90 million cubic meters per day (mmcmd) of gas from Turkmenistan to participating countries with 38 mmcmd each going to Pakistan and India and 14 mmcmd for Afghanistan.

India was formally invited to join the project in 2006, and was earlier participating in the talks as an observer along with the ADB, Turkmenistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan. The ADB has acted as the TAPI Secretariat since 2003. In the last ten years, it has also played a useful role in coordinating and facilitating the TAPI negotiation process, mainly through its small Technical Assistance (TA) projects costing a few million dollars.

Initially when concerns were raised about gas reserves, the Turkmen government in 2006 informed the members that an independent firm, De Golyer & McNaughton, had confirmed reserves of over 2.3 trillion cubic meters (TCM) of gas at Dauletabad field. With major discoveries at South Yolotan (located in the southeastern Murgab Basin north of the Dauletabad field), however, many of these concerns subsided. Although instability in Afghanistan has been one of the main obstacles for the project, international attention to Afghanistan has conversely kept the project alive through all these years.

**IMPLICATIONS:** In the last few years, all four countries involved in the project have already signed most agreements required for its commencement. These include: an Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA), a Gas Pipeline Framework Agreement (GPFA), a Gas Sales and Purchase agreement, and a broad agreement on transit fees. Early last year, India and Pakistan agreed on the principle of a “Uniform Transit Fee,” basically meaning that Pakistan will accept whatever transit fee India and Afghanistan agree upon. The Indian government later approved a payment of 50 cents

per million metric British thermal units as the transit fee to Pakistan and Afghanistan.

To accelerate the project, the parties have formed a ministerial level Steering Committee and Technical Working Group. In February this year, the Indian government approved the formation of the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) for the TAPI project and permitted the Gas Authority of India Ltd (GAIL) to join the SPV. With an initial US\$ 20 million contribution, the Dubai-based SPV, TAPI Ltd, would take up the feasibility study and design work as well as search for a consortium lead. All four countries have agreed to the concept and Indian GAIL has made initial investments of US\$ 5 million in TAPI Ltd.

In recent months, even Bangladesh has shown an interest in joining the project. Knowing the history of the project, the significance of these developments cannot be underestimated. It means that the ground work for the project is ready. It is now time to commit serious finances for it.

According to an earlier pre-feasibility study by Penspen, the estimated cost of the project is about US\$ 7.6 billion. Recent reports quote figures around US\$ 9-12 billion. According to the ADB, the estimated design and construction period for the project is about four years. Since this is a large and complex project, all partners consider it necessary to attract a major energy company to lead the consortium, which will facilitate investment, manage construction and operate the pipeline.

To attract potential project partners, three road shows coordinated by the ADB and attended by representatives of all four participating countries were organized in Singapore, New York and London in September-October 2012. Several companies and financial institutions attended the Singapore road show, including Petronas, Temasek and State Bank of India. In New York,

many leading firms such as Chevron and Exxon Mobile, CITI Group and US Exim participated. Among others, British Petroleum, Shell, British Gas and Morgan Stanley attended the London road show. While all these companies have shown a keen interest in the project, none is currently willing to commit resources due to the uncertain situation in Afghanistan.

Although U.S. administration is pushing for the project, the U.S. Energy Information Administration feels that “the likelihood of such a pipeline coming online in the next few years is very slim due to the logistical and security challenges.” It is also reported that many oil majors may become interested in the project if they are allowed a stake in the upstream fields in Turkmenistan. Turkmenistan has earlier offered a Chinese company such a stake for the Turkmenistan-China gas pipeline. The Turkmen government now says that its new law does not allow stakes in gas fields. After failing to find a lead partner, there were reports that the participating countries were ready to sign a transaction advisory agreement with the ADB to raise funds for the project, yet these limited efforts may not be enough to save it.

At this point, all four participating countries in the TAPI project are keen to see it implemented. Both Pakistan’s Nawaz Sharif and India’s Manmohan Singh are eager to show some positive movement in bilateral relations. Along with other items, TAPI was one of the main items on the agenda when the influential India-Pakistan Business Council met in Islamabad recently. During the meeting, TAPI was termed a “historic step among the member countries.” If the project does not go through, Turkmenistan’s government will move further towards China and possibly Russia. It will be a major setback for Afghanistan’s current administration. The energy starved Pakistan will look for alternative energy ties with China and Iran. For India, it will be a sign of further U.S. disengagement from Afghanistan and Central Asia. Some Indian public sector companies like the Oil and Natural Gas



Commission (ONGC) are already exploring the possibilities of bringing Russian hydrocarbons to India. There are reports that the ADB is already pulling out of another big energy project in Central Asia, the South Asia Transmission & Trade Project (CASA-1000). The ADB was supposed to sponsor 40 percent of this US\$ 966 million project. These reports are not very encouraging for TAPI either.

**CONCLUSIONS:** The strategic significance of the project is great. If implemented, the TAPI gas pipeline can become a “game changer” in regional geopolitics and regional economic integration. It has the potential to smoothen the “Decade of Transformation” for Afghanistan. The time has come to commit serious finances for the project. In the absence of any major energy company coming forward, international financial organizations like the ADB should take a serious look at the project and commit finances for TAPI. Another dose of small TA projects will not be enough. If the U.S. administration is serious about the project, it also needs to put its full diplomatic and financial weight behind it. Otherwise discussions on the TAPI gas pipeline will be limited to academic and diplomatic conferences for another decade.

**AUTHOR’S BIO:** Gulshan Sachdeva is Professor at the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He also headed ADB and The Asia Foundation projects on regional cooperation at the Afghanistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kabul (2006-10). He has been a Visiting Professor at the University of Antwerp, University of Trento and Corvinus University of Budapest.

## Desire for peace behind king's stance on Egypt

Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah's firm support for Egypt at its hour of crisis reflects his desire to reinforce peace and stability in the Arab and Islamic world, said Saudi Ambassador to Egypt Ahmed Kattan on Sunday.

Speaking to the heads of Egyptian associations abroad at the Saudi Embassy in Cairo, Kattan said there is nothing surprising about King Abdullah's stance on Egypt.

"Whatever the king does for the Arab and Islamic Ummah shows his love and affection for them," the ambassador said, adding that the king's noble stances were inspired by the teachings of Islam. The Egyptian groups abroad had previously sent messages of greetings and gratitude to the king in appreciation of his historic support for Cairo against terrorist designs.

King Abdullah's stand toward Egypt was instrumental in changing the global perception about the new Cairo government, the ambassador said while highlighting the strong Saudi-Egyptian relations. The Egyptian Foreign Ministry, meanwhile, has reiterated its appreciation of Saudi Arabia's support at a time when other countries have looked the other way. "The words of Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah came at the most pressing time when other countries are turning a blind eye to terror and criminal activity being perpetrated in Egypt," Abdul Al-Ati, Egyptian foreign ministry spokesman, told an Arabic daily. Al-Ati noted that the king's words carried a clear message to the international community that Saudi Arabia had full trust in the will of the Egyptian people. "The use of the term 'terror' in the king's statement

stressed that the events in Egypt were acts of terror, though its perpetrators have masked them under the label of peaceful sit-ins and demonstrations. The outside world became convinced of the real situation in the country after viewing the video films and photos proving terrorist motives," Al-Ati added. He said Egyptian interim President Adli Mansour lauded the Saudi stance in a statement issued in response to King Abdullah's words and affirmed that Egypt was not only defending itself but also striving to protect the Arab and Muslim world against the menace of terror.

"Our people will never forget those who stood by them at their hour of crisis. They will also not forget those who stood against their will," he said, adding that the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Kuwait, Jordan and Palestine, besides most other Arab countries, supported Egypt. The king made the statement in support of Egypt because he realized that Egypt's stability was strategic to the stability of the entire Arab world in addition to its key role in making joint Arab activities successful, Al-Ati observed.

He added that Cairo would never forget King Faisal's declaration of an oil embargo against the Western world, which showed a clear bias toward Israel in the 1973 war.

The spokesman asserted that his country would come out of the crisis as it had done in the past. "Egypt has always been able to solve major issues with the support of its sisterly countries, particularly the Kingdom and other Gulf and Arab countries."

# “Egypt must not fall to extremists,” says EU special envoy Bernardino León

Source file:[http://elpais.com/elpais/2013/08/23/inenglish/1377256352\\_941609.html](http://elpais.com/elpais/2013/08/23/inenglish/1377256352_941609.html)

The European Union's special representative for the Southern Mediterranean, Spaniard Bernardino León, says that he foresaw a difficult summer, but that events have proved more complicated than expected as result of what the EU calls the "military intervention" in Egypt and the ensuing violence that has left an estimated 900 people dead. León talked to EL PAÍS earlier this week, ahead of the EU emergency meeting that saw Brussels suspend licenses for arms exports to Egypt. Last November the EU pledged a five-billion-euro aid package for Egypt. It consists of one billion directly from the EU, with the rest to come from the EU-associated European Investment Bank and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. But most is already frozen because of EU concerns about corruption in Egypt. The EU says it has sent about 450m euros to Egypt in the last three years.

**Question.** How much influence does the EU have in Egypt?

**Answer.** A lot. The EU is an important mediator, seen by all in the region as impartial. We are also Egypt's most important trading partner, and provide around 80 percent of the country's tourists. Most of the aid we provide is non-military.

**Q.** Saudi Arabia has said that it will fill the gap left by any aid cut to Egypt. Are you afraid that this will weaken your position?

**A.** The problem is that despite all the aid Egypt has received, its economy is still not recovering. It needs investors to return. This is why Europe believes that Egypt has to win back the international investment community's confidence.

**Q.** Do you really think that Egypt can win the trust of the international community?

**A.** The situation is serious. The EU has condemned in the strongest terms what has happened, and largely blames the government. But we have also said that both sides have committed acts of violence. We all agree that the key thing now is to return to the negotiating table.

**Q.** The EU says that there are moderates on both sides, but it is clear that they are not in control of things. How can the moderates be given a voice and a role?

**A.** If we can get talks going, then these voices will be heard and they will have their say. There are initiatives, we are in contact with many groups, and we are going to make sure that they are heard. We cannot let such an important country fall into the hands of extremists.

**Q.** Why is the EU so reluctant to call what happened a coup?

**A.** Because what happened between June 30 and July 3 was much more complicated than a simple military intervention. We have never denied that there was a military element to this. But there were also hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of people on the streets and the real threat of confrontation between different sides. The international community was encouraging President Morsi to find a way out, either through early elections or a referendum.

**Q.** The impression has been that the EU has preferred to look the other way because it didn't regard the Morsi government as an ally, and as a result things are now much worse.

**A.** After the elections, the EU recognized Morsi as the winner. Brussels agreed on a 5.5-billion aid package. You can't accuse the EU of ignoring Egypt. But at the end of November, Morsi started to take decisions that we disagreed with: he assumed greater powers, did not include all sectors of society in writing a new Constitution, and generally kept more and more power for himself.

**Q.** So what happened on July 3 was not a military coup?

**A.** Let's not get involved in a war of labels or legitimacy, because all we want is a return to democracy, and this is clearly not happening at the moment. We want to see a transition that is inclusive of all parties, with no political prisoners, and respect for human rights. You cannot reproach the EU for having been ambiguous in its assessment of the situation in Egypt.

**Q.** What would the EU do if the Muslim Brotherhood were banned?

**A.** This would require a debate within the EU, but personally I think it would be a mistake. It is not possible to demonize an institution that represents so many people, even if it has made mistakes.

**Q.** Is Egypt on the brink of civil war?

**A.** No. The government and the Muslim Brotherhood still believe that there is a peaceful solution to this. We are a long way from that, but it is important to stop the spiral of violence.

## **Syria, Iraq and moral obscenities big and small**

**Other governments should be held to the same standard as Syria when it comes to use of chemical weapons.**

By: Mark LeVine

Question: Can a government that supported the use of chemical weapons in one conflict claim any moral, political or legal authority to militarily attack another country for using the same weapons?

There is little doubt that using chemical weapons is, to quote US Secretary of State John Kerry, a "moral obscenity". And Kerry knows a thing or two about moral obscenities. He (in)famously threw up to nine of his combat medals over the fence of the US Capitol in protest against the Vietnam War, in which he fought.

As Kerry recalled in 1971, the Nixon administration "forced us to return our medals because beyond the perversion of the war, these leaders themselves denied us the integrity those symbols supposedly gave our lives".

These are eloquent and powerful words. So were his remarks accusing the Assad regime of this latest moral obscenity, a likely chemical weapon attack in Damascus that killed 355 people and hurt many more.

I have no illusions that the rebel forces in Syria have greater moral scruples than do Assad and his forces. But it is also implausible that this was a rebel-launched false flag attack, because of its scale and scope. It is simply not conceivable that the US, Israel, Saudi Arabia or other major players would allow any of the Sunni jihadi groups operating in Syria to build up a

significant stockpile of chemical weapons and use them on numerous targets simultaneously. The risk that these weapons could be used against Israel, the US or other targets would be too great to allow.

This was, in all likelihood, the work of a regime that has already killed more than 100,000 of its own people and forced millions to become refugees. That the world community would sit by while the Syrian government so brutalises its own people is an even greater moral obscenity than this particular use of illegal weapons.

Making matters worse, it's only one of seemingly uncountable moral obscenities suffered by the weak the world over.

The main question commentators and officials seem to be asking about this attack is why the Syrian government would launch an attack that would almost inevitably lead to direct Western military intervention against it and further alienate global public opinion.

Several theories are being put forth to answer this question, from declaring that the seeming illogic of the attack is proof enough that it was the rebels; to the [belief](#) that these attacks were ordered by Bashar al-Assad's allegedly even more ruthless brother, Maher; an appreciation of Assad's "[extremely calculating](#)" tactic of ratcheting up the use of force to the point where chemical weapons become normalised; or a sense that Obama will not risk an all-out confrontation with Assad and his Russian backers and so will limit any retaliation to acceptable levels.



## **Are chemical weapons fundamentally 'different'?**

But there are two other questions, both raised by a blockbuster revelation in an August 26 *Foreign Policy* [article](#), "CIA Files Prove America Helped Saddam as He Gassed Iran", which I would argue are more important to consider.

The first concerns the issue of whether chemical weapons are fundamentally different from their conventional counterparts, and thus should continue to be singled out for international condemnation. As we have seen, conventional weapons are also capable of producing death and destruction on an industrial scale.

Emblematic of this line of thought is a December 6, 2012 *American Prospect* article in which Paul Waldman argues that chemical weapons are not as uniquely dangerous as biological or nuclear weapons because they don't have the ability to kill large populations (by which he means tens or hundreds of thousands of people, or even millions). "I've never seen anyone explain what it is," Waldman writes, that these weapons continue to be singled out given their relative lack of large-scale killing power.

An *Atlantic* column by Dominic Tierney from the same time argues that if we "strip away the moralistic opposition to chemical weapons" what we'll find lying underneath is "strategic self-interest... Powerful countries like the United States cultivate a taboo against using WMD partly because they have a vast advantage in conventional arms. We want to draw stark lines around acceptable and unacceptable kinds of warfare because the terrain that we carve out is strategically favourable." Even those who argue that chemical weapons are worse than conventional weapons assume they are only good at killing civilians indiscriminately, and [not very practical](#) for winning conventional battles.

This is where the documents examined in the *Foreign Policy* article come in. What they clearly show is that chemical weapons do in fact provide a crucial strategic advantage to those using them. For instance, Iraq's use of chemical weapons during its war with Iran was [believed](#) by US analysts to be among the decisive factors in counteracting the Iranian "[human wave](#)" strategy, which had been overrunning Iraqi front lines, albeit at a huge cost in Iranian soldiers.

Chemical weapons, and particularly the kind of nerve agents used by Saddam Hussein and now likely Bashar al-Assad's regime, are effective precisely because they can kill large numbers of people, can be used easily and indiscriminately against civilian targets, last long enough to cause damage well after the immediate fighting has ceased, and can help turn the tide of a conventional battle.

Because of these factors, the side subjected to ongoing chemical weapons attacks will usually seek to acquire and use them as well. This inevitably creates an arms race that will exacerbate an already deadly conflict.

### **Moral calculi**

Beyond confirming their effectiveness as a weapon of war and terror, the US intelligence reports analysed by the *Foreign Policy* article are important for another reason. They reveal that the United States government not only knew about the use of chemical weapons by Iraq - in fact, the same neurotoxin, sarin, was most likely also used in the recent attack in Syria - but aided their use by providing satellite and other intelligence to the Iraqi government.

This reality leads to the question with which I began this column: Can a government that supported the use of chemical weapons in one conflict

claim any moral, political or legal authority militarily to attack another country for using the same weapons, particularly when the attack is not authorised by the UN Security Council?

Not only did the US aid the use of chemical weapons by the former Iraqi government, it also used chemical weapons on a large scale during its 1991 and 2003 invasions of Iraq, in the form of depleted-uranium (DU) ammunition.

As Dahr Jamail's [reporting](#) for Al Jazeera has shown, the use of DU by the US and UK has very likely been the cause not only of many cases of Gulf War Syndrome suffered by Iraq war veterans, but also of thousands of instances of birth defects, cancer and other diseases - causing a "large-scale public health disaster" and the "[highest rate](#) of genetic damage in any population ever studied" - suffered by Iraqis in areas subjected to frequent and intense attacks by US and allied occupation forces.

Thus what we have now is a situation in which a government (the United States) that has both supported and committed large-scale and systematic war crimes in one country (Iraq) is leading the international effort to stop Iraq's neighbour Syria from continuing to use chemical weapons against its own people.

The US is being opposed by other major powers, particularly Russia, which have their own history of committing large-scale war crimes, including the use of chemical weapons, such as in the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.

## **A little common sense**

The fact that the United States has supported and committed war crimes, including the use of chemical weapons (in Vietnam even more than in Iraq), does not mean that it should play no role in trying to stop Syria from continuing to commit its own war crimes.

Nor does it mean that we should ignore the crimes of the Assad regime and its allies in Russia, Iran, Lebanon or other places.

Imperfect though it may be, the international community must come together when possible to stop the kind of mass murder that has been witnessed in Syria during the last two years. But if we are to heed Kerry's call to respond to the alleged actions of the Syrian government in a manner that is "grounded in facts, informed by conscience and guided by common sense", then supporters and opponents of a forceful response should hold other governments accountable to the same standard.

This would mean getting rid of the UN Security Council veto enjoyed by the major powers, which has so often been used to shield themselves and their most important clients from punishment for war crimes and other violations of international law. It would also mean turning off the weapons tap across the region: in Israel as well as Saudi Arabia (with whom the US just signed an agreement to sell [cluster bombs](#), another weapon banned under most interpretations of international law), in Egypt as well as in Syria.

A little common sense, facts and conscience would go a long way not just in Syria but across the Middle East and North Africa, and in forming the foreign policies of the world's major powers. Sadly, if the continued carnage in Syria is an indication, I wouldn't hold my breath in hopes of seeing it any time soon.

# Does Obama know he's fighting on al-Qa'ida's side?

‘All for one and one for all’ should be the battle cry if the West goes to war against Assad’s Syrian regime

If Barack Obama decides to attack the Syrian regime, he has ensured – for the very first time in history – that the United States will be on the same side as al-Qa’ida.

Quite an alliance! Was it not the Three Musketeers who shouted “All for one and one for all” each time they sought combat? This really should be the new battle cry if – or when – the statesmen of the Western world go to war against Bashar al-Assad.

The men who destroyed so many thousands on 9/11 will then be fighting alongside the very nation whose innocents they so cruelly murdered almost exactly 12 years ago. Quite an achievement for Obama, Cameron, Hollande and the rest of the miniature warlords.

This, of course, will not be trumpeted by the Pentagon or the White House – nor, I suppose, by [al-Qa’ida](#) – though they are both trying to destroy Bashar. So are the Nusra front, one of al-Qa’ida’s affiliates. But it does raise some interesting possibilities.

Maybe the Americans should ask al-Qa'ida for intelligence help – after all, this is the group with “boots on the ground”, something the Americans have no interest in doing. And maybe al-Qa'ida could offer some target information facilities to the country which usually claims that the supporters of al-Qa'ida, rather than the Syrians, are the most wanted men in the world.

There will be some ironies, of course. While the Americans drone al-Qa'ida to death in Yemen and Pakistan – along, of course, with the usual flock of civilians – they will be giving them, with the help of Messrs Cameron, Hollande and the other Little General-politicians, material assistance in Syria by hitting al-Qa'ida's enemies. Indeed, you can bet your bottom dollar that the one target the Americans will not strike in Syria will be al-Qa'ida or the Nusra front.

And our own Prime Minister will applaud whatever the Americans do, thus allying himself with al-Qa'ida, whose London bombings may have slipped his mind. Perhaps – since there is no institutional memory left among modern governments – Cameron has forgotten how similar are the sentiments being uttered by Obama and himself to those uttered by Bush and Blair a decade ago, the same bland assurances, uttered with such self-confidence but without quite enough evidence to make it stick.

In Iraq, we went to war on the basis of lies originally uttered by fakers and conmen. Now it's war by YouTube. This doesn't mean that the terrible images of the gassed and dying [Syrian civilians](#) are false. It does mean that any evidence to the contrary is going to have to be suppressed. For example, no-one is going to be interested in persistent reports in Beirut that three Hezbollah members – fighting alongside government troops in Damascus – were apparently struck down by the same gas on the same day, supposedly in tunnels. They are now said to be undergoing treatment in a

Beirut hospital. So if Syrian government forces used gas, how come Hezbollah men might have been stricken too? Blowback?

And while we're talking about institutional memory, hands up which of our jolly statesmen know what happened last time the Americans took on the Syrian government army? I bet they can't remember. Well it happened in Lebanon when the US Air Force decided to bomb Syrian missiles in the Bekaa Valley on 4 December 1983. I recall this very well because I was here in Lebanon. An American A-6 fighter bomber was hit by a Syrian Strela missile – Russian made, naturally – and crash-landed in the Bekaa; its pilot, Mark Lange, was killed, its co-pilot, Robert Goodman, taken prisoner and freighted off to jail in Damascus. Jesse Jackson had to travel to Syria to get him back after almost a month amid many clichés about “ending the cycle of violence”. Another American plane – this time an A-7 – was also hit by Syrian fire but the pilot managed to eject over the Mediterranean where he was plucked from the water by a Lebanese fishing boat. His plane was also destroyed.

Sure, we are told that it will be a short strike on [Syria](#), in and out, a couple of days. That's what Obama likes to think. But think Iran. Think Hezbollah. I rather suspect – if Obama does go ahead – that this one will run and run.

## **Syria should not be equated with Libya nor Iraq**

**By MICHAEL WILNER, JERUSALEM POST CORRESPONDENT**

WASHINGTON – Britain's Parliament has been recalled once again to hold a crisis vote on whether to authorize military intervention in another Middle East conflict.

Framed by opposition party members as history repeating itself, Thursday's meeting of Parliament has already been compared to the drumroll that preceded action against Libya in 2011 and Iraq in 2003.

Former UK prime minister Tony Blair was ridiculed for coming out in favor of Western action against Syria's President Bashar Assad on Monday. Polls and local press coverage suggest that much of the British public is still bitter over being misled into the Iraq war under his leadership.

But Western military campaigns in Iraq and Libya cannot reasonably be compared to the action that appears imminent against the regime of Syria's embattled president, Bashar Assad.

The specter of weapons of mass destruction motivated Western allies to act in Iraq preemptively, unilaterally and without due diligence. The premise of the war was that Iraq's leader, Saddam Hussein, could not be trusted to acquire WMD. He had used them years before, in Halabjah in 1988.

But the international community was not in agreement that Hussein was pursuing WMD capability, much less in accord on the progress of the development of such programs, as US intelligence alleged.



In the case of Syria, however, no country – not even Assad's allies – question that the regime has stockpiled massive amounts of chemical weapons.

Assad's government admitted it possesses these weapons in 2012. Syria has the largest stock of sarin in the region, and historically, Russia aided in the development of that program.

The point of drawing a redline on the pursuit of WMD – such as was done to justify the invasion of Iraq – is to avoid a much deeper redline: the use of WMD, as was evidently crossed last week in the Damascus suburb of Ghouta.

Even Iran's leadership, closely allied with Assad, has admitted that chemical weapons were used last week in Syria to devastating effect. The question now is only of culpability, and to that end, there exists no credible evidence that Syria's fractured rebel forces could make, much less deliver, chemical weapons on a massive scale.

The issue is not a matter of intelligence. On Syria, it is a matter of will – both of the people in the US and Britain and of their leaders, reluctant to take on the costs of yet another war.

And yet, again in contrast with Iraq, a full declaration of war by the West on Syria is simply not in the cards.

"This is quite different to that 'boots on the ground' invasion of another country," Nick Clegg, UK deputy prime minister, said on Tuesday. Clegg's political party, the Liberal Democrats, staunchly opposed the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

Western intervention in Libya may be a more appropriate case study when examining the looming attack on Syria, but still has significant differences in the details that matter.

Syria is a country a third the geographic size of Libya, with three times the population.

Assad has stocked and used chemical weapons, whereas Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi had not at the time.

And Syria's civil war is burdened by deep sectarian rivalries, while the Libyan conflict was much simpler: rebels were united in their fight to overthrow a dictator.

"In the case of Libya, the purpose of military intervention was to win the war for the rebels," said Gary Samore, executive director of research at the Belfer Center at Harvard. The purpose of intervention in Syria, at this point, will not be to turn the tide of the war against Assad's favor. It will be to underline a fundamental international norm set forth by the West: the world will not tolerate the use of WMD. Sovereignty is a responsibility, they will assert, and not a right.

Samore says that Kosovo, not Libya or Iraq, provides the best template for comparison to the Syrian crisis. And indeed, the US administration has been studying NATO's 1999 intervention in the Yugoslav conflict closely in recent days.

"The big differences with Libya and Iraq are the facts on the ground," Samore said. "But it's based fundamentally on the principle that outside actors can intervene in a local conflict against a government, if that government has failed to protect its people."

# Bad Reputation

The Folly of Going to War for "Credibility"

By: Jonathan Mercer

Source Link: <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/136577/jonathan-mercero/bad-reputation>

The United States is poised to strike against the regime of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad for a chemical weapons attack that killed hundreds of civilians and wounded thousands. U.S. President Barack Obama warned Assad not to use such weapons once before, saying that their use would cross a "red line." Assad ignored the threat in June and Obama did nothing. So does Obama's initial bluff explain Assad's second chemical attack?

It might. If Assad concluded from the first episode that Obama was irresolute, then he would discount the threat of U.S. military action. Of course, that would make Assad a strategic simpleton unable to imagine the political pressure on the Obama administration to respond to the repeated use of poison gas.

Even if Assad were so simpleminded, the administration's critics are wrong to suggest that the president should have acted sooner to protect U.S. credibility. After the red line was first crossed, Obama could have taken the United States to war to prevent Assad from concluding that an irresolute Obama would not respond to any further attacks -- a perception on Syria's part that seems to have now made a U.S. military response all but certain. But going to war to prevent a possible misperception that might later cause a war is, to paraphrase Bismarck, like committing suicide out of fear that others might later wrongly think one is dead.

It is also possible that the United States did not factor into Assad's calculations. A few months before the United States invaded Iraq, Saddam

Hussein's primary concerns were avoiding a Shia rebellion and deterring Iran. Shortsighted, yes, but also a good reminder that although the United States is at the center of the universe for Americans, it is not for everyone else. Assad has a regime to protect and he will commit any crime to win the war. Finally, it is possible that Assad never doubted Obama's resolve -- he just expects that he can survive any American response. After all, if overthrowing Assad were easy, it would already have been done.

Instead of worrying about U.S. credibility or the president's reputation, the administration should focus on what can be done to reinforce the longstanding norm against the use of weapons of mass destruction.

ORIGINAL ARTICLE, May 13, 2013

People can believe extraordinary things. In an interview with NPR's Melissa Block earlier this month, Susan Ahmad, the English spokesperson for the Syrian revolutionary council, [claimed](#) that last week's Israeli strikes in Syria might have been the result of collusion between Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and the Israelis. And it is well documented that Saddam Hussein believed that, in Hebrew, the name of the Japanese cartoon franchise Pokémon meant "I am Jewish."

It is not beyond the bounds of imagination, then, that Assad believes that U.S. President Barack Obama is feckless and irresolute. At least that has been the worry among many American circles since Obama backed down from earlier warnings that the use of chemical weapons in Syria would be a "red line." It is likely that the Assad regime or Syrian rebels crossed that line in late April and ... nothing happened. Cue the strategists: American credibility is on the line! Not just with Syria, as Republican Senators John McCain and Lindsey Graham put it at the end of April, "but with Iran, North Korea, and all of our enemies and friends."

Since then, the debate about what to do in Syria has been sidetracked by discussions of how central reputation is to deterrence, and whether protecting it is worth going to war.

There are two ways to answer those questions: through evidence and through logic. The first approach is easy. Do leaders assume that other leaders who have been irresolute in the past will be irresolute in the future and that, therefore, their threats are not credible? No; broad and deep evidence dispels that notion. In studies of the various political crises leading up to [World War I](#) and of those before and during the [Korean War](#), I found that leaders did indeed worry about their reputations. But their worries were often mistaken.

For example, when North Korea attacked South Korea in 1950, U.S. Secretary of State Dean Acheson was certain that America's credibility was on the line. He believed that the United States' allies in the West were in a state of "near-panic, as they watched to see whether the United States would act." He was wrong. When one British cabinet secretary remarked to British Prime Minister Clement Attlee that Korea was "a rather distant obligation," Attlee responded, "Distant -- yes, but nonetheless an obligation." For their part, the French were indeed worried, but not because they doubted U.S. credibility. Instead, they feared that American resolve would lead to a major war over a strategically inconsequential piece of territory. Later, once the war was underway, Acheson feared that Chinese leaders thought the United States was "too feeble or hesitant to make a genuine stand," as the CIA put it, and could therefore "be bullied or bluffed into backing down before Communist might." In fact, Mao thought no such thing. He believed that the Americans intended to destroy his revolution, perhaps with nuclear weapons.

Similarly, Ted Hopf, a professor of political science at the National University of Singapore, [has found](#) that the Soviet Union did not think the United States was irresolute for abandoning Vietnam; instead, Soviet officials were surprised that Americans would sacrifice so much for something the Soviets viewed as tangential to U.S. interests. And, [in his study](#) of Cold War showdowns, Dartmouth College professor Daryl Press found reputation to have been unimportant. During the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Soviets threatened to attack Berlin in response to any American use of force against Cuba; despite a long record of Soviet bluff and bluster over Berlin, policymakers in the United States took these threats seriously. As the record shows, reputations do not matter.

Arguments never seem to be won on evidence alone, though, which is where the second approach comes in. Simply put, the logic behind the claim that reputation matters is self-invalidating; common knowledge of the claim changes behavior in ways that undermine it. For example, if I know that a specific signal makes my commitment seem credible, you know it too. You will discount my sending you that signal if you think I have reason to be deceptive. Logic kills strategy, in other words, because anything I can deduce, you can deduce as well. (And I can likely deduce your deduction.) This “he thinks that she thinks that he thinks” logic is part of how people strategize, and it is called [recursion](#).

Recursive thinking can get complicated. In [The Logic of Images](#), Robert Jervis, a professor of international affairs at Columbia, wrote about a wonderful example of recursion in World War II. During the war, there was a French colonel who had been spying on the British and taking the secrets back to the Germans. The British flipped the Frenchman and started using him to pass bad information back to the Germans, who quickly became aware that the colonel was a double agent. After discovering that the

Germans had found out about the Frenchman's status, the British decided to inform the agent that the Normandy invasion was set for early June (it really was). The informant passed the information along, and it only served as proof to the Germans that the Allies were not invading Normandy in early June. All this is to illustrate how strategists use recursive thinking -- and how it quickly becomes nearly impossible to follow.

Recursion poses another strategic problem: When does the game stop? If you count on my going only one round but I go multiple rounds, you will incorrectly predict my behavior. Consider this simple guessing game: A large number of competitors is asked to pick a number between zero and 100 that will be half the average of the number that everyone else picks. Students with training in game theory reason through multiple rounds and know that the logical answer is zero. But few people think like game theorists. Most engage in [only two or three iterations](#), which leads them to believe that the right answer is around 25.

And that brings us back to reputation. Say that Assad interprets Obama's backing down on his red line remark as irresolute and that Assad's reasoning stops there. He might decide that Obama will always be irresolute in the future and that Obama will play the second round of the game as if the first round had not happened. Neither the political context nor the interests at stake are important. In this case Assad, perhaps like McCain, is rather simple-minded when it comes to strategy.

Of course, it is plausible that Assad is capable of reasoning just as well as the public at large and will go through two rounds of reasoning. In this case, he might realize that Obama has taken heat at home for his red line comment. Assad might also reason that Obama knows that Assad no longer believes that Obama will follow through on his threats. And that changes Assad's calculations entirely: in the second round of the game, he will think

it unlikely that whatever Obama says is a bluff. In some ways, then, a called bluff makes Obama's future threats more credible, not less.

Now, if Assad is a master strategist and game theory devotee, he might engage in three rounds of reasoning. In this case, Assad would believe that Obama is actually more likely to bluff because Obama thinks that Assad thinks that Obama is less likely to bluff. Keeping the logic straight is difficult, but it is also irrelevant: no one knows how many rounds the game will go on, for there is no logical place to stop.

Those who argue that reputation and credibility matter are depending on strategists to be simple-minded, illogical, and blissfully unaware of recursion. And if Assad is illogical, then calibrating U.S. foreign policy to elicit particular responses from him is pointless. The same goes for other adversaries. No one can know what the North Korean leadership will make of U.S. behavior in Syria. They might think that Obama has no credibility, that he is, in fact, resolute, or that he is driven by other U.S. interests. Whatever conclusion they come to will be driven by their own beliefs and interests.

As British Prime Minister Lord Salisbury once [complained](#), studying maps "disturbed men's reasoning powers." His strategists, he thought, would have liked to "annex the moon in order to prevent its being appropriated by the planet Mars." Just as Salisbury mocked his strategists' fears, the United States should not let concerns over credibility drive policymaking. Wars should be fought to protect interests and values, not to defend imaginary reputations from simpletons and illogical foes. In other words, the Obama administration should not make Acheson's mistake in Syria and let fears that others might think it irresolute drive it to disaster. Instead, it should refocus on what U.S. interests really are in Syria, and how it can best obtain them.



## **Saudi Arabia cabinet passes ban on domestic violence**

Saudi Arabia's cabinet has passed a ban on domestic violence and other forms of abuse against women for the first time in the Kingdom's history.

The cabinet approved the ban on physical or sexual violence earlier this week, which applies both at home or within the work place.

The legislation makes domestic violence a punishable crime for the first time. It also provides treatment and shelter for victims of abuse and holds law enforcement agencies accountable for investigating and prosecuting allegations of abuse.

The ban includes penalties of a maximum 12 month jail sentence and fines of up to \$13,000.

“All civilian or military employees and all workers in the private sector who learn of a case of abuse — by virtue of their work — shall report the case to their employers when they know it,” Alnbawaba reported the cabinet as saying in a statement. “The employers shall report the case to the Ministry of Social Affairs or police when they know it.”

A campaign calling for an end to violence against women was run for the first time earlier in the year, using an image of a woman wearing a hijab with her eyes visible through slits in the veil.

Domestic violence has previously been considered legally a private matter in the Arab state, until the poster was released to encourage more open discussions of the issue.

In the domestic violence advert, one of the woman's eyes appears blackened and bruised, with the slogan "Some things can't be covered up" written in Arabic underneath.

The campaign aims to "provide legal protection for women and children from abuse in Saudi Arabia" and is endorsed by the King Kahalid Charitable Foundation, who describe "the phenomenon of battered women in Saudi Arabia" as "much greater than expected".

# The Legal Consequences of Illegal Wars

What Will Follow Obama's Foray Into Syria  
By: David Kaye

The United States, by all indications, will soon become a belligerent in Syria's civil war. The Syrian government's alleged use of chemical weapons to kill hundreds crossed a redline that U.S. President Barack Obama claimed a year ago would be the game changer, and the game for Washington, London, and Paris has clearly changed. Yet one thing has not: the international law governing when states may use force.

That is not to suggest that government lawyers won't eventually try to offer some sort of legal benediction. News coverage suggests that administration officials are pushing them to do just that. And the lawyers will want to be helpful, particularly if the policy consensus for force is strong and the evidence for the regime's responsibility for the attacks is beyond reproach.

But they should also be clear: It is the lawyers' duty to provide their clients - - senior U.S. officials -- with legal, not moral, advice and counsel. The lawyers' remit is not to say whether attacking Syria is the right thing to do, but to state what the law is, explain the positions adopted by the United States in similar circumstances in the past, and predict what the legal and institutional consequences of law-breaking might be.

So what is the law? The black-letter law on the use of force is quite simple: Under the United Nations Charter, the central treaty of the modern era and largely the handiwork of the United States and its World War II allies, states are generally prohibited from using force against other states unless they are acting in individual or collective self-defense or pursuant to an

authorization of the UN Security Council. Over the post-war history of the charter, self-defense claims have proven most controversial. States -- especially the United States -- have sought to expand the situations that fall under the definition of self-defense.

But a case for self-defense in Syria would break the concept of self-defense beyond recognition. What concerns the administration, according to official statements, is the "[moral obscenity](#)" of a chemical attack on one's own citizen. As awful as it is, there has been no attack (or the threat of attack) on the United States to justify individual self-defense or on allies to justify collective self-defense as a matter of law.

Given that a Security Council resolution seems unlikely, the United States is left without strong legal arguments for force. Some states, non-governmental organizations, and scholars have sought to craft exceptions to the requirement for Council authorization, usually under the rubric of [humanitarian intervention](#) or its contemporary form, the [Responsibility to Protect](#) (or R2P). Both exceptions spring from a moral position that states owe their citizens a duty of care, and when they violate it by committing grave crimes, force should be an available mechanism to halt or deter them. But neither exception has the force of law. The United States itself rejected humanitarian intervention as legal justification for the Kosovo war in 1999 even as the United Kingdom espoused (and [still espouses](#)) it, but the UK has few allies on the matter. R2P was [blessed by the United Nations](#) in 2005, but even there the United Nations decided that Security Council authorization was necessary for any intervention to qualify as legal.

Obama has also evoked norms against the use of weapons of mass destruction, such as the 1925 Geneva Protocol prohibiting use of poison weapons (to which Syria is a party). This prohibition may be strongly stated, but the treaty itself provides no basis for using force. Like many instruments of its time, it does not talk about the consequences of violation.

So, unless the Security Council authorizes action, the United States and its participating allies would be in violation of international law in using military force against Syria. Call it what you will: “illegal” if you are frank, “inconsistent with international law” if you are a lawyer, “difficult to defend” if you are a diplomat. They all amount to the same thing: No international law supports a U.S. attack on Syria, even in the face of mass killing by internationally prohibited weapons.

The United States will most likely seek some other means of justifying its actions. Its behavior in similar situations, when officials want to use force but have no obvious legal basis to do so, is instructive. Many commentators are pointing to the Kosovo war, for good reason, as the [legal](#) and [political](#) precedent in government lawyers’ deliberations. In 1999, with the war in Bosnia a very recent memory, the United States and its NATO allies perceived a major humanitarian disaster in the Balkans, with the alleged Serb ethnic cleansing of Kosovar Albanians. But the Russian Federation then, as now, refused to countenance any Security Council authorization of force, which forced NATO to consider an alternative international legal basis.

State Department lawyers, wary of establishing a legal precedent that other states could exploit in future conflicts, refused to give their legal imprimatur. Instead, they worked with policymakers to generate a set of factors that, in the specific context of Kosovo, provided justification (if not legal sanction)

for using force. Those factors included the threat of a humanitarian disaster, disruption of regional security, and the paralysis of the Security Council. But they also relied on the former Yugoslavia's failure to meet prior Security Council demands.

In the case of Syria, there are no prior Security Council demands. But it does seem that the United States may be heading toward a renewal of that general approach. Obama, in an [interview with PBS](#), listed a set of factors with specific relevance in Syria, especially the perceived need to uphold the international norm against the use of chemical weapons.

From a policy perspective, the so-called factors approach that applied to Kosovo is attractive; it makes force seem legitimate even when not legal, and many policymakers care more about legitimacy than legality, particularly if there are no concrete legal consequences to action. But by suggesting that law and legitimacy are oppositional -- or more specifically, that the UN Charter's framework is illegitimate to the extent that it allows some states to shelter and permit atrocious behavior by themselves or their allies -- this kind of legal sleight-of-hand damages the integrity of international law and its institutions, including the Security Council. As some powers grow in strength, such as China, the United States could regret having helped undermine the Security Council's legal control over the use of force.

Finally, there is the question of consequences for this kind of law-breaking. Criminal liability is almost unthinkable. Though the International Criminal Court may have jurisdiction over illegal uses of force [in the future](#), using force unlawfully now does not generate the same kind of criminal culpability under international law as provided for crimes against humanity, war crimes,

and genocide. States do not generally (if ever) investigate and prosecute such uses of force by foreign leaders under universal jurisdiction statutes. Unlike with claims about Bush administration torture programs, few if any states would be able to address illegal uses of force in their national courts.

Obama administration officials could still vacation in Europe, in other words (though perhaps not [Belarus](#)). But policymakers should still be thinking about the legal consequences for the UN Charter system. Would the unlawful use of force against Syria make it more difficult for the United States to complain about others using force outside the doctrine of self-defense or Security Council authorization? Would it contribute to the development of a non-institutionalized norm of humanitarian intervention, under which any state could use force on its own terms? Or rather, would this kind of law-breaking help reinforce other norms of international law, such as the norm against use of chemical weapons or the targeting of civilians? Since lawyers for the U.S. State Department also work deeply with international institutions, they will want to consider whether the use of force in Syria could complicate other efforts and relationships across the United Nations.

In short, the United States is heading toward an intervention in Syria that administration officials clearly believe to be right, necessary, and humane. Their cause may be just. But it won't be legal, and no creative amount of lawyering can make it so.

# U.S. explores possible legal justifications for strike on Syria

By Colum Lynch and Karen DeYoung

UNITED NATIONS — As the United States and its allies weigh limited military strikes against Syria, their lawyers have been exploring a range of legal frameworks for any operation, including propositions that members of the international community have the right to use force to protect civilians or to deter a rogue nation from [using chemical weapons](#).

But the Obama administration's efforts to build a legal case are encountering skepticism from U.N. officials and other experts, including former Republican and Democratic State Department lawyers, who argue that the use of force against the Syrian regime, absent a U.N. Security Council resolution, would be illegal.

"Using force in a situation like this could be seen as legitimate internationally and the right thing to do; that's the policymakers' call," said David Kaye, a former State Department lawyer who teaches international law at the University of California at Irvine. "But that's different from saying it would be legal. It wouldn't be, unless you had authorization of the Security Council."

Kaye and other legal scholars say the U.N. Charter explicitly prohibits the use of force against other U.N. members, except in self-defense against an imminent threat or in an operation authorized by the 15-nation Security Council.

Although Britain said Wednesday that it would seek [a Security Council resolution](#) authorizing the use of force against Syria, the prospects for



approval appear dim, given firm opposition from veto-wielding members Russia and China.

"I think that international law is clear on this," said Lakhdar Brahimi, the U.N.-Arab League special envoy for Syria. "International law says that military action must be taken after a decision by the Security Council. That is what international law says. What will happen, then again, I don't know."

Speaking late Tuesday at the Peace Palace in The Hague, U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said the use of chemical weapons "would be an atrocious violation of international law." Without singling out the United States directly, he counseled states to address the crisis in Syria through diplomatic means. "Here in the Peace Palace, let us say: Give peace a chance," Ban said. "In this hall dedicated to the rule of law, I say: Let us adhere to the United Nations Charter."

He added: "The military logic has given us a country on the verge of total destruction, a region in chaos and a global threat. Why add more fuel to the fire?"

A senior Obama administration official said the United States is exploring a number of possible legal arguments to justify an armed response to what officials believe is the worst chemical weapons attack since 1988, when then-Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein gassed more than 3,000 Kurds in the town of Halabja. The official spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations.

As part of that effort, U.S. officials are examining international agreements, including the 1925 Geneva Protocol and the 1992 Chemical Weapons Convention, both of which ban the use of chemical arms. "The fact that there is a long-standing international norm around the use of chemical weapons,

that provides legitimacy for the international community to respond," the administration official said.

## **New Wave Of Pakistan-India Tension – Analysis**

The killing of five Indian soldiers has flared up new tensions between India and Pakistan. In fact, it has become a fact that every time both countries negotiate for peace such sort of incidents end up souring dynamism. Earlier, the third round of secretary level bilateral dialogue on Tulbul Navigation Project was suspended in January when an Indian soldier was beheaded and another injured in border clashes. Pakistan rejected the Indian allegations that its troops were involved in border clashes. Since then diplomats on both sides have hold several meetings to normalize relations. The newly elected PM Nawaz Sharif took office in June and showed interest in improving relations with India through increased commerce and trade.

According to an updated statement of Indian Defence Minister AK Antony, a group of 20 heavily armed men led by Pakistan Army cross the Line of Control (LoC) near Poonch sector in Indian held Kashmir and attacked patrolling Indian troops killing five and injuring one. He believes without the support of Pakistan army it was not possible to attack the Indian troops. Antony demanded and warned that those responsible for this incident should be punished. These attacks can not only impact the LoC, but also on the future relationship between two nuclear-armed states. Previously he stated that 'terrorists along with persons dressed in Pakistan Army uniform attacked the Indian forces.'

Pakistan strongly and categorically rejects any involvement in the killing of Indian soldiers. While, it alleged that the Indian forces opened fire at the LoC and seriously wounded two Pakistani soldiers and one civilian. The death of five Indian soldiers has been considered an ambush of New Delhi on Pakistan.

Premier Sharif called an emergency meeting on the LoC incident and condemned the killings of Indian soldiers and expressed sadness at the event. He emphasized that both India and Pakistan should take effective steps to ensure and restore ceasefire at the LoC. He said he was looking forward to meeting the India PM Singh on the sidelines of the UN Assembly next month, as previously planned.

On the other hand, opposition parties and Indian media have created hype on this issue and leading opposition party, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), has pressured the government not to meet Pakistan PM Sharif in New York. They feel PM Singh should take an example of US President Obama who had cancelled his meeting with the Russian President Putin on the asylum issue of Snowden.

Hindu religious extremists have started their campaign against Pakistan. Baba Ramdev (vocal advocate on Indian political issues) called for adopting an eye for an eye approach and killing at least 50 Pakistani soldiers in retaliation for the 5 Indian soldiers. The Pakistan High Commission has been attacked by religious extremists in New Delhi. In such situation, the Indian government had summoned Pakistan's deputy high commissioner for explanation of LoC killings and cancelled the peace celebrations on August 14 at Sindh-Rajasthan border.

Indian analysts believe that the policy of conciliation has failed and we need a new bipartisan policy which will impose overheads on Pakistan for terrorism. It is right time for New Delhi to cancel all proposed talks with Islamabad. Pakistani analysts are of the view that LoC incident could be the act of anti-Pakistan elements that want to tarnish its image. Indian opposition propaganda against Pakistan is just a coin for their upcoming elections which will be held by May.

Whether the killings were done by the state or non-state actors, it is clear that they are not happy with the peace process between both countries. Pakistan always continues its peace efforts to improve relations with the neighboring state through a comprehensive dialogue on all issues. If the planned meeting between both the Primers canceled and the blame game continues they may not get their way.

# The Political Economy of Pakistan's National Energy Policy

By Asif Faiz

As Pakistan's government was preparing to present the National Energy Policy 2013-18 to the Council of Common Interest (CCI), the Peshawar Electric Supply Company (PESCO) was placing advertisements in major newspapers in KP during the holy month of Ramadan, exhorting the faithful that stealing electricity is a sin. Seeking divine help may now be the only way to stop electricity theft—a major obstacle in stemming power load shedding that results in blackouts up to twenty hours a day in most parts of the country.

Ultimately, the power and energy crisis in Pakistan is a problem of political economy. Good policies as articulated by the new government will no doubt help, but resolving this crisis will require a national consensus on how to address the myriad vested interests that profit from the chaos and disorder in the power and energy sectors.

Take for example the circular debt (see box below); which appears to be a convenient scam for channeling massive public subsidies to a variety of political, commercial, and industrial interests for producing high cost power; using guaranteed supply of fuel oil to public electricity generation companies (GENCOs) and independent power producers (IPPs); for not producing any power at all (under various power rental schemes); and for underwriting outright theft and cheating at all levels, small and large—the 'kunda' artists, the meter readers, public sector institutions, commercial and industrial enterprises of all sizes, and owners of upscale air conditioned residences, to name a few. The circular debt may have also served as a clever device for

the Ministry of Finance to mask the real size of the country's fiscal deficit since 2009. In the face of a failing power supply, it becomes expedient to restore underutilized generation capacity by shelling out billions of dollars of

### ***Explaining the Circular Debt***

Circular debt is the amount of cash shortfall within Pakistan's Central Power Purchasing Agency (CPPA) that it cannot pay to power supply companies. This shortfall is the result of:

- the difference between the actual cost of providing electricity in relation to revenues realized by the power distribution companies (DISCOs) from sales to customers plus subsidies; and
- insufficient payments by the DISCOs to CPPA out of realized revenue as they give priority to their own cash flow needs.

This revenue shortfall cascades through the entire energy supply chain, from electricity generators to fuel suppliers, refiners, and producers; resulting in a shortage of fuel supply to the public sector thermal generating companies (GENCOs), a reduction in power generated by Independent Power Producers (IPPs), and an increases in load shedding.

Circular debt at the end of Fiscal Year (FY) 2011 was estimated to be Rs537 billion (about US \$5billion). By the end of FY 2012, it was predicted to have grown to Rs872 billion (about US \$8.7 billion), representing approximately 4 percent of the national nominal Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

There are two main contributors to the circular debt:

- Non-collection of revenues (including theft and losses) from a range of public and private consumers (main contributor until 2009).
- Tariff and subsidy issues (main contributor since 2009), in particular the Tariff Differential Subsidy (TDS), the largest contributor accounting for nearly a third of the circular debt.

TDS is the difference between the uniform electricity tariff (generally the minimum rate for each category of customer requested by any of the nine DISCOs) applied countrywide and the individual electricity tariffs determined by NEPRA, based on the revenue requirement of each DISCO to meet all costs and to earn a suitable profit. Ultimately each DISCO must receive the revenue, as allowed by NEPRA, either from the customers or through a state subsidy. For political expediency, the government has elected the subsidy (TDS) route instead of charging the users. But the Ministry of Finance has not provided the required TDS in a timely manner, either compelling the DISCOs to borrow from commercial banks or to default on payables to CPPA. Moreover, a national tariff regime based on a weighted average of the tariffs determined by NEPRA for each DISCO would have significantly reduced the size of TDS.

*Source: The Causes and Impacts of Power Sector Circular Debt in Pakistan, USAID and Planning Commission of Pakistan, March 2013*

public monies to IPPs and a variety of energy suppliers (at last count some US \$5 billion since the advent of the new government, and more in the offing) to pay off the circular debt. This payout will buy the new government



time to deflect public wrath, but it may simply set the stage for a new round of circular debt.

In the short run, the Government does not have much space to maneuver. The new energy policy comprises mostly actions with a medium to long term impact. In the near term, short of borrowing massively to pay for subsidies and losses, the Government has few options but to raise tariffs and undertake a massive crackdown on theft and corruption. Tariff increases may help in curbing fiscal imbalances in the short-run, but tariff increases that simply pass the cost of inefficient and unreliable production and blatant theft to the general consumer will invite a public backlash and in any case will not yield the anticipated revenues. Resourceful consumers and conniving operators will find ways to thwart such tariff increases. On the other hand, a massive drive to curb corruption and theft at all levels will garner widespread public support, especially if it is matched with gradual and calibrated improvements in service delivery. Reduced losses would allow power utilities to sell more power, hence the possibility of lower tariffs while generating the same level of revenues. Anti-corruption measures also need to include transparent public procurement of good and services by state-owned energy entities, including oil purchases and delivery.

The National Energy Policy (NEP) articulated by the new government is a visionary document which for the first time pulls together the various strands of energy policy into a comprehensive blueprint for power and energy development, based on sound technical, financial, and regulatory principles. NEP covers all the bases but policy implementation requires an action plan that has time-bound actions and targets. Otherwise the government's claim that it will overcome power shortages within three to five years would remain a wishful endeavor. Moreover, NEP focuses mainly

on supply side measures to increase generating capacity. This is understandable —demand side measures carry a heavy political cost, as these would alienate so many powerful constituencies, within and outside the government.

NEP foresees a lead role for the private sector in improving the power and energy futures. In the critical power distribution area, privatization of the Karachi Electric Supply Company (KESC) variety will help but this is only a partial solution. Most electricity distribution companies (DISCOs) are loss making public entities, heavily indebted and unionized, and dens of graft and corruption. The worst performing are PESCO, Tribal Areas Electric Supply Company (TESCO), and the distribution companies serving Hyderabad, Sukkur and Quetta (HESCO, SEPCO and QESCO, respectively), accounting for 73 percent of the Rs197 billion ( about US \$2 billion) receivables from private consumers at the end of FY 2012. Who will invest in these?

Try obtaining an electricity connection for new house construction and it becomes clear how systemic and organized the corruption is. Without a bribe, there is a waiting time ranging from a few months to a couple of years. The time is shortened to a few days by paying a bribe--the payment is a fixed amount that is paid directly to a DISCO employee or through an agent, generally the contractor building the house. For a monthly payment of Rs1000 (US \$10) ,a consumer can pay a DISCO technician to slow down electricity meters, to bypass meters with concealed lengths of wire, or apply a variety of gimmicks to under record or not record at all the electricity that is being consumed.

In the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) free electricity is considered a birth right, (apparently promised by various governments to retain the loyalty of tribal elders or to permit development works to take place such as the construction of Pakistan's first hydroelectric dam at Warsak in former NWFP in the 1950s), and in Pakistan-administered Kashmir (AJK), rural communities are provided electricity at a nominal unmetered monthly charge. Rural AJK households use electric stoves for space heating, boiling water, and cooking, with the electric stoves running round the clock in winter months. Subsidies to FATA and AJK are significant contributors to the circular debt. There is little accountability for energy use across the country while poorly targeted and undifferentiated subsidies multiply.

According to NEP, Pakistan has a broken power distribution system; this is where the major losses, both technical and commercial, occur. With a 50 percent reduction in losses, coupled with conservation measures such as energy efficient bulbs and electric appliances (especially air conditioners), the need for new generating capacity could be reduced by at least 20-30 percent. Modern solid state electricity meters with smart cards (not dissimilar to the SIM cards used in cell phones) can eliminate the need for conventional electro-mechanical meters and meter readers. In South Africa, Sudan and Northern Ireland prepaid meters are recharged by entering a unique, encoded twenty digit number using a keypad. This makes the tokens, essentially a slip of paper, very cheap to produce. Smartcards also allow two way data exchange between meter and the utility. Tinker with the device and power shuts off automatically and the power utility knows instantly where the tinkering is taking place. The NEP recommends the use of prepaid meters for consumers who default on paying their bills. But why cannot this robust smart metering technology is used in Pakistan to do away

with the menace of the meter reader? The answer perhaps lies in the vested interests that manufacture and supply conventional meters.

It is interesting that energy security garners little mention in the NEP. Pakistan is becoming precariously reliant on foreign sources of energy (oil from Middle East, gas from Gulf states and Iran, nuclear energy from China, electricity from India, and coal from further afield). This, when Pakistan, according to US EIA ranks among the top 10 countries in the world with technically recoverable shale oil deposits, equal to those of Canada-- an estimated 9.1 billion barrels of oil compared to current annual production of about 23 million barrels of conventional crude; along with a probable (unproven) 105 trillion cubic feet of shale gas compared to current annual domestic production of about 1 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and 24 trillion cubic feet of proven gas deposits. Moreover, the country has vast reserves of coal. Why is it that the energy sector policy of the country does not focus on policies and incentives to develop domestic energy resources? Shale oil is the new frontier that will once again make US the largest producer of oil in the world. Why cannot Pakistan begin investigating its shale oil resources while expanding the prospecting and exploration for gas on a war footing?

Likewise, why is it that the government does not forcefully implement the Water and Power Development Authority's (WAPDA) master plan for hydropower development (also well-articulated in NEP), similar to what India has done in relation to its hydropower potential, and remains mired in a fruitless chase of donors to fund Daimir Bhasha Dam? Here again, the NEP offers attractive alternatives like the proposed Indus cascade dams scheme, which includes a string of hydropower investments including the Tarbela Tunnels (work has started on Tunnel #4 and needs to be extended to #5), Dasu (which some donors are willing to fund without much hesitation as it

does not involve significant resettlement), Pattan and Thakot besides Bhasha, along with numerous smaller dams on Jhelum and the Western tributaries of Indus. The potential is huge; ultimately, an installed hydropower capacity of 22,000 MW within the Indus Cascade and a strong possibility of realizing some 10,000 MW of new generating capacity within the next 10-15 years, shifting the power mix in favor of renewable and cheap hydropower, the way it was before the misguided leap to thermal generation started in the 1990s

And there is need to fundamentally rethink the structure of the power sector. Privatization of DISCOs is a good starting point. But along with privatization or subsidized concessions for non-profitable DISCOs, the time has come to make power distribution a provincial/city government responsibility. Why should the federal government subsidize waste and corruption that takes place at provincial/local levels? The federal role should be confined to generation and transmission as is the case in India, China and most federal countries.

The power sector reforms pushed by the IFIs (World Bank and ADB, in particular) remain incomplete. It seems that the Government was never serious about these reforms. Instead of unbundling the sector and creating a level playing field through fair regulation and incentivizing the private sector, what resulted was a weak regulator and a centralized bureaucracy centered on Pakistan Electric Power Company (PEPCO) and several public sector entities. The cost of waste, inefficiency and corruption was simply converted into the circular debt and later ever rising tariffs, while system performance and reliability took a nose dive. So what was wrong then with WAPD, as a vertically integrated utility that it had to be replaced by an unaccountable, monstrous bureaucracy? The country did not have the

horrendous power mess it has today when WAPDA was in charge of the sector.

The NEP fortunately has given considerable thought to the institutional arrangements in the power sector. A future institutional set-up might include provincially regulated distribution companies that operate at provincial/local levels, a much strengthened and independent federal regulator, an autonomous public transmission company, and a large range of power producers both public and private at national, provincial and local levels, that can produce and sell power competitively to DISCOS and large independent consumers, such as industrial and agricultural units, housing estates, electricity cooperatives for farmers and rural consumers, etc. There is, however, a need to review all IPP contracts to ensure an equitable distribution of risk between the public and private sectors and to renegotiate or adjust poorly designed Government guarantees. Desperate conditions often require desperate remedies and no contract is so sacrosanct that it cannot be renegotiated.

The real irony is that Pakistan has made great strides in making electric power accessible to its population, by some estimates; about 80 percent has access to electricity, arguably among the highest access levels in South Asia. But there is no electric power to serve the connected! Load shedding is at a scale and magnitude only seen in economically collapsed states. But the steady expansion of power connections in rural areas and new housing colonies shows that incentives work in Pakistan (in this instance the lure of political patronage and graft) but seldom are they focused on productive and legitimate endeavors. Public interest unfortunately remains subservient to political expediency and private gain.

# Pakistan's water shortage drips towards disaster

By: Sajjad Ashraf

While economic stagnation, terrorism and religious intolerance remain in the spotlight, the South Asia scholar Anatol Lieven warns that water shortages "present the greatest future threat to the viability of Pakistan as a state and a society." Regrettably, the discourse on the subject remains both delusional and misdirected

In 66 years since independence, Pakistan's per capita water availability has declined from 5,000 cubic metres to less than 1,500 cubic metres, according to a 2009 report. Currently Pakistan provides about 1,000 cubic metres of water per capita - about the same level as Ethiopia. At this rate of depletion, by 2025, Pakistan's water shortfall could be five times the amount it can presently store in its reservoirs.

"The country is heading towards an acute water crisis," confirms Dr Qamar-uz-Zaman, who served as head of Pakistan's metrological department for several years.

Given Pakistan's scarcity of water and proclivity to blame others, a 2009 CIA report concluded that "the likelihood of conflict between India and Pakistan over shared river resources is expected to increase".

"No specific evidence [is] brought forth so far that India is actually obstructing the flow or is diverting the waters," concedes Ahmer Bilal Soofi, the former caretaker law minister. And yet, Pakistani media and politicians blame India for controlling the flow of water to the detriment of Pakistan. Such a course merely blinds the policymakers and public to the impending

crisis that is of Pakistan's own making and to which there is a no easy solution.

Paradoxically, India and Pakistan resolved the contentious water issue in 1961 through the Indus Water Treaty in only 14 years. Pakistan's own four provinces took 44 years after independence to sign the Water Apportionment Accord in 1991. Notwithstanding the Accord, water remains a highly contentious issue effectively stalling building of any new reservoirs in the past 40 years.

Historically with plenty of water, shaping the wastage culture, its management and distribution have always been an important but a neglected process in much of Pakistan.

There are several reasons for this reduced water availability in Pakistan, some of which are natural.

Pakistan's population is ballooning. Climate change is making glacial water supply uncertain. Reduced snow-melts sometimes lead to less water in the system. Rainwater is wasted for lack of storage reservoirs. Illegal logging and removal of forest cover have denuded Pakistan's rangelands, causing annual flash floods that result in heavy collateral damage.

In addition to the waste, Pakistan is also contaminating its water. Untreated industrial and domestic effluent is being discharged into rivers while unregulated pesticides from farms are finding its way into streams and groundwater.

Pakistan's existing water storage infrastructure is ageing and is unable to cope with the rising demand. Sedimentation in the three main dams constructed during the 1960s and 1970s has reduced their holding capacity



by a third, leaving Pakistan with a dangerously low water storage capacity of 30 days. Plans for building new dams have fallen prey to narrow provincial self-interest.

Pakistan is estimated to lose 13 million cusecs of water every year into the sea. Some experts, especially from Sindh province, argue that much of this flow is necessary to prevent seawater intrusion into the land. This seawater encroachment damages land otherwise suitable for agriculture up to 100 kilometres inland during periods of reduced river flow.

While water availability has declined, the way Pakistanis use water has not. People waste water by leaving taps running. The household usage is now almost all on a fixed charge basis - meaning excessive wastage. Industrial pollutants and household waste released into water channels contaminates water. The regulatory framework to prevent water wastage is non-existent.

Against the average of 75 per cent water usage for agriculture in the developing world Pakistan uses nearly 90 per cent. With barely 10 per cent left for drinking, household usage, sanitation and industrial purposes, no wonder that a third of the population does not have access to safe drinking water.

From within its usage for agriculture two-thirds of water is wasted due to archaic agricultural practices says Dr Qamar-uz-Zaman. Since many influential landowners are also powerful politicians benefiting from the status quo, they resist all attempts to change - only to maintain some of the lowest productivity rates in the world per unit of water and per unit of land.

Recovering only 24 per cent of its annual overhaul and maintenance (O&M) cost, Pakistan's canal water irrigation system is financially unsustainable. The rest of the money for O&M comes in subsidies, disclosed a planning

commission report. This low cost to the user breeds wastage and thus a national loss.

Pakistan's water scarcity threatens peace in the region. Instead of passing blame Pakistan needs to look within to prevent waste and devise better management methods to reverse this looming crisis. The situation, if not tackled, will fan discord with India and exacerbate inter-provincial disharmony in Pakistan.

# A tangled web of diplomacy - India, Iran, US and Afghanistan

By: [Jaideep Prabhu](#)

Afghanistan, its neighbours are busy with plans to deal with the blow back and shore up their interests. India and China have taken the lead in Afghanistan's infrastructural and economic development, and Kabul has been promised military support too. However, prosperity may be denied the resource-rich Central Asian country just yet. Normalisation needs stability, which is premised upon economic development, which in turn is affected by Kabul's success against the Taliban. For all the assurances given, that may be easier said than done.

With the US retreat from Afghanistan and resources stretched thin everywhere, the most effective way of fighting the Taliban is a coalition. Not only does this share resources but it also allays suspicions of each partner. Iran and India collaborated in a limited manner after the last US withdrawal from the region; this time, Russia may be an additional partner, though Pakistan, China, and the United States have their own agenda.

As modern wars have taught us, victory for an anti-Taliban coalition has not only a military component but also lies in economic and social **development**. Iran offers one solution to this via its port of Chabahar on the Arabian Sea. India partially developed Chabahar under a 2003 agreement, and as the only Iranian port to have access to the sea, Chabahar eases the pressure on Bandar Abbas, Iran's major port in the Straits of Hormuz. Tehran has asked India to complete developing the port and connect it to the Trans-Iranian Railway via Fahraj but the latter has been dragging its feet on the project.

Afghanistan has also been eager to see Chabahar grow, creating alternate trade routes than through the Pakistani port of Gwadar. Afghanistan's relations with Pakistan have not been smooth, and despite agreements, there have been difficulties in the trade route. While Iran has already connected the Afghan city of Zaranj to Chabahar, the Indian Army's Border Roads Organisation constructed a major road between Delaram and Zaranj in 2009, linking Chabahar to the Kandahar-Herat highway.

Chabahar would ease many problems at once - for Iran, it would allow easier access to the ocean and Tehran would be able to draw transit fees for the commodities that would pass through; land-locked Afghanistan would be given an alternative to Gwadar, a little over 100 kilometres from Chabahar; India would be able to address its balance of payments with Iran and bypass its rival, Pakistan, in accessing Afghanistan, Iran, and Central Asia; pipelines carrying oil & gas from Central Asian republics would also have a much shorter route to the sea, saving millions. Furthermore, Gwadar's location in the troubled Pakistani province of Balochistan makes Chabahar a better choice for international shipping.

Not surprisingly, Washington continues to run with the hares and hunt with the hounds in South Asia. The United States has been negotiating with anyone who might allow it a dignified exit from Afghanistan; on the one hand, it is talking to the "good" Taliban, while on the other, it has repeatedly urged India to play a greater role in Afghanistan. Meanwhile, Washington's military assistance to Pakistan continues unabated, despite Delhi's strong objections, so that those "Rawalpindi boys [may] be able to face India with dignity."

However, the rub lies in the sanctions regime implemented by the United States and the European Union on Iran for its nuclear programme.

Washington is well aware of the impact the quick development of Chabahar can have on the Iranian economy as well as its ability to evade sanctions and is therefore unwilling to relent in its confrontation with Iran for the sake of making gains in Afghanistan. While both states can tango around inspections forever, the critical issue for Iran is its right to enrich uranium for its reactors. This issue has plagued the non-proliferation regime since its inception in 1968 and was one of the major sticking points in the United States' negotiations with India on civil nuclear cooperation in 2008.

Even if Washington were willing to consider acceding to Iranian enrichment rights in exchange for the most stringent inspections conditions, it would be impossible to do so. While Iran's concerns about sovereignty are similar to Indian objections raised in the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee in the 1960s, unlike the latter, the former has signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty and is bound by its **stipulations**. Furthermore, Iran's support of the Hezbollah and Syria, its relatively opaque and authoritarian system, its Holocaust denial, and sharp anti-Israel rhetoric raises warning flags in multiple global capitals. Allowing Iran to enrich uranium beyond regulations lowers its **breakout potential**, something no one has the confidence in Tehran to allow. Finally, making an exception for Iran on enrichment, that too so soon after making one for India, would severely destabilise the non-proliferation regime.

Thus, the United States' policy in one region of the world conflicts with its objectives in another and it takes little imagination to know which goal is more important to Washington. Similarly, it would be surprising if other powers were to kowtow to Foggy Bottom's wishes. Despite sanctions, India and China have been **purchasing oil** and **iron** from Iran; while Russian oil revenue benefits from Iranian crude being under sanctions, Moscow is willing

to forego those benefits for geopolitical ones by using Iran against the West. Sanctions have forced Tehran to pivot east, and it remains to be seen how hard the US Congress is willing to pinch Iran's largest trading partners - China, India, Japan, and South Korea - to make its point.

India finds itself in a delicate position - it needs access to US trade and technology, and however much it is publicly denied, to help it balance China. Yet its most valuable partner arms Pakistan, is an obstacle in Afghanistan, and complicates ties with Iran. Some in the Indian commentariat fantasise about Delhi playing a role in bringing Tehran and Washington to the table, but that is all it will remain. To play a successful arbitrator, India must have something to offer both sides. India's geopolitical incompetence and an economy that is committing seppuku as you read leaves little for it to offer. After decades of shirking responsible policy, Delhi is suddenly finding that it has nothing to offer when it counts.

# Does world's 'responsibility to protect' civilians justify a Syria strike?

The architects of the UN's 'Responsibility to Protect' doctrine say it gives countries a mandate to attack Syria in order to stop mass atrocities.

By: Benjamin Shingler

MONTREAL, Quebec — As US President Barack Obama pushes to muster foreign support before dropping bombs on war-ravaged Syria, options for a broad international coalition are shrinking.

Joining naysayers Britain and Germany, Prime Minister Stephen Harper said Thursday Canada won't take part in military action against Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's forces, even if Western powers blame them for the Aug. 21 deadly chemical weapons attack in a Damascus suburb.

France is the only remaining ally, as of Friday morning, on board for a strike.

Yet prominent Canadian diplomats who helped make the "Responsibility to Protect" (R2P) a United Nations doctrine say getting more countries on board could give a US military operation in Syria a greater sense of legitimacy.

A US military strike on Syria remains unpopular among the American public, and US Congress and even some outspoken hawks still need convincing. With British parliament's decision late Thursday to reject military action, building a coalition abroad looks all but hopeless. Even so, the UN's R2P, its earliest promoters say, is the best way forward.

Endorsed by all UN member states in 2005, R2P holds that military action from the international community is justified as a last resort to protect civilian populations.

Paul Heinbecker, who promoted the doctrine while he was Canada's UN ambassador in the early 2000s, says a coalition acting on the basis of R2P could "at least put some minds at rest," even without the UN Security Council's unlikely approval.

"They apparently don't want to take the time to form a coalition, which I think is an error," Heinbecker, now a fellow at the Waterloo, Ontario-based think tank, the Centre for International Governance Innovation, tells GlobalPost about America's push for Western intervention.

### **GlobalPost analysis: Will strikes make right in Syria?**

Heinbecker says the US would be wise to at least wait until the UN reports its findings on whether chemical weapons were used.

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said the inspectors will finish work Friday and leave Syria and report their findings to him Saturday.

Past mistakes, particularly in the lead-up to the Iraq war, haunt the White House as it seeks strong backing and rationale for action.

"The cloud that hangs over all this is the Americans basically lying about the weapons of mass destruction in Iraq," Heinbecker says, meaning that the bar is now "set higher than usual."

R2P should be acted upon, according to the UN doctrine, only if the following provisions are met: the force used is proportionate to the threat and likely to succeed, and unlikely to cause more harm than good.

Given the uncertain makeup of Syria's opposition, Heinbecker acknowledges those requirements will be difficult to meet, given that there are divided



factions and “it's not quite clear how to achieve a situation where the killing stops and the political process takes over.”

Some argue such problems, including an influx of extremist foreign fighters, could have been avoided had R2P been used as basis for introducing a no-fly zone much earlier.

“We missed the boat and now it's gotten so out of hand,” says Kyle Matthews, the senior deputy director of the Will to Intervene Project at Concordia University's Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies.

“This is a problem that's been happening for the last 60 years. We do nothing or wait until it becomes so bad that we have to send in the military and start bombing like crazy, which doesn't solve the political problems that are behind the violence in the first place.”

### **GlobalPost Q&A: Ambassador Nicholas Burns outlines the case for attacking Syria**

The impetus for R2P dates back to the 1990s.

After the Rwandan genocide, the international community began to explore how to react effectively when citizens' human rights are grossly and systematically violated.

The UN put the task into the hands of a Canadian-led commission, which came up with the idea of the Responsibility to Protect.

R2P has been invoked a handful of times in the years since.

It was the basis for the UN-backed NATO intervention in Libya, which Heinbecker calls an “excellent” example for how the doctrine should be used.

In that case, Russia and China — which have Security Council veto power — were convinced to abstain from the UN vote to introduce a no-fly zone.

In recent years, Canada has largely abandoned the idea of R2P in official discourse, even as a multitude of think tanks and non-governmental organizations, some bearing the doctrine’s name, have sprouted up to promote it.

Matthews suggests Canada's Conservative government may have distanced itself for ideological or partisan reasons, since a Liberal government developed it.

Heinbecker was the last Canadian ambassador to sit on the UN Security Council, before the country lost its bid to get back at the table in 2010.

While some have criticized R2P as a way to legitimize foreign powers’ meddling, Canadians who helped make it UN doctrine insist R2P still has a role to play.

Lloyd Axworthy, Canada's former foreign affairs minister, argued in a recent opinion piece it could be used as the basis for action in Syria, even if Russia couldn't be persuaded to get on board.

“The very purpose of R2P is that we should all protect innocent lives without reference to purely national interests or crass political gamesmanship,” Axworthy wrote this week in the Toronto Globe and Mail.

Heinbecker, echoing Axworthy, says that while a US intervention in Syria would be a “tricky business, and a costly one,” it should be done.

“It would not be legal for them to act under the Security Council authority, but it would be legitimate in many people eyes,” he says.

# Pakistan's Energy Crisis

By Shabbir H. Kazmi

Pakistan is in the midst of one of the worst energy crises in its history. This is both slowing the pace of economic activity and causing public unrest with prolonged outages of electricity and gas. Capacity utilization in some key industries has fallen to nearly 50 percent. Worst affected is the fertilizer industry, which faces interruptions to its gas supply and forced closures. Pakistan has the capacity to produce more than one million tons in exportable surplus urea, yet in 2011-12 it imported more than 1.1 million tons. This eroded the country's foreign exchange reserves and effectively entailed the payment of millions of dollars in subsidies, being the difference between the cost of locally produced and imported urea. Pakistan urgently needs to make some strategic decisions and change the national energy mix.

Immediately after assuming power, the government of Nawaz Sharif came up with two policy decisions: pay half a trillion rupees (just under \$5 billion) to energy companies and announce a new power policy. Both steps are aimed at resolving problems plaguing the companies belonging to the energy chain and bringing change to Pakistan's energy mix to optimize the average cost of electricity generation.

Pakistan's government paid Rs260 billion in cash to independent power plants (IPPs) to clear outstanding debt. It also issued bonds to pay off liabilities pertaining to state-owned companies such as exploration and production firms and oil and gas marketing entities. After clearing the debt of the IPPs, it was expected that they would be able to generate 1,700MW in additional electricity, attenuating the shortfall that currently exceeds 6,000MW. The situation is likely to improve over time.

According to the available data, at present installed power generation capacity in Pakistan is estimated to about 22,500MW (excluding the Karachi Energy Supply Company, more on which below), but actual power generation hovers around 15,000MW, partly because of outdated and inefficient power plants and partly because of a cash crunch, which often does not permit power plants to operate at optimum capacity because of the inability to buy the required furnace oil. This could be best understood when one looks at the available data on power plants operating in the public sector, which have an installed capacity of over 4,800MW but actual generation hovering around 1,200MW.

At present, the bulk of electricity supply comes from hydroelectric plants (6,500MW) and IPPs (6,500MW). The output of the hydro plants is dependent on water availability in the dams, and can fall to as low as 2,500MW when water levels drop drastically. And as we have seen, IPP output is limited by money problems.

Pakistan's woes have been exacerbated by its excessive reliance on thermal power plants, mainly using furnace oil. Two factors contributed to the emergence of this situation: a change in lenders from the public to private sector, and Pakistan's failure to complete a hydroelectric project in recent decades. The last mega dam, Tarbella, was completed in the mid seventies and no other dam has been constructed since. After the signing of the Indus Water Treaty with India, Pakistan was required to complete construction of one mega-size hydroelectricity plant per decade to ensure year-round availability of low cost electricity and irrigation water.

Of Pakistan's 6,500MW hydro capacity, the bulk is contributed by three projects: Mangla, Tarbella and Ghazi Brotha. There are nearly two dozen IPPs, but the major players are Hub Power Company, Kot Addu Power Company and Uch Power Plant. Pakistan also has three nuclear power

plants, two in Punjab and one in Karachi, with aggregate capacity of over 800MW. However, the Karachi plant is at the end of its effective life and its capacity cannot be termed “dependable.”

Unlike the rest of Pakistan, Karachi gets its electricity from a compact utility, Karachi Electric Supply Company (KESC), which handles generation, transmission and distribution. The bulk of its generation comes from the Bin Qasim Power Plant, which has an installed capacity of 1,260MW. Another 500MW comes from smaller units. Since privatization, KESC has added another 500MW capacity at Bin Qasim but its output has remained erratic because of the inconsistent supply of gas.

Experts blame many of Pakistan’s problems on the “circular debt,” which mainly arises because of the poor recovery of receivables by the distribution companies. It is estimated that for every 100 units of electricity provided by a distribution company, it gets paid for 30. Of the remaining 70 units, nearly 40 are pilfered and the bills for the remaining 30 go to long-term receivables. Corrupt utility executives and workers contribute to this dismal state.

After privatization, KESC’s new management tried to right size the company, but the move was resisted by employees, who enjoy significant political support. At any rate, analysts acknowledge that human resource costs may be high but it is transmission and distribution losses that really trouble KESC. These losses currently hover at around 35%, mostly because of theft. A one percent improvement would improve the company’s cash flow by Rs1.5 billion per month.

To overcome its electricity shortage, Pakistan has to come up with policies for the short, medium and long terms. The first step for the short term has been taken by clearing outstanding debt. Now, supporting policies must be

prepared and implemented to ensure that circular debt does not rebuild. This requires containing theft and improving recovery. A hike in the electricity tariff could improve cash flow at distribution companies, but opponents argue that a higher tariff itself provides an incentive to pilfer electricity. They say the government should ensure an uninterrupted supply of electricity at affordable cost.

As a medium-term policy, all power plants operating in the public sector need to be refurbished to improve efficiency, which will help bring down the cost of generation. However, the focus should be on achieving the highest possible output from hydro power, where the cost of generation is still Rs2.00/units, compared to the bulk power purchase tariff of US\$0.70/unit being paid to IPPs, mostly being run on furnace oil.

Simultaneously, efforts should be made to switch power plants from furnace oil to coal. Gas should be avoided. To begin with, power plants could use imported coal, but ultimately they will need to use an indigenous source. In this endeavor, Lakhra Power Plant near Karachi, which has been closed for some time, must be reactivated as soon as possible. It uses coal produced at nearby mines.

Under long-term measures, the government must prioritize the completion of the Thar Power Plant. Thar has more than 185 billion tons of lignite coal, suitable for mine-mouth power plants. It is estimated that Pakistan could generate more than 50,000MW of power from Thar coal alone.

Experts say Pakistan should focus on hydro generation as the country has the potential to produce 40,000MW by constructing small and midsize dams and run-of-the-river projects. Two of the latter type (Ghazi-Broth and Laraib) are already in operation. The advantages of these projects are

minimum displacement of people and minimum areas under water. An added advantage is the renewable aspect.

Pakistan also has the potential to get electricity from sugar plants located across the country, especially in rural areas. Some industry experts suggest that sugar mills could deliver up to 3,000MW to the national grid. This option is very lucrative, because sugar mills will mostly use very low-cost bagasse to heat the boilers, using furnace oil only as a supplement.

Yet another advantage of sugar mills is that they have the capacity to produce ethanol, which can be added to motor gasoline to produce E-10 (petrol containing 10% ethanol). This will help contain oil imports and conserve compressed natural gas.

As the saying goes, there is opportunity in crisis, and this certainly applies to Pakistan's energy sector. Notwithstanding the significant challenges, a large market and an enthusiastic government could entice bold investors, local and foreign.



# Kerry, Hagel lay out military objectives during Senate hearing on Syria strike

By Anne Gearan and Ed O'Keefe

Obama administration officials told lawmakers Tuesday that a military strike against Syria would “degrade” the country’s ability to carry out attacks — the most specific military objective they have laid out yet — but faced sharp questions about whether such an operation would accomplish much.

Appearing before a Senate panel, Secretary of State John F. Kerry and Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel struggled at times to frame a proposed military strike on Syria as tough enough to be worthwhile but limited enough to guarantee that the United States would not get dragged into another open-ended military commitment in the Middle East. Nonetheless, they assured lawmakers that the administration was not asking for congressional backing to “go to war,” as Kerry put it.

“Our military objectives in Syria would be to hold the Assad regime accountable, degrade its ability to carry out these kinds of attacks and deter it from further use of chemical weapons,” Hagel said in testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Kerry said such a strike would have a “downstream” effect of limiting President Bashar al-Assad’s conventional military capacity. Gen. Martin Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said his goal would be to leave the regime weaker after any assault.

“On this issue, that is the use of chemical weapons, I find a clear linkage to our national security interest,” said Dempsey, who has long been skeptical of

the wisdom of military intervention in Syria. "And we will find a way to make our use of force effective."

The packed hearing opened what is expected to be a week of intensive debate after President Obama's surprise decision to seek congressional support for any military strike against the Syrian regime. Appealing to both national security hawks and nervous members of Obama's own party, the administration has tried to cast any strike on Syria as crucial to the United States' security interests, particularly its commitment to nonproliferation.

Over and over, officials from Obama on down have stressed that a strike on Syria would be a narrow and direct response to an alleged Aug. 21 chemical weapons attack that the administration says killed more than 1,400 civilians.

The debate has turned from weighing the Syrian government's culpability in the attack to weighing the merits of inserting the U.S. military into a conflict that is in its third year. The United Nations estimates that more than 100,00 Syrian civilians have died in the violence, and U.S. officials said any military action is not intended to tilt the balance of power in favor of rebels fighting the Assad regime.

Obama has said that he believes he has the authority to act even without lawmakers' approval but that the United States "will be stronger" if Congress endorses action in Syria. On Tuesday, he asked for a quick vote when all lawmakers return to Washington next week.

The proposed military action "does not involve boots on the ground," Obama said, welcoming key lawmakers to the White House for a meeting. "This is not Iraq, and this is not Afghanistan."

# Revenge or democracy? Turkey's divisive trial

**By: Ayhan Simsek**

Some 100 senior Turkish army officers are on trial for their alleged role in a 1997 coup. Critics call it revenge by the Islamic government against the secular army. Others say it is Turkish democracy at work.

Turkey's former military chief and other high-ranking officers began testifying in court on Monday (02.09.) about their alleged role in ousting the country's Islamist-led coalition government in 1997.

The trial has been hailed by the Islamic-conservative AKP government of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan as a manifestation of Turkey's "transformation to democracy."

"Turkey is going through normalization," said the ruling Justice and Development Party's (AKP) vice president, Ahmet Aydin. "Turkey has been transformed into a new system, a system of the rule of law and democracy," he stated.

But the politically divisive case has sparked widespread criticism among Turkey's secular opposition, which distrusts Erdogan's policies and claims the AKP is aiming to turn the country into an Islamist state.

"This trial is absurd," Kamer Genc, a senior deputy from the main opposition Republican People's Party (CHP), wrote on his twitter account as he was following the case in the courtroom. "The AKP government regards measures taken against Islamist reactionaries as crimes," he stressed. "On February 28, 1997, Turkey's National Security Council decided on legitimate measures

for threats against the secular character of our state," Genc argued. "No Turkish court can have a trial based on such allegations," he claimed.

The high-profile case concerns events which have become known as the "postmodern coup" or the "February 28 process," in Turkey. Unlike the military coups of 1960, 1971 or 1980, the generals did not seize power or suspend the constitutional order, but orchestrated behind the scenes a political pressure campaign to force the resignation of the coalition government, led by the Islamist politician Necmettin Erbakan.

### **'Setback for democracy'**

Deniz Zeyrek, a political analyst and Ankara bureau chief of the liberal daily, Radikal, says that the Turkish military's last major intervention in 1997 had targeted political Islam, but it was also a setback for Turkish democracy.

"I have personally witnessed the days of this military intervention as a journalist. Not only Islamists, but also liberals and democrats were the political victims of this process," he told DW.

The "post-modern coup", as it was labeled by one of the generals, increased the military's role in politics, limited freedoms in political life and imposed several restrictions on the media.

According to Zeyrek, a specialist on civil-military relations, a fair trial of this post-modern coup may contribute to Turkey's democratization and normalization in politics.

"I have some concerns, but still I am hopeful that the trial can be another step towards Turkey's democratization," he said. "But this can only be achieved if the trial is free from a revenge mentality," he stressed. "Unfortunately, this revenge mentality was present in similar cases, like

Ergenekon and Sledgehammer, and we see it casting a worrisome shadow over the current trial.”

### **Sensational court cases**

Since 2008, Turkey has witnessed sensational probes and court cases against both active and retired army officials, opposition politicians, academics and journalists.

More than 250 retired officers, including former army chief Ilker Basbug, was jailed last month over an alleged Ergenekon coup plot.

In September last year, more than 300 military officers were sentenced to jail for the alleged Sledgehammer coup plot to overthrow the AKP government. All of the defendants deny the allegations and have appealed to the Turkish Supreme Court.

Both the Ergenekon and Sledgehammer cases were marred by procedural flaws and long pre-trial detention periods. Critics argue that these court cases are politically motivated and aimed at curbing the power of the once-supreme Turkish military.

A recent poll by Gezici Arastirma shows that 53.8 percent of the Turkish people believe that the principles of a fair trial were not respected during the Ergenekon trial.

# U.N.'s Ban casts doubt on legality of U.S. plans to punish Syria

UNITED NATIONS: U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said on Tuesday that the use of force is only legal when it is in self-defense or with [Security Council](#) authorization, remarks that appear to question the legality of [U.S.](#) plans to strike [Syria](#) without U.N. backing.

Ban was speaking to reporters after [President Barack Obama](#) won the backing of two top Republicans in Congress in his call for limited U.S. strikes on Syria to punish President [Bashar al-Assad](#) for his suspected use of chemical weapons against civilians on Aug. 21.

"The use of force is lawful only when in exercise of self-defense in accordance with Article 51 of the [United Nations](#) charter and/or when the Security Council approves of such action," Ban said. "That is a firm principle of the United Nations."

Obama said on Saturday he was "comfortable going forward without the approval of a United Nations Security Council that so far has been completely paralyzed and unwilling to hold Assad accountable."

Russia, backed by China, has used its veto power in the Security Council three times to block resolutions condemning Assad's government and threatening it with sanctions.

Ban also questioned whether the use of force to deter Syria or other countries from deploying chemical arms in the future could cause more harm than good in the 2-1/2-year Syrian civil war, which the United Nations says has killed over 100,000 people.

"I take note of the argument for action to prevent future uses of chemical weapons," he said. "At the same time, we must consider the impact of any punitive measure on efforts to prevent further bloodshed and facilitate a political resolution of the conflict."

Ban said that if U.N. inspectors determine that chemical weapons were used in Syria, the Security Council, which has long been deadlocked on the civil war, should overcome its differences and take action.

"If confirmed, any use of chemical weapons by anyone under any circumstances will be a serious violation of international law and outrageous war crime," he said.

"Almost a century ago, following the horrors of the First World War, the international community acted to ban the use of these weapons of mass destruction," Ban said. "Our common humanity compels us to ensure that chemical weapons do not become a tool of war or terror in the 21st century."

"Any perpetrators must be brought to justice," he added. "There should be no impunity."

# China-Russia Ties Deepen

By Mu Chunshan

Chinese President Xi Jinping has [left Beijing to attend the G20 summit](#) in St. Petersburg and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit in Bishkek, in what is his third overseas visit since he became president in March this year. His trip, which will also include visits to Central Asian countries, has attracted extensive attention. The Chinese and Russian leaders appear very close on the international stage, reflecting the special relationship between China and Russia and triggering the topic of a China-Russia alliance once again.

Since March, Xi Jinping has traveled overseas three times. His first visit after taking office was to Russia. On the same trip, he [took in three African countries](#) and attended the BRICS Summit in South Africa. In June, Xi visited three Latin American countries and held a [summit with U.S. President Barack Obama in California](#). For this forthcoming G20 and SCO trip, Xi will again meet with Putin in St. Petersburg and Bishkek. This third trip will also be Xi's second visit to Russia in six months, itself rare enough in the neighborhood diplomacy of top Chinese leaders in recent years and not especially common for leaders of other countries either.

Russia is a diplomatic priority for Beijing. Some Chinese scholars see close links between China and Russia as a counterweight to the U.S.-Japan alliance, offsetting the pressure of the United States and Japan on the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands issue. For Russia, ties with China can also balance U.S. policy.

Beijing and Moscow have been developing relations over more than 20 years. The two countries have long engaged politically; military cooperation



is a more useful indicator of the degree of intimacy. The military alliance between the United States, Japan and South Korea provides insight. Although Japan and South Korea argue over historical and territorial issues, under the larger framework of the alliance, they maintain a careful division of labor, work closely, and stay in step on military issues.

It is worth noting that coinciding with Xi's first visit to Russia, Beijing and Moscow signed the largest weapons procurement contract in the past decade, in which China is to buy [24 Su-35 fighters and four Lada-class submarines](#) (although some reports [have denied](#) this deal actually going through). Since then, China and Russia have [held a "routine" military exercise](#), again showing the growing sophistication of military cooperation between the two countries.

In addition to bilateral relations, cooperation between China and Russia has a broader role in the international arena. Xi will be attending the SCO Summit in Bishkek, his first involvement in the organization as president. China has had a central role in the SCO since the forming of the Shanghai Five mechanism. The organization is based in Shanghai, meaning that it is widely seen as representing China's sphere of influence. In addition to China, other formal members of the SCO include Russia and certain other Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries, making the organization the most effective platform for cooperation between China and the CIS.

Central Asia also forms the innermost ring of Russian foreign policy, and for Moscow, China is an important international partner and external supporter. The cooperation of two major political entities—China and the CIS—through SCO will very likely become the fulcrum for a "quasi-alliance" between Beijing and Moscow. That is the key to understanding Xi's presence at the SCO Summit and China's stepped-up exchanges with Russia.

The rest of the world will have taken note that Xi's meeting with Putin coincides with the deepening crisis in Syria. Before the West resorts to force against the Assad regime, Xi is likely to coordinate his position with Putin and the Central Asian countries to safeguard Chinese interests.



4<sup>th</sup> Sept 2013

# Senate committee approves Syria war resolution

WASHINGTON -- The Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted to authorize President Obama to use limited force against Syria Wednesday, after adopting amendments from Sen. John McCain designed to "change the military equation on the battlefield."

The Senate resolution would limit hostilities to 60 or 90 days, narrow the conflict to Syria's borders and prohibit U.S. troops on Syrian soil. McCain's amendments didn't change that scope, but made clear that the end goal should be "a negotiated settlement that ends the conflict and leads to a democratic government in Syria."

The vote was 10-7.

The committee's consensus followed closed-door meetings Wednesday morning, which delayed the start of the committee's meeting by nearly three hours.

Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., voted no, and unsuccessfully sought an amendment that would reaffirm Congress's preeminent role in declaring war, as reflected in the 1973 War Powers Act. "The constitution doesn't really differentiate between big wars and small wars," he said. The committee left the constitutional issue unresolved, tabling Paul's amendment by a 14-5 vote.

Paul remains a staunch opponent of an attack on Syria, but said any suggestion that he would filibuster the resolution was "a misinterpretation by the media."



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The committee also rejected an amendment by Sen. Tom Udall, D-N.M., that would have prohibited air and naval forces from being put into Syrian waters or air space. In the end, Udall was the only one to support it. "If we start down this road, we're going to be running the campaign from here, and as smart as we are, we're not that smart," McCain said.

McCain's amendment was co-sponsored by Sen. Chris Coons, D-Del., who emphasized that the language would not change the scope of the authority Congress was giving the president, but would help frame the policy behind it. The committee approved those amendments by a voice vote.

Administration officials have been arguing to Congress that "regime change" would not be the goal of U.S. military operations in Syria.

McCain is considered a critical vote on the Syria resolution, so much so that President Obama met privately Monday with McCain and Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., to discuss the administration's broader strategy in Syria.

# US prevented disclosure of Pakistan's rights abuses: report

US intelligence reports said senior Pakistani military and intelligence officials knew of and possibly ordered a broad campaign of extrajudicial killings of militants and other adversaries, The Washington Post reported on Tuesday, adding that public disclosure of such information could have forced the Obama administration to sever aid to the Pakistani armed forces on account of a US law that prohibits military assistance to human rights abusers.

These reports are based on communications intercepts from 2010 to 2012 and other intelligence in classified documents provided to it by former National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden.

The documents indicate that administration officials decided not to press the issue so as to preserve its relationship with Pakistan which was already frayed at the time.

The Post moreover reported that US spy agencies had also shifted their attention to what they classified as dangers surfacing outside Pakistani areas patrolled by CIA drones.

It reported that the US had intensified surveillance of Pakistan's nuclear weapons, has been concerned about biological and chemical arms sites there and has been trying to evaluate the loyalty of Pakistani counter-terrorism agents recruited by the CIA.

The paper was quoting from a 178-page summary of what it called the US intelligence community's "black budget" provided to it by Snowden.

"If the Americans are expanding their surveillance capabilities, it can only mean one thing," said Husain Haqqani, who served as Pakistan's ambassador to the US from 2008 to 2011.

"The mistrust now exceeds the trust."

America has delivered nearly \$26 billion in aid to Pakistan over the past 12 years, with the money aimed at stabilising the country and ensuring its cooperation in counterterrorism efforts, the paper said.

However, as classified documents reveal new allegations of human rights abuses by the Pakistan army, a spokeswoman for the National Security Council seems to have played it down in the Post report saying the United States would "continue to work closely with Pakistan's professional and dedicated security forces" in order to combat the challenging security issues in Pakistan.

Spokeswoman Caitlin Hayden in a statement said the US is "committed to a long-term partnership with Pakistan, and we remain fully engaged in building a relationship that is based on mutual interests and mutual respect".

"We have an ongoing strategic dialogue that addresses in a realistic fashion many of the key issues between us, from border management to counterterrorism, from nuclear security to promoting trade and investment," Hayden said.

"The United States and Pakistan share a strategic interest in combating the challenging security issues in Pakistan, and we continue to work closely with Pakistan's professional and dedicated security forces to do so."

# **Pakistan, India agree border tension a setback to dialogue**

Forces of both countries routinely trade fire that caused casualties and increased tensions between the uneasy nuclear neighbors.

Pakistan and India on Tuesday came up with a unanimous view that the ongoing escalations along the Line of Control (LoC) in the disputed Kashmir region have derailed efforts at resumption of dialogue process.

Forces of both countries routinely trade fire that caused casualties and increased tensions between the uneasy nuclear neighbours.

Both accuse each other of violating the 2003 ceasefire along the LoC that divides the two countries in Kashmir region.

Sartaj Aziz, advisor to the Pakistani prime minister on national security and foreign affairs, Tuesday received Indian High Commissioner T.C.A Raghavan and both discussed the impact of the LoC tensions on bilateral relations, Xinhua reported.

"Both sides have to show maturity and move forward in a positive manner to resolve outstanding issues and put in a place a sustainable dialogue process," Sartaj Aziz said in the meeting.

The advisor stressed the importance of resuming the bilateral dialogue process and reiterated Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's commitment to normalising relations with India.

He stated that there was great hope within the present government of picking up the threads from the Lahore Declaration of 1999, when then Indian prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee visited Pakistan and embarked upon a new phase of Pakistan-India relations.

"The tension along the LoC seemed to have derailed this process, which was unfortunate," the advisor said.

High Commissioner Raghavan also viewed the LoC incidents as a "setback" in the dialogue process and said that, while there was a feeling in India also to continue to engage with Pakistan, incidents such as the recent one on the LoC raised doubts on Pakistan's sincerity.

He felt that both countries needed to work towards forging a common policy on combating terrorism that would help in allaying misperceptions that existed, the foreign ministry said in a statement.



# Syria says will not give in 'even if there is WWIII'

'The Syrian government will not change position even if there is World War III, 'Syrian deputy foreign minister said

Syria's deputy foreign minister said Wednesday the regime would not give in to threats of a US-led military strike against the country, even if a third world war erupts.

In an exclusive interview with AFP, Faisal Muqdad said the government had taken "every measure" to counter a potential intervention aimed at punishing the regime of Bashar al-Assad over a suspected deadly poison gas strike and was mobilising its allies.

"The Syrian government will not change position even if there is World War III. No Syrian can sacrifice the independence of his country," he said.

"Syria has taken every measure to retaliate against... an aggression," he added, refusing to provide any clue as to what that might mean.

Muqdad said the regime was mobilising its allies ahead of a possible strike, as US President Barack Obama lobbies Congress to back intervention and the French parliament debates the issue.

Washington says the alleged chemical weapons attack on 21 August in suburbs of Damascus killed more than 1,400 people and blames it on the Assad regime -- a claim it categorically denies.

# Pressure grows on Obama over Syria at G20 summit

ST. PETERSBURG, Russia: U.S. [President Barack Obama](#) faced growing pressure from world leaders on Thursday not to launch military strikes in [Syria](#) at a summit on the global economy that was hijacked by the conflict.

The [Group of 20](#) (G20) developed and developing economies met in St. Petersburg to try and forge a united front on how to revive economic growth, but failed to heal divisions over a U.S. plan to wind down a programme to stimulate the world economy.

The club that accounts for two thirds of the world's population and 90 percent of its output looked as divided over therapy for the economy as it is over possible military action following a chemical weapons attack in Syria.

Obama arrived in Russia's former imperial capital with a showdown looming at a dinner hosted by President Vladimir Putin, with a debate on Syria the main course on the menu.

Obama wore a stiff smile as he approached Putin and grasped his hand. Putin also wore a businesslike expression and it was only when they turned to pose for photographers that Obama broke into a broader grin. There was no clutching of arms or hugs.

The first round at the summit went to Putin, as China, the European Union, the BRICS emerging economies and Pope [Francis](#) - in a letter - warned of the dangers of military intervention without the approval of the U.N. Security Council.

"Military action would have a negative impact on the global economy, especially on the oil price - it will cause a hike in the oil price," Chinese Vice Finance Minister [Zhu Guangyao](#) said.

The BRICS - Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa - echoed that remark, and the Pope, who leads the world's 1.2 billion Roman Catholics, urged the G20 leaders to "lay aside the futile pursuit of a military solution".

European Union leaders described the Aug. 21 attack near Damascus, which killed up to 1,400 people, as "abhorrent" but said: "There is no military solution to the Syrian conflict."

Obama is unlikely to be deterred. He said before talks with Japan's prime minister on the sidelines of the summit that the use of chemical arms in Syria was "not only a tragedy but also a violation of international law that must be addressed."

Aides said he would set out his views at the leaders' dinner and hoped to build support for military action, although aides acknowledge a consensus might be hard to find.

"We would not anticipate every member of the G20 agreeing about the way forward in Syria, particularly given the Russian position over many, many months now in terms of resisting efforts to hold the Assad regime accountable," said White House deputy national security adviser [Ben Rhodes](#).

Putin was isolated on Syria at a Group of Eight meeting in June, the last big summit of world powers, but could now turn the tables on Obama, who recently likened him to a "bored kid in the back of the classroom" who slouches at meetings.

Only France, which has already said it is preparing to join U.S. military action, rallied loudly behind Obama.

"We are convinced that if there is no punishment for Mr. Assad, there will be no negotiation," French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius said before leaving for St. Petersburg.

With backing by Beijing and Moscow unlikely at the U.N. Security Council, where both have veto powers, Obama is seeking the approval of the U.S. Congress instead.

Putin says rebel forces may have carried out the poison gas attack and that any military strike without Security Council approval would violate international law, a view now being supported increasingly openly by others - including countries that have usually disagreed with Moscow on Syria.

[United Nations](#) Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and U.N. special envoy Lakhdar Brahimi are also in St. Petersburg to push for diplomacy rather than military options, and support efforts to organise an international peace conference on Syria.

Putin's press secretary, Dmitry Peskov, portrayed the "camp of supporters of a strike on Syria" as divided, and said: "It is impossible to say that very many states support the idea of a military operation."

Peskov also reiterated that the [United States](#) had failed to produce convincing proof that Assad, who is backed by Russian arms, and his forces had resorted to chemical warfare.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel saw no chance of agreement between Putin and Obama on Syria. U.S.-Russian ties have long been strained by political differences but went into freefall when Russia harboured Edward

Snowden, a former spy agency contractor who leaked details of U.S. intelligence programmes.

Any G20 decision on Syria would not be binding but Putin would like to see a consensus to avert military action in what would be a significant - but unlikely - personal triumph.

The G20 achieved unprecedented cooperation between developed and emerging nations to stave off economic collapse during the 2009 financial crisis, but the harmony has now gone.

Member states are at odds as the U.S. recovery gains pace, Europe lags, and developing economies worry about the impact of U.S. plans to stop a bond-buying programme that has helped kick-start the U.S. economy.

"Our main task is returning the global economy towards steady and balanced growth. This task has unfortunately not been resolved," Putin said. "Therefore systemic risks, the conditions for an acute crisis relapse, persist."

The BRICS agreed to commit \$100 billion to a currency reserve pool that could help defend against a balance of payments crisis, although the mechanism will take time to set up.

There is likely to be an agreement on measures to fight tax evasion by multinational companies at the summit in the spectacular, 18th-century Peterhof palace complex, built on the orders of Tsar Peter the Great.

An initiative will be presented on refining regulation of the \$630-trillion global market for financial derivatives to prevent a possible markets blow-up.

Steps to give the so-called 'shadow banking' sector until 2015 to comply with new global rules will also be discussed.

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# Saudi-Egyptian Relations: Fault Lines of a Future Conflict

*By: Ibrahim Alloush*

The new Egyptian government is politely asserting its differences with Saudi Arabia over a military strike on Syria, disrupting what appears to be a convergence of interests between the two in getting rid of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Saudi Foreign Minister Saud al-Faisal came to the Cairo meeting of the Arab League on September 1 hoping to convince his counterparts to officially give their consent for a US military strike on Syria, but his plans were diplomatically foiled by Egypt's Foreign Minister Nabil Fahmy.

The meeting's closing statement did condemn the use of chemical weapons in Syria and held the regime responsible, but called for the matter to be put before the UN, which should respond as it sees fit. This not only benefits Damascus in proscribing any action outside the UN, it also had the effect of encouraging other countries to object more strongly to the Saudi position.

The nightmare scenario for the Saudis is for Egypt to take its own course on the Syrian crisis, realizing that its national security is intimately linked to what happens in the Levant. This new Egyptian approach is a departure from the days of Hosni Mubarak and the days leading to the toppling of the Muslim Brotherhood, when Cairo simply tailed Riyadh on the Syrian crisis. Today, the new government in Egypt is trying to plot its own course while at the same time making sure not to alienate the Saudis, who have poured billions of dollars into the country to shore up its economy at this critical stage.

In recent months, the Saudi government has taken a series of steps to take the lead on the Syria file, marginalizing the role of the Muslim Brotherhood and those countries where they have influence, such as Turkey and Qatar. Riyadh was also one of the more enthusiastic supporters of the ousting of Mohamed Mursi for essentially the same reasons.

For the Wahhabi kingdom, the Muslim Brotherhood represents the most serious and credible alternative to its influence both internally and across the region. Both sides find themselves competing over the same constituency (Sunni Muslims), with the Brotherhood having the advantage of being more marketable, particularly after dressing up their rhetoric with liberal democratic terminology to gain favor with the West.

Riyadh's greatest fear is for Egypt to move in a more independent direction, freeing itself from the clutches of Washington, and once again playing the central role it once did in the region's affairs. The Saudis know the extent of Cairo's power from recent history, when they waged a regional cold war with Nasser in the 1950s and 60s that turned into a deadly hot war in Syria and Yemen.

Under Anwar Sadat, the spread of Wahhabi and Saudi influence went a long way to cut Egypt's role down to size. Mubarak continued this trend, keeping the country on Saudi Arabia's good side for nearly three decades.

In short, the Gulf monarchy knows that their regional ambitions cannot be realized without keeping Egypt under their control, thus the generous injection of \$12 billion that Cairo received from the Gulf following the June 30 uprising against the Brotherhood. Just as the Zionist lobby did its best to prevent Washington from withholding military aid to the new government, desperately hoping to keep Cairo under America's thumb, which in turn safeguards Israel's security.

The nightmare scenario for the Saudis is for Egypt to take its own course on the Syrian crisis, realizing – as many Egyptians already know – that its national security is intimately linked to what happens in the Levant. The destruction of the Syrian army and the fragmentation of the country could very well be a prelude to subjecting Egypt – the Arab world’s largest nation – to the very same catastrophe, thus weakening it before the Zionist enemy.

Therefore, Saudi’s rulers are today pursuing a dual strategy in containing Egypt. On the one hand, they are working to undermine any independent course that the Muslim Brotherhood may take, in an attempt to subordinate them to Riyadh’s priorities in the region. At the same time, by showering the new government in Cairo with billions in aid and diplomatic support, it is hoping to keep Egypt under US-Saudi influence.

For the time being, the Egyptian government is doing its best to avoid any tensions with the Gulf kingdom, building on their mutual antagonism toward the Brotherhood and hoping to buy time until the country gets through this delicate transitional period. In the end, however, there is no avoiding the day when Egypt stands on its own, and conflict seeps back into its relationship with Saudi Arabia.

# War of attrition as forces disappear from Afghanistan

KABUL: General Sayed Mohammad Roshandel is not a man who scares easily: he spent years battling both the insurgency and corruption in a violent province on the Afghan-Iranian border, and several more facing down the Taliban in Kabul's crowded, dusty streets, under the full glare of the world's media.

But earlier this summer, the officer who had risen from an ordinary background to become head of special forces for the Afghan police slipped away from an official work trip to Europe, crossing into Denmark, where he intended to apply for political asylum, sources with knowledge of his trip told the Guardian.

The interior ministry, to which Roshandel reports, confirmed he had been in Europe for over two months, but said he was on extended leave to deal with family issues.

A few weeks after Roshandel's journey, a pioneering army helicopter pilot, Latifa Nabizada, hailed as Afghanistan's Amelia Earhart, made her last landing and shifted to a desk job in the ministry of defence, after a barrage of Taliban threats against her family became too intense.

The news of both moves has been hushed up in Kabul, where they are perhaps the most high-profile examples of a more widespread problem facing the country's police and army. At a time when they are meant to be taking over the fight against a ruthless, battle-hardened insurgency, and as the west moves into a support role, the forces are hemorrhaging more than a few good men. And women.

Many of the losses are deaths and injuries in battle, with casualties mounting up at a rate that senior Afghan and Nato commanders both admit poses a serious risk to morale. But thousands more are men, and a few women, who go awol or simply don't renew their contracts.

Nato and the Afghan government have hailed the expansion of the police and army to a 350,000-strong force in just a few years of intense recruitment and development; the west didn't really turn its focus to training them until 2009.

But there have been concerns about the durability of such a rapidly assembled force. A recent US government report found that in the six months to March 2013, the Afghan national army lost men at an average rate of over 3 per cent each month. That amounts to over a third of its total strength each year, an alarming number.

Cruel odds of injury or death, rising violence nationwide, widespread drug abuse, heavy corruption and Taliban targeting of soldiers and police even when away from their forces have all contributed to the departures, officials and analysts say.

Roshandel appears to have fallen victim to the lack of family connections that made his rise so impressive. His determination to crack down on corruption and lack of powerful backers left him vulnerable at the top, despite praise for his shakeup of once-listless forces.

Under his guidance, the police special units were transformed from a shaky force that operated only alongside foreign commandos into a powerful unit that earlier this year held off a major attack on the airport without a single casualty, and have won widespread plaudits.



Roshandel's departure was unusual because he was a member of the usually well trained and highly motivated security elite, often closely groomed by Nato forces for success, and with access to perks like opportunities to travel abroad.

Most of the disappearing soldiers are far lower down the ranks, where there is often limited loyalty to Afghanistan or the security forces. In a country where by some estimates unemployment is higher than one in every three adult men, the primary driver of recruitment is frequently financial.

"People don't join the police with the aim of serving the country, it's just for the salary. If they don't get paid for two months, they will leave," said one officer with several years' service.

I am in this job because I had no other options.

Nabizada, originally trained by the Russians and accompanied on flights by her young daughter when there was no one for childcare, did not want to stop flying, but was targeted by Taliban death threats.

It was eventually too dangerous for her to travel to the airfield every day.

A string of high-profile women have been killed recently, including a member of parliament, a senator, and the most senior female police officer in southern Helmand.

Her shift to a desk job diminishes the already thin ranks of the air force, and means another pilot will need to be trained. That will cost millions and take several years, highlighting one of the most dangerous effects of the attrition problem in a country expected to fight the Taliban more or less alone from the end of next year.

# Afghan Peace Stuck in Clashing Interests

*By: Sami Jabarkhail*

Monday 26 August, 2013 has marked President Hamid Karzai's twentieth attempt in person to persuade leadership in neighboring Pakistan to adopt a peaceful policy towards Afghanistan. It was Karzai's first visit to capital Islamabad since the newly elected Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

In his address, Sharif stressed upon endorsing peace and reconciliation with Taliban. While Islamabad's official policy positions have often condemned Taliban attacks, the military establishments have been accused of supporting terror groups such as the Haqqani network, Quetta Shura, and other militant organizations who kill US-Afghan troops.

Pakistan's army has appeared hesitant to combat Taliban militants despite appeals from the U.S and NATO allies. "It is a problem that terrorist can cross the border, conduct terrorist acts in Afghanistan and then seek sanctuaries, safe havens in Pakistan." said NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen to reporter after NATO members met to discuss Afghanistan on April 23, 2013 in Brussels.

Consequently, the people of Afghanistan have plenty of reasons to be cynical about the outcome of their President's visit to Islamabad. However, the more critical consideration is that, because peace and security are the most prominent needs of the Afghans and interest of the international community in the region, any efforts to end the conflict deserve a chance.

The main source of Pak-Afghan tension has been Pakistan's so called strategic depth in Afghanistan – that is installing a pro-Islamabad regime in

Kabul and asserting Pakistan's interest, especially vis-à-vis India. Seeking strategic depth in Afghan land was sanctioned in Pakistan's foreign policy by military dictator Zia-Ul-Haq in 1978. Since Zia, Pakistan has begun militating people in Afghanistan against unification and national development.

For Prime Minister Sharif, making a decision that indicates a split with his position on Afghanistan in the past is not easy. At that time, when militancy was being promulgated as a tool of foreign policy to achieve strategic depth in Afghanistan, Prime Minister Sharif's party was part of a power. Instead of cracking down on militants, members of the ruling party in Islamabad have repeatedly linked militancy to drone strikes and occupation of Afghanistan.

There is an intimate relation between Pakistan's security establishments and the Taliban. "Taliban members who went to Qatar for the inauguration of their office, possessed Pakistani passports," confirmed National Security Advisor, Rangin Dadfar Spanta in an interview on 18 July, 2013 in Herat province. Peace and reconciliation with the Taliban no matter where and how it takes place must pass the test of being accepted by Islamabad.

There are two options available to the Afghan government to alter Pakistan's unconventional policy – domestic and international. The first option will require Kabul to address Pakistan's legitimate security concerns and fears by limiting Indian activities along the Duran line. Downgrading Indian diplomatic representations in Afghanistan will change Islamabad's political calculation and encourage public discourse for Afghan peace within Pakistani society.

Second, seeking pressure of the international community on Islamabad is equally important. To do so, the Afghan government should explore new ways of engagement with global partners, especially the United States. Pointing fingers at international allies that have committed wealth and blood

to bring Peace in Afghanistan will do no more than to jeopardize relations between the two sides. Future engagement policies *must* include linking interests of Afghanistan to that of the interests of long-term partners and to lobby for promoting those interests.

The twentieth visit of President Karzai did not inspire confidence for peace, and the next one may not succeed either. Peace efforts will succeed only if both Pakistan and Afghanistan are prepared to compromise on differences and accept the results. If relations with Islamabad continue to be based on fear and mistrust, Afghans will not have a chance to live in peace and economic prosperity in the near future. For this reason, it is important that both countries, including the international community, find a way forward towards peace.

# Waiting for the Tomahawks

BY HANIA MOURTADA

How do Syria's rebels feel about a U.S. bombing campaign against Assad?

BEIRUT, Lebanon — When President Barack Obama first dangled the possibility of launching a punitive military strike against the Syrian regime, he may have been caught off balance by the reaction of some of Bashar al-Assad's staunchest opponents. Rather than gleefully welcoming support from the world's biggest superpower, some Islamist rebels worry that the United States isn't really coming for Assad -- it's coming for them.

"America is going to strike empty bases that are useless to the regime and this cosmetic strike will then be used as a front to go after us," said Suhaib, a 30-year-old fighter with the al Qaeda-affiliated Jabhat al-Nusra, in a Skype interview. "The Americans decided to destroy airports, arms and munitions factories, and scientific research centers when they realized that the honorable revolutionaries of the Free Syrian Army and the jihadists of the Islamist factions are on the verge of seizing them."

If there is one thing that Syria's diverse armed factions converge around, it's the nagging feeling that the United States wants to pull a fast one on them.

In extensive interviews, several rank-and-file fighters and high-ranking commanders expressed the fear that U.S. forces will sweep in at the very last moment, "stealing" the hard-fought Syrian revolution from them after all sides are sufficiently weakened and installing a pliable, hand-picked leadership in Damascus.

"There was never a single day in my entire life where I ever felt like I could trust the Americans or the West in general," said Abu Obaida, who leads a

small battalion within the Ahrar al-Sham movement, a countrywide jihadist group that nevertheless maintains close ties to mainstream rebel groups. "This complete lack of trust comes from the strike on Iraq ... American forces seized the oil, brainwashed people's minds, took over state institutions, and they went in based on a pretext."

He scoffs at Obama's humanitarian arguments for embroiling the United States in the Syria conflict. With hundreds of people dying every day, he finds it odd that America would be moved to act by a single chemical weapons attack. It is merely an affectation, he believes, to dampen Americans' outrage about embroiling them in yet another military campaign in the Middle East.

"They left us to die for two years," he says. "So can I ask: What difference is there if there's blood or not? It is not a moral imperative for them. We all know that."

The reaction of Abu Obaida and like-minded fighters, however, is just one aspect of the diverse rebel response to the prospect of U.S. military intervention in Syria. While it is difficult to find a single rebel fighter who is not skeptical of American overtures, most moderate Free Syrian Army (FSA) commanders welcome a U.S. military strike as the only potential salvation from the horrors of the Syrian regime's crackdown.

These divergent opinions have become a microcosm of the larger challenges facing the sprawling armed opposition. While a U.S. strike may present the rebels with an unprecedented military opportunity, the fractured movement has seemingly failed to organize a coordinated response.

Even some of the rebel groups who were on the front lines of the Aug. 21 chemical weapons attack, which the United States says killed over 1,400



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people, are ambivalent about U.S. military intervention. Liwa al-Islam, a Salafist group that operates in the eastern Damascus suburbs, released a statement that warned darkly of the true American intentions behind intervening in Syria.

# Iran, not Syria, is the West's real target

*By: Robert Fisk*

**Iran is ever more deeply involved in protecting the Syrian government. Thus a victory for Bashar is a victory for Iran. And Iranian victories cannot be tolerated by the West**

Before the stupidest Western war in the history of the modern world begins – I am, of course, referring to the attack on Syria that we all yet have to swallow – it might be as well to say that the cruise missiles which we confidently expect to sweep onto one of mankind's oldest cities have absolutely nothing to do with Syria.

They are intended to harm Iran. They are intended to strike at the Islamic republic now that it has a new and vibrant president – as opposed to the crackpot Mahmoud Ahmadinejad – and when it just might be a little more stable.

Iran is Israel's enemy. Iran is therefore, naturally, America's enemy. So fire the missiles at Iran's only Arab ally.

There is nothing pleasant about the regime in Damascus. Nor do these comments let the regime off the hook when it comes to mass gassing. But I am old enough to remember that when Iraq – then America's ally – used gas against the Kurds of Hallabjah in 1988, we did not assault Baghdad. Indeed, that attack would have to wait until 2003, when Saddam no longer had any gas or any of the other weapons we had nightmares over.

And I also happen to remember that the CIA put it about in 1988 that Iran was responsible for the Hallabjah gassings, a palpable lie that focused on America's enemy whom Saddam was then fighting on our behalf. And



thousands – not hundreds – died in Hallabjah. But there you go. Different days, different standards.

And I suppose it's worth noting that when Israel killed up to 17,000 men, women and children in Lebanon in 1982, in an invasion supposedly provoked by the attempted PLO murder of the Israeli ambassador in London – it was Saddam's mate Abu Nidal who arranged the killing, not the PLO, but that doesn't matter now – America merely called for both sides to exercise "restraint". And when, a few months before that invasion, Hafez al-Assad – father of Bashar – sent his brother up to Hama to wipe out thousands of Muslim Brotherhood rebels, nobody muttered a word of condemnation. "Hama Rules" is how my old mate Tom Friedman cynically styled this bloodbath.

Anyway, there's a different Brotherhood around these days – and Obama couldn't even bring himself to say "boo" when their elected president got deposed.

But hold on. Didn't Iraq – when it was "our" ally against Iran – also use gas on the Iranian army? It did. I saw the Ypres-like wounded of this foul attack by Saddam – US officers, I should add, toured the battlefield later and reported back to Washington – and we didn't care a tinker's curse about it. Thousands of Iranian soldiers in the 1980-88 war were poisoned to death by this vile weapon.

I travelled back to Tehran overnight on a train of military wounded and actually smelled the stuff, opening the windows in the corridors to release the stench of the gas. These young men had wounds upon wounds – quite literally. They had horrible sores wherein floated even more painful sores that were close to indescribable. Yet when the soldiers were sent to Western hospitals for treatment, we journos called these wounded – after evidence

from the UN infinitely more convincing than what we're likely to get from outside Damascus – "alleged" gas victims.

So what in heaven's name are we doing? After countless thousands have died in Syria's awesome tragedy, suddenly – now, after months and years of prevarication – we are getting upset about a few hundred deaths. Terrible. Unconscionable. Yes, that is true. But we should have been traumatised into action by this war in 2011. And 2012. But why now?

I suspect I know the reason. I think that Bashar al-Assad's ruthless army might just be winning against the rebels whom we secretly arm. With the assistance of the Lebanese Hezbollah – Iran's ally in Lebanon – the Damascus regime broke the rebels in Qusayr and may be in the process of breaking them north of Homs. Iran is ever more deeply involved in protecting the Syrian government. Thus a victory for Bashar is a victory for Iran. And Iranian victories cannot be tolerated by the West.

And while we're on the subject of war, what happened to those magnificent Palestinian-Israeli negotiations that John Kerry was boasting about? While we express our anguish at the hideous gassings in Syria, the land of Palestine continues to be gobbled up. Israel's Likudist policy – to negotiate for peace until there is no Palestine left – continues apace, which is why King Abdullah of Jordan's nightmare (a much more potent one than the "weapons of mass destruction" we dreamed up in 2003) grows larger: that "Palestine" will be in Jordan, not in Palestine.

But if we are to believe the nonsense coming out of Washington, London, Paris and the rest of the "civilised" world, it's only a matter of time before our swift and avenging sword smiteth the Damascenes. To observe the leadership of the rest of the Arab world applauding this destruction is perhaps the most painful historical experience for the region to endure. And

the most shameful. Save for the fact that we will be attacking Shia Muslims and their allies to the handclapping of Sunni Muslims. And that's what civil war is made of.

# Putin Scores on Syria

How He Got the Upper Hand -- And How He Will Use It

By Fiona Hill

After months of standing firm (and almost alone) against international intervention in Syria, by the end of August, Russian President Vladimir Putin seemed resigned to the prospect of a U.S. strike against Bashar al-Assad's regime. To be sure, he was not happy about it, but the use of chemical weapons against civilians in a Damascus suburb appeared to have brought the current phase of the Syrian crisis to its inevitable climax. In the face of repeated U.S. and international warnings that a chemical attack was the red line for retribution, coalition strikes on Syria seemed mere days away.

Yet events after the attack unexpectedly worked in Putin's favor. First came the British parliamentary vote blocking Prime Minister David Cameron's initiative to join any U.S. military assault. Then came U.S. President Barack Obama's decision to put the issue to a vote before a reluctant Congress. The French government announced that -- unlike in Mali -- it would not go it alone in Syria. And United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon stated that the chemical weapons inspection team he had dispatched to Syria would need time to complete its work before determining whether there was sufficient evidence for the UN to approve the use of force.

Now, as Putin hosts the G-20 summit in St. Petersburg, he sees a new opportunity for Russia. Given all parties' clear reluctance to take assertive action, Putin believes that an attack can be averted, or, at the very least, limited to a unilateral American action. Beyond some French support, and some sideline cheering by the Turks and the Arab League, Obama -- not Putin -- will be out on his own. And Russia will find itself no longer isolated on Syria.

Over the past week, Putin has used a series of carefully staged public appearances and interviews to stoke skepticism about the use of force. He has pushed the idea that the Syrian rebels launched the chemical attack themselves to draw in the United States and regain ground in a civil war that they have been losing. He has engaged in cleverly orchestrated pieces of political theater, including encouraging Russian Duma deputies to reach out to members of the U.S. Congress before they vote. Putin has been judicious in calling for a review of the facts, and pointing to the importance of not doing anything rash. He has also left open the possibility that Russia could play a role in UN action against the Syrian regime -- if the secretary-general obtains irrefutable proof that Assad ordered the use of chemical weapons against his own civilians. Putin has stressed the need for high evidentiary standards to avoid repeating past mistakes, such as sanctioning U.S. intervention in Iraq on the basis of faulty intelligence on WMD.

A decision against using force in Syria, an embarrassed Obama, the prospect of a unilateral U.S. intervention launched without even the imprimatur of the U.S. Congress -- all that can be spun as a Russian victory if Putin keeps his cool.

Whether these moves are sincere or not (most likely, not), they resonate with audiences in Russia, and with some outside Russia who have opposed past U.S. military actions. Putin has picked up on all the prevailing arguments against intervention and, by repeating them, staked out a position for himself as a defender of international law and principles. He has presented himself as a savvy leader who recognizes a provocation when he sees one and refuses to rise to the bait. He is poised to declare a moral victory for Russia and to take the credit if Obama backs away from intervention.

In his statements about Obama, moreover, Putin has not insulted the president personally, nor questioned his integrity directly. His jabs at the U.S. position have been deft. Even if one does not trust his motives, it is clear that Putin has at least put Obama in the awkward position of having to justify why he drew red lines on Syrian use of chemical weapons and why he cannot wait for the UN decision -- and all that while Obama is in Russia, in front of a generally skeptical G-20 audience.

Putin is particularly skilled at keeping his opponents off balance. And there is no question that Obama is Putin's opponent on the issue of Syria. All along, Putin's goal has been to stop the United States from attacking the Syrian regime -- not to protect Assad but to protect Russia. Putin wants a strong leader in Syria who can keep things under control. He wants to make sure that terrorist groups with ties to extremists in Russia's troubled North Caucasus region do not turn from operations in Syria to [strikes against Russian targets](#). Putin also has some experience to draw on to achieve his goals.

He counts on being underestimated and discounted -- dismissed as the slouchy "bored kid at the back of the classroom" (as Obama described him in a news conference on August 9). This is an image Putin has cultivated for a very long time. As a bored kid in Leningrad in the 1960s and 1970s, Putin skulked at the back of classrooms but was energized in his free time by his pursuit of judo. He became extremely accomplished in the sport -- competing with distinction at the regional and national levels. Putin frequently underscores how much he benefitted from the qualities of judo. Naturally hotheaded and scrappy, the young Putin learned discipline through studying judo; it taught him self-restraint. His training focused on how to leverage his opponents' strengths against them, and how to wait for the right moment to capitalize on their missteps. The real skill in judo is keeping

the opponent perpetually off balance, not roughly pushing him down to the mat. Finesse, not force, earns points with the judges. This ability was a valuable asset once Putin joined the KGB and needed to, literally, stand and watch quietly in the shadows, waiting for someone to screw up.

Putin knows what he is doing. He stands back while others blunder in and act in the heat of the moment. He needles and riles his opponents so they trip themselves up and do his work for him. Putin intends to win this particular round of his sparring match over Syria on points. A decision against using force in Syria, an embarrassed Obama, the prospect of a unilateral U.S. intervention launched without even the imprimatur of the U.S. Congress -- all that can be spun as a Russian victory if Putin keeps his cool. Against the backdrop of the G-20 summit, the international community will be the judge of whether Putin or Obama has made the most skillful moves.

# Syria positive about giving up chemical weapons

MOSCOW (AP) — Syria on Monday quickly welcomed a call from Russia, its close ally, to place Syrian chemical arsenals under international control, then destroy them to avert a U.S. strike, but did not offer a time frame or any other specifics.

The statement by Syrian Foreign Minister Walid al-Moallem appeared to mark the first official acknowledgement by Damascus that it possesses chemical weapons and reflected what appeared to be an attempt by Syrian President Bashar Assad to avoid the U.S. military attack.

But it remained to be seen whether the statement represented a genuine goodwill gesture by Syria or simply an attempt to buy time.

"Syria welcomes the Russian proposal out of concern for the lives of the Syrian people, the security of our country and because it believes in the wisdom of the Russian leadership that seeks to avert American aggression against our people," al-Moallem said during a visit to Moscow, where he held talks with his Russian counterpart, Sergey Lavrov.

However, al-Moallem, would not give any further details in his brief statement and didn't take any questions from reporters.

Moallem's statement came a few hours after U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said Assad could resolve the crisis surrounding the alleged use of chemical weapons by his forces by surrendering control of "every single bit" of his arsenal to the international community by the end of the week.



Also Monday, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urged Syria to immediately agree to transfer chemical weapons and chemical precursors to a safe place within the country for international destruction.

Ban said he will also propose to the Security Council that it unite and demand an immediate chemical weapons transfer should U.N. inspectors conclude that such weapons were used in an attack Aug. 21 in a suburb of Damascus.

Al-Moallem and Lavrov didn't make any immediate reference to Kerry's statement when they spoke to the media after their talks, but a few hours later Lavrov went before cameras to say that Moscow would urge Syria to quickly place its chemical weapons under international control and then dismantle it.

Lavrov, who held talks with al-Moallem in Moscow earlier in the day, said he expected a quick positive answer from Damascus.

"If the establishment of international control over chemical weapons in that country would allow avoiding strikes, we will immediately start working with Damascus," Lavrov said.

"We are calling on the Syrian leadership to not only agree on placing chemical weapons storage sites under international control, but also on its subsequent destruction and fully joining the treaty on prohibition of chemical weapons," he said.

The surprise series of statements from top U.S., Russian and Syrian diplomats followed media reports alleging that Russian President Vladimir Putin, who discussed Syria with President Barack Obama during the Group of

20 summit in St. Petersburg last week, had sought to negotiate a deal that would have Assad hand over control of chemical weapons.

Putin himself said Friday at a news conference marking the summit's end that he and Obama discussed some new ideas regarding a peaceful settlement of the crisis and instructed Kerry and Lavrov to work out details.

Speaking Monday, Lavrov denied that Russia was trying to sponsor any deal "behind the back of the Syrian people."

The Russian move comes as Obama, who has blamed Assad for killing hundreds of his own people in a chemical attack outside Damascus last month, is pressing for a limited military strike against the Syrian government. The Syrian regime has denied launching the attack, insisting along with Russia that the attack was launched by the rebels to drag the U.S. into the civil war.

Lavrov and al-Moallem said after their talks that U.N. chemical weapons experts should complete their probe and present their findings to the U.N. Security Council.

Al-Moallem said his government was ready to host the U.N. team, and insisted that Syria is ready to use all channels to persuade the Americans that it wasn't behind the attack. He added that Syria was ready for "full cooperation with Russia to remove any pretext for aggression."

Neither minister, however, offered any evidence to back their claim of rebel involvement in the chemical attack.

Lavrov said Russia will continue to promote a peaceful settlement and may try to convene a gathering of all Syrian opposition figures to join in

negotiations. He added that a U.S. attack on Syria would deal a fatal blow to peace efforts.

Lavrov wouldn't say how Russia could respond to a possible U.S. attack on Syria, saying: "We wouldn't like to proceed from a negative scenario and would primarily take efforts to prevent a military intervention."

Putin said Moscow would keep providing assistance to Syria in case of U.S. attack, but he and other Russian officials have made clear that Russia has no intention of engaging in hostilities.

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AP correspondents Zeina Karam in Beirut and Edith Lederer at the U.N. contributed to this report.

# The Doha Process and Afghanistan's Future

By Naveed Ahmad (the 08/21/13 issue of the CACI Analyst)

*The Taliban finally have an address, far from their power base in Afghanistan. The place, commonly referred to as the "Taliban Embassy" by Doha taxi drivers, is receiving mixed reactions. After its opening on June 18, Pakistan welcomed the decision; India expressed caution that the office may confer "legitimacy" to the terrorist group while China found the development as "encouraging" and "positive progress." Afghan President Hamid Karzai continues to stall the tripartite talks besides putting on hold a fourth round of negotiations on the status-of-forces agreement (SOFA) with the U.S.*

**BACKGROUND:** Not every commander and foot soldier of the Taliban militia is ready to accept negotiations with the U.S. or its allied Karzai regime, although this may change whenever the negotiations begin and more information trickles down the ranks of the Taliban. The first formal round of negotiations among the U.S., Afghanistan's High Peace Council and the Taliban may not result in a breakthrough.

The Taliban's interest in a negotiated settlement can be gauged from the fact that its Supreme Commander Mulla Omar has appointed none other than his brother-in-law and spokesman Mulla Mohammad Omar Tayyab Agha as top negotiator in the Qatari capital. The militia's former ambassador in Saudi Arabia Maulvi Shahabuddin Dilawar, alongside some key commanders, forms a multi-faceted negotiation team. The entourage has been in Qatar since January 3, 2012, holding several rounds of talks with U.S. delegations, without any major breakthrough. Meanwhile, their wives

have enjoyed the time in cosmopolitan Doha malls and restaurants while their children attended modern schools and colleges.

Since U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton coined the term “good Taliban,” negotiators and diplomats have had scores of rollercoaster rides. For the U.S.-led campaign in Afghanistan, the primary goal was to defeat and disable the militia, a disastrous failure across the country including the Afghan capital. U.S. commanders then requested troop reinforcements in the so-called surge and zoned the country’s troubled regions based on insurgent groups. This did win partial success but at a slow speed and a high price. Exhausting all other options, the U.S. chose to do the right thing. The Taliban are now recognized as legitimate stakeholders. By actively engaging Pakistan’s Chief of Army Staff General Ashfaq Pervez Kiani, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry could gain what Clinton failed to achieve owing to a catastrophic decline in relations between Islamabad and Washington.

A confident Taliban team has now added leverage particularly after Afghan President Karzai’s outbursts against the U.S. administration, NATO and Pakistan. Mulla Omar’s men have already tested the patience of U.S. and Qatar by hoisting their white flag and branding the office as the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. The symbols were removed on the request of Qatar’s government.

The Taliban may be following the outline of a draft reconciliation agreement prepared in 1996 during Benazir Bhutto’s government in Pakistan. Islamabad was a go-between then as well but short-sighted U.S. policies underestimated the militia’s resilience besides miscalculating the strength of warlords allied with Washington.

The content of the negotiations reveals that the Taliban had limited connection with al-Qaeda while Osama bin Laden was invited to Kabul from

Khartoum by none other than President Burhanuddin Rabbani. The Taliban supreme leader had even agreed to hand over bin Laden to any neutral Muslim country such as Turkey. The talks broke down as the U.S. refused the offer and later opted to fruitlessly fire cruise missiles. The angered Taliban embraced “Shaikh” Osama bin Laden and adopted a hard line posture. Engaging the Taliban, again with the help of Pakistan, the U.S. demands are no different from what the militia was offering 16 years ago.

**IMPLICATIONS:** The softening U.S. position vis-à-vis the Taliban can be a game-changer, even more so with Pakistan onboard. The Afghan High Peace Council (HPC), led by Salahuddin Rabbani, has proven functional despite the brutal murder of its chairman, Burhanuddin Rabbani. While the U.S., the Taliban and the HPC are set to engage with more contentious issues, President Hamid Karzai is getting increasingly isolated. With his second and final presidential term ending next year, Karzai has been desperate to preserve the political office in his vicinity. Intensive negotiations with likely but temporary hiccups imply an uncertain future for Hamid Karzai, who has no supporters in Islamabad – a much bigger problem for Washington than for New Delhi.

On the negotiating table, the U.S. will push the Taliban to reject al-Qaeda, accept an effective ceasefire in the wake of a security handover, and to respect and participate in the political process. The Taliban, on the other hand, find the existing political, bureaucratic and military setup discriminatory against the majority Pashtun population. The militia will push for a greater role for the marginalized ethnic segment.

The Taliban are eager to have five Guantanamo prisoners released, i.e. Mulla Fazal Akhund, Khairullah Khairkhwā Noorullah Noori, Abdul Haq Waseeq and Mohammad Nabi in exchange for U.S. soldier Bowe Bergdahl who has been in their custody since 2009. In a symbolic move, U.S. President Obama has

re-initiated the process for closing Guantanamo. Pakistani media reports that Islamabad has also facilitated low profile interaction between the non-Pashtun Northern Alliance and the Taliban to strengthen the trust of all stakeholders including the U.S.

Once a serious bone of contention, the Taliban's Haqqani chapter is no longer an irritant in Pakistan-U.S. relations but a partner in the Doha peace talks, a development that annoys President Hamid Karzai as well as his ally New Delhi. Pakistan will have to release more Taliban prisoners on Afghanistan's request of as gesture of goodwill. Islamabad has already freed 26 Afghan prisoners belonging to the militia.

The opening of a Taliban office followed by initial statements from both sides has already started to benefit Pakistan. Islamabad experiences reduced pressure to carry out a military operation in the restive semi-autonomous Waziristan region. Instead, its army chief General Kiani has called upon the internally displaced persons to return home. With the financial assistance of the United Arab Emirates, a 50 kilometer road linking it's the region's two key cities, Wana and Angoor Adda, has been inaugurated while other healthcare and education projects near completion. Moreover, a smooth transition of power in Afghanistan will help Pakistan tackle its extremist problem in the tribal areas, where Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan has safe havens and sympathizers.

The table is set for negotiations but the real task of hammering out a power-sharing formula has yet to be worked out. Afghan President Karzai seems the most uncertain variable, owing to his insecurity with regard to a possible role for Mulla Omar or his rival Abdullah Abdullah. With Saudi Arabia and Qatar being guarantors of the negotiations, Pakistan and the Taliban have little incentive to derail the process.

The sooner the Taliban categorically distances itself from al-Qaeda, denounces global terrorism and announces a ceasefire, the greater the prospects for an Afghan-led transition. The U.S. may have to be patient in the wake of hardline guerrilla attacks against its soldiers and material for some time. The reconciliation process has yet to take roots and Pakistan, Afghanistan, the U.S. and the Taliban must be watchful of any provocations.

The SOFA will surely test the maturity of the reconciliation process as other stakeholders will not accept agreements between President Karzai and the U.S. and its allies. The likely presence of troops in post-2014 Afghanistan is set to become a tricky and divisive question in the Doha talks.

**CONCLUSIONS:** The stalled Doha process must be speeded up to end the 12-year-old Afghan war by late 2014. A prolonged delay in resuming the Doha process is bound to have serious ramifications for NATO's withdrawal plans. The U.S. Secretary of State has already had talks with Afghanistan, India and Pakistan on this issue. Washington knows well that a suspension of talks is advantageous to the Taliban. President Karzai, however, has been trying to find leverage over the issue ahead of the April 2014 presidential elections. Afghanistan may confront a chaotic post-2014 future unless stakeholders avoid hardline posturing.





**Atlantic Council**

BRENT SCOWCROFT CENTER  
ON INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

# The United States, Russia, and Europe: Trilateral Security Dialogue in the Absence of Strategic Partnership



Isabelle François

# The United States, Russia, and Europe: Trilateral Security Dialogue in the Absence of Strategic Partnership

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Atlantic Council  
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## About the Author

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Isabelle François is a nonresident senior fellow with the Atlantic Council's Brent Scowcroft Center on International Security. She served previously at NATO and held various positions on NATO international staff, including as director of the NATO Information Office in Moscow for five years. She is Canadian and worked at the Department of National Defense from 1993 to 1998. She has published extensively on defense issues related to Africa and Europe. Dr. François holds a law degree from Université de Paris XII (France) and is a graduate from Carleton University (MA) in Ottawa, Ontario, and Université de Montréal (PhD) in Québec, Canada.

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## Foreword

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This report is the result of a series of trilateral dialogue sessions between American, European, and Russian experts with some involvement of current and former officials from governments and international organizations, as well as participants from the Atlantic Council's Young Atlanticist Program, and colleagues from the private sector. The project was funded by a grant from Carnegie Corporation of New York.

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and contributed ideas to move forward in addressing current security challenges.

This report is the first of a series of papers devoted to how the United States and its allies need to consider their relationship with Russia in the midst of new global currents with new powers rising, new challenges emerging, and the need for renewed American leadership and partnerships. Any strategy calling for "staying the course" is no longer viable. The key question in this report is whether the United States, NATO allies, and Russia will approach the future together or separately.

The trilateral dialogue was launched in April 2012. It was developed against the backdrop of significant presidential elections in Washington and Moscow and a number of challenges. First, in January 2012, the United States unveiled a new security strategy and force posture review in Europe that significantly impacted both NATO and European security and rebalanced US priorities toward Asia. Second, Russia continued to pursue military modernization plans and voice its objections to the European-based US missile defense system. Third, allied defense establishments continued to face severe fiscal constraints and budgetary cuts.

In engaging experts and decision-makers from Europe, Russia, and the United States, this project considers the prospects for an inclusive European security community laid out in President George H.W. Bush's grand strategy for a Europe whole, free, and at peace. This report offers a diagnosis, a prognosis, and a prescription for the United States, Russia, and Europe to move beyond the status quo.

In acknowledging that a “strategic partnership” with Russia never materialized, the report provides an honest diagnosis in an effort to assess the way forward. The report also makes a prognosis on the prospects for cooperative security. Alternatives to Euro-Atlantic cooperative security arrangements remain unclear, however, and the prescription for how to proceed is transactional rather than transformational or normative. Nonetheless, this report offers a viable strategy in an attempt to remain engaged without prejudging of the outcome.

We hope that this report will help to clarify the debate about how to best engage with Russia and avoid the pitfalls of regular resets by offering specific proposals for US-Russia-Europe cooperation while acknowledging the significant challenges in the relationship.

## Executive Summary

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The past twenty years have been marked by a series of setbacks and disappointments in the US-European-Russian dialogue, despite regular attempts to develop a strategic partnership. In this cyclical relationship, 2012 was a low point in Western relations with Russia, from the calculated absence of President Vladimir Putin at the NATO summit in Chicago to the Russian ban on American adoptions of Russian orphans, and the US reaction to the Sergei Magnitsky case. The year 2013 could have been the beginning of an upswing in the trilateral dialogue. In April, US Secretary of State John Kerry and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov met on the margins of the G8 foreign ministers' gathering in London. At the same time, US National Security Advisor Tom Donilon called on Putin in Moscow, where he hand-delivered a letter from President Barack Obama detailing potential areas of cooperation. A series of meetings between Russian and American officials throughout the summer saw a new diplomatic push to reframe the US–Russia relationship in the run-up to the Group of Eight meeting in June and the G20 meeting in September 2013. However, the Edward Snowden affair and Obama's subsequent decision to cancel the planned September meeting with Putin in light of insufficient progress on bilateral issues point to a pause in the relationship.

What might work in the future that did not work in the past?

For the relationship between the United States, Europe, and Russia to develop in the long run, there must be a conscious political choice by the top

leadership to engage and a readiness to address disagreements within national constituencies. The political expectations of the 1990s, when Russia and the West sought to influence each other's decision-making processes—whether Russia's attempts to have a say within NATO or US attempts to influence Russian domestic politics—will have to be abandoned. Instead, the parties can work on the more modest short-term goal of establishing a transactional partnership on areas of common interests and resist regular attempts to close the values gap.

In this turbulent relationship, a strategy should provide a guide that helps manage expectations, hedges against unhelpful decisions, and mitigates the risks of disengagement. A strategy could also help identify compromises between the requirements of expedient solutions, typical in transactional relationships, without losing sight of the ultimate search for a normative framework. A strategy could define short-term goals and long-term objectives, and thus allow for pragmatic decisions based on interests, while retaining a values-based, long-term perspective.

The strategy presented in this report rests on three pillars: transatlantic security, regional and trans-regional issues, and global challenges. In the short term, its seven operational goals focus the trilateral dialogue from the conceptual to the practical, spanning security issues such as the need to define common understanding on “Mutual Assured Stability” and regional focus from Afghanistan to Asia-Pacific. Finally, among the key

enablers, the report highlights the need to broaden human contacts beyond the United States, Russia, and Europe, and beyond the usual group of security experts that have dominated the trilateral dialogue for decades. It calls for more informal ties and processes, and for nurturing and integrating a new generation ready to engage, unburdened by the weight of history.

Ultimately, the challenge for delivering such a strategy will not be the absence of an inspiring vision, past failures to develop a strategic partnership, or lack of common interests. Rather, the biggest challenge will rest on the lack of mutual intentions, mutual respect, and political will on the part of the respective leaderships to work with their own internal opposition and move toward genuine cooperation.



# I. Unequivocal Diagnosis: A Strategic Partnership Gone Missing

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In the summer of 2013, despite a series of setbacks and disappointments during President Barack Obama's first term and with mixed results from the so-called "reset" policy, a renewed sense of engagement dominated the US–Russian political dialogue for a couple of months with a series of high-level meetings. These efforts did not yield the expected results and the pathologies of the US–Russia relationship proved stronger. Twenty years after the end of the Cold War, Washington and Moscow have yet to overcome the outdated Cold War paradigm of "mutual assured destruction." The bilateral relationship is still dominated by a security agenda and a zero-sum approach, rooted in the fierce ideological and political competition between two superpowers, which no longer fits today's globalized and multipolar world.

Similarly, the NATO–Russia relationship, formally launched in 1997 when both sides seemed ready to trade an adversarial relationship for dialogue and cooperation, has resulted in disappointment and frustration. In reality, despite the political statements and summits, just beneath the surface of cooperative security lies a very uneasy partnership between NATO and Russia. Events in the last five years have often diverged from the cooperative agenda of the 1997 Founding Act and the 2002 Rome Declaration, highlighting a more competitive and at times even confrontational relationship. In spite of the creation of various institutional frameworks such as the NATO–Russia Council (NRC) and examples of concrete practical cooperation, the so-called "strategic partnership"

has had limited impact in addressing today's strategic issues in Europe and beyond.

The polarization of positions and the inability to reach strategic partnership, the lack of political will to find compromises for joint solutions to common security challenges and to develop joint actions reflect three dilemmas in the US–Russia–Europe relationship.

## **Shaky premises**

The NATO–Russia relationship was developed on a fundamental misunderstanding about each other's expectations. In the 1990s, Russia embarked on a path of integrating Western values fundamental to the post-Cold War alliance transformation. Russia was thereby reconciled with NATO's "open door" policy in the eyes of Western observers. For its part, Russia expected that it would be given a voice at the table in Euro-Atlantic security affairs, where it could influence alliance thinking from within. The creation of the NRC and the 2002 Rome Declaration were thus developed under the dubious assumption that both NATO and Russia would be in a position to influence each other's decision-making processes. Already the 1999 Kosovo air campaign and more starkly, the 2008 Russian–Georgian war called into question the core assumption binding the NATO and Russia partnership, namely that Russia would become more integrated into the Western community of states.

The US–Russia relationship has also developed under misplaced assumptions. Washington and

Moscow seemed intent on adapting strategic stability to the 21st century through significant arms control efforts, when in reality the bilateral partnership has evolved toward a fundamentally asymmetrical relationship. Neither side grasped the challenge of transformation that occurred in the past two decades and affected the conditions in which strategic stability needs to be sustained. Washington and Moscow have talked past each other. Russian preoccupations have focused on American technologies.<sup>1</sup> Moscow lacks the confidence that strategic stability can be maintained given US technological advantages and seems to wrongly assume Washington's hostile intent. The United States' own focus is elsewhere, and it has failed to understand or recognize the Russian threat perceptions. The United States has been adjusting to the changed political security conditions of the 21st century where Russia is not a focal point. The Russians have failed to understand the American preoccupation with Iran and North Korea, which have been much more significant nuclear threats than Russia—hence the dilemma over missile defense.<sup>2</sup>

### **Diverging threat perceptions**

In "Sustaining US Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense," published in early 2012, the Department of Defense refocused on threats emanating primarily from Asia and the Middle East, rebalancing its efforts beyond Europe.<sup>3</sup> The US government also clearly decided to address these threats working with allies and partners. In this context, the Department of Defense emphasized US engagement with Russia and committed to continue efforts to build a closer relationship in areas of mutual interest. By contrast, official Russian policies have tended to emphasize that US policies such as NATO expansion pose a security threat to the Russian Federation.<sup>4</sup> In part, this

reflects that given the US military, economic, and political preeminence, US actions can be more consequential for Russia than Russian actions for the United States.<sup>5</sup>

These former enemies are no longer enemies, but may not have become friends. Some partners are actually competitors, and partnership arrangements may be ill suited for the reality of the relationship. Official statements thus often reflect the uneasy compromise between the requirements of partnership in areas of mutual interest, such as terrorism, and the reality of nuclear and other capabilities that needs to be addressed in terms of potential threats by defense planners.

NATO documents have been particularly ambiguous about the fact that Russia is both a partner with whom to engage in cooperative security programs and a potential nuclear threat against which the alliance continues to plan, train, and exercise in terms of its Article 5 requirements. In its Deterrence and Defense Posture Review agreed upon at the Chicago Summit in 2012, allies reiterated that the alliance does not consider any country to be its adversary and preserved its "to-whom-it-may-concern" deterrence policy maintaining a mix of nuclear, conventional, and missile defense capabilities for the full range of Alliance missions, from collective defense to crisis management and partnerships. At the same time, NATO reaffirmed its commitment to arms control, disarmament, and nonproliferation. Recognizing the Russian nuclear stockpiles stationed in the Euro-Atlantic area, NATO committed to "developing detailed proposals on and increasing mutual understanding of NATO's and Russia's nonstrategic nuclear force postures in Europe," as well as seeking "reciprocal steps by Russia in terms of further reducing its requirement for nonstrategic nuclear weapons assigned to the alliance."<sup>6</sup>

This ambiguity seems to adequately reflect the complexities of the post-Cold War era with diverging positions and interests. Differences

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1 Paul J. Saunders, "New Realities in US-Russia Arms Control," Center for the National Interest, p. 24, April 2012.

2 Celeste Wallander, "Mutual Assured Stability: Establishing US-Russia Security Relations for a New Century," Atlantic Council, 29 July 2013.

3 See [http://www.defense.gov/news/Defense\\_Strategic\\_Guidance.pdf](http://www.defense.gov/news/Defense_Strategic_Guidance.pdf).

4 See [http://carnegieendowment.org/files/2010russia\\_military\\_doc-trine.pdf](http://carnegieendowment.org/files/2010russia_military_doc-trine.pdf).

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5 Paul J. Saunders, "New Realities in US-Russia Arms Control," Center for the National Interest, p. 15, April 2012.

6 NATO, "Deterrence and Defense Posture Review," May 12, 2012, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official\\_texts\\_87597.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_87597.htm).

among allies' positions vis-à-vis Russia are well known. Diverging interpretations of Russian actions against Georgia in the summer of 2008 reinforced differences within the alliance on how to best engage with Russia. The suspension of political dialogue and military cooperation between NATO and Russia resulted in polarized positions within the Alliance that have continued to hamper the proper functioning of the NRC, which has essentially become a forum where the parties "agree to disagree." The resumption of NRC meetings in the spring of 2009 proceeded on the same basis of partnership and cooperation developed in 1997 and 2002. In reality, this papered over the fact that the various NATO allies came out of the 2008-09 period with different outlooks on the potential for the NATO-Russia relationship. Yet, in 2010 at the NATO summit in Lisbon, allies stated once more the importance they attached to "developing a true strategic and modernized partnership based on the principles of reciprocal confidence, transparency, and predictability, with the aim of contributing to the creation of a common space of peace, security, and stability." The reality of NATO-Russia cooperation pales in comparison with optimistic official documents reaffirming strategic partnership intentions.

### **Different approaches to change**

This gap between rhetoric and reality may have been the result of fundamental misunderstandings among Americans, Europeans, and Russians about one another's expectations regarding the post-Cold War era as much as the result of their diverging threat perceptions. The world and this uneasy partnership seem to be at a crossroads fast approaching an inflection point.<sup>7</sup> The US, European and Russian abilities to position themselves in this new era will be largely determined by their past responses to the post-Cold War period and the significant changes it brought along. How did the United States, Russia and Europe respond to the challenges and manage the call for change when caught between the legacy of the past and

the aspirations to a different future? The real dilemma for security lies with what seems to have been an inability after twenty years of attempted cooperation to get beyond the old paradigm of mutual assured destruction, which no longer corresponds to reality.

The relationship between the United States and Russia remains anchored in a narrowly defined security agenda, dominated by nuclear weapons and arms control negotiations, which distorted the broader and richer ties these two countries could have developed. While some European countries like Germany or France have engaged with Russia bilaterally on a much broader agenda, the security partnership through NATO has also been dominated by the old paradigm, undermining allies' and Russia's ability to advance their wider interests.

Arms control still has as much a role to play in European security as in US-Russia bilateral relations, but it is a much different role which cannot be played in the same way with the same concepts and rules of the games as in the past. It has to be first about reassurance rather than reductions of nuclear and conventional arsenals. The continued relevance of arms control lies in the fact that it offers a familiar setting managing change step-by-step in a controlled fashion. This is reassuring to Russia in particular at a time when the relationship between Moscow and the West is in a state of flux, best characterized as "unfinished business." Arms control actually corresponds to the Russian approach to change.

It is fundamental to appreciate how Americans, Europeans, and Russians have dealt with change differently in the post-Cold War period. In the 1990s, the United States had been first to develop a new vision reaching out to former enemies. Europeans have been generally amenable to change, albeit less swiftly and less broadly, while Russia has been reluctant to embrace change. The default mode in Russia when faced with change seems to be status quo until Moscow has had a chance to fully review and assess new proposals. New ideas are met with suspicion and the process of transformation is very slow.

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<sup>7</sup> Atlantic Council, "Envisioning 2030: U.S. Strategy for a Post-Western World," December 2012, [http://www.acus.org/files/publication\\_pdfs/403/Envisioning2030\\_web.pdf.pdf](http://www.acus.org/files/publication_pdfs/403/Envisioning2030_web.pdf.pdf).

Russia appears genuinely perturbed about the ultimate intentions behind the endless inventiveness of American military power. It is also mindful of the political debates within the United States, especially the anti-Russian sentiments regularly emanating from Congress and the significant changes on key issues such as missile defense from one administration to the next. The need for reassurance and clarity is crucial and can be addressed through arms control mechanisms.

However, arms control is a means to an end—it is a tool, but the end game and the strategy are still unclear to all. Arms control was developed as a tool for managing risk in an adversarial security relationship. The revival of arms control debates today, and the return of arms control in the European security agenda twenty years after the end of the Cold War, might be cause for concern. Has the security environment deteriorated to the point of warning against a new arms race with Russia?

The fact is that the old paradigm of mutual assured destruction has yet to be replaced, while the goal of an inclusive European security community seems far-fetched. A cooperative European security framework, dominated by trust and transparency, where adversarial approaches to manage security challenges have disappeared and rendered nuclear deterrence redundant, may be unrealistic in the near to medium term. In the long run, cooperative security among the United States, Europe, and Russia may still represent the ultimate goal, but in the interim a paradigm shift toward “mutual assured stability” may be more realistic. Mutual assured stability could be defined as “a condition in which neither party has the intention or capability to exercise unilateral advantage for political or military exploitation through preemptive coercion or military strike in such a way that precludes response, negotiation, or compromise.”<sup>8</sup> At this stage, however, the shift has yet to occur. The United States-Russia-Europe security partnership is facing an uncertain future.

In the face of a new period and given the differences in views among the United States,

Europe, and Russia, the past twenty years have taught us one lesson if nothing else: if engagement between the West and Russia goes toward one side prevailing over the other, it will go toward disengagement. This type of partnership with Russia is unsustainable.

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<sup>8</sup> Wallander, “Mutual Assured Stability.”

## II. Uninspiring Prognosis: Common Interests, Cooperative Programs, and Cyclical Relations

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The inherent limits of the United States/NATO-Russia partnership should not overshadow the successes and genuine efforts at cooperation. Over the past two decades, cooperation on various security projects has led to concrete results and significant agreements.

On the NATO-Russia agenda, two significant cooperative successes should guard against undue pessimism. In the area of counterterrorism, the NRC presided over the development of Cooperative Airspace Initiative (CAI). In the aftermath of 9/11, this NATO-Russia initiative was launched to prevent terrorist attacks using civilian aircraft by sharing information on movements in NATO and Russian airspace by coordinating interceptions of renegade aircraft. Significant cooperative work led to the creation of an airspace security system, which today provides a shared NATO-Russia radar picture of air traffic and allows for early warning of suspicious air activities. Similarly, cooperation with Russia on Afghanistan has yielded three significant projects. The first allowed for cooperation in countering narcotics trafficking. The second enabled the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to make use of the Northern Sea Route to and from Afghanistan for cargo shipments. The third has provided funding for helicopter maintenance building the capacity of the Afghan army. However, these projects have been punctual and limited to specific areas of cooperation, often on a commercial basis, and clearly fell short of developing into a strategic partnership.

Similarly, on the US-Russia security agenda, the signature and ratification of the New START Treaty in 2011 was considered a milestone and anchored the “reset” policy between Washington and Moscow. President Obama committed in the Senate to follow-on negotiations and to address reductions in nonstrategic and nondeployed strategic nuclear warheads. However, the lack of enthusiasm in Moscow for follow-on negotiations, and the expected resistance in the US Congress to ratify further arms control agreements with Russia have hampered progress in security cooperation.

Despite the lack of progress, the proponents of cooperative security have pursued their efforts and remained vocal, convinced that there is no alternative in the long run to Western partnership for Russia. While Europeans may seem more likely to persist in their search for a strategic partnership with their Russian neighbor, when it comes to security affairs, the US-Russia bilateral relationship is determinant for a genuine partnership to develop. Hence, NATO may not be the organization of choice to foster engagement with Moscow and get past the post-Cold War inertia. The NATO-Russia relationship, while significant to NATO’s transformation agenda, is not vital to alliance core interests and missions. For its part, Moscow will not walk back on its commitment to the NRC, but NATO is becoming less central to its foreign policy interests.

Today, Russians and Americans do not fear a nuclear attack on each other. Instead, extremism, terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass

destruction, and environmental catastrophes are the greatest risks to the citizens of both countries. Moreover, they are trading and investing with each other, facilitating greater scientific cooperation among themselves, and creating opportunities for cultural and people-to-people exchanges through simplified visa programs. Although Russian and American leaders have acknowledged this new reality, they have failed to take concrete steps to usher in a new strategic relationship that reflects the prospects of a new era and the opportunities sought by their own people, despite encouragement from prominent political figures from both sides.<sup>9</sup>

### **The trappings of a cyclical partnership**

The US-Russia relationship, just like the NATO-Russia partnership, has had to reinvent itself on a regular basis. The last US-Russia “reset” between President Obama and President Dmitry Medvedev echoed prior cooperative attempts and positive moments in the bilateral relationship—be it the Bush-Putin rapprochement following the Iraq war or the Clinton-Yeltsin honeymoon in the mid-1990s. Invariably these “highs” quickly subsided, and significant efforts were required to mitigate the “lows” and keep cooperation on the agenda.<sup>10</sup>

On the NATO-Russia agenda, the major breakthrough of 1997—the Founding Act—quickly unraveled with the Kosovo air campaign. A new attempt in 2002 by NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson and President Vladimir Putin lasted a few years but ultimately deteriorated in 2007 with Putin’s Munich speech and came to a halt in 2008 with the Russian-Georgian war. The next attempt by NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen and President Medvedev in the run-up to the 2010 Lisbon Summit focused on missile defense cooperation, but it gained little traction. Since then, NATO-Russia cooperation has for the most part remained below the radar.

Looking back at the past twenty years, the

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<sup>9</sup> See Ellen Tauscher and Igor Ivanov, “MAD About You,” *Foreign Policy.com*, June 14, 2013, [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/06/14/mad\\_mutual\\_missile\\_defense\\_us\\_russia](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/06/14/mad_mutual_missile_defense_us_russia).

<sup>10</sup> Frances Burwell and Svante Cornell, “Rethinking the Russia Reset,” *Atlantic Council*, 2012, <http://www.acus.org/publication/rethinking-russia-reset>.

relationship between Russia and the West is best described as cyclical. It currently seems to be in a downward spiral. Unfortunately, no one seems to learn from one cycle to the next. Instead, the players accumulate negative baggage, making it more difficult each time to get back to a meaningful, cooperative agenda.

These cycles feed off diverging positions between optimists and pessimists regarding cooperation between Russia and the West. For the pessimists, a possible reset in the short term is met with considerable skepticism and some resistance due to a perceived growing polarization of positions within the security community. In the West, the lack of progress on missile defense cooperation with Russia and the dismissal of aggressive political statements from Moscow mirror the skepticism in Moscow regarding Western readiness to accommodate Russian interests and address Moscow security concerns about the current European security architecture. Pessimism has been in the driver seat for some time. NATO seems increasingly dismissive of a strategic partnership with Russia, while Washington is focused on threats and challenges beyond Russia, and its attention span and efforts to reach out to Russia will necessarily be limited. Moscow is also looking beyond its Euro-Atlantic relations and pivoting toward Asia.

This pessimism is often informed by popular judgment and channeled by the media. The general perception from Western media is that Russia is in a downward spiral prompted by internal politics. Similarly, the Russian perception is that the West is in decline in the aftermath of a significant economic and fiscal crisis, followed by destabilizing social uprisings. Pessimists on all sides seem to have concluded that the other side is on the wrong side of history.

### **Cooperation and trust**

However, the voice of optimism is not far below the surface. Optimists recognize disturbing realities and political differences but resist value judgment, do not demonize differences, and avoid emotional reactions—be it epidemic anti-Americanism in Russia or hysteria about Russian authoritarianism

in the West. Optimists underline that cultural and political differences have existed among Western partners in the past without preventing former enemies from developing normalizing relations over time. Essentially, we are reminded that socio-political differences among former enemies are not a sufficient cause for lack of progress in developing genuine cooperation.

The lack of progress in cooperation has generally been the result of polemical rhetoric by political elites. More often than not, Western-Russian relations are used in domestic political debates, in particular at times of elections, as an effective way to galvanize support by resorting to old prejudices in the absence of new ideas and leadership skills. Left to their own devices, the Western and Russian publics have long left Cold War political reflexes behind. In Russia, a predominantly Western-oriented citizenry favors westward migration. Young Russians are drawn to Western culture and to Western education. Westerners have also become more open toward Russia, especially in the private sector, and have helped foster a new corporate culture in Russia.

Six sets of issues bind the United States, Europe, and Russia together and provide the basis for what a substantive program of cooperation should entail.

- Current practical programs of cooperation on Afghanistan, counterpiracy, counternarcotics, counterterrorism, and even Iran could be reinforced.
- The arms control agenda would need further action, whether as a follow-on to the new START treaty, conventional forces in Europe, or missile defense.
- A new agenda dealing with new threats and challenges, such as cyber-security, energy security, and the Arctic would require new thinking.<sup>11</sup>
- An economically-driven agenda with cooperation in smart defense, possible cooperation among armament industries, and

collaboration to help Russia uphold its World Trade Organization (WTO) obligations as a new member would help address today's European security challenges.

- Strategic consultations on issues such as the Arab spring, Asia-Pacific, and China, as well as global governance would reenergize a polarized political dialogue through formal and informal channels.
- Finally, good neighborly relations would help address unresolved tensions that resulted from the end of the Cold War.

While American, European, and Russian experts might quickly come together in listing the key issues to advance a cooperative agenda, they would find it much more difficult to agree on how to prioritize these issues. The United States would be more ready to embrace a new agenda focused on cyber and energy security issues in the hopes of getting early results and making visible progress on issues with less "historical baggage," while Russians would insist on addressing the old "unfinished business" of arms control. Ultimately, a meaningful cooperative agenda likely to offer "win-win" opportunities to Americans, Russians, and Europeans alike would have to address both sets of issues with a dual-track approach.

Trust is the linchpin of continued efforts toward European security with its hardcore defense agenda and the new security agenda well beyond Europe. Whether the focus on trust should come first as Russians would likely insist upon or whether cooperation should strengthen in order to build trust is a mute point. The United States, NATO, and Russia all acknowledge their mutual lack of trust resulting from the past twenty years and their collective inability to address each other's security concerns. The United States, Europe, and Russia must take their mutual lack of trust seriously and deal with it urgently before they can effectively enhance cooperation beyond European security.

In order to advance cooperative security, the United States, Europe, and Russia will have to devote significant efforts toward confidence-building measures and reassurance through a wide-ranging

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<sup>11</sup> Energy security refers to efforts to protect energy infrastructure and maintain adequate energy supplies through securing trade routes.

program with mutually reinforcing bilateral and multilateral activities.<sup>12</sup> Such a confidence-building program could build on well-established practices in the field, notably through transparency on contingency planning and military exercises. Both sides initiated increasingly robust exercise programs, which in themselves may be useful to keep the rhetoric and the planning in check given unhelpful political statements, but which could benefit from increased transparency and reciprocal efforts. Similarly, this trilateral initiative should enhance dialogue on deterrence and transparency, notably to address safety measures and the way ahead on nonstrategic nuclear weapons. Finally, operational cooperation is always a successful approach to build confidence and trust among partner countries, and one can only regret the limited cooperative deployments involving Russian contingents in NATO-led operations.

The United States, Russia, and Europe could also develop new ideas based on recent developments in the context of smart defense and missile defense. Modernization efforts in Russia and allies' multinational cooperation with smart defense in the face of economic recession and fiscal austerity might provide new opportunities. In the sphere of missile defense, the parties could, for example, create joint installations to build upon the CAI in the context of missile defense, notably through the establishment of fusion centers to exchange data and assist in joint planning, concept of operations, and rules of engagement. This would allow US, European, and Russian planners to work side-by-side and develop trust.

### **Common interests and common values**

The lack of common values is often cited as one of the major impediments to further cooperation between Russia and its Western partners. This values gap has been exacerbated since the return of Vladimir Putin to the Russian presidency. The Russian government's record on human rights, freedom of speech and assembly, fair elections,

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12 Isabelle Francois, "The United States, Russia, Europe and Security: How to Address the 'Unfinished Business' of the Post-Cold War Era," *Transatlantic Perspectives* no.2, CTSS, National Defense University, pp. 35-39, April 2012, <http://www.ndu.edu/press/lib/pdf/trans-perspectives/CTSS-TransPers-2.pdf>.

and rule of law have all been causes for concern to those in the West calling for a tougher stance on Russia. Assessing Putin's policies as repressive as a rollback on the mildly liberal changes of the Medvedev era certainly points to different standards than those prevailing in the United States and Europe. But this does not make Russia an enemy. In the end, it is unclear whether President Putin will be able to control Russian elites and respond to the interests of a more vocal Russian middle class and relatively nascent civil society. Ultimately, Russia's political trajectory is for the Russian electorate to decide.

The lack of common values is not deterministic of future relations among the United States, Europe, and Russia. Common interests will drive the relationship. Security policy is not developed on the basis of judgment of others' domestic practices but to provide for common defense. The complex relationship between allies and Russia cannot be reduced to single-issue advocacy.<sup>13</sup> Defending the highest moral standards will not be served by jeopardizing practical cooperation with Russia and security interests more broadly.

There are indeed common interests in addressing some strategic challenges and seizing opportunities between Washington and Moscow in a number of key regions in the world.<sup>14</sup> The scope of common interests between NATO and Russia is necessarily far more limited. In South Asia, the United States, Europe, and Russia will have to continue working together in Afghanistan, in particular after the ISAF drawdown, in the interest of regional stability. In the Middle East, working toward developing a common position on Syria and continuing to engage in negotiations with Iran will be critical. Both the United States and Russia have pivoted and rebalanced their priorities toward the Asia-Pacific while essentially ignoring each other's presence in the region. Russia will have to be part of the equation as any new security architecture emerges

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13 Matthew Rojansky, "Magnitsky List's Limited Impact," *National Interest*.org, April 16, 2013, <http://nationalinterest.org/commentary/magnitsky-lists-limited-impact-8352>.

14 John Parker and Michael Kofman, "Russia Still Matters: Strategic Challenges and Opportunities for the Obama Administration," *Strategic Forum*, INSS, National Defense University, March 2013.



around China's rise in the region. In the Arctic, Russia is facing the consequences of climate change firsthand, and will look at transforming challenges into opportunities for East-West commerce. Finally, irrespective of the problems regularly plaguing the US-Europe-Russia relationship, business opportunities to expand trade and investment will not be ignored.

It has never been beneficial to isolate or marginalize Russia. Russia's permanent membership and veto power in the United Nations Security Council and its nuclear potential mean that it will remain a country that the United States and its allies cannot afford to ignore for long. Similarly, Russia will not escape the importance of Euro-Atlantic relations for its own long-term modernization plans. One may conclude that mutual interests and concerns destine the United States, Europe, and Russia to pragmatism. These uneasy partners may just have to settle for a transactional partnership on areas of common interests and resist regular attempts to close the value gap by staying away from a normative partnership. Transformational leadership at this stage may just be a bridge too far.

### III. Prescription Without Political Vision

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In 2012, analyzing global trends with a 2030 horizon, the US National Intelligence Council offered potential scenarios pointing to an unparalleled transformation coming with unprecedented breadth, speed, and complexity, and indicated that none of them is pre-ordained.<sup>15</sup> The Atlantic Council went a step further in defining what that meant for the United States and how the Obama administration should position itself to meet the global challenges ahead.<sup>16</sup> This proactive approach reflects American affinity toward embracing change. It calls for more collaborative forms of leadership at home and abroad, and reaffirms the importance of the United States' transatlantic ties, despite the challenges of European and NATO's political will and capacities in a time of sustained defense austerity. It also concludes that the US strategy should be to create an environment conducive for Russia to move in a direction of modernization and greater integration into the European Union and NATO.

One would be hard-pressed to find a comparable study reflecting European positioning vis-à-vis global trends given the lack of consensus on a strategic vision in Europe, despite a perfunctory Common Security and Defense Policy. This has little to do with lack of capabilities and institutions and more to do with the lack of consensus on European

needs and ambitions in the emerging world order. Lacking in shared interests, Europeans are hard-pressed to define a foreign policy. Interests and ambitions continue to be defended from national positions rather than as Europeans.<sup>17</sup> However, developments on Europe's doorstep in North Africa to the Middle East may force a change of European strategy by necessity.

While there does not seem to be much of a European strategy toward Russia, Moscow for its part appears to have decoupled itself from Europe, despite the fact that Europe remains Russia's main trading partner. Following the euro crisis, Russia has come to the conclusion that Europe will not emerge as a strategic partner beyond economic issues.<sup>18</sup> This stands in sharp contrast to just a few years ago when Europe was regarded as a mentor. Today, contacts are much more transactional, and President Putin seems to enjoy his interaction with chief executive officers of European and American companies more than the company of European and American political leaders.

#### **Lack of vision: beyond Euro-Atlanticism**

In retrospect, the post-Cold War dynamic among the United States, Europe, and Russia has evolved markedly every ten years. It started with a Euro-Atlantic choice in the 1990s followed by

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15 "Global Trends 2030: Alternative Worlds," National Intelligence Council, December 2012, <http://www.dni.gov/index.php/about/organization/global-trends-2030>.

16 "Envisioning 2030: US Strategy for a Post-Western World," Atlantic Council, December 2012, [http://www.acus.org/files/publication\\_pdfs/403/Envisioning2030\\_web.pdf](http://www.acus.org/files/publication_pdfs/403/Envisioning2030_web.pdf).

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17 Jan Techau, "Will Europeans Ask the Right Question in Munich," Judy Dempsey's Strategic Europe, Carnegie Europe, January 31, 2013, <http://carnegieeurope.eu/strategieurope/?fa=50802>.

18 Dmitri Trenin, "How Russia Sees Europe After the Euro Crisis," Judy Dempsey's Strategic Europe, Carnegie Europe, February 15, 2013, <http://carnegieeurope.eu/strategieurope/?fa=50955>.

disenchantment with a resurgent Russia best characterized by president Putin's Munich speech in the mid-2000s, a period still marked by continued Euro-Atlantic efforts toward defense reforms. The last few years, however, seem to mark a new period in which Russia is significantly distancing itself from Euro-Atlanticism. In the aftermath of the euro crisis and significant political challenges on the home front, American, European, and Russian leaders have moved toward consolidating power at home. The United States and Russia have also been rebalancing their foreign policies beyond Europe.

The conceptual framework for Russia and the West to interact in the security field seems to have disintegrated. The idea of an inclusive Euro-Atlantic security community no longer inspires. Euro-Atlanticism has ceased to offer a common vision from Vancouver to Vladivostok that could bind North Americans, Europeans and Russians together. This vision still resonates in Europe and North America but no longer in Russia. Atlanticism in today's Russia is a symbol of Western democratization and modernization imposed from outside at the expense of national security and sovereignty. Of late, Russia has pushed forward its own set of values anchored in traditional family, religious faith, and national sovereignty.

Russia's foreign policy has focused on Eurasia and Eurasian economic integration. President Putin has also pivoted to Asia-Pacific not only in attempt to foster a geopolitical rebalancing between East and West, but also as an acknowledgment of China's importance in the regional power play.

Russia is unlikely to become the center of US or European focus in the years ahead, and Moscow seems no longer interested in getting the attention. According to Russian experts, Moscow "sees itself as an independent player and now interprets the notion of a great power both as a freedom from foreign influence at home and a freedom to act according to its own wishes on the international scene."<sup>19</sup> In fact, the real challenge for the Kremlin seems to come from within, which has prompted policies toward consolidating power at home. President Putin, challenged by Moscow protesters

in the run-up to his reelection in 2012, focused his attention on Russian civil society organizations that have received funding from Western sources in his effort to regain control over society and safeguard sovereignty.

American international affairs experts have also argued for US leadership to emphasize what has been called "nation building at home" as the first foreign policy priority. President Obama in his reelection campaign focused on the need to revitalize US economic strength as the most effective way to ensure US global influence. The Obama administration has focused on reversing rising deficits and debt, and addressing the political factors that have led to this conundrum.

The preeminence of internal challenges in the United States, Russia, and Europe, and the need to refocus on "nation-building at home," was not intended to neglect the global context. However, it forced some rebalancing and realignment, which has prompted some core questions about the future of the US-Europe-Russia relations. While Euro-Atlanticism has receded, Western and Russian leaders have not yet developed a new path, short of cautioning against a return to the past. This is hardly a position of leadership and it needs some attention and creative thinking.

### **Mutual respect**

In the absence of a clear vision, the best approach for the United States, Europe, and Russia to define how to interact in a complex environment without prejudice to the future will be to start by asking the fundamental question of whether the allies and Russia could develop relations on the basis of mutual respect without an expectation on either side to win over the other on the merit of its own position.

Russian experts at Carnegie Moscow Center have described changes occurring in Russia in the past couple of years, including calls for a more accountable government and growing opposition to Putin's rule, as "the Russian awakening."<sup>20</sup> The

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20 Dmitri Trenin, et al., "The Russian Awakening," Carnegie Moscow Center, November 2012, [http://carnegieendowment.org/files/russian\\_awakening.pdf](http://carnegieendowment.org/files/russian_awakening.pdf).

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19 Ibid.

authors encouraged Western policymakers to help Russia's transformation and modernization process by diversifying strategic and economic relations and enhancing people-to-people contacts, while trusting the internal political process and acknowledging that Russia is for the Russians to fix. The Russian awakening is presented as rooted in Russian society's relative success in surviving the Soviet system without plunging into civil war and achieving a measure of freedom and prosperity never enjoyed before in Russian history. This movement encompasses the whole political spectrum from liberals to nationalists and was met by the Russian government with targeted repression as a threat to its rule.

Dealing with Russia in the coming years will mean dealing with President Putin, who for many symbolizes authoritarianism and is seen as standing against the values espoused by the United States and Europe. At the same time, Russia is by no means the only authoritarian regime with which the West engages on the international scene. While Western values are rightly informing Western interests, they are hindering necessary engagement with Russia. At the same time, Western societies are inherently value-based societies—it is part of their DNA. It is therefore difficult to transcend a value-based approach without giving up a fundamental part of Western identity. The values versus interests debate is not only an issue in engaging with Russia but also in the West's dealings with other parts of the world.<sup>21</sup> Russia will have to do its part in accepting that this recurrent debate is part and parcel of what it takes to engage with the West, and move on. Moreover, Moscow will have to continue repeating that Russia is not, and is not going to become, a new USSR. Similarly, allies facing constant recrimination from Russia about the threat of missile defense will have to continue repeating that European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA) is not aimed at Russia and is not undermining strategic stability, as Russians' fear of encirclement and unalterable faith in American technological ingenuity is part of the Russian psychological make-up.

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<sup>21</sup> Jan Techau, "Values vs. Interests: The Big European Soul Search," Judy Dempsey's Strategic Europe, October 9, 2012, <http://carnegieeurope.eu/strategieurope/?fa=49622>.

## A roadmap to nowhere

In the absence of vision, to reconcile the idealists and their values with the pragmatists and their interests, the optimists with their action-oriented approach, and the pessimists with their uneasiness with change, the only way forward lies with defining a strategy. The best of strategies may not stand the test of time, especially in the face of a fast-evolving reality. A strategy remains nonetheless a guidepost in managing a turbulent relationship hedging against political improvisation and unhelpful decisions, such as publicized expulsions of spies (real and otherwise). A strategy also mitigates the risks of disengagement. As a crisis management tool, developing a strategy should help identify compromises between the requirements of expedient solutions typical in transactional relationships without losing sight of the ultimate search for a normative framework. A strategy provides decision-makers with tools facilitating these types of compromises through time management, offering short-term goals and long-term objectives, and thus allowing pragmatic decisions based on interests, while retaining a value-based, long-term perspective.

Recognizing the absence of vision binding the United States, Europe, and Russia together, all will nonetheless have to first consciously choose engagement. For the West, standing up to Russia or simply ignoring it has not worked in the past and will not work in future. It goes against global trends--demographic patterns, the food, water and energy nexus, the diffusion of state-centric power, and emergence of individual empowerment--and is therefore short-sighted.<sup>22</sup> Similarly, for Russia to ramp up anti-Americanism or choose to see the relative decline of the West as a welcome sign of global power rebalancing will not serve its interests on the long run, as most of its modernization goals can only be met in cooperation with the world's most advanced economies.

This report sees the strategy for US-Europe-Russia engagement as follows.

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<sup>22</sup> "Global Trends 2030: Alternative Worlds," National Intelligence Council, December 2012, <http://www.dni.gov/index.php/about/organization/global-trends-2030>.

### **Strategic objectives:**

- *Transatlantic security issues:* Ensure peace and stability in Europe. This will only be achieved once the United States, Europe, and Russia have come to terms with the fact that no one should prevail at the expense of another, calling for mutual respect as well as consideration for each other's threat perceptions.
- *Regional and trans-regional issues:* Explore common challenges and interests beyond Europe, the United States, and Russia, and consider joint actions in other regions of the world.
- *Global issues:* Expand and deepen trade with each other, avoid overdependence and overreliance, exploit investment opportunities strengthening the rule of law, address regulatory measures against corruption, and harmonize norms and principles.

### **Operational goals:**

- Develop common understanding of "*mutual assured stability*" as a potential substitute for "mutual assured destruction" over time.
- Address Russian concerns regarding missile defense through transparency and *technical cooperation*, assuming Russia is prepared to be reassured.
- Develop a modus operandi for regional cooperation in *Afghanistan* post-2014 given long-term mutual security interests.
- Turn challenges into opportunities in the *Arctic*. As a result of the melting of the ice cap, Arctic sea lanes are increasingly available for commercial and military use. As competition from liquid natural gas and shale oil lessens dependence on Russian energy, the use of Arctic sea lanes offers options for transfer of hydrocarbons and other raw materials from East to West. This presents opportunities for North America, its allies, and Russia, among others, and for public-private partnerships.

- Explore the potential for common interests and joint actions in *Asia-Pacific*, taking into account that Europeans have yet to define their own interests in Asia. Multilateral efforts in Asia-Pacific might offer a different approach to relations among North America, Russia, and Europe.
- Pursue consultations and dialogue on the *Middle East and North Africa*. Europeans will have no choice but to be engaged in a region stretching to their doorstep, but the challenge is beyond European capacity to address alone and will require cooperation from the United States and Russia.
- Strengthen *trade and investment*. The need for Western technical know-how and significant investment capital to modernize and grow the Russian economy should be further exploited, as Western business leaders welcomed the permanent normal trade relations with Russia following its accession to the WTO last year. Build on the business community interests and its resilience to political stand-offs, recognizing that in the long run continuing trade and investments will also require rule of law to settle disputes.

### **Enablers of the trilateral dialogue:**

- Broaden *human contacts* and exchanges in all fields to avoid isolationist policies and strengthen mutual understanding. This will require visa-free regimes among the United States, Europe, and Russia extending to ordinary citizens. Expanding engagement through tourism, cultural exchange programs, and other people-to-people contacts would contribute to the strengthening of civil society in Russia.
- The US-Europe-Russia security relationship is no longer solely about United States-Russia-Europe and has to include other players as security challenges keep evolving and shifting.
- Given the complexity of issues and their global reach, it will be important to reach out across geographical boundaries and across fields

of expertise, from arms control to economic issues, thereby avoiding single-issue advocates, and get passed locked debates on particular projects such as missile defense.

- Institutional ties among the United States, Europe, and Russia have not delivered a strategic partnership. *Informal ties and processes* will be necessary to get beyond the security community and bring different experts to develop integrated solutions.
- *A new generation* interested in strengthening relations among the United States, Europe, and Russia in order to meet global security challenges can help to develop a different approach, unburdened by the weight of history and the failures of the past.<sup>23</sup>

The US-Russia-Europe dialogue continues to be relevant well beyond European security. The main focus in the short run should be reassuring through confidence-building measures in these times of change and defining concrete rules of the game to facilitate transition and transactions. It is also important to develop the habit of addressing security issues beyond their regional dimension, and to integrate transnational and global perspectives. The challenge seems to be more in the way security is approached and the ability to learn from and work with each other than in the actual security issues.

Coping with global security issues will require the US, European, and Russian political and military leaders to reexamine some of their long-held assumptions, notably about nuclear weapons and strategic stability. In order to accomplish this difficult task, informal dialogue will be necessary. Sustained commitment to reach out through informal contacts and personal commitments at the highest levels will be necessary. Track two diplomacy can also serve as a bridge across different areas of expertise and help to develop public-private partnerships. It will be vital for all parties to open up to new thinking.

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<sup>23</sup> See [http://www.acus.org/new\\_atlanticist/do-russia-and-america-have-future-together](http://www.acus.org/new_atlanticist/do-russia-and-america-have-future-together).

## Conclusion

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The past twenty years have been marked by a series of setbacks and disappointments in the dialogue among the United States, Europe, and Russia. For the US, Russian, and European relations to develop in the long run there has to be a genuine move by the top leadership toward engagement and readiness to address disagreements within national constituencies—optimists and pessimists—speaking up for engagement. At this stage, the trilateral dialogue appears to be a rather sick patient and the future seems uncertain at best.

The diagnosis is clear. The United States, Europe, and Russia inherited shaky premises from the 1990s, which prevented a healthy relationship from developing. The political deal by which Russia and the West expected to influence each other's decision-making by weighing in on internal forces has proven detrimental. Similarly, threat perceptions are diverging, although official documents—especially NATO documents—are ambiguous, preferring to focus on common threats and challenges while papering over the real differences. Transformation has dominated the security landscape over the past twenty years without developing new rules of the game. This triggered suspicions and increasing distrust, especially on the Russian side, with a renewed interest in arms control rather than cooperation. In the end, the so-called strategic partnership has gone missing.

The prognosis is not particularly inspiring. The US-Russia relationship, just like the NATO-Russia partnership, has been essentially cyclical, but all parties have been unable to learn from one cycle

to the next. There are clearly a number of areas of common interest where the United States, Europe, and Russia can cooperate and have engaged with some genuine success over the past two decades. This is, however, leading at best to a transactional partnership without much trust and with little hope of closing the value gap.

This leaves us with an uneasy prescription for the sick patient. The idea of an inclusive Euro-Atlantic security community no longer inspires. In the absence of a clear vision that binds us together, the United States, Europe, and Russia will have to rely on developing a relationship based on mutual respect without an expectation on either side to prevail over the other. In the absence of a vision, engagement has to rest on a strategy to mitigate the risk of disengagement. In the short term, this strategy may entail a transactional partnership at a time when the United States is focused on global challenges beyond Russia, while Russia remains focused on how the United States is positioning itself. Developing a normative partnership through transformational leadership may have to wait. Today's challenge lies with providing a roadmap without clear destination.

In sum, engaging Russia is no longer just about Russia and no longer best achieved through existing institutions and frameworks. The biggest challenge for this trilateral dialogue in the absence of vision and strategic partnership is above all an issue of mutual intentions, mutual respect, and political will on the part of the respective leaderships to work with their respective internal oppositions towards genuine cooperation.

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# Syria backs chemical weapons plan, bombs Damascus

[Syria](#) accepted a Russian proposal on Tuesday to give up chemical weapons and win a reprieve from U.S. strikes, while its warplanes bombed rebel positions in [Damascus](#) for the first time since the West threatened military action.

The Russian diplomatic initiative, which apparently emerged from off-the-cuff remarks by the U.S. secretary of state, marks a sudden reversal after weeks in which the West appeared finally headed towards intervention in a two-and-a-half year old war.

France said it would put forward a U.N. Security Council draft resolution for Syria to give up its stockpiles of chemical arms, threatening "extremely serious" consequences if Syria violates its conditions.

Syria's rebels reacted with deep dismay to the proposal, which would halt Western military action to punish President Bashar al-Assad's forces for a poison gas attack that killed hundreds of people in a Damascus suburb last month.

Gulf Arab States renewed their demands for the [United Nations](#) Security Council to take deterrent measures against Assad's government.

U.S. President Barack Obama, for whom the proposal provides a way out of ordering unpopular strikes days before contentious Congressional votes, said it could be a "breakthrough".

Russia's Interfax news agency quoted Syrian Foreign Minister Walid al-Moualem, visiting Moscow, as saying Damascus had agreed to the Russian initiative because it would "remove the grounds for American aggression".

While the diplomatic wrangling was under way in far-flung capitals, Assad's warplanes bombed rebellious districts of Damascus on Tuesday for the first time since the Aug. 21 poison gas attacks. Rebels said the air strikes were a demonstration that the government now believed the West had lost its nerve.

"By sending the planes back, the regime is sending the message that it no longer feels international pressure," activist [Wasim al-Ahmad](#) said from Mouadamiya, one of the districts of the capital hit by the chemical attack.

The war has already killed more than 100,000 people and driven millions from their homes, and threatens to spread violence across the Middle East.

The Russian proposal "is a cheap trick to buy time for the regime to kill more and more people," said Sami, a member of the local opposition coordinating committee in the Damascus suburb of Erbin, also hit by last month's chemical attack.

French officials said their draft resolution was designed to make sure the Russian proposal would have teeth, by allowing military action if Assad is uncooperative.

"It was extremely well played by the Russians, but we didn't want someone else to go to the U.N. with a resolution that was weak. This is on our terms and the principles are established. It puts [Russia](#) in a situation where they can't take a step back after putting a step forward," said a French diplomatic source.

A statement from the Sunni Muslim-led Gulf Cooperation Council, the first of its kind issued by the main backer of rebels fighting to overthrow Assad, condemned Tuesday the use of chemical weapons against civilians in Syria.

"The GCC condemns the ugly crime committed by the Syrian regime by using internationally banned chemical weapons, which resulted in the killing of hundreds of civilians," said Bahrain's Foreign Minister Sheikh Khaled bin Ahmed al-Khalifa.

He was speaking at the start of a meeting of foreign ministers from the six countries, which also include Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman.

"This requires the United Nations and the international community, represented by the security council, to shoulder its responsibility," he added.

He called for "appropriate deterrent measures against those who committed this crime".

The [United States](#) has accused Assad of responsibility for last month's attack on Damascus suburbs. He denies any links.

The Russian proposal, which Syria accepted, offers Obama a way out of ordering strikes, days before votes in Congress seeking authorization to use force.

The Russian proposal makes it easier for members of the U.S. Congress to vote to authorize action as part of a diplomatic initiative, without it leading directly to missile strikes.

Republican Senator John McCain, a leading hawk, said lawmakers were working on new wording of a Congressional resolution to ensure "strict

timelines and guidelines that would have to be met" for Assad to give up chemical arms

Russia's proposal apparently began life as an off-the-cuff remark by U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry on Monday, although both Moscow and Washington later said President [Vladimir Putin](#) had discussed the idea in principle with Obama in the past. Putin's spokesman said it came up at a summit last week.

With veto-wielding China also backing it, it would be the rare Syria initiative to unite global powers whose divisions have so far blocked Security Council action. Assad's main regional backer Iran has also signalled support, as has U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

Washington and Paris have threatened to carry out strikes to punish Assad for the Aug. 21 poison gas attack on Damascus suburbs, which they say Syrian government forces carried out.

But after 12 years of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, Obama has had a hard time winning over the public or members of Congress. Britain quit the coalition threatening force after Prime Minister David Cameron lost a vote in parliament.

Moscow unveiled its proposal on Monday after Kerry, speaking in London, said the only way to halt strikes would be for Assad to give up his chemical arsenal. The State Department said his remarks were rhetorical and not meant as a serious proposal.

But hours later Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov called for Assad's government to do just that.

Responding to the Russian initiative, Obama told CNN: "It's possible that we can get a breakthrough," although he said there was a risk that it was a further stalling tactic by Assad.

"We're going to run this to ground," he said. "John Kerry and the rest of my national security team will engage with the Russians and the international community to see, can we arrive at something that is enforceable and serious."

Robert Danin, a Middle East specialist and senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, said the initiative spoils Obama's strategy, but Washington was likely to be relieved.

"It basically throws a bit of a wrench into the administration's plans, but it may be a welcome wrench."

The wavering from the West was a blow for the Syrian opposition, which had thought it had finally secured military intervention after pleading for two and a half years for help from Western leaders that vocally opposed Assad.

The Russian proposal "fails to hold the Assad regime responsible for the killing of innocents," the [Syrian National Coalition](#) said, calling it "a political manoeuvre which will lead to pointless procrastination and will cause more death and destruction to the people of Syria, and further threats to the countries and people of the region."

Assad's forces - which had been withdrawing from fixed positions and bracing for expected Western strikes - appear to have responded to the hesitation by redoubling an offensive to clear fighters from Damascus suburbs.

Troops and pro-Assad militiamen tried to seize the northern district of Barzeh and the eastern suburb of Deir Salman near Damascus airport, working-class Sunni Muslim areas where opposition activists and residents reported street fighting.

Fighter jets bombed Barzeh three times and pro-Assad militia backed by army tank fire made a push into the area. Air raids were also reported on the Western outskirts near Mouadamiya.

Syria is not a party to international treaties which ban the stockpiling of chemical weapons, but it signed the Geneva conventions that forbid using them in warfare. Syria has tried to avoid confirming whether it possesses poison gas, while denying it has used it.

Western countries believe Syria has a vast undeclared arsenal of chemical arms. Sending inspectors to destroy it would be difficult even in peacetime and extraordinarily complicated in the midst of a war.

The two main precedents are ominous: U.N. inspectors dismantled the chemical arsenal of Iraqi leader [Saddam Hussein](#) in the 1990s but left enough doubt that suspicion he still had such weapons was the basis for a U.S.-led invasion in 2003.

Libyan leader [Muammar Gaddafi](#) was rehabilitated by the West after agreeing to give up his banned weapons, only to be overthrown with NATO help in 2011.

Assad's government says the chemical attack was the work of rebels trying to win Western military support, a scenario that Washington and its allies say is not credible.

Human Rights Watch, the New York-based watchdog, said evidence strongly suggested Syrian government forces were behind the attack. It said in a report that the type of rockets and launchers used in the attacks suggested weapon systems in the possession only of government forces.



# Taliban begin consultations over govt's talks offer

In response of unanimous decision regarding settling the issue of militancy and terrorism through peaceful and political means, militants from various groups and factions have formally initiated consultations and are likely to come up with final decision in the coming few days.

The first ever consultation gathering of militants was held in a secret place in North Waziristan on Tuesday, *Pakistan Today* came to know from certain tribal sources. The tribal sources informed that representatives and observers from at least 78 groups, factions and sub-organisations had directly or indirectly attended the meeting and become part of the consultation. "The participants have welcomed the APC declaration, stressing on a negotiated solution to the issue of militancy," the tribal sources remarked.

Though no one from banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, an umbrella of several militant groups, could not be contacted for confirmation, tribal sources informed said the participants had held detailed discussion on a 10-point demand agenda to be put forward to the government before entering into the negotiation process.

The demands will include withdrawal of armed forces from Federally Administrative Tribal Areas (FATA) and its substitution by paramilitary Frontier Corps, release of arrested militants and compensation for legal and lawful heirs of those killed in US drone attacks or military actions.

It was further learnt that participants had decided to constitute a 10-member committee for holding dialogue with the government.

The committee would comprise at least six commanders and two clerics. "So far, the consultation is in progress and efforts are underway for contacting others in this respect," the sources said, adding that TTP chief Hakimullah Mehsud was also included in the consultation.

## Syria and the red lines of international law

Steven Blockmans

4 September 2013

A year ago many predicted, this author included, that by now Bashar al-Assad would have been removed from his presidential palace in Damascus. But he is still there, although apparently desperate enough to use chemical weapons to keep himself 'in power'.

Since the start of the conflict in March 2011, there are now more than 100,000 dead, 4.25 million internally displaced persons and 2 million refugees. The spill-over of the conflict puts enormous strain on Syria's neighbours, some of which have provided military support to opposing sides in this conflict.

The specific offence that has pushed the Obama administration across its self-imposed red line is not the humanitarian disaster, or even the mass atrocities, of the Syrian civil war so far. It is the apparent use, on August 21<sup>st</sup>, of chemical weapons, which allegedly killed more than 1,400 people in the suburbs of Damascus.

As the US and its allies France and Turkey dither over whether or not to punish Assad for having used sarin gas on his own people, the crucial question is: What response might the world legally take without the authority of the UN Security Council, which remains blocked by the opposition of two veto-wielding members, Russia and China? Sadly, international law provides no clear-cut answers to this dilemma. The basic arguments that would justify armed intervention under international law are sharply contested by states, lawyers and diplomats. Yet, to respond to what US Secretary of State John Kerry has rightly called a "moral obscenity", formal interpretations of international law should give way to a more pragmatic approach.

### ***Jus in bello*: Crime and (the limits to) punishment**

The use of chemical weapons amounts to a breach of the *jus in bello* - international humanitarian law. Ever since 19th century Russia developed a kind of musket-ball that would detonate on impact after being fired, the development of this strand of international law has been rapid. Predicting the disastrous effect on diplomatic relations with its neighbours and the start of a grisly arms race, Russia decided to negotiate an international ban on the creation, development, and use of weapons that would cause 'unnecessary suffering'. The 1868 Saint Petersburg Declaration prompted the adoption of further declarations and regulations at the two Hague Peace Conferences of 1899 and 1907. The prohibition was codified in the four 1949 Geneva Conventions and the first of the 1977

Steven Blockmans is CEPS Senior Research Fellow and Head of the EU Foreign Policy unit.

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Additional Protocols, to which Syria and 172 other UN states are party (but not the US, Israel, Turkey or Iran).

Over time, further technical limits have been fixed at which the necessities of war ought to yield to the requirements of humanity, so as to prevent injury and unnecessary suffering. Following the use of mustard gas, Yperite, in World War I, the 1925 Poison Gas Protocol was adopted. In 1993, the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) widened the scope of the prohibition of toxic chemicals and outlawed the production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons. No fewer than 191 states of the United Nations have signed up to the CWC. The global *opinio juris* and consistent state practice of the ban on the use of chemical weapons have raised the status of the prohibition to that of *jus cogens*, i.e. non-derogable pre-emptory norms of international law, which bind even the five UN states that have not signed the CWC: Angola, Egypt, North Korea, South Sudan and Syria. If the government of Syria has used chemical weapons that injured or killed a large number of civilians, there can be no doubt that the regime has breached international humanitarian law.

So there are good reasons to punish Assad, but the legal way to do this would be to treat him as a war criminal and indict him at the International Criminal Court (ICC). The ICC was founded in 2002 by the Rome Statute to "bring to justice the perpetrators of the worst crimes known to humankind – war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide", especially when national courts are unable or unwilling to do so. Currently, 122 states are party to the Rome Statute. It has been signed but not been ratified by Syria, the US, Russia and 29 other UN members. The fact that the US has in the meantime informed the UN Secretary General that it no longer intends to become state party and, as such, has no legal obligations arising from its former representative's signature of the Statute, poses a serious objection to American claims of justification to punish Syria via other avenues than the ICC.

According to the Rome Statute, the ICC has four mechanisms that grant it jurisdiction: i) if the accused is a national of a state party to the Rome Statute, ii) if the alleged crime took place on the territory of a state party, iii) if a situation is referred to the Court by the UN Security Council and iv) if a state not party to the Statute 'accepts' the Court's jurisdiction. On the basis of the facts of the case at hand, the way to the ICC is thus excluded.

The only other mechanism that could land Assad and his cronies in the dock is if countries were to claim criminal jurisdiction over an accused person, regardless of where the alleged crime was committed, and regardless of the accused's nationality, country of residence or any other relation with the prosecuting entity. Only a handful of countries (Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Ireland, Israel, Malaysia, Spain and the UK) have prosecuted crimes under laws on universal jurisdiction, which are considered crimes against all (*erga omnes*), i.e. too serious to allow them to go unpunished. However, confronted with a sharp increase in cases (e.g. in 2003 against Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon for his involvement in the 1982 Sabra-Shatila massacre in Lebanon, and against George W. Bush, Donald Rumsfeld and Dick Cheney for the 2003 invasion of Iraq), some of these countries (e.g. Belgium and the UK) have recently repealed this legislation and refocused it on the extra-territorial jurisdiction over crimes committed by their own nationals abroad. If, however, a prosecutor in France, Germany or Spain would press charges against Assad for having committed war crimes, international rules on the immunity of heads of state would in any case normally still shield the Syrian president from universal jurisdiction.

The unsatisfactory state of international criminal law has triggered the question whether a 'pinprick' assault on Assad's military installations could serve as a legal remedy to enforce the *jus cogens* on chemical warfare and prevent Assad from further overstepping the red lines of international humanitarian law, which he has reportedly done several times before the sarin attack on Damascus' eastern suburbs, albeit on a smaller scale.

### ***Jus ad bellum: Humanitarian intervention?***

According to Article 24 of the UN Charter, the Security Council has the “primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security”. In formal terms, it is the world’s only institution with the authority to decide whether armed force may be used to maintain or restore international peace and security. Otherwise, there is a near-absolute prohibition on the use of force, except in limited circumstances of self-defence. The US has cited the possible “collective” defence of neighbouring states, including Jordan, Turkey and Israel, but those countries have not signalled a request for assistance in their own self-defence, so arguably the legal exception could not be invoked. Bypassing the Security Council and launching targeted strikes (however limited) to punish an illegal act is therefore not an easy policy to defend.

One approach, which – in all but name – has been used by the US and its allies, is to claim that the use of chemical weapons aggravates the humanitarian crisis in Syria, and that therefore intervention in the internal affairs of a state is justified in order to protect civilian populations against mass atrocities that are plainly prohibited by international law.

However, it is far from settled that this doctrine, known as the “Responsibility to Protect” (R2P) has been accepted as binding international law. Certain states like Russia and China were deliberately cautious about developing the concept since they were worried by the new humanitarianism that NATO displayed in the 1999 Kosovo intervention. Their reservations are reflected in UN General Assembly Resolution 60/1 of 2005. This Resolution places the concept of R2P firmly in the hands of the Security Council. The formal legal argument on this basis speaks against unilateral action by (coalitions of) states. Moreover, the view of Russia and China that NATO abused a limited mandate by the Security Council for humanitarian intervention in Libya to bring about regime change has certainly reduced their willingness to grant any formal authority through Security Council authorisation.

In today’s increasingly multi-polar world, the political legitimacy that on this occasion made the argument plausible as an alternative to a formal legal one is not really evident. Should the United States and/or its allies act alone, they cannot depend on the same general sense of political legitimacy for actions anywhere in the world that NATO benefited from in Kosovo. Moreover, they would risk creating an invitation for Russia and China, for example, to freely do the same in other conflicts.

In geopolitical terms, the Obama administration is faced with an onerous dilemma in Syria. Either it intervenes and reinforces the US position as the world’s only superpower in real terms, thereby violating formal international law so as to shape the international order according to values that it preaches but not always practices, which would mean an order premised on the validation of human security over state-centred security. Or it decides to abide by formal UN law, which it helped to formulate at the end of the Second World War, but thereby risks ceding its place to other countries in deciding on how to deal with other hotspots around the world.

### **Illegal but legitimate**

The international community finds itself at a crossroads. Who would have thought that, after the gradual evolution of a pre-emptory norm of international law over almost a century, the world would countenance the use of chemical weapons in Syria – a war crime that has shocked the entire world – with merely token or perhaps no consequences? And that this would largely be because of legal arguments that those who might respond to preserve a

pre-emptory humanitarian norm could not lawfully do so under the formal, but partially outdated, law of the UN Charter?

Surely, a more pragmatic and dynamic reading of the *jus ad bellum* is required to allow for a necessary and proportional armed response, driven by a robust defence of international humanitarian law and designed for the express purpose of protecting civilians from predation at the hands of their government, while avoiding making things worse. It is up to the US and its allies in Europe, especially those EU member states that have introduced universal criminal jurisdiction into their law books, to push the obligation *erga omnes*: all states are under the legal obligation to save the populations of Damascus, Aleppo, Homs and other Syrian cities, towns and villages from the criminal regime of Bashar al-Assad inflicting further injury and unnecessary suffering upon them. His is a regime that has lost every shred of legitimacy and the right to be recognised as the lawful government of the Syrian people. After all, the interpretation of the formal requirement of “effective control of the state” to establish whether a government is legal under international law cannot be stretched to legitimise war crimes and crimes against humanity. Using armed force in collective self-defence of the Syrian people against a criminal gang of thugs who are violating non-derogable norms of international humanitarian law is not the same as breaking a pre-emptory norm of *jus ad bellum* by using force against UN member state ‘Syria’.

Under the given circumstances, a coalition of able and willing states should therefore be allowed to intervene militarily in Syria, even if this is contrary to formal UN law. The responsibility to protect is an international responsibility and not the exclusive burden of the United States. Indeed, the EU and all of its member states should support the limited US-led operation to hold the regime of Bashar al-Assad accountable for the gross breach of international humanitarian law, to ‘deter’ its calculus in using chemical weapons again, and to ‘degrade’ his capacity to do so again.

# Mom wants Muslim son's name moved to be among first responders at 9/11 memorial



By **Susan Candiotti**, CNN

You won't find Mohammed Hamdani among the names of the first responders that are etched in a wall at the 9/11 memorial in New York.

But on the day of the 9/11 attacks, the 23-year-old certified EMT and onetime NYPD police cadet skipped his job at a university research lab to rush to the World Trade Center. Not long after, his family posted Hamdani's picture on a wall of the missing.

Six months later, his remains were found - in 34 parts.

"They gave us his jeans and his belt, which my husband identified were his clothes," says Hamdani's mom, Talat.

"He was a prime example of what it is to be a human being," she says, recalling his decision to go to the World Trade Center 11 years ago. "He went in there to save humanity."

When the 9/11 memorial opened last year, Talat wanted to see her son's name grouped among the first responders who lost their lives trying to help others.

Instead, the Pakistani-American's name is positioned in a separate section of the memorial, among those considered loosely connected to the World Trade Center.

His mother is convinced her son's Muslim religion has set him apart: "They are discriminating because of his faith and that is not right."

"He did not stop to wonder are they Christian or Muslims or are they Jews or their ethnicity or their color," Talat says of her son's actions on 9/11. "It's just humanity."

The memorial denies discrimination, saying Hamdani was no longer an active cadet when he was killed and that he had not received a presidential medal for valor, which the memorial says were the memorial's criteria for "first responder."

"So many of the names on the 9/11 Memorial represent individuals — both in and out of uniform, known and unknown — who displayed extraordinary bravery on that horrible day, and that includes Mohammed Salman Hamdani," a spokesman for the memorial said in a statement.

"While this case did not meet the criteria for the 'First Responders' section of the Memorial, that in no way diminishes the courage and bravery Mr.



Hamdani and hundreds of others showed on 9/11," said the spokesman, Michael Frazier.

At the same time, the NYPD calls Hamdani a hero, having honored him in 2002 with a police funeral that included full honors from New York's mayor and police commissioner.

"The fact that it was acknowledged in a very, highly honorable fashion was gratifying," Talat says, remembering that day. "I was very satisfied at that moment."

On the one-year anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, the NYPD gave Hamdani's family a badge.

Talat says she'll keep fighting to move the name of her son, who grew up in New York and dreamed of becoming a doctor. She has contacted public officials from her congressman to the White House seeking help with her fight, but to no avail.

"I want to see it in my lifetime," she says. "It's a very - it's so intense pain that is indescribable."

"He's not here to speak for himself," Talat says. "I have to speak for him. And I will till the day I die. "



## The Economic Collapse

# 22 Reasons Why Starting World War 3 In The Middle East Is A Really Bad Idea

By Michael Snyder

While most of the country is obsessing over Miley Cyrus, the Obama administration is preparing a military attack against Syria which has the potential of starting World War 3. In fact, it is being reported that cruise missile strikes could begin "as early as Thursday". The Obama administration is pledging that the strikes will be "limited", but what happens when the Syrians fight back? What happens if they sink a U.S. naval vessel or they have agents start hitting targets inside the United States? Then we would have a full-blown war on our hands. 22 Reasons Why Starting World War 3 In The Middle East Is A Really Bad Idea - A Tactical Tomahawk Cruise Missile launches from the forward missile deck aboard the guided-missile destroyer USS Farragut (DDG 99) And what happens if the Syrians decide to retaliate by hitting Israel? If Syrian missiles start raining down on Tel Aviv, Israel will be extremely tempted to absolutely flatten Damascus, and they are more than capable of doing precisely that. And of course Hezbollah and Iran are not likely to just sit idly by as their close ally Syria is battered into oblivion. We are looking at a scenario where the entire Middle East could be set aflame, and that might only be just the beginning. Russia and China are sternly warning the U.S. government not to get involved in Syria, and by starting a war with Syria we will do an extraordinary amount of damage to our relationships with those two global superpowers. Could this be the beginning of a chain of events that could eventually lead to a massive global



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conflict with Russia and China on one side and the United States on the other? Of course it will not happen immediately, but I fear that what is happening now is setting the stage for some really bad things. The following are 22 reasons why starting World War 3 in the Middle East is a really bad idea... #1 The American people are overwhelmingly against going to war with Syria... Americans strongly oppose U.S. intervention in Syria's civil war and believe Washington should stay out of the conflict even if reports that Syria's government used deadly chemicals to attack civilians are confirmed, a Reuters/Ipsos poll says. About 60 percent of Americans surveyed said the United States should not intervene in Syria's civil war, while just 9 percent thought President Barack Obama should act. #2 At this point, a war in Syria is even more unpopular with the American people than Congress is. #3 The Obama administration has not gotten approval to go to war with Syria from Congress as the U.S. Constitution requires. #4 The United States does not have the approval of the United Nations to attack Syria and it is not going to be getting it. #5 Syria has said that it will use "all means available" to defend itself if the United States attacks. Would that include terror attacks in the United States itself? #6 Syrian Foreign Minister Walid Muallem made the following statement on Tuesday... "We have two options: either to surrender, or to defend ourselves with the means at our disposal. The second choice is the best: we will defend ourselves" #7 Russia has just sent their most advanced anti-ship missiles to Syria. What do you think would happen if images of sinking U.S. naval vessels were to come flashing across our television screens? #8 When the United States attacks Syria, there is a very good chance that Syria will attack Israel. Just check out what one Syrian official said recently... A member of the Syrian Ba'ath national council Halef al-Muftah, until recently the Syrian propaganda minister's aide, said on



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Monday that Damascus views Israel as "behind the aggression and therefore it will come under fire" should Syria be attacked by the United States. In an interview for the American radio station Sawa in Arabic, President Bashar Assad's fellow party member said: "We have strategic weapons and we can retaliate. Essentially, the strategic weapons are aimed at Israel." Al-Muftah stressed that the US's threats will not influence the Syrian regime and added that "If the US or Israel err through aggression and exploit the chemical issue, the region will go up in endless flames, affecting not only the area's security, but the world's." #9 If Syria attacks Israel, the consequences could be absolutely catastrophic. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is promising that any attack will be responded to "forcefully"... "We are not a party to this civil war in Syria but if we identify any attempt to attack us we will respond and we will respond forcefully" #10 Hezbollah will likely do whatever it can to fight for the survival of the Assad regime. That could include striking targets inside both the United States and Israel. #11 Iran's closest ally is Syria. Will Iran sit idly by as their closest ally is removed from the chessboard? #12 Starting a war with Syria will cause significant damage to our relationship with Russia. On Tuesday, Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin said that the West is acting like a "monkey with a hand grenade". #13 Starting a war with Syria will cause significant damage to our relationship with China. And what will happen if the Chinese decide to start dumping the massive amount of U.S. debt that it is holding? Interest rates would absolutely skyrocket and we would rapidly be facing a nightmare scenario. #14 Dr. Jerome Corsi and Walid Shoebat have compiled some startling evidence that it was actually the Syrian rebels that the U.S. is supporting that were responsible for the chemical weapons attack that is being used as justification to go to war with Syria... With the assistance of



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former PLO member and native Arabic-speaker Walid Shoebat, WND has assembled evidence from various Middle Eastern sources that cast doubt on Obama administration claims the Assad government is responsible for last week's attack. You can examine the evidence for yourself right here. #15 As Pat Buchanan recently noted, it would have made absolutely no sense for the Assad regime to use chemical weapons on defenseless women and children. The only people who would benefit from such an attack would be the rebels... The basic question that needs to be asked about this horrific attack on civilians, which appears to be gas related, is: Cui bono? To whose benefit would the use of nerve gas on Syrian women and children redound? Certainly not Assad's, as we can see from the furor and threats against him that the use of gas has produced. The sole beneficiary of this apparent use of poison gas against civilians in rebel-held territory appears to be the rebels, who have long sought to have us come in and fight their war. #16 If the Saudis really want to topple the Assad regime, they should do it themselves. They should not expect the United States to do their dirty work for them. #17 A former commander of U.S. Central Command has said that a U.S. attack on Syria would result in "a full-throated, very, very serious war". #18 A war in the Middle East will be bad for the financial markets. The Dow was down about 170 points today and concern about war with Syria was the primary reason. #19 A war in the Middle East will cause the price of oil to go up. On Tuesday, the price of U.S. oil rose to about \$109 a barrel. #20 There is no way in the world that the U.S. government should be backing the Syrian rebels. As I discussed a few days ago, the rebels have pledged loyalty to al-Qaeda, they have beheaded numerous Christians and they have massacred entire Christian villages. If the U.S. government helps these lunatics take power in Syria it will be a complete and utter disaster.



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#21 A lot of innocent civilians inside Syria will end up getting killed. Already, a lot of Syrians are expressing concern about what "foreign intervention" will mean for them and their families... "I've always been a supporter of foreign intervention, but now that it seems like a reality, I've been worrying that my family could be hurt or killed," said one woman, Zaina, who opposes Assad. "I'm afraid of a military strike now." "The big fear is that they'll make the same mistakes they made in Libya and Iraq," said Ziyad, a man in his 50s. "They'll hit civilian targets, and then they'll cry that it was by mistake, but we'll get killed in the thousands." #22 If the U.S. government insists on going to war with Syria without the approval of the American people, the U.S. Congress or the United Nations, we are going to lose a lot of friends and a lot of credibility around the globe. It truly is a sad day when Russia looks like "the good guys" and we look like "the bad guys". What good could possibly come out of getting involved in Syria? As I wrote about the other day, the "rebels" that Obama is backing are rabidly anti-Christian, rabidly anti-Israel and rabidly anti-western. If they take control of Syria, that nation will be far more unstable and far more of a hotbed for terrorism than it is now. And the downside of getting involved in Syria is absolutely enormous. Syria, Iran and Hezbollah all have agents inside this country, and if they decide to start blowing stuff up that will wake up the American people to the horror of war really quick. And by attacking Syria, the United States could cause a major regional war to erupt in the Middle East which could eventually lead to World War 3. I don't know about you, but I think that starting World War 3 in the Middle East is a really bad idea. Let us hope that cooler heads prevail before things spin totally out of control.

# Syria crisis: Assad agrees to surrender chemical weapons

**President Bashar al-Assad confirmed for the first time on Thursday that Syria plans to give up its chemical weapons and demanded that the US drop threats of military action against his regime in return.**

“When we see that the US truly desires stability in our region and stops threatening and seeking to invade, as well as stops arms supplies to terrorists then we can believe that we can follow through with the necessary processes,” Assad said in an interview on Russian television. He demanded Washington dispense with the ‘politics of threats’.

“Syria is handing over chemical weapons under international control because of Russia,” he said. “US threats have not affected the decision.”

In a concrete move towards disarmament, Syria on Thursday filed documents at the UN seeking to join the international convention banning chemical weapons.

Despite Assad’s demand, US President Barack Obama said he was hopeful US-Russia talks due to start in Geneva could produce a workable weapons transfer plan that will avert the need for military action.



” When we see that the US truly desires stability in our region... then we can believe that we can follow through with the necessary processes  
Syrian President Bashar al-Assad

Backed by a large team of experts, US Secretary of State John Kerry was to meet Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov in Geneva.

"I am hopeful that the discussions that Secretary Kerry has with Foreign Minister Lavrov as well as some of the other players in this can yield a concrete result," Obama said.

Ahead of the talks, a senior US official said Washington was urging Syria to "declare their entire stockpile quickly."

The official said Washington would ask for specific action from Damascus to test the regime's sincerity and discuss 'different modalities' of destroying Assad's chemical weapons and production facilities.

"It's doable, but difficult," the official said.

Lavrov voiced optimism ahead of the talks, saying during a visit to Kazakhstan: "I am sure that there is a chance for peace in Syria... We cannot let it slip away."

The US and its main backer of military strikes on Syria, France, have warned they will not allow the chemical weapons plan to become a delaying tactic in Syria's brutal war, saying the threat of military force remains on the table.

"All of this should, if everyone is aware of their responsibilities, allow for the end of chemical weapons in Syria and for us to find a political solution, but France is keeping up pressure," President Francois Hollande told journalists.

Revealing details of the Russian proposal for the first time Thursday, daily Kommersant said Moscow had given Washington a four-step plan for the weapons handover.

Quoting a Russian diplomatic source, Kommersant said the plan would see Damascus join the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons



(OPCW), declare the locations of its chemical arms, allow OPCW inspectors access and finally arrange for destruction of the arsenal.

Syria's opposition has denounced the plan, warning it will only lead to more deaths in a conflict that has already killed more than 110,000 people since March 2011.

The commander of the Free Syrian Army, Selim Idriss, said in a video posted on YouTube that the rebels categorically rejected the Russian initiative.

And the Syrian National Coalition opposition group said the plan is a 'political manoeuvre aimed at buying time' for Assad and would be a 'green light' to other regimes to use chemical weapons.

Meanwhile, the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) said on Thursday that destroying Syria's chemical weapons would be 'immensely difficult' and may do little to end the conflict there.

"There has never been a situation where the international community has attempted to secure, seize and destroy weapons of mass destruction during an ongoing conflict," IISS proliferation expert Mark Fitzpatrick told a news conference.

# Revisiting Pak-US ties: Quit war on terror but not ties with US, says experts

**Speakers at a conference were unanimous in exhorting Pakistan to keep engaged and maintain balanced relations with the United States while broadening its strategic options in the external field, said a press release.**

“Pakistan must build a unified vision on foreign policy and should not allow its relations with the US to be undermined despite the latter’s dichotomous approach towards it,” they said.

A diverse panel of scholars and defence analysts participated in the conference on “Revisiting Pakistan-US Relations” organised by the Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI) on its premises in Islamabad on Thursday.

Chaired by Lt-Gen (ret'd) Asad Durrani, the conference heard the views of Prof Tahir Amin, chairman, National Institute of Pakistan Studies (NIPS) Quaid-i-Azam University, Air Vice-Marshal (ret'd) Shahzad Chaudhry and former Ambassador Muhammad Saeed Khalid.



” The question of national sovereignty will have to constantly adjust to developments in cyber technology  
AVM (ret) Shahzad Chaudhry

Prof Amin endorsed the resolution of the recent All Parties Conference (APC) on countering terrorism and urged the government to quit the ‘war on terror’ as soon as possible. He said that the US had allocated a huge budget to keep surveillance on Pakistan’s nuclear programme.

The professor noted the dichotomy in US policy in asking Pakistan to fight the militants in its tribal areas while itself pulling out of Afghanistan.

“The nature of US relations with Pakistan is transactional focused on counter-terrorism and non-proliferation.”

He said the US ‘war on terror’ had lost its legitimacy and Pakistan must delink itself from it irrespective of the consequences.

Security analyst Shahzad Chaudhry discussed the confusion surrounding the current controversy on drone attacks and said it was due to lack of proper narrative on the problem. He said in this era of cyber technology the nature of war would change with new developments and the question of national sovereignty would have to constantly adjust to these developments.

Ambassador (retd) Saeed Khalid criticized the media for giving disproportionate coverage to the activities of the terrorist groups and said it was bolstering their viewpoint.

Winding up the discussion Gen Durrani said that Pak-US relations had always been tactical and issue based. He stressed the point that Pakistan must keep an eye on its weaknesses.

# Pakistan, India spar in Kashmir in worst border violence in years

By Annie Gowen

SRINAGAR, India — After a decade of relative quiet, Indian and Pakistani troops are shelling each other with vigor again along their disputed border, raising tension between the nuclear-armed nations and forcing hundreds of villagers to flee.

Many fear there is worse to come. As the American military withdraws from Afghanistan, some Pakistan-based militants who had been fighting there have pledged to turn their attention to the Kashmir border region — and their old foe, India. Already, there are signs that militant activity is on the rise in this area, with graffiti appearing saying “Welcome Taliban.”

In recent days, the disputed border that separates much of the Indian-controlled state of Jammu and Kashmir from Pakistan has turned into a virtual war zone. A month of cease-fire violations by both sides has resulted in the deaths of at least 11 soldiers and two Pakistani civilians and the wounding of several residents.

“We can’t sleep at night,” said one village head, Lal Din, 38. “Whenever we hear gunshots and mortars we huddle together in the corners of our shacks. We are helpless to do anything to prevent it.”

The two sides have fought for more than six decades over this hilly and verdant land, which has been at the heart of two of the countries’ three wars. While few people see the current skirmishes as exploding into a full-scale conflict, the fear of further deterioration is widespread.

“In three or four months, the people fighting in Afghanistan or Pakistan could come here,” said Sheikh Younis, 42, who runs a mobile phone shop in a mall in downtown Srinagar, not far from the lotus-fringed lake where tourists take rides in colorful boats. “People are very concerned about it. What’s going to happen after 2014?”

### **Militant incursions on rise**

The current skirmishes began in August, when [five Indian soldiers were ambushed](#) and killed while on patrol in Indian-controlled Kashmir. That triggered near daily mortar and machine-gun fire from both sides along the Line of Control — some 460 miles of razor-wire fencing, surveillance cameras and heavily armed military posts snaking through the Himalayas.

Although no major population centers have been hit, the exchanges of fire have renewed tensions as leaders of the two nations were to try and meet later this month during the U.N. General Assembly.

Kashmir, whose population is mostly Muslim, has been bitterly contested since the British granted India independence in 1947 and the land was split into Hindu-dominated India and Muslim-majority Pakistan. In the late 1980s, an [Islamist insurgency](#) backed by Pakistan emerged, seeking to end India’s control over the disputed territory. Kashmir suffered more than 50,000 dead in that conflict.

Over the last decade, India and Pakistan have crept toward normalcy, with easing visa restrictions and hopes for increasing bilateral trade. Violence along their disputed border ebbed, too, after a 2003 cease-fire agreement. Insurgent activity also declined dramatically, in part, experts say, because many of the fighters now had a far more compelling target nearby — American and NATO troops in Afghanistan.

# Afghans caught between terror and graft

By Giuliano Battiston

HERAT, Afghanistan - The threat to the stability of the Hamid Karzai government in Afghanistan arises not so much from outside as from within. And the one thing that is eating into its edifice is the malaise called corruption.

"Corruption is undermining what little legitimacy the government has left," Qader Rahimi, head of the western branch of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, tells IPS. "The people do not trust the government. They do not believe that it works for the good of all."

The international community, he says, has so far concentrated its fight against al-Qaeda and terrorism. But it's time it turned its

focus on corruption, "our biggest enemy", he adds.

The available statistics do little to counter his pessimism. According to a joint survey conducted by the Afghan High Office of Oversight and Anti-corruption (HOOAC) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), half of Afghan citizens paid a bribe in 2012 while requesting a public service.

The survey, titled Corruption in Afghanistan: Recent Patterns and Trends, was released in February. It put the total cost of such corruption at US\$3.9 billion.

With just over a year left for the NATO-led forces to disengage with Afghanistan and bring the transition process to an end, there is serious introspection within the country over what the international community and the Afghan government have achieved since 2001, when the war against terror began. Many Afghans are still trying to figure out why they should be still in a war that is counting its 12th year and becoming more and more destructive.

According to the latest mid-year report on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict released by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), the country saw a 23% rise in the number of civilian casualties over the first six months of 2013.

And one of the factors Afghans see as fostering the conflict and encouraging anti-government mobilization either directly or indirectly is the lack of confidence and trust in the government.

"There is an enormous communication gap between the people and the government," says Abdul Khaliq Stanikzai, regional manager for Sanayee Development Organization, a non-governmental body. "People do not have the mechanisms and instruments to make their voices heard and to influence government choices," he tells IPS.

This, according to him, has created a high level of mutual distrust.

The lack of confidence in the government is only growing, due to the gap between expectations and actual achievement in terms of economic



development, guaranteed rights, functioning institutions and, above all, social justice and equality.

"Initially, after the removal of the Taliban regime, people were hoping for a transparent and equal government. Now, no one expects anything from the government," says Asif Karimi, project coordinator in Kabul for The Liaison Office, an Afghan organization focusing on communitarian peace-building. Most people, he tells IPS, are neutral, wanting neither the government nor the Taliban.

Mirwais Ayobi, lecturer in law and political science at the University of Herat, thinks that trust in the Taliban is growing. "If you ask the Taliban to solve a dispute," he tells IPS, "they focus on reconciliation instead of demanding money."

He considers corruption in the political and administrative systems an enormous challenge, because it is eroding the citizens' trust.

Afghanistan was placed third in Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index 2012, after Somalia and North Korea.

The average size of the bribes, according to the HOOAC-UNODC survey, varies from sector to sector.

"Bribes tend to be larger in the justice sector," it notes, "where the average bribe paid to both prosecutors and judges is more than \$300." The amounts given to local authorities and customs officials, at \$200-odd, are smaller. Bribes paid to other officials range from \$100-150, it found.

Many consider the problem to be structural. Among them is Rahman Salahi, former head of the Herat Professionals Shura, an independent, non-political organization in Afghanistan's western province comprising associations of lawyers, economists, teachers, engineers and others advocating a more active engagement of the local civil society with the country's reconstruction.

"Until a few years ago we had what was basically a socialist economic system, based on the mould left by the Soviet occupation," Salahi tells IPS. "When the international community came, we adopted a free trade system lacking adequate institutional structures for oversight and policy guidelines."

For Antonio Giustozzi, visiting professor at the Department of War Studies in King's College, London, and a specialist on Afghanistan, "The quantity of aid earmarked for the country, as well as the mechanisms for its distribution and assignment, exceeded the society's overall absorption capacity and the institutions' capacity to manage it."

The mismatch between the wide flood of aid and the narrow absorption capacity gave rise to corruption, says Giustozzi, something which he thinks is now "totally entrenched within the political system".

Apart from these structural reasons, the international community too is seen to have fostered a culture of impunity in the country through the empowerment of the so-called warlords.

"International [bodies] gave political power and money to warlords, to those who have committed crimes, to those who killed thousands of innocent people, to those who are involved in the corruption system," says Sayed

Ikram Afzali, head of Advocacy and Communication for Integrity Watch Afghanistan, a civil society organization.

"People had hoped things would change, that they would get justice and equality after the Taliban was defeated," he tells IPS. But that did not happen.

There is still hope, though, he feels. "The warlords do not have strong roots among the people, they deny them social justice. They have hijacked the state. The time has come to free the State from these people."

# Debating The Doctrine Of Military Intervention – Analysis

By Gurmeet Kanwal

The ongoing struggle of people across the Arab world to get rid of military dictators and tyrannical monarchies has led to a new debate about the efficacy of the emerging doctrine of military intervention. The foremost question today is whether the international community should punish the Assad regime in Syria for using chemical weapons against its own people.

In Libya, in 2011, the UN Security Council had approved the imposition of a 'no-fly zone', but had ruled out the deployment of a 'foreign occupation force'. The western alliance launched air and missile strikes on Libya — ostensibly to protect the population against attacks from Gadhafi's forces. However, the strikes were clearly designed to bring about a regime change.

John Mackinlay of King's College, London, has argued that in the "complex emergencies which increasingly threaten security in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Africa, international response mechanisms have failed from the outset to take a realistic approach that reflected the needs of the crisis... due to vested interest, conservatism and a lack of vision beyond the narrow limitations of national and professional interest". With some exceptions, most nations today agree to join an international intervention effort only when their own national interests are served by intervening and rarely where the cause is humanitarian. The world had failed to intervene to stop the genocide in Rwanda.

John Hillen, a policy analyst at the Heritage Foundation, a US think tank, has suggested the following criteria for future US military interventions: should defend national security interests; should not jeopardise the ability of the US to meet more important security commitments; should strive to achieve military goals that are clearly defined, decisive, attainable and sustainable; should enjoy Congressional and public support; and, the armed forces must be allowed to create the conditions for success.

Notably, Hillen makes no reference to the need to abide by international law before deciding to intervene. Former Secretary of State Colin Powell had suggested very precise conditions for US intervention when he was Chairman, US Joint Chiefs of Staff in 1990. According to him, the following questions must be answered in the affirmative: "Is a vital national security interest threatened; do we have a clear attainable objective; have the risks and costs been fully and frankly analyzed; have all other non-violent policy means been fully exhausted; is there a plausible exit strategy to avoid endless entanglement; have the consequences of our action been fully considered; is the action supported by the American people; and, do we have genuine broad international support?"

In the case of Syria, President Obama would find it difficult to answer even half the above questions with a firm yes. Recent US interventions in Kosovo and Iraq have clearly established that the US-led 'coalition of the willing' chooses to intervene militarily purely to further perceived national interests. Clearly, when national interests are at stake, there are no qualms about circumventing international law. Such a muscular approach to the conduct of foreign policy is extremely damaging to international stability and is bound to encourage similar adventurism elsewhere in the world in the long run.

The emerging doctrine of intervention is built around the ability of the international community, mainly the US-led western alliance, to impose its collective will in order to restore a deteriorating situation or to prevent a nascent conflict from burgeoning into full blown war with wider ramifications. The international community's right to intervene may manifest itself in many ways. It may begin with a warning through a UNSC resolution. A military embargo and economic sanctions may follow. Where applicable, a no fly zone or even a naval blockade may be enforced. Failing all other means, the international community may sanction the use of military force. The overwhelming belief among members of the international community is that when this happens, it must first be approved by a UNSC resolution.

Justifications for the right to intervene militarily, which are being increasingly propagated and are finding reluctant acceptance – at least among some countries in the western alliance – include: defence of democracy and the prevention of the excessive curtailment of a people's right to participate in decision making; prevention of severe violation of human rights of a people by a totalitarian regime; protection of minority groups from severe repression; prevention of acute environmental degradation; and, prevention of possible attempts to use, acquire or develop weapons of mass destruction.

In addition to these situations justifying intervention, some of the following occurrences may also warrant a military response in the future, provided the proposal is unambiguously supported by a majority of the members of the UNSC: the persecution of a people due to religious affiliation; aiding and abetting of terrorists, narcotics smugglers and crime gangs by rogue regimes; the wilful repeated violation of World Trade Organisation (WTO) quotas and undercutting of tariffs through unfair trade practices; excessive

interference with the production facilities, movement and sale of goods and the transfer of funds by transnational corporations (TNCs); plausible threat to paralyse or interfere with international communications, navigation, remote sensing and surveillance satellites and ground control facilities; interference with the internet and subversive attempts to infect its software; and, malicious intervention in and manipulation of the international banking system.

However, regardless of the emerging contours of the doctrine of military intervention, it must remain a cardinal principle of international relations that the territorial integrity of each member state of the UN must be collectively guaranteed by all the other member states. The non-observance of this collective security imperative can only lead to anarchy and the rule of the jungle where might is right. This can be done only by strengthening the UN system to emerge as the sole arbiter of the need for intervention. Individual nation-states must not be permitted to assemble coalitions of the willing to intervene anywhere in the world to further their own necessarily narrow national interests.

If Syria does not surrender its chemical weapons to the UN in a reasonable period of time, military strikes would be justified. Surgically precise missile and air strikes should be employed to achieve limited military objectives. Emphasis should be laid on the minimum use of force. Maximum efforts must be made to prevent collateral damage, with particular reference to civilian casualties and property.

## Govt: to raise its case on drone attacks at the UN: FO

The Foreign Office spokesman on Thursday said the government had prepared a case aimed at raising the issue of US drone strikes on Pakistani territory in the United Nations, DawnNews reported.

Speaking at the weekly media briefing, the spokesman said there was no secret agreement between Pakistan and the United States on drone strikes, adding that the government had no idea where the drones were flown in from.

Regarding the recent release of Afghan prisoners, he said the reason for releasing Afghan Taliban prisoners was to facilitate the reconciliation process in Afghanistan.

Speaking of the Guantanamo Bay prison in Cuba, the spokesman said it has Pakistani prisoners, however, it wasn't certain how many. He added that talks were in progress with the US government regarding the release of these prisoners.

The FO spokesman told reporters that Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif would go on an official visit to Turkey from September 16 to 18.

He also said that Advisor to the Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz would meet with his Indian counterpart in Turkmenistan's capital Bishkek on Friday. The talks would centre on bilateral relations with the aim of improving ties with India.

Regarding the crisis in Syria, the spokesman stated that Pakistan hoped for a diplomatic solution to the issue, adding that none of the groups actively



involved in the fighting should use chemical weapons. He further said that Pakistan was waiting for the UN report regarding the usage of chemical weapons in Syria.

Earlier, Ambassador Zamir Akram, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN in Geneva, had said that Pakistan, a primary target of drone attacks, had suffered a heavy loss of innocent lives apart from widespread social and economic costs.

While addressing the opening session of the 24th Human Rights Council, he said that in recent years, there had been severe human rights violations across the globe, as a result of indiscriminate use of force in the context of counter-terrorism efforts.

According to a press release, Akram said these included illegal detentions, renditions, and extrajudicial killings including through use of drone attacks.

He added that these attacks caused collateral damage and violated international laws, including humanitarian and human rights laws, apart from violating Pakistan's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Akram also stated that drone attacks were counterproductive in the campaign against terrorism, referring to the United Nations Secretary General's statement that the use of armed drones, like any other weapon, should be subject to long-standing rules of international law, including international humanitarian law.

# Taliban 'unlikely to retake power' in Afghanistan

By: Gabriel Domínguez

Many fear the Taliban could regain full control over Afghanistan after the 2014 drawdown of NATO troops. But South Asia expert Michael Kugelman says it's 'unfathomable' the militants could overthrow the Kabul government.

NATO troops have been in Afghanistan since the US-led invasion of the country in 2001, which toppled the Taliban regime. But as the international combat forces prepare to leave the country by the end of next year, the security situation in the war-ravaged country remains volatile. According to a UN report, the civilian casualty toll in the first six months of 2013 jumped by 23 percent, compared to the same period last year.

These figures have led many to believe the Taliban extremists are preparing to launch a major offensive to retake power as soon as NATO forces pull out of the South Asian nation. But in a DW interview, political analyst Michael Kugelman says Afghan security forces have improved to such a degree that a takeover of power by the insurgents would seem very unlikely.

*DW: How successful has the ISAF mission been?*

*Michael Kugelman:* It depends on who you ask. ISAF commanders and others in Afghanistan point to shining success stories of recent years: Girls are back in school, roads are being built, and democracy is advancing slowly but surely.

Those in Washington and other places further from the action take a broader, more cynical view, stating that there have been successes, but

overall Afghanistan remains a mess. The Taliban continue to wreak havoc, the economy continues to struggle, and the government often appears paralyzed by corruption and incompetence.

Ultimately, the mission has been successful because its core objectives have been accomplished: The Taliban have been removed from power, and Afghanistan is no longer a sanctuary for the al Qaeda network. Yet the biggest measure of success will be if these gains are sustained in the coming years after international forces have withdrawn.

*In light of a sharp rise in the number of civilians and security forces killed over the past few months, how ready are the Afghan police and military to provide security?*

Afghanistan has made major strides in recent years, with the military in particular benefiting from international assistance and training. However, the military remains afflicted by drug abuse, illiteracy and desertion. These are major challenges for any military, including those operating in stable security environments.

Yet Afghanistan's armed forces preside over one of the world's most volatile security environments, and continue to suffer from combat-related incapacities. This is all one big recipe for disaster, no matter how much Afghanistan and its allies around the world try to sugarcoat the issue.

*How would the US administration react if the upcoming elections on April 5 were to be postponed?*

The US and most other countries would be highly displeased by a delayed vote. If President Hamid Karzai were regarded as a credible and trusted partner, Washington and other capitals may be more sympathetic to the argument of "continuity amid change" being made by some Afghan officials.

But most key international stakeholders likely look forward to the day that Karzai steps down. Karzai is widely seen as a national leader in name only, someone who no longer enjoys the legitimacy and respect to see his nation through a major transition as international troops withdraw. The world is keen for new partners in Afghanistan. Delaying the election would make this a more remote possibility, and would also deal a blow to the South Asian nation's fragile democracy.

*How is the situation in Afghanistan likely to develop after the scheduled NATO withdrawal in 2014?*

It all depends on two factors: Pakistan-based militant sanctuaries and the effectiveness of Afghanistan's government. On the one hand, as long as the Afghan Taliban, Haqqani network, and other anti-Kabul extremists continue to enjoy safe havens in Pakistan, it will be difficult to end the insurgency in Afghanistan. US drone strikes - which target militants in these Pakistani areas - will likely diminish after 2014, removing one of the few effective means of tackling this Pakistan-based threat to Afghanistan.

On the other hand, while many Afghans despise the Taliban and would prefer any alternative to the Taliban, there are Afghans who believe that Kabul is too corrupt, weak, and incompetent to be a government worth supporting. Until the Afghan government convinces these Afghans that it is a better alternative to the Taliban, the insurgency will remain strong. This underscores the crucial nature of next year's election.

*How big is the possibility of the Taliban retaking power in Kabul after a NATO withdrawal and what role could Pakistan play here?*

Many of the nightmare scenarios of post-2014 could well come true such as a rapidly deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan spilling into Pakistan

and further destabilizing that country. However, I think the Taliban are unlikely to retake power in Afghanistan. The country's security forces have improved to a level that it would seem unfathomable that the Taliban could muster the resources and capacity to overthrow the government.

A more realistic concern is that future political negotiations to end the war will give the Taliban some sort of role in a future Afghan government and that the Taliban will use that perch to bring back, in limited form, some of the draconian policies used when in power in the 1990s.

Another, more operational, concern is that the Taliban will effectively take over certain swaths of territory in the south and east and exert de facto control. This, again, is much more likely than an outright takeover of government.

#### *How will the NATO withdrawal affect South Asia?*

It will affect the region on all fronts. It will raise the stakes for better regional cooperation in a region that is not known for cooperating at all. Afghanistan is a country in which many different nations in the broader region have interests - from India and Pakistan to China, Iran, and Russia. In many cases, these interests do not converge.

When the foreign troops have left, these neighboring nations, along with Afghanistan, will have an opportunity to craft a long-term regional cooperation strategy. Concessions and compromises will be necessary, but if done right, a breakthrough is possible. The alternative is that these countries will fail to agree, and instead continue to compete for influence in Afghanistan in ways that further destabilize what will be an incredibly volatile country.

*How would a potential political resurgence of the Taliban affect India's relations to Pakistan?*

It would certainly imperil a relationship that has showed so much potential for improvement in recent years. A resurgent Taliban, which is viciously anti-Indian, would pose an immediate threat to New Delhi. It would also embolden anti-Indian militants based in Pakistan, such as the Lashkar-e-Taiba. Some of these Pakistan-based groups have operated in Afghanistan in recent years.

With no more international troops in Afghanistan, these extremists could all turn their attention to India and there's little reason to think that Pakistan would have the will or capacity to rein them in. Anti-India militants, after all, have been regarded as "strategic assets" by the Pakistani security establishment for decades. Until Pakistan finally decides that it's time to reconcile with India, such a long-ingrained policy will likely remain in place.

*Michael Kugelman is senior program associate for South and Southeast Asia at the Woodrow Wilson Center. His most recent work has focused on Pakistan's 2013 elections, Indian-Pakistani relations, US-Pakistani relations, and security challenges in India.*

*The interview was conducted by Gabriel Domínguez*

# Japan to be nuclear-free as last reactor switched off

**Japan Sunday began switching off its last operating nuclear reactor for an inspection, with no date scheduled for a restart amid strong public hostility towards atomic power.**

The move will leave the world's third largest economy without atomic energy for the second time since the Fukushima nuclear crisis erupted in March 2011.

Nuclear power supplied about one-third of the resource-poor nation's electricity before a tsunami knocked out cooling systems and sparked meltdowns at Fukushima, causing tens of thousands to flee their homes.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has openly supported a return to the widespread use of atomic energy, but the public remains largely opposed on safety grounds.

Kansai Electric Power Company (KEPCO) Sunday started gradually to take offline the No. 4 reactor at its Oi nuclear plant in the western prefecture of Fukui.

"The work started at 4:40pm (local time)," said a company spokesman. "The reactor will come to a complete stop early tomorrow (Monday)."

Japan previously was without any nuclear energy in May 2012, when all of the country's 50 commercial reactors stopped for checkups in the wake of the disaster.

Utilities were unable immediately to restart them due to public opposition.

It was the first time in more than four decades that Japan had been without nuclear power.

Government officials and utilities voiced concern at the time that Japan could face major blackouts without nuclear power, particularly in the western region that relied heavily on nuclear energy.

Their fears proved unfounded but the government last year gave Kansai Electric approval to restart No. 3 and No. 4 reactors at the Oi plant, arguing that nuclear energy was necessary to meet increased electricity demand during the winter.

The reactors were reactivated in July 2012 and resumed full commercial operation the following month, but the No. 3 reactor was shut down earlier this month for a scheduled inspection. The nation's other reactors have remained idle.

Utilities this summer have submitted applications to restart their reactors with the Nuclear Regulation Authority, which has significantly upgraded safety standards since the Fukushima crisis.

The central government and utilities will seek the consent of local governments and communities hosting nuclear plants before any future restarts.

The No. 3 reactor at the Ikata nuclear plant in Ehime prefecture in the southwestern Shikoku region may come back online early next year, the Sankei Shimbun newspaper said.



The Asahi Shimbun meanwhile said the reactor at Ikata might resume operation in “the coming winter”.

Anti-nuclear campaigner Greenpeace Japan said the country must seize the opportunity of being without nuclear power to focus on promoting renewable energy.

“Having zero running nuclear reactors is proof that we do not need nuclear plants,” Junichi Sato, executive director of the environmental group in Japan, said in a statement Friday.

He urged the government not to rush to restart reactors and to focus on containing the ongoing atomic crisis at Fukushima, and helping those evacuated to avoid exposure to radiation.

“Going without nuclear energy for the second time is a major opportunity for Japan to become a leading nation for renewable energy,” Sato said.

But utilities have called for the swift restart of reactors to ensure stable electricity supplies.

“In order to maintain stable supplies, we believe it is necessary for nuclear to play its role” as a key energy source, Makoto Yagi, chairman of the Federation of Electric Power Companies in Japan, said Friday.

He is also the president of Kansai Electric.

Japan has turned to expensive fossil-fuel alternatives to fill the gap left by the shutdown of atomic plants.

Utilities have raised charges to cover increased fuel costs for thermal plants.

Radiation was spread over homes and farmland in a large area of northern Japan when the massive tsunami hit Fukushima on March 11, 2011.

No one is officially recorded as having died as a direct result of the meltdowns, but tens of thousands were evacuated and many remain so.

Some areas are expected to be uninhabitable for decades.

## **Pakistan's release of Taliban has resulted in no concrete progress: Afghan officials**

**Afghan officials say Pakistan's release of 33 Taliban prisoners from jail, a policy initially trumpeted by Kabul as an opportunity to ignite peace talks, has resulted in no concrete progress.**

The Afghan government, desperately searching for a way to negotiate peace before Nato troops leave next year, has said that the release of influential insurgents could encourage their comrades to the negotiating table.

But despite the 33 Afghan Taliban prisoners released by Pakistan and dozens of others freed in Afghanistan, there is still no peace process and some fighters have returned to the battlefield.

The Taliban still refuse publicly to deal with the government of Afghan President Hamid Karzai, branding him a US puppet.

They have also shown no willingness to participate in elections on April 5, 2014 when Karzai will step aside for a new leader for the first time since the 2001 US-led invasion.

Instead their readiness to negotiate with the Americans about a prisoner swap has only infuriated Karzai, who late last month asked Pakistan to help find a direct channel of communication.

In parts of Afghanistan, which continue to suffer daily from Taliban violence, the releases have been met with incomprehension if not anger by local government officials.

“The Taliban who are released... rejoin the battlefield again,” said Zurawar Zahid, police chief of the flashpoint southern province of Ghazni.

“We put our lives in danger to arrest them, but the central government releases them under different pretences,” he added.

Zahid told AFP that more than 40 Taliban, including some senior commanders, who were recently freed from Ghazni central prison on Karzai’s orders have gone back to the battlefield.

Mohammad Ali Ahmadi, deputy provincial governor of Ghazni, also believes that the Taliban releases have done nothing to help.

“The people who are behind killings, bombings, killing innocent civilians and government officials should be punished.

“The central government knows they will rejoin the Taliban again after they are released, it is not going to help the peace process,” he said.

Afghans have also complained about the manner in which the Pakistanis have released the detainees without giving any warning and without delivering them to Afghan authorities.

“We don’t even know what happens to them after they’re released,” said Ismail Qasimyar, a senior member of the High Peace Council set up to reach out to the Taliban.

“When they decide to free Taliban, they only inform the Afghan government a few hours before,” he added.

“The Taliban releases by Pakistan have not been effective for the Afghanistan peace process,” he said.

Pakistan now says it intends to release its most senior Afghan Taliban detainee, former military leader Abdul Ghani Baradar who has been described as number two to supreme leader Mullah Omar.

He was picked up by Pakistani and American agents in Karachi in early 2010. Afghan and US officials at the time accused Pakistan of sabotaging peace efforts by arresting the reputed moderate.

But nearly four years later, the consequences of his release are deeply uncertain.

“He is no longer as important for the Taliban as he used to be before being arrested,” said Pakistani militancy expert Rahimullah Yusufzai.

“Nor will it (the Taliban) accept him as a mediator. The Taliban would rather like to watch him before assigning him any role,” Yusufzai added.

“But I don’t think Baradar will be assigned the kind of role that the US and Karzai administrations expect him to be given – to mediate between Kabul and the Taliban,” Yusufzai further added.

Rather than benefiting peace talks, the releases have perhaps been limited to an attempt to re-establish trust between Kabul and Islamabad, whose relations are clouded by deep distrust.

Both trade blame over the Taliban militants threatening security in both countries, and Kabul accuses elements of the Pakistani state of funding, controlling and sheltering the Afghan Taliban.

Islamabad says publicly it will do anything to stop the fighting in Afghanistan.

“It will definitely send strong signals that Pakistan is contributing positively to the peace process,” retired Pakistani general Talat Masood told AFP.

“However, this release is not likely to make any significant difference in the negotiating process,” he added.

## Pakistani Taliban make demands ahead of peace talks

The Pakistani Taliban demanded Sunday that the government release militant prisoners and begin withdrawing troops from the group's tribal sanctuary before they will participate in peace talks, raising doubts about prospects for negotiations.

The Taliban's leadership council decided on the need for confidence building measures while meeting to discuss the government's offer to hold peace talks, said the group's spokesman, Shahidullah Shahid.

Pakistan's major political parties endorsed peace talks with the Taliban last week as the best way to end a decade-long insurgency that has killed thousands of people.

However, it's unclear what steps the government is willing to take to convince the militants to sit down at the negotiating table.

It's also unclear what would be acceptable to the army, which has lost thousands of soldiers fighting the Taliban and is considered the strongest institution in the country.

"The Taliban have been deceived in the past in the name of peace, so the government will have to take some steps before the start of talks to assure the Taliban that the government is serious about the peace process," Shahid said by telephone from an undisclosed location.

The government must release Pakistani Taliban militants it is holding prisoner and show that it is withdrawing soldiers from the tribal region along the border with Afghanistan, said Shahid.

"If the government does not take these two steps, the peace process cannot go forward," said Shahid.

Intelligence officials and militant commanders said the Taliban and the army exchanged a small number of prisoners last week as a confidence building measure ahead of talks, but the army denied the swap.

The army has carried out scores of operations against the Taliban in the tribal region, but the militants have proven resilient and continue to carry out regular attacks.

A roadside bomb killed one soldier and wounded another Sunday in the tribal region of North Waziristan, the main sanctuary for Taliban and Al Qaeda militants in the country, said military officials, speaking on condition of anonymity in line with military policy.

On Saturday night, militants ambushed a group of tribal policemen riding in a vehicle near the northwest town of Bannu, killing two of them and wounding four others, the officials said. No one has claimed responsibility for the attacks.

Many observers are skeptical about peace talks with the Taliban since prior agreements with the militants have fallen apart. Critics say the deals simply gave the militants time to regroup and continue their fight against the state.

It's also unclear what room for compromise the Taliban and the government would find if they did sit down to negotiate. The militants have earlier criticized Pakistan's democratic system, demanded the imposition of Islamic law and stipulated the government must break off its alliance with the United States.



Even if the two sides could come to an agreement, it is unclear how well the Taliban could enforce it on their side. There are dozens of militant groups based in the tribal region with varying degrees of allegiance to the Taliban.

The US is wary of a peace deal because it could give Afghan Taliban militants greater space to conduct cross-border attacks against US-led troops in Afghanistan.

However, it could be hard for the US to push back against negotiations since it wants Pakistan's help in striking a peace deal with the Afghan Taliban.

The Afghan and Pakistani Taliban are allies but have focused on different targets. The Afghan Taliban have fought coalition troops in Afghanistan, while the Pakistani Taliban have largely focused on battling the Pakistani state.

The Pakistani Taliban indicated they were open to holding peace talks at the end of last year but withdrew that offer in May after the group's deputy leader was killed in a US drone strike.

Despite the Taliban's reluctance, Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has continued to push for negotiations since he took office in June.

## **Balochistan unrest: 592 mutilated bodies found in last three years**

The home and tribal affairs department of Balochistan Wednesday revealed that 592 mutilated dead bodies have been found in the last three years from different parts of the militancy-hit province of Pakistan.

According to documents obtained by Dawn.com, police and other law enforcers have found 592 bullet-riddled bodies since 2010 to September 2013.

The documents indicate an increase in recovery of mutilated bodies during the current year in different volatile parts of Balochistan province, the least developed of the country.

Most of the dead bodies were found in Quetta, Khuzdar, Kalat and the volatile Mekran belt. "Most of the dead bodies are of Baloch political workers," the document said, adding that few of the victims belong to other ethnic groups as well.

The provincial home ministry has directed all concerned deputy commissioners and concerned police officials to properly investigate into the recovery of dead bodies.

Besides mutilated dead bodies, the document revealed that 132 cases of missing persons were pending before the Supreme Court and the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances (CIED), headed by Justice (retd) Javed Iqbal. Eight new cases of missing persons have been registered with the provincial home and tribal affairs department.

“66 cases of missing persons are pending before Supreme Court and 64 are pending before the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances,” the document said.

The ministry said most of the cases of missing persons were pertaining to Khuzdar, Kalat, Mastung, Panjgoor, Turbat and other troubled parts of Balochistan.

However, Voice for Baloch Missing Persons (VBMP) – a non-profit rights group – claimed that the number of missing persons was more than what was being claimed by the home department.

Nasrullah Baloch, the chairman of VBMP claimed that thousands of Baloch missing persons were picked up from different parts of the province.

Chief Minister Balochistan Dr Abdul Malik Baloch has already termed recovery of missing persons and an end to recovery of mutilated dead bodies as most important for restoration of peace in the troubled province.

## **Army withdrawal from Malakand approved by KP govt**

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government announced on Saturday that withdrawal of troops from Malakand division would begin next month and the civil administration would take over control of the area.

Shiraz Paracha, spokesman for Chief Minister Pervez Khattak, said the withdrawal could begin in mid-October.

In the first phase, troops would be pulled out from Buner and Shangla districts. The spokesman said the chief minister had approved the plan and 'everybody' had been consulted.

The announcement comes at a time when the federal government is preparing to launch peace talks with the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) in the light of decisions of an all-party conference.

The army was called out by the Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal government in 2007 to assist the administration in parts of Malakand division to quell militancy in the mountainous region. The division comprises Swat, Buner, Shangla, Upper Dir, Lower Dir, Chitral and Malakand districts.

When several militant groups, led by Mullah Fazlullah, established a parallel administration in Swat, Buner and other adjoining districts and started brutalities, the army launched an operation in May 2009. The air force assisted the army.

Over two million civilians were displaced from the area due to the conflict.

An official communiqué issued from the CM House stated that KP Chief Minister Pervez Khattak announced the withdrawal of army from Malakand division in Nowshera.

Khattak said that withdrawal of army from these two districts would be followed by a phase-wise withdrawal from Upper Dir, Lower Dir and Swat where 'the writ of the government has been consolidated'.

Khattak said that the army was deployed in the Malakand division due to increasing activities of the Taliban in 2007.

The security forces had offered innumerable sacrifices to clear the area and restore peace and now 'hundreds of displaced people are back'.

The chief minister said that the KP government wanted to resolve all issues through talks and it has been successful in maintaining the writ of the government.

The residents of Malakand have expressed their reservations time and again about the militants' threat from across the border where the Fazlullah-led Taliban have safe heavens in Nuristan and Kunar provinces and launch attacks in Upper Dir, Lower Dir and in Bajaur Agency as well.

## Army, government at loggerheads over Taliban talks

**Disagreement over how to handle an escalating insurgency has put Pakistan's all-powerful army on a collision course with the government, with the military increasingly vocal in its criticism of civilian leaders, officials and diplomats said.**

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif who came to power in May has promised to tame militancy through negotiations, but four months on, talks have yet to start and attacks continue daily.

The army has avoided open confrontation with Sharif and his government but tension is on the rise.

"The army chief ... is thinking: 'Mian Sahib (Nawaz Sharif), enough is enough'," a senior army officer serving in the strife-plagued tribal area along the Afghan border told Reuters during a visit to Islamabad.

The military-civilian discord has been the source of tension throughout Pakistani history but Sharif's election has raised hopes the government would get a larger say following Pakistan's first transition between civilian administrations.

Sharif promised to hold talk with the militants during the election campaign, a welcome vow for many Pakistanis who, while abhorring the bombers, have never been convinced of the necessity of joining the US-led campaign against militancy.

The army, which keeps thousands of troops in the tribal belt, opposes talks with the Pakistani Taliban, saying previous attempts to bring the militants to the negotiating table yielded no results.

Frustration spilled into the open on Sunday when a roadside bomb killed a general and another officer near the Afghan border, just days after government officials promised to launch peace negotiations with the Pakistani Taliban soon.

“This incident has dealt a serious blow (to the peace process),” Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar told parliament this week. “We have come to a standstill.”

### **‘Quite disturbing’**

The tension comes at a crucial time when speculation is mounting over who will replace the army chief, General Ashfaq Kayani, arguably Pakistan’s most powerful man, who is due to retire in November.

The army put out a toughly worded statement this week.

“While reaffirming the army’s support for the political process, (Kayani) also said, unequivocally, that terrorists will not be allowed to take advantage of it,” it said.

“The army has the ability and the will to take the fight to the terrorists.”

The United States, Pakistan’s biggest donor, is pushing Islamabad to step up its campaign against groups such as the Haqqani network which regularly attacks US forces in Afghanistan from hideouts in Pakistani mountains.

“The absence of a strong government narrative on how to counter terrorism is quite disturbing for everyone, including the army chief,” said a senior Western diplomat in Islamabad.

The Pakistani Taliban are a fragmented alliance of factions with no coherent voice. Some within the group have announced preconditions, while others have denied this. The government would not say who would talk to whom, where and when.

“Until they (government) say out loud who the enemy is, there can be no policy and there can be no results,” said the senior military officer.

The army says it would not agree to any preconditions, particularly the withdrawal of troops from tribal areas.

“They are saying: ‘Get out of here and let us be kings’,” another army source also serving in the tribal belt said of the Pakistani Taliban. “That’s not an option.”



## **Govt tells NA it will build KBD ‘with consensus’**

The PML-N government Friday informed the National Assembly that it has plans to construct new hydropower projects, including the controversial Kalabagh Dam, but it assured the enraged opposition that no major project would be carried out without a national consensus.

The government also informed the House that cross-border incident of firing at Pak-Afghan border is a condemnable act, which caused a blow to Pakistan’s efforts for making peace. “Such kind of incidents are condemnable and sabotage the efforts for peace in the region,” said Kashmir Affairs Minister Muhammad Birjees Tahir.

Giving a policy statement on firing incident on Pak-Afghan border, he said the incident happened on September 18 at around 9:30am as Afghan security forces started firing from Zero Line to Pakistan side. Five Pakistani citizens lost their lives while a women was injured due to this unprovoked firing.

The minister said that Pakistan registered strong protest with Afghan government through diplomatic mission in Kabul and also asked them to investigate the incident thoroughly. Earlier, Leader of Opposition in the National Assembly Syed Khursheed, who attended assembly session after weeklong break, demanded government version on this incident. The House was also informed that Wapda has prepared a master plan to construct new hydropower projects, including Kalabagh Dam (KBD) in the country. The opposition benches, especially PPP members, strongly criticised the government plans to revive the much-opposed Kalabagh Dam project. However, the government side assured that all under planning projects would be constructed with the national consensus. It is the second time the

PML-N government has officially stated that it plans to develop consensus on KBD and construct this multi-purpose mega project.

During the PPP government its minister for water and power had told the assembly that Kalabagh Dam project was highly beneficial for the country but it did not went ahead with its construction and made no serious effort to develop consensus among the provinces on the matter.

Responding to a question posed by Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) lawmaker Sahibzada Tariq Ullah, Minister of State for Water and Power Abid Sher Ali assured the assembly that KBD would not be constructed without national consensus. To a supplementary question from PPP's Imran Zafar Leghari, the minister repeated that the government would take up this project only after consultation with all the political parties.

According to a written reply of the minister, Naulong Dam and Terbela 4th extension was in the list of ready for construction projects. The under planning projects in Wapda's master plan include Kalabagh Dam, Muhamand (Munda) Dam, Bara Dam, Tank Zam Dam, Akhori Dam, Shyok Dam, Lower Palas valley and Lower Spat Gah.

To another question, the minister said the government is also considering a Russian proposal regarding purchase of 5,000MW electricity. PML-N government is also committed to convert thermal power plants into coal based plants, which would produce cheap electricity, he added. Abid said cost of electricity production through a coal power plant would be 10 to 11 rupees per unit as against the cost at thermal plants of 21 to 22 rupees. The House during the question-hour also saw verbal brawl between the government and opposition benches when one opposition member made offensive remarks against Minister Abid Sher Ali. The matter was resolved with the timely intervention of Speaker Ayaz Sadiq who urged the MNA to

take his words back and expunged them from the record. Minister for Industries and Production, Ghulam Murtaza Khan Jatoi, informed that Pakistan Steel Mills (PSM) had caused a loss of Rs86 billion to the national exchequer from 2008 to 2012. "Four bailout packages worth Rs40 billion had been given to the Steel Mill during this period," he added. To a question about the privatisation of the PSM, he said that there is no fresh proposal under consideration in that regard.

Taking part in debate on former President Asif Ali Zardari's address to the parliament, MNA Essa Noori said that 85 persons have went missing in Balochistan in last three months. He further said that 65 mutilated bodies were also found in different areas of the province.

To a question about minorities, Religious Affairs Minister Sardar Muhammad Yusuf said that the ministry had spent over Rs337 million on the development schemes."Rs22 million were given to 10 minorities MNAs in October 2011 as special grants," he informed.

To another question, he said that there was no shortage of rooms for visitors at Gurdawara Nanakana Sahib, as a residential block consisting 500 rooms has been constructed in the premises of Gurdawara Janam Asthan Nankana Sahib.

## **Pak-US relations transitory in nature**

**By Asif Haroon Raja**

Delving into the history of Pak-US relations spread over six decades one finds that the US relationship was always transitory in nature. After the birth of Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam and Liaquat Ali Khan managed to keep foreign influence at bay. Through their strength of superior leadership and character, they overcame plethora of teething problems mostly created by the British and India. The country not only survived but succeeded in developing its own economic feet. After the death of Liaquat Ali in October 1951, regionalism raised its ugly head and it became easier for the US to expand its perverse influence in Pakistan because of self-serving mini-mind leaders.

The US influence over Pakistan has remained ever pervasive. Not only governments have come and gone under the directions of Washington, its economic health has also been regulated by it. Whenever the US desired to fulfill its interests in this region with the help of Pakistan, it uplifted its fortunes by doling out aid generously and winking at aid giving agencies to do the same. Aid injections are however strictly regulated in a manner to keep Pakistan afloat but dependent. Aid flow and goodwill prevailed as long as Pakistan leadership abided to its commands and served its interests loyally.

No sooner the US objectives are achieved, or it finds that Pakistan's enthusiasm in performance of its assigned tasks is waning, or is becoming

reluctant or defiant, or tilting towards some other power; its friendship turns into coldness and at times hostility. The chosen leader suddenly turns from an asset into a liability and is either humiliatingly ousted from power or murdered. Pakistan was punished when it lost its utility value, or for its defiance through sanctions, media war, coercion and fomenting internal instability to bleed its economy.

The US needed Pakistan's services in early 1950s because of Communist threat and made it member of SEATO and CENTO. Pakistan joined the western pacts under the belief that it would remain secure from expansionist India. Moreover, all our political leaders and Governor/President after Liaquat Ali were pro-US. The US had no other alternative in this vital region since India was the camp follower of former Soviet Union and had refused to become part of defensive arc stretching from Turkey and Iran to Pakistan.

Even in those hey days during which Pakistan was termed as the most allied ally of the allies, the US stance was unfair. During 1962 Indo-China border conflict, the US falsely assured Ayub Khan that if he didn't take advantage of the precarious military situation of India, it will help in resolving Kashmir dispute. Pakistan thus missed a golden chance to reclaim Kashmir. The US started building up Indian military in the aftermath of its humiliating defeat in the conflict, which enabled Indian Army to raise five additional infantry divisions between 1962 and 1965 and tilt the military balance in its favor.

During the 1965 Indo-Pak War, the US stopped economic as well as military aid including spare parts to Pakistan knowing that USSR was continuing to deliver India's entire military needs. The US did not take into account that

Pak military was entirely dependent upon US manufactured weaponry and was five times inferior to India both in men and material. Lowering of stocks of war munitions prevented Pakistan military from taking the war into Indian Territory and accepted Indian requested ceasefire after Indian offensives were effectively blunted on all fronts. Stoppage of economic assistance seriously impacted Ayub's ambitious second five-year development program (1965-1970), which had all the potential to address east-west inequities and to turn Pakistan into an Asian tiger.

President Ayub Khan remained in very good books of USA as long as he leaned heavily on USA but was unceremoniously ousted from power when he started tilting towards China. Moscow felt highly offended when Pakistan under Gen Yahya Khan acted as a conduit in 1971 to bring a thaw in China-US relations and decided to punish Pakistan. The turning point in Pak-US relations came during the 1971 Indo-Pak war when Pakistan's repeated requests to help save marooned East Pakistan from falling were ignored by Washington while Moscow provided full support to India. ZA Bhutto was made a horrible example when he refused to stop nuclear program which started in 1976 in response to India's nuclear explosion at Pokhran in 1974.

After betraying Pakistan in the 1965 and 1971 wars against India, the US again befriended Pakistan in 1981 to help fight the proxy war against Soviet forces in Afghanistan. All the sins of President Ziaul Haq were ignored when he agreed to make Pakistan the frontline state of the US led Free World and assist the Mujahideen. His inclination towards Islam and continuance of nuclear program at Kahuta were accepted by Reagan and he was eulogized as a great Mujahid.

No sooner the objectives were accomplished in 1988; Pakistan's sacrifices were forgotten. Zia the prime mover of Afghan Jihad was first terrorized through Ojhri Camp disaster in May 1988 and when he didn't buckle, 'Get Zia' plan was conceived. He died in a C-130 plane crash on August 17, 1988. Although the crash of the most secure aircraft still remains a mystery, it is generally believed that CIA was behind it since Zia's image in the Muslim world had shot up sky high and he had successfully weaponized nuclear program. He was all set to impose Shariah in Pakistan and had made a permanent place in the hearts of Afghans. He had become a danger man for the US and hence had to be got rid of.

Pakistan was abandoned with indecent haste and harsh sanctions were imposed under Pressler Amendment to force it to roll back its expensive nuclear program. Benazir Bhutto was twice brought into power in 1990s to denuclearize Pakistan, but each time she refused to oblige. Nawaz Sharif became a marked man after he refused to succumb to US-UK pressure and carried out six nuclear tests in May 1998 in response to Indian tests. To punish him, conditions were created for his removal from power and takeover by Gen Musharraf in October 1999. This crucial change was affected in anticipation to 9/11 and the agenda the US had chalked out against the Muslims. Nawaz survived death sentence by the skin of his teeth owing to Saudi intervention.

After 9/11, the US once again offered its hand of friendship. President Bush led team deceived Gen Musharraf that it will make Pakistan its strategic partner and resolve all its economic problems if it agreed to become the frontline state in the war on terror. Pakistan was assured that this time the

US would forge lasting relationship based on mutual trust and friendship and will not repeat past mistakes. Pakistan was taken out of the intensive care unit and given a new lease of life for next few years but the economic progress achieved during Musharraf regime proved short-lived since economy was consumer oriented.

Benazir Bhutto was all set to take over as PM for the third time, but was bumped off on December 27, 2007 since she had once again started to deflect from the route prescribed by USA. She was required to share power with Musharraf and not to confront him. Surprisingly, among the list of suspects, CIA doesn't figure out. Five years and nine months have gone past and her murderers have still not been traced. After her murder, NRO cleansed dream team of PPP-MQM-ANP was installed by USA in March 2008 to serve its interests without demur.

Musharraf was allowed to go in exile since in that timeframe he had become a liability. He was to be re-launched at an appropriate time. Whatever economic gains made during his tenure went down the drain because of poor governance, incompetence and corruption of the PPP led regime. Pakistan lost many times more than what it had gained through US aid.

Although Pakistan rendered huge sacrifices in fighting US imposed war, the US neither acknowledged its sacrifices nor compensated it for the human and material losses it incurred since the puppet regime was taken for granted. The relations remained uneasy all along due to distrustful and bossy attitude of the US and GHQ's reluctance to obey Washington's command blindly. Frostiness turned into near hostility in 2011 as a consequence to Raymond Davis incident, stealth attack in Abbottabad and



attack on Salala border post killing 24 Pak soldiers. Between December 2011 and July 2012, Pak-US relations were at lowest ebb. Thereafter the relations have begun to improve steadily although not without hiccups.

This process of giving artificial respiration through US aid, IMF, World Bank, Paris Club, ADB when Pakistan's services are needed followed by policy of coercion to compel it to tow its line has been going on since 1953. It is a coincidence that whenever the US had to fulfill its strategic interests in this region, Pakistan was ruled by a military dictator. One window operation suited Washington to elicit quick responses rather than having to deal with multi-layered parliamentary system. For its crucial endgame in Afghanistan, the US tried its best to force Gen Ashfaq Kayani to take over the reins of power but the latter refused to oblige and let the change take place through democratic process.

Lot of water has flown in River Indus since September 2001, when the US at its pinnacle of glory had ordered Pakistan to facilitate its intrusion into Afghanistan. After twelve years, the US has lost its splendor and is caught up in dire strait because of higgledy-piggledy situation in Afghanistan. It is requesting Pakistan which it has been drubbing on account of its uncommitted sins all these years to facilitate its safe departure from Afghanistan. It is urging Pakistan to persuade the Taliban to talk and arrive at a negotiated political settlement so that it could leave behind stable Afghanistan and friendly government. Under the changed environment there is visible change in the behavior of US officials. Rate of drone strikes has come down significantly and targets are chosen with care.

Tone and tenor of US officials have become affable and conciliatory. Despite the apparent thaw in relations, it will be early to jump to conclusion that all

friction points have been removed and trust restored. Such assuring words and promises had been uttered by US officials' way back in 2001 but their stance started changing after 2004. Thereon, it became difficult for Pakistan to ascertain whether it was an ally or foe of USA.

Even after its reassurance that the US would refrain from committing past mistakes and would make amends for the excesses committed, it keeps India and Afghanistan on higher priority. TTP and BLA are still being funded and used to destabilize Pakistan through proxy war. Ongoing escalation of tension along the LoC together with tantrums of unpredictable Karzai and spate of terrorist acts in various parts of Pakistan are designed to put pressure on the new government to pick up cudgels against the militants in FATA rather than initiating peace talks. Acceleration of militancy in Balochistan is aimed at giving a message that establishment of nationalist government led by Dr Malik has not lessened the resolve of separatists seeking independence of Balochistan.

Other objectives are to sabotage IP gas pipeline and Gawadar projects. Likewise, stepped up terrorist acts in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are aimed at undermining PTI government advocating peace talks with Taliban. Karachi is being bled to further bleed the economy of Pakistan. Projected peace talks with TTP are resented and US toadies are applying all tricks to kill the initiative taken by All Parties Conference (APC).

Apart from application of pressure tactics to keep Pakistan tamed, the US is bent upon making India a global power, a permanent member of UNSC, a counterweight to China and a dominant player in Afghanistan. To this end, the US has taken practical steps to strengthen India economically and militarily. It would like settlement of Kashmir issue but on Indian terms. It

will not benefit Pakistan at the cost of annoying India. In other words, as a policy it would always prefer India over Pakistan and in case of Indo-Pak war it will stand behind India.

In the backdrop of foreign policy framework of USA in which Pakistan doesn't figure out, we must be careful in jumping to wishful conclusions. We shouldn't lose sight of prudence and should remain vigilant not to again get deceived by sweet talk of US leaders asserting that they want to move to 'full partnership' with Pakistan. Rather, our leadership should be mentally prepared to get ditched once again after completion of ISAF's drawdown in December 2014. Rather than keeping all our eggs in the basket of untrustworthy USA, our policy makers formulating national security policy should distribute the eggs pragmatically and give top priority to national interests.

Holding of Defence Committee National Security Council to take stock of internal and external security issues, on-going Rangers led operation in Karachi under the captaincy of Chief Minister Sindh to tackle lawlessness after taking all stakeholders on board, and holding of APC to discuss ways and means to tackle extremism and terrorism are steps in the right direction. It was satisfying to hear all the participants of APC condemning drones as illegal and agreeing to take up the matter to the UN, terming terrorism as a blowback from Afghan war and endorsing holding talks with Taliban with no strings attached. It was rightly decided to abandon policy of fight-and-fight or fight-and-talk and to give peace a chance.

Reaffirmation of complete trust and confidence in the armed forces and extending full support to them in tackling security challenges was gratifying.

Praying for the martyrs in war on terror and extending sympathies to the bereaved families and calling upon provincial governments to provide assistance to them were praiseworthy gestures. It is also good to hear that TTP has welcomed the offer of talks and expressed willingness to hold negotiations without conditions.

Having made all the noble declarations, what is now needed is sincere and honest implementation of resolution in letter and spirit and not like the previous two joint resolutions of APC/Parliament. While the news of troops falling back from Shangla, Dir and Malakand in October in phase 1 and from Swat in phase 2 was being greeted, ill-fated martyrdom of Maj Gen Sanaullah, Lt Col Tauseef and L/Naik Imran in Upper Dir on 15 September on account of IED has vitiated the atmosphere of peace talks. IED was in all probability planted by fugitive Fazlullah's men assisted by external forces to sabotage peace talks. Anti-state elements and spoilers need to be kept under strict scrutiny and exposed.

## **Syria completes handover of chemical weapons inventory on time**

Syria has completed the handover of an inventory of its chemical stockpile by a Saturday deadline laid out in a U.S.-Russian disarmament plan, the world's chemical weapons watchdog said.

The "OPCW has confirmed that it has received the expected disclosure from the Syrian government regarding its chemical weapons program," the Hague-based Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons said in an email received by Agence France-Presse.

"The Technical Secretariat is currently reviewing the information received."

The watchdog, which will oversee the removal of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's chemical weapons stockpile, said it expects to receive more information from the Syrian government in the coming days.

Syria gave the first details of its chemical arsenal on Friday, the agency said.

"The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons has received an initial disclosure from the Syrian government of its chemical weapons program," an OPCW statement said.

A spokesman for the U.N.-backed agency said: "We have received part of the verification and we expect more."

The organization has postponed a meeting of its Executive Council set for Sunday that had been due to discuss how to dismantle Syria's chemical weapons program, AFP reported.

Damascus had until Saturday to supply details of its arsenal, in line with a U.S.-Russian plan that helped prevent military action on regime targets following a chemical attack last month that killed hundreds of people.

China on Friday has called for the quick implementation of the plan, voicing hope for a political solution to the crisis.

Foreign Minister Wang Yi, said that China was "firmly opposed to the use of chemical weapons by any country or individual," AFP quoted him as saying.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov had agreed on Friday to continue cooperating, "moving not only towards the adoption of the OPCW rules and regulations, but also a resolution that is firm and strong within the United Nations," Kerry told reporters in Washington.

One Western diplomat warned on Friday that a failure by Assad to account for all the suspected stockpile would cause world powers to seek immediate action at the U.N. Security Council to force Damascus to comply.

If there were gaps in the documentation, the diplomat said, "this matter is going to go straight to the Security Council."

## US, Iran Talk Nicely, but Nuke Progress Uncertain

Iran and the United States are making plenty of friendly gestures, but real progress is going to be harder. A notable first meeting between the two nations' presidents suddenly seems possible, but without nuclear concessions the U.S. is unlikely to give Tehran what it wants: an easing of punishing sanctions that have resulted in soaring inflation and unemployment.

President Barack Obama and Iran's new president, Hasan Rouhani, both will be in New York next week for the U.N. General Assembly. And a recent flurry of goodwill gestures has raised the prospect that they will meet face to face.

As part of the effort to cast a promising outlook on Iranian diplomacy, Rouhani touted his commitment to "constructive engagement" in a column published Friday in The Washington Post. He wrote that nations spend a lot of time, perhaps too much, discussing what they don't want rather than what they do want.

"This approach can be useful for efforts to prevent cold conflicts from turning hot. But to move beyond impasses, whether in relation to Syria, my country's nuclear program or its relations with the United States, we need to aim higher," Rouhani said.

"Rather than focusing on how to prevent things from getting worse, we need to think — and talk — about how to make things better. To do that, we all need to muster the courage to start conveying what we want — clearly, concisely and sincerely — and to back it up with the political will to take necessary action."

The nuclear issue may be the most difficult challenge. The U.S. and other world powers are seeking reductions in Iran's uranium enrichment, real-time monitoring of its nuclear facilities and scaled-back production at its underground Fordo facility. Not likely, Iran experts say. At least not yet.

"I'm a bit skeptical that we'll see those kinds of concessions this early in the game," said Gary Samore, who until earlier this year was Obama's top arms control adviser.

The Obama administration has welcomed the election of Rouhani, a moderate cleric who achieved a stunning victory in Iran's June presidential elections. But U.S. officials are still skeptical of whether Rouhani's more palatable rhetoric will be followed by actual shifts in Iran's longstanding refusal to curb its nuclear program. The U.S. and its allies suspect Iran is trying to produce a nuclear weapon, though Tehran insists its nuclear activities are only for producing energy and for medical research.

Obama has been testing the waters through an exchange of letters with his Iranian counterpart. U.S. officials say Obama used his correspondence to convey urgency in resolving the nuclear dispute through diplomacy before that option is cut off.

Rouhani, in an interview with NBC News, said he thanked Obama for his outreach and "expressed Iran's viewpoint on the issues raised in his letter and some other issues."

Rouhani has made other overtures that have grabbed the Obama administration's attention. He included Iran's only Jewish lawmaker in his delegation to the U.N. meeting. And the Iranian government this week released a dozen prominent political prisoners, including a human rights



lawyer who defended opposition activists and was imprisoned for three years.

White House officials said Friday that no meetings between Obama and Rouhani are scheduled, but they left open the prospect of a direct exchange.

## **Pakistan releases top Afghan Taliban prisoner**

Pakistan released its highest-ranking Afghan Taliban prisoner on Saturday in an effort to jump-start Afghanistan's struggling peace process, Pakistani officials said.

The Afghan government has long demanded that Pakistan free Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, the Taliban's former deputy leader who was arrested in a joint raid with the CIA in the southern Pakistani city of Karachi in 2010. Pakistani intelligence and security officials confirmed that he left detention Saturday but did not provide any details, including where he was held. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk to the media.

Pakistan's Foreign Ministry announced earlier that Baradar would be released Saturday "to further facilitate the Afghan reconciliation process," but also didn't provide any details.

Mohammad Ismail Qasimyar, a member of the council tasked by the Afghan government to negotiate with the Taliban, praised Baradar's release, saying "we are very much hopeful that Mullah Baradar can play an important role in the peace process."

Wakil Ahmad Muttawakil, who served as foreign minister for the Taliban when the group ruled Afghanistan, also hailed Bardar's release and cautioned Pakistan not to try to control his movements now that he is free.

"They also have to allow him contact with Taleban leaders and for him to be useful for peace in Afghanistan," Muttawakil told The Associated Press.

Pakistan has released at least 33 Taleban prisoners over the last year at the Afghan government's request in an attempt to boost peace negotiations between the insurgents and Kabul.

But there is no sign that the previous releases have helped peace talks, and some of the prisoners are believed to have returned to the fight against the Afghan government. The US was reluctant to see Baradar released, believing he would also return to the battlefield.

Afghanistan has in the past called on Pakistan to release Taleban prisoners into its custody. But they have instead been set free in Pakistan, and it was likely the same would happen with Baradar.

Afghanistan's Foreign Ministry spokesman Janan Mosazai has said Baradar must be "accessible, secure and with a known address" if he remains in Pakistan.

The circumstances surrounding Baradar's arrest in Karachi were murky. Afghan officials said at the time that he was holding secret peace talks with the Afghan government and accused Pakistan of arresting him to sabotage or gain control of the process.

# Atrocities against women

Author: I.A. Rehman

**THE display of anger and outrage at the brutal rape of a small girl in Lahore will acquire meaning only if the public discourse is extended beyond demands for punishing the culprit(s) and practical steps can be taken to eliminate the causes of the Pakistani woman's increased vulnerability to assault and abuse.**

That the indescribably horrible assault on the five-year-old girl in Lahore must not go unpunished is a perfectly valid call, though subject to respect for the moratorium on the death penalty. But nobody whose conscience has only now been aroused should stop short of looking at sexual assaults on girls in a proper context.

To begin with, the rape of little girls in Pakistan is not so infrequent as some people might think. A day after the Lahore girl was ravaged, incidents of rape and gang rape on minor girls were reported from Faisalabad, Tandliawala, Kasur, Toba Tek Singh, Hafizabad and Dera Ismail Khan.

The Lahore police chief disclosed that his city force alone had registered 113 cases of rape and 32 incidents of gang rape during the first eight months of the current year. A senior police officer was quoted as saying that most of the rape victims were teenaged girls and that the number of victims could be higher as many cases were not reported to the police. Both the state and civil society should realise that the sexual abuse of girls is a large-scale and widespread phenomenon and it needs to be tackled as such.

The second fact to be borne in mind is that such devastation of girls is not a simple matter of crime and punishment and that the evil has flourished in

spite of tightening of the relevant laws over the past 34 years or so. For instance, Gen Zia added Section 354-A to the Penal Code which prescribes death penalty for "assault or use of criminal force to women and stripping her of her clothes".

The Offence of Zina (enforcement of Hudood) Ordinance of 1979 laid down the death penalty for several forms of rape. In 1990, Section 164-A of the Penal Code was amended to raise the age of children from 10 to 14 whose abduction "in order that a person may be murdered or subjected to grievous hurt, or slavery, or to the lust of any person...." was punishable by death.

Has making the laws more stringent caused a decline in sexual crimes against women, particularly girls? If common experience is any guide the answer is in the negative. In fact, the dangerous consequences of making and amending laws in haste, often to satisfy the demands from a brutalised society, have become apparent.

For example, the prescription of death penalty for gang rape, the same punishment that is awarded for murder, operates as an inducement to the culprits to kill their victim after violating her, thus eliminating the key witness of their crime.

It is common knowledge that the rape of women in Pakistan is not merely one of the offences committed by individual criminals, it is also a weapon to be used to subjugate weaker people and to humiliate adversaries in tribal/feudal conflicts.

Sociologists and psychologists could tell us about the factors that are keeping alive in our society the feudal attitudes towards women, the tendency to treat them as chattel.

From a layman's point of view some of the worst feudal practices involving the degradation of women that were confined to the tribal areas have lately spread to settled, supposedly civilised, parts of the country. Reports of killing of women for men's honour from cities like Lahore and Karachi are enough to confirm this.

Worse, some of the feudal practices, such as denial of girls' right to education, are now being promoted as religious injunctions, eg the destruction of girls' schools in areas infested with militants. Quite clearly, the more retrogressive that society becomes the greater will be the exploitation of women in various forms, including sexual abuse.

Law and order authorities and defenders of public morality in religious parties are quick to attribute attacks on girls to the declining moral standards of a society under the influence of Western culture, the internet and social media. But there seems to be greater force in the argument that women's vulnerability has increased as a result of campaigns to restrict their mobility, greater emphasis on gender segregation and a variety of attempts to reduce women's role in public life.

Is there any connection between attacks on minor girls and the religious authorities' insistence on considering a girl fit for marriage as soon as she reaches the age of puberty and their reluctance to denounce marriage of men (of any age) to teenage girls?

Again, to answer this, we need to be guided not only by the research of subject specialists but also by the ulema. To the mind of sex-starved and depraved young men, especially in a suburban environment, if a girl in her teens is fit to be given away in marriage she is fair game for forced sex. A study should be undertaken to find out whether increasing emphasis on

gender segregation in educational institutions, offices and public places is making women safer or their lives more hazardous.

Finally, the nexus between growing religiosity and the rise in attacks on women must be thoroughly explored. The starting point should be a study of Gen Ziaul Haq's measures aimed at curtailing women's freedoms.

To sum up, devising workable plans to deal with the increase in women's vulnerability due to conservation of feudal cultural practices, reinforcement of patriarchy and the abuse of belief to deny women their rights is as important, if not more, as punishing criminals.

# The IMF programme

Author: Dr Ashfaque H Khan

**The Executive Board of the IMF has approved a 36-month programme under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) for US\$ 6.68 billion on September 4, 2013. After the board approval, the IMF has released the first tranche of \$540 million to the Pakistani authorities. The remainder of the amount will be released in equal instalments subject to the satisfactory quarterly reviews.**

The efforts of the present government must be appreciated for successfully negotiating a programme with the IMF within the first 100 days of its tenure.

This programme supposedly aims to reduce the risk of balance of payment crisis in the short-term and to address Pakistan's underlying medium-term problems to sustain higher and more inclusive growth. Quantitative performance criteria are set to reduce fiscal deficit, build foreign exchange reserves and lower inflation rate. Structural conditionality is designed to strengthen the country's tax system, address energy bottlenecks, liberalise the trade regime, restructure or privatise PSEs, improve the business climate, strengthen the SBP's operational independence, enhance financial sector stability, and protect the most vulnerable from the adjustment costs.

The present IMF programme is designed in the worst form of 'stabilisation first' with major emphasis on reducing budget deficit, controlling public debt, building foreign exchange reserves and keeping inflation low. Growth and employment generation have been ignored altogether at least during the medium-term. The readers are reminded that the conventional macroeconomic policies that focused primarily on stabilisation to create the



conditions for growth and employment generation have been discredited, particularly after the recent experiences of Greece, Spain, Italy and other European countries.

The sharp fiscal adjustment to stabilise the economy was found to be associated with human suffering of colossal proportions. Such policies have not only postponed economic recovery in these European countries but some of them had to battle 60 percent youth unemployment with all its social consequences.

The pain and suffering of the people in Europe have forced global leaders to rethink the 'stabilisation first' strategy. Over the last two years and as late as in early September this year in St Petersburg, the G-20 leaders recognised the importance of growth, job creation, equality and social development. They brought robust and 'job-rich' growth which is inclusive, broad-based and sustainable at the centre of macroeconomic policies.

The managing director of the IMF has been attending the G-20 Summit and as such is fully cognizant of the developments. Given the fact that the eurozone economies are still weak and fragile and the risk of prolonged stagnation is gaining traction, the IMF on July 25 strongly recommended these economies to ease monetary and fiscal policy to spur growth and employment. Why have such policies not been prescribed for Pakistan which is stuck in a low growth mode (three percent per annum) for five consecutive years? Do Pakistan's economic woes differ from Greece and Spain? The answer is no but the prescriptions are discriminatory.

Under the no-programme scenario, Pakistan's economy, as projected by the IMF, continues to grow by three percent per annum but with the programme, it grows at a marginally better rate of 3.2 percent during the

programme period and 3.8 percent over the next five years. Given the demographic structure of Pakistan, over 2.5 million new job seekers are entering the job market annually for which its economy must grow by 7-8 percent per annum to at least absorb the new entrants.

Under the IMF programme the people of Pakistan will experience the pains of adjustment on the one hand and a growing pool of the unemployed, particularly the youth, on the other. Such an outcome will have disastrous consequences both for the country and the political leadership. The conventional macroeconomic prescription has not worked in Europe; it is not working in Asia-Pacific and, therefore, will not work in Pakistan.

I would like to make it abundantly clear that I am not at all advocating lax fiscal and monetary policies; neither am I encouraging fiscal irresponsibility. I am simply advocating for striking a balance between stabilisation and the developmental roles of macroeconomic policies. Such balance is missing in the IMF programme. It is a stabilisation policy of the 1980s vintage, applied in 2013.

The world has changed since the 1980s. The new generation economists have learnt new tools and better way to address the conventional challenges. It was the same new generation of economists that brought the world economy out of the great recession of 2007/2008 within two years. The older generation economists took seven years to take the world economy out of the Great Depression of the 1930s. While there can be several risks as documented by the IMF itself which have the capacity to derail the programme, the very design of the programme is a major risk.

Who will be blamed for the disastrous consequences of the programme? Naturally the present government and the IMF will be held responsible.

Granted that the IMF has bailed the country out of the economic mess created by the incompetent economic team of the previous regime. Nonetheless, the design of the programme is the greatest risk to its success. Asking a political government to reduce budget deficit by five percentage points of GDP (from 8.8 percent to 3.9 percent of GDP) in a 36-month programme with three percentage points of GDP alone in the current fiscal year is a tough target which in all probability will not be achieved.

While the IMF staff may be blamed for designing a programme that is bound to fail, the Pakistani authorities engaged in negotiation will equally be held responsible for its failure. The Pakistani side, it appears, was oblivious to the developments that were taking place on the global economic scene. They failed to put forward their views on fiscal deficit reduction, on the pace of removal of subsidies, on tax system and tax administration reforms and on growth and employment generation. They could have conveyed the social cost and human suffering of such a sharp adjustment. They could have argued for striking a balance between stabilisation and growth. It appears that Pakistan was in such dire straits that it wanted the IMF's support and money desperately.

This programme is different from past programmes in many ways. First, the Letter of Intent jointly signed by the finance minister and the governor of the SBP gives explicit commitment from the highest level of political leadership (prime minister), cabinet, and provincial governments to comply with the policies and reforms underlying the programme. This has never happened before.

Second, never before has the IMF been so explicit in commenting on the security, political and judicial environment of the country. It has talked about intensification of insurgency in Pakistan after the withdrawal of Nato

forces from Afghanistan, sectarian violence in Baluchistan and street crimes in Karachi. What message has the IMF conveyed to global investors? It is the weakness of the Pakistani authorities that allowed such misplaced comments to be the part of the document.

# Turkey Stands With al-Qaeda against the Kurds

By: Youssef Sheikho

**Turkey continues to support armed Islamist groups in their campaign against Kurdish militias along Syria's northern front. Yet the growing body count of al-Qaeda fighters in the north suggests that Turkish efforts are not entirely successful.**

**Qamishli** – The Turkish government is arguably the strongest backer of the armed Syrian opposition, especially the factions led by the Free Syrian Army (FSA). Turkey is also believed to be the main base for opposition fighters and their logistical and military supply lines. But while Turkish officials have no qualms about publicly acknowledging this direct support, Ankara denies it has any ties to al-Qaeda's affiliates active in Syria.

Turkey is also wary of seeing militants seize control of towns along the border with Turkey, such as Tall al-Abiad, Jarablos, and recently, Azaz, which is now settled by fighters from the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) following a ceasefire with the FSA's Northern Storm Brigade. Nevertheless, it seems that the government of Recep Tayyip Erdogan has found it necessary to provide military and logistical support to al-Qaeda's affiliates to fight the Kurds.

According to Kurdish sources in the Turkish border town of Ceylanpinar, it has become commonplace for the residents of border villages and cities to see Turkish ambulances near the areas where clashes take place between the Kurdish People's Protection Units (YPG) and radical Islamic brigades, to evacuate the latter's casualties and wounded to Turkish hospitals.

A video posted recently purports to show a Kurdish citizen in Turkey attacking wounded members of al-Nusra Front upon their arrival to a hospital in Ceylanpinar. Kurds in Turkey have also been staging protests against their government's support for radical groups.

It is also not odd to see the Turkish army supervising the transfer of al-Qaeda fighters across the border region in Turkey into the Kurdish areas on the Syrian side. It is also not odd to see the Turkish army supervising the transfer of al-Qaeda fighters across the border region in Turkey into the Kurdish areas on the Syrian side. A few days ago, the Turkish army allowed 150 fighters from ISIS and other Islamic brigades to cross to the village of Alouk, east of Ras al-Ayn (Serekani), along with six tanks and pick-up trucks equipped with machine guns. It appears that the goal of the move was to try to block the road between the cities of Derbassiyeh and Ras al-Ayn and cut off supplies to YPG fighters.

After four days of intense fighting, the Kurdish forces were able to take control of the village. Kurdish military sources told *Al-Akhbar* that more than 60 Islamic fighters had been killed in the fighting, including two commanders and 13 Kurdish fighters.

The opposition-aligned Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, quoting activists in the area, said that more than 39 bodies belonging to al-Qaeda fighters were spotted in the village. According to the Kurdish source, hundreds of al-Qaeda fighters flocked to the Hasakah governorate in early September to support the radical militants after they received heavy blows in Hasakah's southern countryside.

Turkish support for radical brigades was not limited to Hasakah, but also played out equally in villages and towns close to Tall al-Abiad in the Raqqa

governorate. In truth, the YPG have now accused the Turkish army of killing two of its fighters using snipers near an area where clashes were taking place between the Kurdish units and radical brigades in the Syrian border village of Sawsak, which was recently seized by Kurdish fighters after fierce clashes with jihadi groups.

For the first time since the start of the crisis in Syria, the YPG, which is affiliated with the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), issued a statement warning the Turkish government against continuing to provide support for the radical groups, or otherwise "face dire consequences." The statement called on Ankara "not to resort to dirty tactics that destabilize the region."

### **Six Suicide Attacks**

It is worth mentioning that over the past two months, al-Qaeda affiliates in Hasakah carried out six suicide attacks against Kurdish checkpoints near city entrances, killing 15 Kurdish fighters and two civilians. The YPG units have also captured Arab and foreign fighters, mostly from Libya, Tunisia, Egypt, and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

# Afghan repatriation will be completed by 2015, minister

By Mohammad Zafar

**Federal Minister for Borders and Northern areas Lieutenant General (Rtd) Abdul Qadir Baloch said Afghan refugees would voluntarily return to their country by 2015.**

Talking to media here on Monday Baloch said the repatriation of Afghan refugees depends on the situation in Afghanistan and that they would happily return to their country if the situation improves.

“We have discussed the issue with the Afghan authorities and a strategy has been formulated so that the Afghan refugees could go back to their country with dignity.”

Baloch added that Pakistan is providing all facilities to over 3,00,000 Afghan refugees living in Pakistan. He complained that NGOs are not providing any relief to the refugees.

Responding to a question about Afghan refugees purchasing property in Pakistan, he said a committee has been formed in this connection and he would lead it. “The committee will make recommendations and actions will be taken to curb such steps.”

Baloch informed that wherever camps of Afghan refugees were set up in the country over \$500 million were being spent under RAHA programme.



After the withdrawal of foreign troops in 2014, the law and order situation would deteriorate in Afghanistan that might scare refugees from going back to their homes, said minister.

### **48 illegal Afghan immigrants arrested**

Balochistan Frontier Corps have arrested 48 illegal Afghan immigrants from a passenger bus in Hazarganji area on Monday.

A spokesperson for the paramilitary force said that the Afghans had been arrested for allegedly entering Pakistan without any legal documents. The bus driver has also been arrested.

The alleged illegal immigrants have been handed over to local FIA branch which will initiate legal proceedings against them under the Foreign Act.

# Nairobi attack - Why Kenya and why now?

By: Simon Allison

When Kenya sent thousands of soldiers across the border to hunt down Al-Shabaab in Somalia, the Islamist militant group warned they would get their revenge. On Saturday, and through the weekend, the nightmares promised by Al-Shabaab became a bloody, body-strewn reality. SIMON ALLISON explains how Somalia's messy civil war spilled out of its borders, and wonders if Kenya's politicians will ask themselves the hard questions, or revert to the bombast that got them involved in the first place.

It's easy to forget, wandering through Nairobi, that this is a nation at war. There are a few clues – the mirror checks for car bombs, the metal detectors in supermarkets and public buildings, the odd grenade outside a nightclub – but the battlefield is far away and the fighting sporadic. In this year's presidential election, the war wasn't even a campaign issue, with candidates preferring instead to bicker about parliamentarians' salaries and the International Criminal Court.

There's no forgetting now.

With 68 people dead in the fancy Westgate shopping mall, at least 175 others nursing bullet injuries and an unknown number being held hostage somewhere in the building, the war has arrived in Nairobi in the most tragic possible way.

Kenya can't say it wasn't warned. Ever since October 2011, when 4,000-odd Kenyan troops were summarily dispatched across to the border into Somalia with a mandate to hunt down and destroy Al-Shabaab, the Islamist militant group has been promising a massive, bloody revenge. Although it was

always tempting to dismiss Al-Shabaab's hyperbole as empty, Comical Ali-style bluster, the group has form when it comes to revenge.

Remember it is only three years since the last major terrorist attack in Africa, when 76 died in twin bombings in the Ugandan capital Kampala as they watched the World Cup final. This was in direct response to Uganda's military intervention in Somalia, involving thousands of Ugandan soldiers operating under the aegis of the African Union Mission in Somalia.

Of course, being warned is not the same as being able to prevent these kinds of attacks. Nairobi's gunmen were clearly inspired by the Mumbai 2008 attacks, which analysts said at the time could be the template for terrorism of the future. Easier and cheaper than bombs, requiring just a handful of machine guns, plenty of ammo and a few men (and, in Nairobi, at least one woman) willing to die for their cause. And without going on full, permanent lockdown, what can cities do to prevent such an attack?

Still, in the light of this weekend's tragic scenes, it is worth revisiting Kenya's sudden decision to get itself involved in Somalia. Unlike Uganda's internationally approved military support for Somalia's fragile central government (along with troops from Burundi, and more recently Djibouti and Sierra Leone), Kenya's was a unilateral intervention that took everyone by surprise. And their goal was less about restoring stability in Somalia and more about wiping out Al-Shabaab and establishing a de facto buffer state between the two countries, a buffer state it hoped would keep Somalia's instability from spilling over its borders and threatening Kenya's vital tourism and shipping industries.

Before Kenya went to war that is exactly what had been happening. In the absence of any effective government, piracy in Somalia flourished, as did kidnappings for ransom. As pickings grew slim in Somalia itself, the pirates, kidnappers and militant groups trying to fund their operations looked further afield, with Kenyan tourist resorts – flush with wealthy western tourists – identified as perfect targets. Two foreigners were taken from two different coastal resort towns, while another two foreign aid workers were abducted from a refugee camp near the Somali border. The future for Mombasa port was also looking grim, with shipping companies looking for alternative destinations that would take them out of pirate range. Along with the flood of Somali refugees into Kenya, this was all too much for the country's unpopular government of national unity (who would also have welcomed the distraction from their own governance record and the popular approval boost that so often accompanies major military action).

And so Kenyan troops were sent in to one of Africa's most intractable conflicts. Al-Shabaab, then in control of most of Somalia (and alleged to have participated in some of the Kenyan kidnappings) was the obvious target.

Kenya's involvement was welcomed cautiously by the African and international diplomatic community, and has fundamentally altered the balance of power in Somalia. Whereas Amisom's approach was essentially defensive, Kenya went straight on the attack and ousted Al-Shabaab from most of its important strongholds, including its de facto capital in the port city of Kismayo. It allowed the federal government in Mogadishu to extend its reach and gave Amisom the encouragement it needed to secure Mogadishu properly, which explains the mini renaissance some say the city is currently enjoying (including hip restaurants, ice cream shops and TEDx talks).

The pressure has hit Al-Shabaab hard. Divisions in the group deteriorated into infighting, with several prominent defections. It has lost plenty of territory it once controlled, although it still remains in charge of vast swathes of the country. This pressure, ironically, may explain the timing and the spectacular nature of the Nairobi attack this weekend. In the face of fading influence, it is fighting to stay relevant and remain in the headlines.

Subsequent to the unilateral invasion, Kenyan troops were folded into Amisom and given a seal of international approval. Yet this retrospective legitimisation could not disguise that their intervention was in fact an invasion, and that the risk of blowback was always going to be high, especially when it became clear that Kenya's involvement was seriously hurting Al-Shabaab.

On that front, Al-Shabaab have delivered. Kenya's leaders now have some serious, difficult questions to ask themselves. Why is Kenya in Somalia? Is it worth staying? How likely are repeat attacks? Crucially, with President Uhuru Kenyatta already promising to "punish" those responsible, they need to ask whether sending even more troops in Somalia, with an even more aggressive mandate, is the best way to protect Kenyan citizens in the long run.

Also important for everyone to remember is that Al-Shabaab's actions do not define Somalia, or Somalis (after all, Al-Shabaab's primary target has always been Somalis themselves). Kenya has a sizeable Somali population and an entire suburb (Eastleigh) that is known as the Somali district. This has previously been the site of xenophobic violence, with Kenyans targeting Somalis in response to other attacks attributed to Al-Shabaab. Kenya's leaders have a duty to remind their citizens that this is not acceptable.

There is also a worry that this tragedy will be used as a bargaining chip in the trials of Kenyatta and his deputy, William Ruto, at the International Criminal Court. Already Ruto has requested that the court delay his trial so that he can deal with the aftermath of the massacre and there are rumours that Kenyatta wants to use it to bolster his argument that he is unable to attend his trial in person.

In the middle of this ongoing tragedy, Kenya needs good leadership more than ever. This is Kenyatta and Ruto's chance to show they can provide it, even if they haven't in the past. They owe the Westgate victims at least that much.

## EU says Iran, 6 key nations to hold nuclear talks

UNITED NATIONS (AP) Iran's new foreign minister will join talks with six key nations trying to rein in the Islamic Republic's nuclear program later this week at the United Nations, the European Union's foreign policy chief said Monday.

Thursday's meeting on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly would be the first in six years between a U.S. secretary of state and an Iranian foreign minister. It comes amid signs of a possible thaw in US-Iranian diplomatic relations, which were cut after the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

Catherine Ashton, the chief nuclear negotiator, told reporters after meeting Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif that she saw "energy and determination" for talks with the U.S., Russia, China, Britain, France and Germany to move forward.

On Twitter, the U.S.-educated Zarif called the meeting with Ashton "positive" and added, "Need new start under new circumstances."

The meeting Thursday between the Western powers and Iran will be the first since April, when discussions on how to reduce fears that Tehran might use its nuclear technology for weapons stalled at a meeting in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

U.S. officials said Secretary of State John Kerry will attend. It would mark the first meeting between the top U.S. and Iranian diplomats since U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice met with Iranian Foreign Minister Manoucher Mottaki in the Egyptian resort of Sharm el-Sheikh in May 2007.

The election of Iran's new president, Hasan Rouhani, considered a relative moderate in the country's hard-line clerical regime, has sparked speculation about possible movement on the nuclear issue. Rouhani said last month that the foreign ministry not the Supreme National Security Council will lead nuclear talks with world powers, a shift away from security officials being in control.

Rouhani is scheduled to address the U.N. on Tuesday.

U.S. State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki said the United States hopes the new Iranian government "will engage substantively with the international community to reach a diplomatic solution to Iran's nuclear program and to cooperate fully" with the International Atomic Energy Agency in its investigation.

"We remain ready to work with Iran should the Rouhani administration choose to engage seriously," she said.

Ashton said she and her team will meet with Zarif again in October to follow up on Thursday's meeting to continue their discussion on reviving long-stalled negotiations.

"We had a good and constructive discussion," she said of her half-hour meeting with Zarif. "We didn't talk about the details of what we would do. The purpose of this meeting was to establish how we would go forward."

The U.N. Security Council has imposed four rounds of sanctions against Iran because of concerns it is seeking to develop nuclear weapons and its refusal to suspend uranium enrichment. The U.S. and its Western allies have imposed even more punishing sanctions which have severely affected Iran's economy and drawn criticism from its citizens.



Iran insists its nuclear program is peaceful, aimed only at producing energy and isotopes for medical use. Rouhani told NBC last week that Iran has "never pursued or sought a nuclear bomb, and we are not going to do so."

Rouhani has repeatedly appealed to the U.S. and allies to roll back sanctions to move ahead negotiations. Before leaving for New York, Rouhani urged Western leaders to heed his appeals for greater dialogue and take steps to ease economic sanctions on Iran as a path to "reach joint interests."

Asked if she thought a breakthrough was imminent on restarting negotiations, Ashton replied, "I was struck, as I said, by the energy and determination that the foreign minister demonstrated to me."

"I have worked, I think, very hard to find a way in which we can address this issue of great concern, and I will take every opportunity to try and do that and I hope this will be one," she said.

# China to help deal with Syria's chemical weapons

China will send experts "when asked" to help with the destruction of Syria's chemical weapons, Chinese foreign ministry says

China will send experts "when asked" to help with the destruction of Syria's chemical weapons, the Foreign Ministry said on Monday.

China welcomes the Syrian government's submission of a list of its chemical weapons to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, ministry spokesman Hong Lei said in Beijing on Monday, adding that the decision is "one more positive measure".

The organisation confirmed it received the list on Saturday.

"Regarding the destruction of chemical weapons in Syria, China will support the OPCW's work as before, including sending experts to participate in the action at the request of the organization," Hong said.

China has consistently supported the work of the OPCW and provided many high-end experts, especially chemical-weapons inspectors, to the organisation.

Beijing "supports the OPCW's positive role in settling the Syrian chemical weapons issue and is willing to work with various parties to push its (the OPCW's) standing committee to pass a resolution", Hong said.

Li Shaoxian, a Middle East studies researcher at China Institutes of Contemporary Relations, cautioned that the process of eliminating chemical weapons could be disrupted if the situation in Syria continues to worsen.

"If the situation continues sliding toward all-out civil war and the opposition gains enough strength, Washington might find an excuse at any time to launch an attack on the Syrian government," Li said.

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad said the government now needs to facilitate the work of the UN inspectors, who will visit the production facilities and storage sites for the chemical weapons in the coming month, according to an interview aired by China Central Television on Monday.

But "now the only obstacle is the security conditions in some areas, which will make it difficult for the inspectors to enter", and terrorist militants "may even shift the blame onto the government", he said Assad did not give details on the size of Syria's chemical weapons arsenal, and he said the Syrian army "mainly fights with conventional weapons".

He added: "Any country or army that possesses chemical weapons generally has special protection measures to stop the weapons from falling into terrorist or enemy hands. We are not worried about this problem. Our chemical weapons are stored at safe places that are totally controlled by the Syrian army," he said.

Li Hong, secretary-general of the China Arms Control and Disarmament Association, said that in addition to the turbulent situation, the financial cost is a heavy burden for the Syrian government, and it is "unrealistic" to expect full elimination of Syrian chemical weapons by 2014.

In New York, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi met with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on Sunday at UN headquarters to discuss Syria and related developments.

Wang said it is now important for the international community to reach consensus on the Syrian issue as soon as possible and for the UN Security Council to "send out a message of unity".

The elimination of Syria's chemical weapons and the political settlement of the Syrian issue should be advanced together, Wang added.

Syria's Foreign Minister Walid Muallem will head the country's delegation to the UN General Assembly, Syria's Al-Watan newspaper reported on Monday. Muallem will address the UN on Sept 30.

## Iran poses 'absolutely no threat'- Rowhani



**Iran's President Hassan Rowhani called Tuesday on US counterpart Barack Obama to ignore "warmongering pressure groups" and seek better relations.**

Speaking at the UN General Assembly, Rowhani said Iran poses "absolutely no threat to the world," in remarks widely watched for signs of a thaw with the United States.

Rowhani condemned international sanctions against Iran and also hit out at America's use of drones.

But he said if Obama rejects "the short-sighted interest of warmongering pressure groups, we can arrive at a framework to manage our differences."

Rowhani spoke a few hours after Obama told the assembly that he wanted a "meaningful agreement" with Iran if it acted to end international concerns over its nuclear program.

The Iranian leader reaffirmed his country's position that its nuclear drive is "exclusively peaceful."

"Nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction have no place in Iran's security and defense doctrine, and contradict our fundamental religious and ethical convictions," Rowhani said.

He added that the international community had to accept Iran's nuclear activity, which Western nations say hides an attempt to reach a nuclear bomb capacity.

The UN Security Council has imposed four rounds of sanctions against Iran over its uranium enrichment.

But Rowhani said it is "an illusion, and extremely unrealistic, to presume that the peaceful nature of the nuclear program of Iran could be ensured through impeding the program via illegitimate pressures."

## **Egypt must make democratic progress - Obama**



**US President Barack Obama Tuesday warned that continued US support for Egypt depends on its progress back to a democracy, as it struggles through painful political upheavals.**

Obama said the United States had "purposely avoided choosing sides" after the military's July 3 overthrow of president Mohamed Morsi, but warned "our support will depend upon Egypt's progress in pursuing a democratic path."

Washington has been watching the unfolding events in Egypt with concern, worried that the new military leadership under General Abdel Fattah al-Sisi may renege on its promise to hand back to civilian rule.

And Obama lashed out at the new military interim government for decisions which he said were "inconsistent" with democracy.

"Morsi was democratically elected, but proved unwilling or unable to govern in a way that was fully inclusive," Obama insisted at the annual UN General Assembly.

"The interim government that replaced him responded to the desires of millions of Egyptians who believed the revolution had taken a wrong turn, but it too has made decisions inconsistent with inclusive democracy -- through an emergency law, and restrictions on the press, civil society, and opposition parties."

On Monday, a Cairo court banned Morsi's Muslim Brotherhood and ordered all its assets seized, in an echo of the prohibition placed on the party under long-time autocratic leader Hosni Mubarak.

Mubarak was toppled in the 2011 revolution which saw Morsi come to power as Egypt's first ever democratically elected president.

Earlier this year, Obama put on hold some \$1.3 billion in mainly military aid to Egypt as it tracks the course of the political upheavals.

"Of course, America has been attacked by all sides of this internal conflict, simultaneously accused of supporting the Muslim Brotherhood, and engineering their removal from power," Obama said.

"In fact, the United States has purposely avoided choosing sides. Our overriding interest throughout these past few years has been to encourage a



government that legitimately reflects the will of the Egyptian people, and recognizes true democracy."

He vowed that "going forward, the United States will maintain a constructive relationship with the interim government that promotes core interests like the Camp David Accords and counter-terrorism."

Obama also defended his administration's somewhat vague policies towards Egypt. It was long accused of shoring up the Morsi government despite accusations that it was seeking to introduce Islamic law and deny the rights of civil society.

But when the military ousted Morsi, Washington refused to call his overthrow "a coup."

"Our approach to Egypt reflects a larger point: the United States will at times work with governments that do not meet the highest international expectations, but who work with us on our core interests," Obama said.

"But we will not stop asserting principles that are consistent with our ideals, whether that means opposing the use of violence as a means of suppressing dissent, or supporting the principles embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights." (AFP)

# If at First Rouhani Doesn't Succeed

The Case for Optimism About U.S.-Iranian Relations  
By Mohsen Milani



More than at any time since a group of Iranians occupied the American embassy in Tehran in November 1979, the stars for a diplomatic breakthrough between the United States and Iran are aligned. As a result of Iran's presidential election in June 2013, the country now has a moderate president, Hassan Rouhani, who is willing to do business with the United States. At the United Nations yesterday, he declared that "nuclear arms have no place in Iran's security" doctrine and that Iran is fully prepared to settle its nuclear dispute with the West. The United States is apparently ready to reciprocate. In his own speech at the United Nations, U.S. President Barack Obama emphasized that the United States does not seek regime

change in Tehran and that, once Iran's nuclear dispute is settled, the two countries "can have a different relationship."

Obama and Rouhani are uniquely positioned to reach a detente and establish their historical legacies. But to achieve this Herculean task, they must first lower their expectations and realize that bilateral talks cannot end years of animosity. Rather, they would constitute one giant step toward establishing a new mechanism to manage their conflict.

In recent days, the Rouhani administration has sent a flurry of signals to the West that it is willing to open up the political process and moderate Iran's foreign and nuclear policies, including welcoming and responding to private letters from Obama and releasing a few political prisoners. Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has even declared that Iran is ready to show "[heroic flexibility](#)" in dealing with the West and has given Rouhani full authority to negotiate, something he has not previously given to any president. Most of this change in posture is a direct result of the 2013 presidential election, in which the Iranian people expressed a strong desire for their country to end its confrontational and counterproductive foreign policy and throw the troubled economy a life raft.

There is plenty of skepticism about Iran's new posture. In Israel, some conservative commentators have dismissed it as a stalling tactic to dupe the West as it builds a nuclear bomb. They argue that Iran is unlikely to offer meaningful concessions on its nuclear program. Yuval Steinitz, a member of Netanyahu's cabinet, has even argued that negotiation is futile because Iran is supposedly only six months away from building a bomb. In the United States, meanwhile, conservatives accuse Obama of appeasing Iran.

It is difficult to know Iran and the United States' real intentions. But there are two ways to find out. The first is to actually begin direct bilateral negotiations. The other is to invite Iran to the Geneva II conference on the future of Syria.

First, negotiations: Washington must go in with a realistic assessment of what Rouhani can offer without inciting a backlash at home. Despite sanctions, explicit threats of force, and computer sabotage, Iran has made remarkable progress in its nuclear program. Today, it has more than 11,000 centrifuges spinning in its nuclear facilities, compared to 1,400 when Mahmoud Ahmadinejad became president in 2005. Iran has endured crippling sanctions to make this progress. Those who oppose negotiations now, namely the hard-line conservatives, have a privileged position in Iran's multi-center power structure, especially within the Revolutionary Guards and the intelligence agencies. Rouhani's ability to offer major concessions to the United States is therefore limited.

Moreover, Khamenei, the ultimate decision-maker, has strong reservations about the United States' reliability as a negotiating partner. He is waiting to see whether Washington really wants to change the nature of its relationship with Iran. As he has talked about flexibility, he also has noted that "Sometimes a wrestler shows flexibility for technical reasons, but he doesn't forget who his opponent is, and what his real goal is." The Revolutionary Guard Corps, too, has warned Rouhani that he should not be deceived by Washington's apparent openness to talks. And there is also the possibility of non-state actors trying to subvert any rapprochement with the United States.

So far, Rouhani has promised more transparency in Iran's nuclear program and more intrusive international inspections. There are speculations in Western media that he might consider closing the underground Fordow nuclear facility, restricting enrichment at 20 percent level, and reducing Iran's stockpile of 20 percent enriched uranium. Although Rouhani has explicitly stated that Iran is not making a bomb or desirous of making one, he has emphatically insisted that the United States must recognize Iran's inalienable right to enrich uranium on its own soil. He has also made clear that the West must grant Iran major concessions by lifting some of the sanctions. Without those, Rouhani will be undermined by his domestic opponents and the negotiations will quickly hit a dead end. In that case, the only alternatives left will be continued containment of Iran or war.

Second, Syria: The United States and Iran can also use engagement on Syria to test each other's sincerity.

Iran is one of the key players in Syria's bloody civil war. Through thick and thin, it has been the most stalwart supporter of the Assad regime. For Iran, Syria remains a major front in its geo-strategic competition with the United States, its cold war with Saudi Arabia, and its battle against Sunni extremists. It is unlikely that Rouhani will be able to change Iran's Syria strategy entirely, but his administration is much more likely to be flexible about the future of Assad's regime than its predecessor.

There are signals that Iran is already moderating its policy toward Syria. For one thing, Iran's reaction to a possible U.S. military strike against Syria was uncharacteristically taciturn, given that Iran had previously declared that attack on Syria would constitute an attack on Iran. For another, Iran has condemned the use of chemical weapons in Syria, although the Islamic Republic has not explicitly denounced the Assad regime. Ayatollah Hashemi Rafsanjani, the Chair of the Expediency Council, has reportedly blamed the

Syrian government for using chemical weapons against its own people. But his office later denied the report. It appears that he might have been preparing the leadership to distance itself from Assad, especially considering that Iran has praised the Russian-American deal to dismantle Syria's arsenal of chemical weapons. In fact, Iran claims to have played a constructive role bringing about that deal.

Iran's ultimate objective is not the protection of Assad, but rather the protection of the Syrian security and military forces, with which Tehran has close ties. For Iran, Syria is a reliable conduit for the transfer of arms and money to Hezbollah, which gives Iran strategic depth in the heart of the Arab world. Like Washington, Iran does not favor the total dismantling of the Syrian state, which would lead to chaos and the empowerment of radical Sunni organizations. Both Iran and the United States want to avoid that. They also believe that only political negotiations will bring the devastating Syrian civil war to an end.

Iran surprised the United States by playing a constructive role at the 2001 Bonn Conference on the future of Afghanistan. Iran could be willing to play the same role at the Geneva II Conference, if it is invited. Iran has some legitimate interests in Syria and Lebanon. The West should understand that the Islamic Republic will not cease its support for Hezbollah, and it will do everything it can to protect its close relationship with the Syrian state, with or without Assad at its helm. But it might be ready to work with the United States on issues of overlapping interest.

It is time for cautious optimism that, after three decades of mutual hostility, the United States and Iran could open a new chapter. There are major hurdles on the path toward a rapprochement, and both sides must have strategic patience. If it sounds difficult, that is because it is. Nevertheless, even the earliest attempts to improve ties will have their rewards.

Rapprochement could start to change the landscape of the Middle East, allowing the United States to proceed with its pivot toward Asia. It would give the United States a new partner in the war against extremism and would profoundly reduce the Sunni-Shia tensions. It would ease American withdrawal from Afghanistan in December 2014. It would also begin to open up Iran's vast oil and gas reserves to Western companies. Better ties between the United States and Iran would give Washington a new lever to slow down Russian expansionism in Central Asia and the Caucasus. The benefits for Iran are equally compelling: The crippling sanctions could be lifted. Iran's isolation could end. It could become reintegrated into the global economy, once more attracting foreign investment.

For those reasons, Obama and Rouhani must now show political courage and strategic imagination to make the first step and see what the other is made of.

# Western envoys tout deal on core of U.N. Syria draft; Russia denies

By John Irish and Louis Charbonneau

(Reuters) - After weeks of haggling, the United States, Russia, France, [China](#) and Britain have agreed on the core of a U.N. Security Council resolution to rid Syria of its chemical weapons, three Western diplomats said on Wednesday, but Russia denied such an agreement and insisted work was "still going on."

The development came after the foreign ministers of the five permanent members of the council met over lunch with U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon earlier in the day, the diplomats said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The three diplomats said a draft resolution could be presented to the full 15-nation council soon, and the five permanent members would also meet on Friday to discuss a proposed [Syria](#) peace conference in Geneva.

"It seems that things are moving forward," said a Western diplomatic source, adding that there was "an agreement among the five on the core."

"We are closer on all the key points," he said. A third diplomat also suggested that a deal on the draft resolution was within reach.

But [Russia](#) rejected suggestions by the Western diplomats that there was an agreement on the core of a draft resolution.

"This is just their wishful thinking," the spokesman for Russia's U.N. delegation said. "It is not the reality. The work on the draft resolution is still going on."



A U.S. official cited progress while cautioning that there was still work to be done. "We're making progress but we're not done yet," the official told Reuters.

The five veto-wielding permanent members of the Security Council - Russia, the United States, [France](#), Britain and China - have been negotiating a resolution to demand the destruction of Syria's chemical arsenal in line with a U.S.-Russian deal reached earlier this month.

Negotiations on a draft in New York had come to a standstill while Russia and the United States struggled to reach an agreement acceptable to both.

But it appears that after talks between U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov on Tuesday, the deadlock was broken.

#### STICKING POINT

A major sticking point between Russia and Western powers has been whether the resolution is written under Chapter 7 of the U.N. charter, which covers the Security Council's authority to enforce decisions with measures such as sanctions or military force.

Russia, a staunch ally of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, has made clear it would not accept an initial resolution under Chapter 7 and that any punitive measures would come only in the event of clearly proven Syrian non-compliance on the basis of a second council resolution under Chapter 7.

A Western diplomat who had seen the latest draft before the Ban Ki-moon meeting said the only reference to Chapter 7 was at the end - a threat that in the event of non-compliance the council should "impose measures" under Chapter 7. To carry out that threat, a second resolution would be needed.

There is, the diplomat said, no reference to Chapter 7 in the rest of the resolution, though the language is identical to what would normally be in a Chapter 7 resolution.

Assad agreed to destroy Syria's chemical weapons in the wake of a sarin gas strike on civilians in the suburbs of Damascus last month - the world's deadliest chemical arms attack in 25 years.

Washington blamed Assad's forces for the attack, which it said killed more than 1,400 people, and President Barack Obama threatened a U.S. military strike in response. Russia and Assad have blamed the attack on rebels who are battling to overthrow him in a civil war raging since 2011.

## **Indo-US relationship has not plateaued: White House**

Indo-US relationship is in "an active engagement stage" and Washington would like to keep it that way, the White House said today, strongly refuting the impression that bilateral ties have plateaued or are in drift. The series of high-level exchanges between the two countries, including the India visit by the Vice President Joe Biden, early this year and now that of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to the White House for a meeting with President Barack Obama on Friday is not an indication of a relationship that has plateaued, a senior administration official said.

"Those are indications of a relationship, which is in active engagement stage. And that is the place where we want to keep it because of the strategic partnership in the 21st century and scaling that trajectory," the official told Indian reporters in a conference call on the eve of the arrival of Singh in Washington.

Singh is scheduled to arrive in Washington tomorrow on a two-day working visit to the American capital wherein he would meet the Obama at the White House on Friday.

Following the meeting, during which the two leaders are expected to discuss a wide range of bilateral, regional and global issues, Singh and Obama are likely to give brief statements to the press without taking any questions and then head for luncheon hosted by the President for Singh.

The purpose of this "short working visit" is both to reflect and appreciate the decade of this transformation and the commitments of the leaders in the government to the strategic partnership, the official said.

The purpose is also to "set out a road map for the path ahead", the official added, noting that the road map would carry forward through the upcoming events which include certainly the Indian elections.

"I think, if you look at the relationship over the course of the past decade, its remarkable that some of the most contentious issues which would include defence co-operation, nuclear energy and access to high technology items are the centre piece to this relationship today," the official said.

"During this visit, some of the specific progress, we look forward to celebrating will be the defence trade relationship, expanding defence ties between India and the United States and also the civil nuclear initiative making progress on terms of paving way for commercial contract.

"Also making progress on expanding clean energy cooperation and the economic partnership," he said.

Noting that in a complex relationship, and certainly in a strategic partnership there are always areas where there is room for more progress, the official said, that includes the concerns of the US Government and its businesses about some of the Indian economic policies and the need for some additional economic reform to attract greater international investment.

This is subject to discussion between the two governments and is being expressed by the US business and will "certainly be a centre piece" of the discussion, the official said adding that the two countries are now working to expand the mechanism to address these issues.

Responding to questions, the official said, "We have seen encouraging signs" on the likelihood of signing a pre-early works agreement between Westinghouse and Nuclear Power Cooperation of India Ltd (NPCIL).

The endeavour of the two countries has been to pave the way for the commercial contracts to go forward.

"We certainly look forward to marking that progress and celebrating it," he said.

## Israel, Palestinians agree to intensify peace talks with increased US role



Israel and the Palestinians have agreed to intensify their peace talks and to increase the US role, US Secretary of State John Kerry said on Wednesday in a rare comment on the negotiations.

Speaking to donors who support the Palestinian Authority, Kerry said the two sides have met seven times since the talks resumed on July 29 although Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas have not met.

"We have agreed now, in the last week, when I have met with both President Abbas and Prime Minister Netanyahu, we have agreed now to intensify these talks," he said. "And we have agreed that the American participation should be increased somewhat in order to try to help facilitate."

Kerry described two tracks to the talks: one among the negotiators - Israel's Tzipi Livni and Yitzhak Molcho and the Palestinians Saeb Erekat and Mohammed Shtayyeh - and another among Abbas, Netanyahu, Kerry and US President Barack Obama.

Speaking of the second track, Kerry said: "As we think appropriate, as we need to move the process, we will be consulting among each other and working to move this process forward."

A US official played down the idea of US President Barack Obama increasing his role for now, although Obama had described the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations, along with trying to curb Iran's nuclear program, as two top diplomatic priorities [in his speech at UN General Assembly](#) on Tuesday.

The US official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the increase in US engagement during the short term was likely to take the form of lower-level US officials taking part in the Israeli-Palestinian meetings more frequently.

Kerry's comments offered a rare glimpse at the talks, which the United States initiated but has tried to keep under wraps on the argument that public discussion makes it harder to reach an agreement to end the more than six-decade conflict.

[Abbas told Obama](#) in a meeting on Tuesday on the fringes of the UN General Assembly that the Palestinians will exert every effort possible to try to ensure the peace talks are a success.

Obama, as well as Kerry, are due to meet Netanyahu next week in Washington as they try to keep up the momentum in the negotiations.

# World Powers, Iran Agree to Resume Nuclear Talks

UNITED NATIONS — Major powers have agreed with Iran to resume talks about its suspect nuclear program next month in Geneva.

The foreign ministers of the five permanent Security Council powers plus Germany met with their Iranian counterpart, Mohammad Javad Zarif, late Thursday.

President Hassan Rouhani has designated Minister Zarif as his lead nuclear negotiator.

European Union foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton said they had a good and substantive meeting.

"I am pleased that we've agreed to meet in Geneva on 15 and 16 of October to pursue the agenda, to carry on from today's meeting and to hopefully move this process forward," said Ashton.

The October talks will be the first round of substantive negotiations on Iran's nuclear program since April.

Ashton said timetables were discussed.

"We were interested to see that they are all of an ambitious nature. The question is how far you can go in three months or six months or 12 months.



And 12 months is a good time frame to think about some serious implementation on the ground. But for me, what really matters now, is that we get down to the detail and actually work out what will happen, when it will happen, how we know it's happened, how we move forward building confidence as we go to get to that point," she said.

Iran says its nuclear program is intended to produce nuclear energy for civilian use, but the international community worries Tehran is secretly trying to build nuclear bombs.

Thursday's meeting was the highest-level direct contact between the United States and Iran in several years as Secretary of State John Kerry sat side-by-side with the Iranian foreign minister. Although positive about the session, Secretary Kerry was cautious.

"Needless to say, one meeting and a change in tone - which was welcome - doesn't answer those questions yet and there is a lot of work to be done. So we will engage in that work, obviously, and we hope very, very much, all of us, that we can get concrete results that will answer the outstanding questions regarding the program," said Kerry.

Minister Zarif was also upbeat, saying the discussions were substantive and businesslike.

"We hope to be able to make progress towards resolving this issue in a timely fashion, based on respecting the rights of the Iranian people to nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, including enrichment, and at the same time making sure that there is no concern at the international level that Iran's nuclear program is anything but peaceful," said Zarif.

Minister Zarif said as the process moves forward, sanctions imposed against his country for its nuclear program must be lifted.

Speaking to an audience in New York Thursday evening, President Rouhani addressed the nuclear issue, saying his country is a peaceful one.

"But for the Islamic Republic of Iran, all its activities have been within the safeguards agreement and have continued to be, and will continue to be, under the supervision of the IAEA," said Rouhani.

Iranian officials are set to meet with the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna on Friday.

## Peace talks: Taliban will have to lay down arms, says Nawaz Sharif

**NEW YORK: Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said on Thursday that the Taliban will have to renounce terrorism if peace talks are to move forward.**

In an interview with the [Wall Street Journal](#) during his first visit to New York after being elected in May, the Prime Minister said, “we evolved a consensus... on a joint strategy to put an end to terrorism in Pakistan [through peace talks].”

Asserting that the Taliban had disowned the bomb attacks on All Saints Church, he said that the Taliban hadn’t done that before but the intelligence agencies were still investigating the matter. He revealed that contrary to [media reports](#) the Taliban had also disowned the attack that killed a two-star General \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ Dir.

“As far as the tragic incidents are concerned, they are unacceptable. There cannot be any compromise on that,” he added.

The Prime Minister said that the Taliban offered a dialogue themselves and the political parties decided to respond to their offer positively.

However, he added that the Taliban will have to renounce terrorism.

“They will have to say they are keen to do business with the government. They will have to abide by the Constitution of Pakistan. We’re also waiting for their response, what they have to say in this regard,” he said.

"If we agree on addressing this terrorism, (Taliban) will have to be disarmed, lay down their arms," the Prime Minister added, but made it clear that while the government wanted a peaceful resolution, it hinged on the Taliban laying down their arms and accepting the Constitution.

### **New Chief of Army Staff**

When asked if there was a possibility that Chief of Army Staff General Ashfaq Kayani will be given an extension, Nawaz said that no decision had been reached on the subject.

"I'm not saying yes or no. Of course, we will be taking a decision on this issue soon."

Responding to a question about the next army chief, he said, "there's still time. I'll handle it."

### **Ties with India**

Asserting that he was the one who had brought the two countries together, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said that the two neighbouring countries were picking up the threads from where they left off in 1999.

"I will be having a meeting with the Indian prime minister here in the next few days," he said, adding that his government stood for peaceful resolution of all issues with India, including Kashmir.

Talking about the issue of Siachen, he said, "both countries' armies are sitting at an altitude of more than 22,000 feet high. I don't know what sense it makes in this modern age that armies are sitting at more than 22,000 feet. I think we have to resolve this issue as well."

The Prime Minister said that both the countries were spending a lot of money and resources building up their defense.

“We have been spending resources which should have been spent on social sectors on buying F-16s, frigates, tanks, expensive submarines,” he said, adding that India was spending more resources on its defense than Pakistan.

### **Relations with US**

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said that he had a good rapport with the American government.

“President Obama was very kind to call me up immediately after my election and express his desire to work with Pakistan,” he said, asserting that he wanted to work with the US.

### **Drones**

The Prime Minister said that the issue of drones was discussed with Senator John Kerry when he visited Pakistan.

Asserting that the drone strikes were counter productive, he said, “the more the drones, the more the terrorists get multiplied. You kill one man, his sons, his father, his brothers, they become terrorists. So this is something that is not helping at all.”

He said that he plans on taking the matter up with President Obama in their forthcoming meeting.

### **Iran Pipeline**

The Prime Minister said that the previous government had signed an agreement with Iran on the gas pipeline and the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) led government needed to proceed with it.

“There will be a \$3 million daily penalty from Iran if that’s not completed by the end of next year,” he said, adding that the only way they could retract from the agreement was if the US provided gas or the daily \$3 million penalty.

“There is an acute shortage of gas in Pakistan, so we have to import gas from somewhere,” he said.

## Abbas insists Mideast peace deal must be 'permanent'



NEW YORK (AFP) -- President Mahmoud Abbas on Thursday demanded that any peace deal with Israel be permanent, calling new US-brokered talks a "last chance."

Speaking before the UN General Assembly, Abbas urged international pressure to stop Israeli settlement building on Palestinian land.

"Time is running out, and the window of peace is narrowing and the opportunities are diminishing," Abbas said.

"The current round of negotiations appears to be a last chance to realize a just peace," he said.

Abbas, who has frequently turned to the United Nations to build support, began his speech by voicing pride at being introduced as "president of the state of Palestine" -- following a UN vote in November to grant it observer status.

Abbas said that the peace process with Israel -- relaunched after exhaustive missions by US Secretary of State John Kerry -- needed to result in a permanent peace.

"We refuse to enter into a vortex of a new interim agreement that becomes externalized," Abbas said.

"Our objective is to achieve a permanent and comprehensive agreement and a peace treaty between the states of Palestine and Israel that resolves all outstanding issues and answers all questions," he said.

Abbas urged international action against Israeli settlements, praising the European Union decision to label products from the internationally condemned units.

"The international community is asked to remain alert to condemn and stop any actions on the ground that would undermine negotiations," Abbas said.

"I refer here, above all, to the continuation of settlement construction on our Palestinian land, particularly in Jerusalem," he said.



## **Pakistan committed against extremism, but drones must stop: Nawaz at UN**



NEW YORK: Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, in his address to the United Nations General Assembly on Friday, said that his country condemned terrorism “in all its forms and manifestations”, but the use of drone strikes could never be accepted as it was “a continued violation of our [Pakistan's] territorial integrity.”

The Pakistani premier told UN that the “war against terrorism must be waged within the framework of international law. The use of armed drones in the border areas of Pakistan is a continued violation of our territorial integrity.”

Nawaz emphasised that Pakistan had suffered immense losses to the plague of terrorism and was not prepared to endure any more. Therefore, the situation would have to change.

“We have lost 40,000 precious lives of men, women and children, which include 8,000 defense and security personnel. There have been colossal damages to social and physical infrastructure as well. Our economy has been denied the opportunity to grow fully.

“This must change now.”

To that effect, he said he had “urged the United States to cease these strikes, so that we could avert further casualties and suffering.”

### **The Kashmir issue**

Nawaz said he appreciated the UN’s role as an anchor for global peace and stability in the world, but that the UN needed to attend to the issue of Jammu & Kashmir and the implementation of the right of self-determination there.

“The suffering of the people cannot be brushed under the carpet, because of power politics,” Nawaz noted, with regard to human rights violations in Kashmir.

Though he reaffirmed his faith in the UN as the only legitimate body to deal with international conflicts, on the matter of Kashmir, he expressed his veiled criticism.

“The issue of Jammu and Kashmir was presented to the Security Council in January 1948; and yet the issue remains unresolved after nearly seven decades.”

## **Minimum nuclear deterrence**

The Prime Minister told the General Assembly that as a “responsible nuclear weapon state”, his country was committed to the cause of non-proliferation, disarmament and the policy of Credible Minimum Deterrence, but would always keep regional strategic and national interests in mind.

“Our position on the proposed Fissile Material Treaty is determined by our national security interests and the objective of strategic stability in South Asia,” said Nawaz.

He went on to state that Pakistan needed and was qualified to have full access to civil nuclear technology for the safe and peaceful purposes of economic development.

“Pakistan has impeccable credentials to join the multilateral export control regime, including the Nuclear Suppliers Group,” he continued. “Pakistan will continue to participate constructively in the Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) process, which is a laudable initiative.”

## **Dialogue with India**

Concerning matters with India, Nawaz reiterated the massive resources that both countries had wasted in an arms race mostly directed at each other. He said he would like to change the picture now to a scene mutual cooperation and benefit through dialogue.

“We stand ready to re-engage with India in a substantive and purposeful dialogue.”

“I am looking forward to meeting Prime Minister Manmohan Singh here in New York to make a new beginning. We have a solid basis to do that. We

can build on the Lahore Accord signed in 1999, which contained a road map for the resolution of four differences through peaceful negotiations.

“I am committed to working for a peaceful and economically prosperous region. This is what our people want and this is what I have long aspired for.”

### **Peace in Afghanistan**

“The people of Afghanistan are and should remain masters of their own destiny. We support an inclusive, Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process, leading to national reconciliation.”

The Prime Minister also noted that Pakistan “encourages United Nations’ efforts for the stabilization of Afghanistan. We will work together with Afghanistan for regional and economic cooperation that would establish and reinforce regional trade, energy and communications corridors.”

### **Condemnation of chemical weapons in Syria**

Referring to Pakistan’s membership in the Chemical Weapons Convention, Nawaz said his government condemned its use and welcomed the joint US-Russia plan to secure and destroy them in Syria.

He urged all the stakeholders in Syria to resolve the political and security crises soon, as more war would only lead to more killings.

“We appeal to the Syrian Government and opposition groups to move to the negotiating table in Geneva to prepare a road map for national reconciliation and the necessary political transitions,” said the PM.

He added that:

“Acceptance of the Geneva One document and a decision on the dates for the convening of the Geneva Two Conference will be a big step in ending the crisis in Syria.”

### **Palestine’s membership**

Nawaz Sharif also said he hoped Palestine would soon join the General Assembly as a full member state.

“Last year, Palestine was given the status of non-member observer state by this Assembly. We hope that soon Palestine will join this body as a full member state.

“We are glad that the stalled peace process has started again. It should lead to the consolidation of an independent, viable and contiguous state of Palestine, based on the pre-1967 borders, with Al Quds Al Sharif as its capital.”

## A change of mood in India

By: Inayatullah

Pakistan has been, for years, urging India to agree to hold talks for addressing a number of issues hanging fire for a long time. These issues include Jammu and Kashmir dispute which from the Pakistani point of view has been the major hurdle in normalizing relations with India. India, on the other hand, disregarding the blatant violation of human rights in the occupied state, has been accusing Pakistan of exporting terrorism to India. Mumbai killings and the recent incidents across the Line of Control are cited to assert that Pakistan must first demonstrate its resolve to punish those who were allegedly involved in planning and perpetrating the attack in Mumbai. Pakistan is demonised for deliberately dragging its feet to bring the culprits to book including Hafiz Saeed who is held as the mastermind behind the dastardly shootings. The killing of the five Indian soldiers allegedly by Pakistani military has been added to the heap of Indian grievances. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh during the last many years has repeatedly refused to visit Pakistan, turning down Pakistani invitations on the ground that Islamabad had failed to convince New Delhi that it is serious about stopping terrorist activities undertaken across the border, by non-state actors. It is interesting to recall that during Vajpai's premiership, India took the initiative of inviting the then military dictator for talks in Agra, the same General who had started the Kargil adventure. Vajpai's successor, the mild-mannered Manmohan Singh, however, has behaved differently. Possible reasons for this somewhat contradictory conduct has been his comparatively weak leadership and the fact that after the strategic partnership agreements with USA and India's enhanced economic and political clout, New Delhi has been deliberately indulging in

putting pressure on a correspondingly weaker and increasingly vulnerable neighbor.

With Nawaz Sharif returning to power in Pakistan, hopes were raised for an early restarting of talks between the two countries. There was a flurry of contacts with special envoys meeting the Prime Minister's reviving expectations of Mr. Manmohan Singh finally agreeing to come to Pakistan, or at least show willingness to take up the interrupted dialogue process between the two countries. The LOC incidents, however, were used by New Delhi to smother such a move. Nawaz has been more than clear about the need and the urgency of battering relations with India. In view, however, of India's intransigence he too, had to, lower expectations. Of late, efforts have remained focused on ensuring that the two Prime Ministers meet in New York on the sidelines of the September UN General Assembly sessions. In this connection, Pakistan's advisor on security and foreign affairs has had meetings with the Indian foreign minister. It now appears certain that the two heads of government shall meet on Sunday, September 29.

Thursday last saw an attack on a police station and army post in Jammu in which 12 persons including an Indian Lieutenant Col, were killed. Somewhat surprisingly this time the reaction on the part of the Indian government and most of the media, has been positive in the sense that this incident is allowed to affect the scheduled talks between the Prime Ministers. Describing the attacks as "one more in a series of provocations and barbaric actions by the enemies of peace", Manmohan Singh has made it clear that his government would not let "terrorists" disrupt the dialogue process with Pakistan. "Such attacks" he said "would not deter us and will not succeed in derailing our efforts to find a resolution to all problems through a process of

dialogue". One may also note that BJP leaders including Modi have called for holding off all talks with Pakistan until "a more conducive environment is guaranteed".

A part of the editorial of the Indian Express (of September 26) merits to be reproduced to indicate the changing attitude in India: "A peaceful equilibrium with Pakistan has been one of Manmohan Singh's avowed priorities,..... Yet, if past experience is a guide, the UPA's will can dissolve dramatically in the face of a few belligerent opposition voices and angry TV anchors. Several times in the last year alone, the prime minister set aside his resolve after the opposition and parts of the media raised the pitch on Pakistan. In August, after an ambush on Indian soldiers at the Line of Control, the government did a miserable flip-flop on the nature of the aggression and who was responsible. In January, after another border incident, the government broke with the convention that the bilateral dialogue was kept separate from such events, with the prime minister himself saying that "business-as-usual" was untenable. Sports teams and business delegations were sent back to Pakistan. Led by the same jingoistic din, the UPA bequeathed a state funeral on Sarabjit Singh, even though he had been convicted of espionage and terrorism there. This time, the PM must not pander to the irresponsible chorus. He must be mindful of the imprint he wants to leave on foreign policy, not the fleeting opinions of prime-time TV". An excerpt from an article written in The Hindu (newspaper) by a former Indian High Commissioner to Pakistan Mr. Satyabrata Pal reflects the mind of thinking and concerned Indians: "It is important to stress, therefore, that talking to Pakistan does not mean that we are soft on it. Trying to make peace with Pakistan is not a sign of weakness. The government that comes to power after the next election will do the same. It too will try to make peace with Pakistan. If it does not, it will be abdicating



its responsibility and charting a course that diverges so completely from its predecessors that it is unlikely to get broad, political support. It is a given that if the Prime Ministers agree to meet at the U.N. General Assembly, there will be outrages at the LoC or in India, to torpedo the meeting. If the Prime Ministers do agree on the next steps, the provocations will increase. We can certainly urge the government of Pakistan to stop these, but should know that, realistically, they currently cannot. We must nevertheless persevere so that they eventually can". It is good that Pakistan has officially and unequivocally condemned the Jammu attacks.

Mention may, here, be made of a number of influential Indians from the political and economic fields, these days, visiting Pakistan, one after the other. One may refer to the participation of Mani Shanker Ayer and other well-placed Indians in the Pakistani TV talk shows as well as visits of the parliamentarians and businessmen to Islamabad and Lahore. While welcoming the change of mood in India, Nawaz Sharif has to tread the path carefully. Considering the euphoric statements he made soon after taking over his office as well as Indian short-term and long-term plans and designs, he would be well-advised to act prudently with a view to safeguarding Pakistan's national interests.

## Nawaz-Singh talks must be Kashmir-centric

Hizbul Mujahideen chief says Sharif must behave as a strong N-power leader

By: Fasihur Rehman Khan

ISLAMABAD - Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif should not get carried away by the upcoming photo opportunity with the Indian premier in New York; instead, he should press for meaningful talks on the core Kashmir issue which is the mother of all disputes between the two countries, Kashmiri Hizbul Mujahideen Chief Syed Salahuddin said on Friday. "Please be brave as you are the leader of a strong nuclear power and don't talk to India apologetically from a position of self-imposed weakness as Pakistan will get nothing out of it," Salahuddin cautioned Premier Nawaz Sharif in an exclusive interview with The Nation from an undisclosed location.

Salahuddin, is a migrant from Kashmir valley. Sharif, the third-time premier of Pakistan, is also a Kashmiri whose forefathers migrated to Punjab even before the creation of Pakistan.

"Please don't be too optimistic about India. Talk to the Indians from a position of strength, and they will come to your terms and some mutually acceptable middle ground," the top Kashmiri militant commander declared. At the same time, he stressed that Pakistan should provide military, political and moral support to Kashmiris without any fear of international pressure as it was a legitimate struggle.

Salahuddin, however, dispelled the impression that Kashmiri militant organisations wanted to derail the Pakistan-India peace process. "Let me be very clear. We are not against peace talks with India, but they should be result-oriented and Kashmir-centric," he declared. He added, "We will

support the peace talks subject to the condition that Kashmiris, India and Pakistan should sit on one table.”

Salahuddin has been heading for many years Muttahida Jihad Council (MJC), an umbrella organisation of all Kashmiri groups who seek freedom through armed struggle against India.

Many would find it surprising that Salahuddin, a politician-turned militant commander, contested the Kashmir Assembly election in 1987 from Amirakadal constituency in Srinagar as a Muslim United Front candidate, but a massive rigging prompted him to look for other options as he was arrested and jailed for two years.

A strong critic of Pervez Musharraf, Salahuddin feels he alone did a major damage to the Kashmiri struggle by presenting a meaningless dialogue formula to India on Kashmir.

Although he will not spell out specifically, the Hizbul Mujahideen leader wanted to make the world realise that Kashmiri freedom struggle should not be labelled as a pan-Islamic or an Al-Qaeda-pattern movement. “We don’t want the world to see us as hardline militants or terrorists; we are freedom fighters who want to liberate their homeland from the brutal clutches of India. The world should acknowledge our pains, sufferings and sacrifices,” he stressed.

Pinning little hopes on the ongoing back channel or formal talks between India and Pakistan, Salahuddin said India was feeling the heat of uncontrollable public opinion against it inside Kashmir amidst some international focus coupled with military actions by freedom fighters, so it was again playing the negotiation card with Pakistan. Around 155 rounds of bilateral talks were held between India and Pakistan, but the Kashmir issue never became part of the real negotiations, Salahuddin said. “I can challenge Pakistani leadership doesn’t raise Kashmir seriously with India in

bilateral talks," he claimed. For 31 years, he complained, no Pakistani representative raised the Kashmir issue in the United Nations Security Council. "Our diplomatic missions failed to raise the issue with force at the Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC) and the UN forums". "The Indians magnify their military might and use delaying tactics when they see they can't keep Kashmir forever. Their unrealistic behaviour is a major impediment in the way of talks on the issue. If India doesn't consider Kashmir as a disputed territory, then what are we negotiating? Our leadership should first force the Indian leadership to take into account the ground realities," the Kashmiri militant commander stressed. Kashmir, he maintained, was a tri-partite issue, but India was trying to portray it as a border dispute between the two countries, and end its status as an international dispute was still unresolved by the United Nations. "It is neither a border dispute between India and Pakistan, nor an internal security problem of India. It is the matter of future of over 130 million Kashmiris and cannot be resolved by the two governments," he said. The Kashmiri militant commander defended the armed struggle against Indian forces and cross-border movement along the Line of Control (LoC) in Kashmir. Born in 1946 in central Kashmir's Soibugh village, Salahuddin studied political science at Kashmir University, Srinagar, where he joined Jamaat e Islami and became its Srinagar district president. He delivered Friday sermons at a mosque outside the Civil Secretariat Srinagar and had a large following.

"Kashmiris migrated to Pakistan in 1947, in 1965 and in 1990s due to Indian atrocities. They have houses, lands, businesses, relatives and near and dear ones in Indian side of the valley. Does it make them aliens and foreigners? Am I not a Kashmiri? So Lashkar-e-Taiba and militant people belong to migrated families and have a legitimate right to wage struggle against Indian occupation," he contended.

Salahuddin hinted at a major change in the strategy of Kashmiri militants, which caused border tension between the two countries. Attacks on Indian border posts and cantonments would continue, he vowed. "We don't operate in cities, urban areas and towns as we don't want the civilians to suffer. We attack border posts, supply lines and cantonments," he concluded.

## Talks with Pakistan govt will fail, says Taliban commander

As Pakistani officials and politicians mull negotiations with the Taliban to end years of insurgency, a senior rebel commander on Friday said the talks will fail as both sides are pursuing opposing objectives.

Omer Khalid Khorasani, the Islamist commander of Mohmand Agency, one of seven lawless tribal districts in the country's northwest, said in a letter to the media that he was not hopeful about the outcome of peace overtures.

"The current wave in support of the talks is bound to fail as we have come to the conclusion that the government is not serious," said Khorasani.

"The main difference is that we want to change the Constitution (with Shariah or Islamic law) and the army is demanding from us to follow the Constitution," he said.

The Taliban "will not budge an inch from the demand of implementation of Shariah" and if militant commanders deviate from this, "then we will not follow him", he said.

Khorasani said the second biggest hurdle in the way of peace is that the Taliban's demand for implementing Islamic law is for the entire country and not just the tribal region.

"We will support the mujahideen living in areas other than tribal region. We will not leave them and live and die together," he said.

The letter was issued amidst reports of rifts among Taliban factions circulating in the media. Some of the reports are highly credible and have been confirmed by Taliban sources.

The main Tehrek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) led by Hakimullah Mehsud has run into differences with the Jundullah group, created in 1970 for activities in Iran. It joined the TTP in 2007 as an independent group after Pakistan provided support to Tehran to launch a crackdown against it.

Sources said Jundullah chief Ahmed Marvan has accused Mehsud of taking unilateral decisions on accepting the government's offer of peace talks without consulting other groups.

He announced he would continue militancy and his faction was reportedly behind the the suicide attack on a church in Peshawar that killed 84 people.

The matter was referred to the Shura Muraqba, the Taliban's highest decision-making body, which declared that Marvan was right. This dealt a serious blow to Mehsud's prestige and power.

Khorasani is one of central TTP leaders but he is seemingly unhappy with the way Mehsud is running affairs. He has been using former TTP spokesman Ihsanullah Ihsan, who is also from Mohmand, to issue statements and letters.

For the government, the real issue is picking a reliable partner for peace, which seems an uphill task, according to a senior official of the Interior Ministry.

"We have prepared a list of militant organisations, which includes 62 groups involved in violence in the country. It is quite complex and difficult to select one group and leave the others," said the official, who did not want to be named.

Political parties too are divided as former President Asif Ali Zardari, head of the Pakistan People's Party, has warned of the perils of showing leniency towards militants.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, who has been pushing for talks with the militants, is disillusioned because of the relentless violence since he took power despite offering an olive branch to the Taliban.

But former cricketer Imran Khan, whose PTI rules the restive Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province, is adamant about the talks.



# U.N. Security Council unanimously passes Syria chemical weapons resolution

By Colum Lynch and Anne Gearan

UNITED NATIONS — The U.N. Security Council voted unanimously late Friday to approve an ambitious plan requiring Syria to surrender its chemical weapons for destruction, the first major diplomatic milestone reached more than two years after the start of the Syrian conflict.

The resolution, adopted by a vote of 15 to 0, does not spell out what penalties the government in Damascus might face if it doesn't comply. U.S. and European diplomats conceded that some of their toughest wording aimed at compelling Syria to obey the council's demands and holding perpetrators to account for using chemical weapons was removed from the final resolution at Russia's insistence.

Still, the measure constituted the first legally binding action on Syria from the Security Council since the government of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad launched a brutal crackdown on peaceful protesters in early 2011.

The conflict has descended into a brutal civil war, leaving more than 100,000 dead and threatening to engulf the region in sectarian conflict. Russia had previously blocked all attempts to punish or condemn Assad at the Security Council, which can order mandatory sanctions or military action.

"This is the first hopeful news on Syria for a long time. Tonight, the international community has delivered," U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said. He urged the council's big powers to follow up by convening a long-awaited Syrian peace conference in Geneva by the middle of November.

The agreement binds Syria to turn over its [chemical arsenal](#) but provides no automatic punishment if Syria balks. Enforcement would require further negotiation, setting up the prospect of more [tussles between the United States and Russia](#).

The White House claimed victory, citing the prospect of weapons inspectors entering Syria as soon as next week to begin the work of auditing and dismantling the country's chemical stockpile. "This is something that we have long sought," President Obama said at the White House on Friday. The deal worked out this week on the sidelines of the annual U.N. General Assembly will be "legally binding" and enforceable, Obama said, with "consequences for Syria's failure to meet what has been set forth in this resolution."

But the council action received a cool response from the Syrian opposition. "We don't believe the removal of chemical weapons will end the suffering of the Syrian people. Therefore, we have emphasized the need to do more to end the war and particularly to stop the regime from using heavy weapons against population centers — particularly ballistic missiles and jets," Ahmad al-Jarba, president of the Syrian Opposition Coalition, told reporters in New York.

Secretary of State John F. Kerry hailed the council action as a show of unity that promises the elimination of one of the world's largest chemical weapons stockpiles, one that had remained secret for decades. The United States and its allies say the arsenal was used in an Aug. 21 attack that killed about 1,400 Syrians, including more than 400 children, many as they slept.

"The U.N. Security Council has demonstrated that diplomacy can be so powerful it can peacefully defuse the worst weapons of war," Kerry told the Security Council. "Our collective resolve hardened tonight with a strong,

enforceable, precedent-setting resolution requiring Syria to give up its chemical weapons.”

But Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov made it clear how difficult it will be to penalize Syria in the event it cheats, noting that Friday’s resolution includes no “coercive” measure to ensure Syria’s compliance.

He said that “violations” of the agreement and “the use of chemical weapons by anyone will have to be carefully investigated by the Security Council of the United Nations, which will impose penalties only in the event that violations are serious enough to merit punishment” and are “proven by 100 percent,” a threshold that could be insurmountable.

Assad agreed to eliminate Syria’s chemical weapons program by the middle of 2014 under Russian pressure and following global outrage over the [Aug. 21 sarin gas attack](#), the deadliest chemical attack in 25 years. The United States and its allies blamed the Assad government for the attack; Assad and his Russian backers said the rebels were responsible.

The resolution says Syria “shall not use, develop, produce, otherwise acquire, stockpile or retain chemical weapons,” or transfer them to others.

In the event of noncompliance, the resolution says, the Security Council can “impose measures under Chapter 7 of the United Nations Charter.”

Diplomats were also meeting Friday in hopes of setting a date for a peace conference that would bring together representatives of Assad’s government and the [U.S.-backed political opposition](#) trying to oust it. A political settlement seems a long shot, however, especially since the Western- and - Sunni Arab-backed rebels have further splintered this week.

Shortly before the Security Council's vote, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons adopted a plan to send experts to inspect Syria's toxic munitions, which U.S. experts have described as a mix of nerve agents such as sarin and blister agents such as sulfur mustard. Approval by The Hague-based OPCW cleared the way for the Security Council vote.

The OPCW is scheduled to produce by Nov. 15 a timeline that details a series of disarmament milestones that Syria will be required to meet in order to "complete the elimination of all chemical weapons material and equipment in the first half of 2014."

U.N. weapons inspectors are also finalizing investigations into seven incidents where chemical weapons are alleged to have been used in Syria.

The inspectors are scheduled to leave Syria on Monday and present a final, comprehensive report on their findings to the U.N. secretary general by the end of October.

U.S. and European diplomats concede that some of their toughest wording aimed at compelling Syria to obey the council's demands and holding perpetrators to account for using chemical weapons was removed from the final resolution at Russia's insistence.



## No change in red lines for Taliban talks - US

The United States on Wednesday hoped negotiations on the bilateral security agreement (BSA) with Afghanistan would be completed in the next few weeks.

A top Obama administration official said it was too early to see what role Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, who was recently released by Pakistan, could play in peace talks with the Taliban.

Special US Representatives for Afghanistan and Pakistan James Dobbins told foreign journalists here there had been no change in the red lines with regard to reconciliation talks,

Only after the BSA negotiations were over, President Barack Obama would decide on the number of American troops staying in Afghanistan after 2014, he added.

"Those negotiations have been underway for almost a year; they have been increasingly intense in the last couple of months. The site of negotiations has moved to Kabul."

He noted the level of participation had also increased, saying the Washington was hopeful that process would be concluded in the next several weeks.

Dobbins said the US was currently negotiating a basis for a continued military presence to advise and assist Afghan armed forces.

"Once we complete that, [NATO](#) will seek to negotiate a comparable agreement that will allow the presence of other non-American forces as part of that coalition in support of Afghanistan," he said.



The US had kept Pakistan fully appraised of its intention and negotiations and looked forward to its continued support for the international presence in Afghanistan, he continued.

Dobbins said both Afghanistan and Pakistan wanted the release of Baradar and as such the US supported the move, but his role in the peace process was not known yet.

"All we know is the Afghan government and the Pakistani government both wanted this to happen, and both think that it will contribute to reconciliation, a goal we support."

Pakistan and Afghanistan believed Baradar, once released, would become a supporter and a proponent for reconciliation, he said, adding American conditions for successful peace negotiations were well known.

"The Taliban would have to stop fighting. They would have to respect the Afghan constitution and operate within it. They would have to cut their ties with al-Qaida. Those are not conditions to begin negotiations, they're conditions to end negotiations..."

The diplomat explained the US itself had had no contacts with the Taliban since early 2012, but would support a process that would allow American-Taliban talks. More importantly, he said, they wanted talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban.

# How Obama Can Apologize for Snubbing Asia

President [Barack Obama](#)'s decision to cancel his already truncated trip to [Asia](#) next week has elicited shrugs in Washington and politely clenched jaws from Bali to [Tokyo](#). What else could he do, say those focused on the high-stakes U.S. budget stalemate. What else is new, say those hoping that the administration will deliver on its promise of a "pivot" or a "rebalancing" toward Asia.

Much of the criticism of the cancellation comes from those worried about [China](#)'s growing economic and strategic heft. The Chinese are playing a long game in the region, it's said: President Xi Jinping has been crisscrossing [Southeast Asia](#), glad-handing counterparts and talking up business deals. Questioning the U.S. commitment to Asia is a default setting for pundits -- one reinforced by Obama's previous two cancellations of Asia trips in 2010 -- and the Chinese want their neighbors to know they aren't going anywhere.

You don't need to be Sun Tzu to exploit this dynamic. Pure geography means that Chinese officials will always outdo their U.S. counterparts in the number of meetings held, deals signed, hands shaken. Countries in the region will always hedge their bets, rolling out the red carpet for Secretary of State [John Kerry](#) one week, then jetting off to Beijing to pose with Xi and Chinese Premier [Li Keqiang](#).

No doubt the U.S. would have benefited if Obama had gone ahead with his trip. Negotiations for the 12-nation Trans-Pacific Partnership trade pact are nearing the endgame. A little presidential charm or arm-twisting would surely help negotiators overcome the stumbling blocks presented by Japan's

closed agricultural markets, Malaysia's ethnic preferences and [Vietnam's](#) state-owned enterprises.

At the same time, the agonizing in some quarters over the missed opportunity and U.S. loss of face is exaggerated. China's heavy-handed behavior is the reason for renewed local interest in a strong U.S. presence. Nations from Myanmar to Vietnam to [Japan](#) are bristling at Chinese arrogance, military assertiveness and (as they see it) economic exploitation. That's why Japan's government wants to [ramp up](#) its military ties to the U.S. That's why the [Philippines](#) is interested in reopening Subic Bay as a naval station for U.S. warships. And that's why China is attempting a new charm offensive.

Obama's failure to don a batik shirt for the closing photo shoot of the [Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation](#) summit changes little. In addition, if the past is any guide, China's leaders will once again overplay their hand. For many of its neighbors, China's uncompromising stance on sovereignty over various disputed atolls and islands is just too alienating.

The U.S. would do well to play a long game of its own. More important than all the talk about "rebalancing" is the substance, especially concerning trade and investment. The U.S. now exports goods worth more than \$325 billion a year to Pacific Rim nations. Kerry and Commerce Secretary [Penny Pritzker](#) can push for more. Even Congress has done its part by so far blessing sales of cheap shale gas to Asian nations, with or without free-trade agreements. At home, Obama can urge U.S. auto manufacturers and others to stop resisting some of the TPP's provisions -- demands that will only provoke deal-breaking counterdemands from their Asian competitors.



(5<sup>th</sup> Oct 2013)

The U.S. could shine more light on unrest in countries such as [Cambodia](#), where recent elections were tainted by charges of fraud. It can expand its emerging strategic cooperation with nations such as Vietnam, including a possible end to the embargo on the sale of lethal U.S. military equipment.

Asia's leaders will judge the U.S. commitment partly by the resources -- financial, diplomatic and military -- that the administration has available to it. Cuts at the Pentagon have already caused alarm across the region. A functioning U.S. government not about to default on its debts will send a more impressive message than a presidential visit while [Washington](#) flails.

## Experts launch mission in Syria



BEIRUT (AP)—Deadly clashes raged on the edge of Damascus on Wednesday, and rival rebel factions battled each other in northern Syria as international chemical weapons inspectors began to secure the sites where they will work.

The fighting underscored the immense security challenge that the dozens of disarmament experts must negotiate as they work amid the civil war to meet tight deadlines for eliminating President Bashar Assad's estimated 1,000-ton arsenal of chemical weapons.

The inspectors' mission—endorsed by a U.N. Security Council resolution passed last week—is to scrap Syria's capacity to manufacture chemical weapons by Nov. 1 and destroy its entire stockpile by mid-2014.

(4<sup>th</sup> Oct 2013)

A convoy of sport-utility vehicles with U.N. markings departed the central Damascus hotel where the team from the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons is staying as the inspectors headed out for their first full day in the country.

The United Nations and OPCW said in a statement that "joint work with the Syrian authorities has begun on securing the sites where the team will operate, especially in outlying areas." It added that planning continues for disabling production facilities as do discussions on the size of Syria's stockpile.

One challenge the inspectors face is navigating the war itself.

On the northern edge of Damascus, clashes between Syrian troops and Al-Qaida-linked fighters killed at least 19 soldiers and pro-government militiamen, the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said.

Fighting in the Barzeh district flared Monday when the army stepped up attacks against opposition forces who have been trying to capture the area for months, the Observatory said. Districts such as Barzeh, on the edge of Damascus, are important for rebels based in the outer suburbs as they try to move closer to the heart of the city.

The rebels, mostly from the ranks of Al-Qaida-linked fighters, sustained losses but did not disclose them, the Observatory said. It also noted clashes in Jobar on the capital's eastern edge.

In northern Syria, the Observatory reported clashes between Al-Qaida rebels and more moderate groups near the Turkish border.

(4<sup>th</sup> Oct 2013)

The rebel infighting, which in recent months has risen in intensity, adds a new layer of complication to the 2½-year-old conflict, in which more than 100,000 have been killed.

Syria's war is the first that inspectors from the OPCW have faced in a disarmament mission. An advance group of 19 OPCW experts and 14 U.N. staff members arrived Tuesday in Damascus, and they will be joined within a week by a second group of inspectors.

## **Pakistan not in arms race with any country - Nawaz**



**ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is not in an arms race with any country and follows the policy of minimal defence ability, said Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on Friday.**

Nawaz made this statement during his visit to the National Command Centre (NCC), where the centre's director general briefed him about special security measures taken to strengthen country's defence system.

The prime minister expressed his satisfaction over the security of Pakistan's nuclear assets. He said that country's nuclear assets are in safe hands and that Pakistan is a peaceful nuclear power.

He also visited the Kahuta nuclear plant earlier in the day, where General Khalid Shamim Wynne briefed him about the security of nuclear installations and other departments.

The Prime Minister commended the skills, expertise, professionalism and dedication of individuals as well as the organisations involved in the development of the NCC.

In attendance were Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, Chairperson Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Khalid Shamim Wynne, Director General Plans Division (SPD), Lieutenant General Khalid Ahmed Kidwai, other senior military officers, scientists and engineers.

# Structural flaws in IMF programme may hinder reduction in budget deficit

**By: Shahbaz Rana**

**ISLAMABAD: Structural flaws in the recently-signed programme with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) may work against one of the key objectives of 'stabilising economy through belt-tightening', as quarterly budget ceilings set by the IMF are contrary to historical budget deficit trends.**

The quarterly budget deficit ceilings allow the government to spend more in the first two quarters of the fiscal year, while imposing restrictions of less spending in the third and fourth quarters, showed the IMF documents.

Historically, the budget deficit in terms of the total size of the economy remained low in the first two quarters of the fiscal year, but widened in the third and fourth quarters.

The government's ways and means boundaries are also set in a manner that allow comparatively less spending in the first two quarters and more during the last two quarters of the fiscal year. According to the 'ways and means limit', government agencies can spend up to 20% during each of the first two quarters and 30% each in the third and fourth quarters.

For the current fiscal year, the IMF imposed a binding condition of keeping the gap between the national income and spending at Rs1.463 trillion or 5.8% of the gross domestic product (GDP). To achieve this target, the Washington-based lender had allowed the government to attain a budget

deficit of 1.7% in the first quarter, 1.8 % in the second, 1.3% in the third and just 1% in the fourth quarter, according to the IMF documents.

According to independent economists, lean budget deficit targets in the first two quarters will allow the government to adopt an expansionary fiscal policy – cutting interest rates and expand money supply to encourage growth and combat inflation – which may make it difficult to reverse the trends in the next two quarters. They argued that it will be difficult to reverse historical trends, and eventually the government will miss the deficit targets for last two quarters.

### **Historical trends**

During the last five years, the budget deficit in the first quarter remained around 1% of the GDP that gradually widened during the course of the fiscal year and in the fourth quarter the deficit remained over 2% of the GDP – double than the IMF permissible limit.

The preliminary results of fiscal 2014's first quarter (July-September) were also in line with historical trends. According to an official from the Ministry of Finance, the budget deficit in the first quarter remained at Rs293 billion or 1.1% of the GDP – far below the IMF ceiling of 1.7%. One of the major reasons behind lower budget deficit was the placement of Rs67 billion in the Universal Services Fund under the control of the Finance Ministry. This gave 0.3% benefit to the government in the first quarter.

According to the official in the first quarter, the government's revenues stood at Rs471 billion against total expenditure of Rs845 billion, showing a gap of Rs374 billion or 1.4% of the GDP. However, provinces saved Rs81 billion that brought down the overall budget deficit to 1.1%.



In the last fiscal year 2012-13, the budget deficit in the first quarter was 1.2% of the GDP while it was 3.6% or Rs787 billion in the fourth quarter. The fourth quarter of the fiscal year 2012 closed at 2.3% of the GDP. Similarly in fiscal year 2011, the budget deficit was 2.1% of the GDP.

The fiscal ceilings were indicative, but the final goal of attaining a budget deficit of 5.8% was more important, said Dr Nadeemul Haque, former deputy chairman of the Planning Commission. Haque, who had also served in the IMF, said that the international lending agency could adjust these fiscal ceilings as per requirement.

The fiscal year 2009-10 was the first year under the last IMF programme. Even in that year when the government showed restraints in spending, the deficit remained at 2.1% of the GDP, according to documents of the finance ministry.

Ministry of Finance spokesperson Rana Assad Amin did say the quarterly ceilings were not in line with historical trends, but he affirmed that the austerity measures will reverse them. Amin said the 5.8% budget deficit target was "sacrosanct" for the government to achieve.

# IMF says US, emerging economies pose greater risk to global economy

The economic crisis in Europe has largely been overcome, says the IMF. In a reversal of roles, it's the United States and emerging economies that pose the larger risk for global economic growth - not the eurozone.



The mood in the run up to the fall meeting of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in Washington, DC, has been quite subdued. For the sixth time in a row, the IMF has revised its growth forecast downward. The global economy is now expected to grow 2.9 percent this year and 3.6 percent next year - as long as no new catastrophic shocks disrupt the economy. But there could be just such a shock if the United States fails to raise its legally prescribed debt ceiling on October 17, which would put Washington in default.

The economic consequences of the temporary US government shutdown can be managed, said IMF chief economist Olivier Blanchard on Tuesday in Washington, as he presented the new economic outlook.

"Failure to lift the debt ceiling would however be a major event," Blanchard said. "Prolonged failure would lead to an extreme fiscal consolidation and almost surely devalue the US recovery.

"But the effects of any failure to repay the debt would be felt right away, leading to potentially major disruptions in financial markets - both in the US and abroad," he continued.

### **Risky monetary policy**

In addition to the [US budget and debt ceiling battles](#), the IMF also called the monetary policy of central banks as another major risk.

"It is, therefore, time to make plans for an exit from both quantitative easing and zero policy rates," Blanchard said. "However, it is not time yet to implement those plans."



Blanchard: US debt battle poses major risks

While the IMF expert said moving away from [loose monetary policy](#) would pose "no major technical issue," it's a "new and delicate" challenge for the

US Federal Reserve to communicate this policy shift in a way that doesn't cause volatility.

That was clearly a reference to outgoing US Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke, who announced in just 33 words last May that the Fed might consider slowing the printing press if the US economy continues to recover. A "Washington Post" reporter wrote on Monday that each word cost \$12 billion. That's because the IMF estimated the capital flight from emerging economies after Bernanke's announcement at \$404.4 billion.

### **Europe no longer in the hot seat**

The Europeans no longer sit in the hot seat as the IMF's main cause of concern when it comes to economic growth. Early in the year, the [eurozone](#) was considered a risk for the global economy and the emerging economies were viewed as growth's great hope. But now the roles have been reversed. The emerging economies have become a source of concern as their growth slows, while the EU has been praised by the IMF for its progress.



Slowing growth in emerging economies poses a risk to the global economy, according to the IMF

The eurozone has put the recession behind it and will see a small amount of net growth next year, according to Jörg Decressin, the deputy director of the



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research division at the IMF. Decressin said there had been a lot of progress in budget consolidation and the easing of austerity could stimulate the economy.

But he also warned that there was a long way to go before Europe had overcome its high unemployment rate. That's why the IMF continues to promote structural reform in Europe and in particular a banking union, Decressin said. Above all, the countries on the eurozone's southern periphery need to invest everything in regaining their lost competitiveness, he said.

# Economic Integration Remains Elusive for ASEAN



BRUNEI — The leaders of Southeast Asian nations will meet Wednesday and Thursday to assess progress on an ambitious goal of realizing the ASEAN Economic Community by 2015. The quest for a regional economic partnership is one that even ASEAN's Secretariat is acknowledging remains a challenge, especially amid an uncertain global environment.

The summit's host, the Sultan of Brunei, Hassanal Bolkiah, opened the meeting by noting there has been "some progress" towards ASEAN's goal of regional integration of ten economies (Burma, Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam) in two years' time.

“But overall, we must continue to show greater political will in doing all we can to realize our community goals by 2015,” said the Sultan.

Another big issue for ASEAN is a maritime code of conduct. It focuses on the territorial dispute involving China and several other member nations regarding navigation of the South China Sea.

The previous ASEAN Summit came close to what analysts termed a diplomatic implosion when the maritime issue prevented the group, for the first time, from issuing a joint communiqué.

This week, China's foreign ministry spokesperson, Hua Chunying, made it clear while speaking to reporters in Beijing on Tuesday that discussions about the financial crisis faced by Southeast Asia, not the territorial disputes, should be the priority at this year's ASEAN summit.

Hua said “China should make joint efforts to maintain peace and stability of the South China Sea without adopting any action that may complicate the situation in the region.”

The ASEAN meeting will be followed on Thursday by the East Asia Summit. Two high profile leaders will not be attending: U.S. President Barack Obama and Russian President Vladimir Putin.

In a column published Wednesday in the Brunei Times, former U.S. Ambassador to the Asia Development Bank, Curtis Chin, contends that Obama's absence is contributing to the United States “losing face in Asia” at the expense of China. Chin writes this could lead to a loss of American credibility, power, prestige and influence at a time when Washington is touting a diplomatic “pivot” to Asia.

## **Barack Obama: real, unreal, for real?**

The United States decides to cut military assistance to Egypt because it is displeased with the slow pace of democratization after the coup against President Mohamed Morsi. But then, off the record, officials characterize this as “temporary,” and say they hope assistance will resume as democratic practices are adopted.

Then look at what is happening in Syria. A psychopathic regime has carried the country into a civil war that has quickly become a regional and international free-for-all. It uses chemical weapons against its own citizens, but somehow manages to make it sound relative by killing not far from 100,000 people, most of them civilians, in other ways. Despite all this its Russian ally continues to supply weapons, defend the Syrian leadership, and look the other way on its most monstrous crimes, all the while retaining its influence.

Morally, the United States is right and Russia wrong. But politically, Washington is ensuring that it becomes less relevant in a country that had been a cornerstone of its regional policy until not so long ago. Russia, in contrast, has used stubbornness over Syria as a trampoline back into regional relevance after a long period of marginalization.

But are things as clear as that? The zeal with which American officials sought to play down the measures against Egypt was reminiscent of Secretary of State John Kerry’s statement that an attack against Syria would be “unbelievably small.” The effective consequence was to negate the very policy Washington was implementing--without, however, tempering Egyptian annoyance, since nothing is more annoying than to be penalized by a country unconvinced by the penalty.



The Obama administration is still not clear about what it wants in Egypt. That's partly because Egypt presents such a litany of contradictory reactions and impulses. In 2011 the Americans called on their old ally President Hosni Mubarak to step down, fearing that by not doing so the US would be overtaken by events and fall on the wrong side of the revolution. They then supported the democratic process, which brought in an Islamist majority to parliament and Morsi as president. When he was overthrown by the army, the US found itself again caught up in a dilemma of either supporting a legitimate president or backing the army with whom it had close ties.

Barack Obama's choice satisfied nobody. The president tried to play the middle ground--neither calling the military intervention a coup, so as not to be legally bound to cut funding to Egypt (a charade that convinced nobody), nor endorsing the actions the military took against the Muslim Brotherhood--even as it warned against the consequences of repression. For this ambiguity it was accused of sympathizing with the Brotherhood, a ridiculous charge, but one which the cutoff in military aid will not help to discredit.

Russian behavior has been less angst-ridden. President Vladimir Putin opted to go all the way with a barbaric Syrian regime, whatever the consequences. That meant aiding and abetting mass murder, but apparently with no lingering consequences to date, since Putin has been hailed around the world as a master tactician while Obama is routinely (and justifiably) dismissed as a tiresome ditherer.

How strange it is to hear that. Recall that political realists welcomed the president's election as a refreshing contrast to George W. Bush, whose alleged neoconservatism and taste for democratization jarred with the practical and calculating realist mindset. But it very quickly became apparent that Obama's desire to disengage from the Middle East did not really qualify

as “realism,” because as the region dissolved into violence, American interests were seriously harmed.

The Arab Spring provided both challenges and opportunities for Washington. In retrospect the US failed on both counts. While Obama managed the initial revolution in Egypt well, he has since lost much ground. Ironically, this happened once Morsi was overthrown, which should have been a moment the Americans would welcome. Instead they waffled, allowing Saudi Arabia to intervene with a generous cash [injection](#) that bolstered the military’s credibility.

Now the Egyptian Army is far more concerned with Saudi approval than with American disapproval. And many Egyptians agree.

In Syria, a true realist would have exploited the opportunity in 2011 to help get rid of the Assad regime, and in that way undermine Iranian power in the Levant. Obama opted to do nothing, neither arming the rebels with weapons that could have threatened the regime nor using its influence to impose unity on the fragmented Syrian opposition groups and the divided countries bolstering them.

The delay (for Obama, typically, would later reconsider and start arming the rebels) gave Iran and Russia the time they needed to send weapons and reorganize Bashar Assad’s army, allowing him to regain his footing. While Washington was emptily calling on Assad to step down, the Iranians and Russians were making sure he wouldn’t do so.

So what are the lessons of the story? There are several. That being morally right but politically indecisive is worse than being morally wrong yet clear-minded about one’s objectives. That Barack Obama is a realist only in the imagination of his admirers. That America in two years has lost in Egypt

**NOW.**

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much of what it spent more than three decades building up. And that nothing is more wretched than a president who wants to be a moral paragon and a cool calculator at the same time.

Above all, that a successful leader is the one who seizes the moment, not the one who has the hubris to believe that the world will somehow bend itself around his priorities and hesitations.



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# Nobel highlights Syria with Peace Prize to chemical weapons watchdog

By **Ben Brumfield** and **Laura Smith-Spark**, CNN

The prize committee in Oslo, Norway, awarded it Friday to the [Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons](#), the international chemical weapons watchdog helping to eliminate the Syrian army's stockpiles of poison gas.

[EXCLUSIVE: Inside lab that tested Syria chemical weapon evidence](#)

Its inspectors have just begun working in the active war zone, and the Norwegian Nobel Committee said it hopes the award offers "strong support" to them as they face arduous and life-threatening tasks.

But the OPCW did not receive the prize primarily because of its work in Syria, committee chairman Thorbjorn Jagland said. "It is because of its long-standing efforts to eliminate chemical weapons and that we are now about to reach the goal and do away with a whole category of weapons of mass destruction. That would be a great event in history, if we can achieve that."

Nevertheless, OPCW Director-General Ahmet Uzumcu said he wants the prize to inspire everyone to reach for peace in Syria.

"I truly hope that this award ... will help broader efforts to achieve peace in that country and (ease) the suffering of its people," Uzumcu said told reporters Friday afternoon.

Uzumcu, saying he was "pleasantly surprised" by the award and acknowledging it was a great honor, added that "events in Syria have been a tragic reminder that there remains much work yet to be done."



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"The recognition that the peace prize brings will spur us to untiring effort, even stronger commitment and greater dedication," he said.

U.S. President Barack Obama congratulated the group. A White House statement said "this award honors those who make it their life's work to advance this vital goal."

"Today's award recognizes that commitment, and reinforces the trust and confidence the world has placed in the OPCW, Director-General Ahmed Uzumcu, and the courageous OPCW experts and inspectors taking on the unprecedented challenge of eliminating Syria's chemical weapons program," the statement said.

[Chemical weapons team faces many dangers](#)

### **Team in Syria**

A team from the OPCW and the United Nations has been in Syria since October 1, and it oversaw the first destruction of chemical weapons equipment this week.

On Sunday, Syrian personnel used "cutting torches and angle grinders to destroy or disable a range of items," the OPCW said. "This included missile warheads, aerial bombs and mixing and filling equipment."

[U.N.: Destruction of Syria's chemical weapons begins](#)

Given the danger the inspectors face, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon this week described the joint OPCW-U.N. mission in Syria as "an operation the likes of which, quite simply, have never been tried before."



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The joint mission is tasked by a U.N. Security Council resolution with eliminating all chemical weapons in the country by midyear 2014.

### [Nobel recognizes risks faced by weapons inspectors](#)

Ban has set out the three phases of the mission: establishing an initial presence and verifying the Syrian government's declaration of its stockpiles; overseeing the destruction of chemical weapons; and verification of the destruction of any and all chemical weapons-related programs or materials.

The team in Syria is made up of 35 members, but the OPCW is preparing to deploy a second team to strengthen the effort. The group plans to grow the team to 100.

### [Where are Syria's chemical weapons?](#)

The government in Damascus has been cooperative so far, and there is hope they will reach their goal.

"These developments present a constructive beginning for what will nonetheless be a long and difficult process," Uzumcu said.

On August 21, a chemical attack outside Damascus led the United States and its allies to call for military intervention in Syria's civil war -- a confrontation that was defused in mid-September, when Damascus agreed to a U.S.-Russian plan to give up its chemical weapons stockpile.

The United States estimates the Syrian arsenal at about 1,000 tons of blister agents and nerve gas. The Syrians provided an initial declaration of its stockpile and must submit a plan for destroying the weapons by October 27, Uzumcu said.



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## **Nobel justification**

The award to the OPCW was intended in part as a message to countries still harboring chemical weapons to get rid of them, Jagland said.

In awarding the prize, the Norwegian committee highlighted the widespread use of chemical weapons in World War I and efforts to stop it since.

In 1925, the Geneva Convention prohibited their use. But during World War II, the Nazi dictatorship under Adolf Hitler employed them to extinguish the lives of millions of concentration camp inmates in the Holocaust.

### [Chemical weapons: The desperate commander's escape from stalemate](#)

The Geneva Convention left some loopholes open, though, the Norwegian committee said. It does not prohibit the production and storage of chemical weapons.

But in 1997, an international convention banning that as well was instituted.

## **About the OPCW**

The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, based in The Hague, in the Netherlands, is the independent implementing body for the Chemical Weapons Convention, an international arms control treaty.

The Chemical Weapons Convention entered into force in April 1997, at which point 87 states had ratified it, and the work of the OPCW to implement its provisions began at that point.

### [Syria: Are chemical weapons worse than conventional attacks?](#)



11<sup>th</sup> October 2013

According to the treaty's wording, signatories are "determined for the sake of all mankind, to exclude completely the possibility of the use of chemical weapons, through the implementation of the provisions of this Convention."

Sixteen years later, more than 100 additional states have ratified the treaty. In September, Syria became the latest nation to ask to join the convention. It is due to enter into force in Syria on October 14, when it will become the 190th member state.

### **Peace prize**

In the lead-up to the prize announcement Friday, the global media speculated that an individual would win, possibly Congolese physician Denis Mukwege, who treats victims of gang rape, or Malala Yousafzai, the teenage education activist from Pakistan whom a Taliban assassin shot for her work to promote education for girls.

Malala appeared to be the front-runner in headlines around the world.

CNN's Monita Rajpal asked Jagland why she did not win.

"Fortunately, we have many good candidates every year, actually this year, more than 250. And the woman you mentioned, Malala, is an outstanding woman, but we never comment on why she or others didn't get the prize," he said. "The right answer is that she didn't get the prize because OPCW got it. She and others will probably be candidates in the years to come."

A Twitter account in Malala's name sent out a message congratulating the OPCW and thanking it for its work. In an interview with CNN's Christiane Amanpour, which is to air at 7 p.m. Sunday, Malala said it might be premature for her to receive the Nobel Peace Prize this early in her life.





11<sup>th</sup> October 2013

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon congratulated the OPCW, saying it has "greatly strengthened the rule of law in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation."

"From the battlefields to the laboratories to the negotiating table, the United Nations is honored to work hand-in-hand with the OPCW to eliminate the threat posed by chemical weapons for all people and for all time," Ban said Friday.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry also voiced congratulations. He highlighted the organization's role in Syria.

"The Nobel Committee has rightly recognized their bravery and resolve to carry out this vital mission amid an ongoing war in Syria," he said.

Last year, the Norwegian committee awarded the [peace prize to the European Union](#) as it grappled with the worst crisis since its founding -- devastating debt and the threat of disintegration.

The award was a salute to the struggling 27-nation union for its work in promoting democracy and reconciliation since World War II.

It is common for the Nobel Peace Prize to go to organizations.

### [Opinion: Why Europe deserved the Peace Prize](#)

Other large organizations that have won it include the United Nations, Doctors Without Borders, U.N. peacekeeping forces, the U.N. atomic energy agency, the Red Cross and the International Campaign to Ban Landmines.

The Peace Prize is the fifth Nobel Prize to be awarded this week, preceded by honors in medicine, physics, chemistry and literature.



11<sup>th</sup> October 2013

The final Nobel Prize, recognizing achievement in the field of economics, will be awarded Monday.

# Israel and India, a Match Made in the U.S., Develop Their Own Military Romance

**How last month's attacks in Nairobi, a reminder of the Mumbai siege, may bring them even closer together**

By [Mark Bergen](#) | October 8, 2013

In February, 2009, Rafael Advanced Defense Systems, the Israeli arms manufacturer, made a short [advertisement](#) for the Indian market. It began with three bejeweled Bollywood-style dancers shimmying with a long-nosed man wearing a leather jacket, who pivoted around a model missile and sang in an Israeli accent. "What more can I pledge to make our future strong?" he pleaded. "I need to feel safe and sheltered," his female counterpart sang back. "Together forever, we will always be." The entourage then breaks into nonsensical Hindi: "Dinga dinga, dinga dinga, dinga dinga dee."

*Wired* [declared](#) it "the most atrocious defense video of all time." It has little competition. But the 3-minute clip is noteworthy for how uncharacteristic it is of relationship between Israel and India—a defense partnership built not on spectacle but on muted deals and secrecy. The ad, in fact, was something of a thank-you to the Indian defense ministry, which in December 2008 had quietly [inked](#) a billion dollar deal for 18 Spyder missiles from Rafael, a private company spun off from the research and development division of the Israel Defense Forces in 2002. It has since signed a [partnership](#) to build weapons with Mahindra & Mahindra, one of India's largest conglomerates.

Last year, Israel topped the list of arms suppliers to India—just as India officially became the globe's [largest](#) arms importer. And it's not just missiles and drones: India has increasingly leaned on Tel Aviv for high-tech warfare, scooping up the Phalcon airborne radar and advanced electronic surveillance systems along with equipment to retrofit now-rickety Soviet-era weaponry.

In New Delhi, Israel is seen not just as a ready and competent supplier, but as a kindred nation. "India and Israel both imagine themselves as democracies under siege," said Bhairav Acharya, a legal analyst with the Centre for Internet and Society, a Bangalore think tank. "Relationships are extremely one-sided and based almost solely on combat weapons."

For India, the Shabab terrorist attack in Nairobi last month struck a nerve. It was eerily reminiscent of the siege by a militant group from Pakistan in Mumbai, five years ago, in which more than 160 people were killed, including the local Chabad rabbi and his wife. Since then, the Indian government has grown closer to Israel, which was one of the first nations to come to its aid in 2008. Their courtship began as a multilateral relationship, with the United States acting as partner and [matchmaker](#). But the road between Jerusalem and Delhi no longer passes through Washington. "In fact, if the U.S. were to take an active interest, it would complicate this relationship," said Harsh V. Pant, a defense studies lecturer at King's College, London.

As India continues to ramp up its military might, it looks set to grow closer still, as Israel seeks to cement its relationship not just with a customer for its defense industries but with a friend among the world's major non-Islamic powers. In November, the two nations are set to hold a seventh round of talks on a bilateral free-trade agreement. If finalized, it's expected to broaden economic exchange beyond government contracts, to private-sector deals in information technology, agriculture, and energy. "The relations between Israel and India are not based on the relations between India and the U.S.," Ohad Horsandi, the Israeli Embassy spokesman in New Delhi, told me. "These are completely independent relations."

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India did not open diplomatic relations with Israel until 1992, making it the last non-Arabic or Islamic country to do so. The two nations, born a year apart, started off on shaky ground. India voted against the United Nations Partition Plan in 1947, largely at the behest of Mahatma Gandhi, who opposed the [tactics](#) of militant Jewish nationalist groups in Mandatory Palestine. Yet India recognized Israel in 1950, under Jawaharlal Nehru, and according to multiple [accounts](#), the Mossad and its Indian equivalent, the Research and Analysis Wing—known as the R&AW—spent decades in covert cooperation.

A month after establishing direct ties, Benjamin Netanyahu, then a deputy minister, [told](#) a visiting Indian journalist that his country had “developed expertise in dealing with terrorism ... and would be happy to share it with India.” Defense, the one thread that tied the two countries, was now the bedrock. In 1998, the Hindu nationalist Bhartiya Janata Party, or BJP, came to power in Delhi, bringing with it an avowed, ardent stance on Pakistan and terrorism and a wobbly history with India’s Muslims. In 2000, Israel hosted LK Advani, the right-wing BJP elder statesman. The BJP returned the favor and invited Ariel Sharon, then prime minister, to Delhi in September of 2003. But that same year the party also [invited](#) Iran’s President Mohamad Khatami, a prelude to a naval warship partnership with Iran.

In 2004, the Congress Party, which has a large base of Muslim voters, took over the coalition government and in the years since has struck a cooler public stance regarding Israel. Secrecy has become the modus operandi. “The defense partnership between the two states continues to grow, quietly, out of the public glare,” said Pant.

The growing relationship with Israel has coincided with Delhi’s efforts to ease its military dependency on Russia. (India, unlike China, has had a rough time producing its own weapons.) In 2007, Israel surpassed France as the

second leading military supplier to India, after Russia. India, whose neighbors are primarily equipped with Russian weaponry, continues to look for alternatives. And Russia has shown increased irritation; in April, Moscow's ambassador to Delhi [suggested](#) that Russia may withdraw from military tenders, after losing a series of deals for everything from fighter jets to attack helicopters—something the Russians blamed on “gimmicks” in India's government contracts.

Ties now extend to India's civilian technology industries. Commercial trade has boomed in the past 20 years, from \$180 million to \$6 billion, and both nations have invested heavily in technology industries. In May Israel opened its third Indian consulate in Bangalore, the country's technology center. “In every sphere, there's very strong and deep cooperation,” Horsandi, the embassy spokesman, told me.

Meanwhile, India's relations with the United States have grown increasingly [fraught](#); Washington remains frustrated at India's intransigence in opening markets, and Delhi is irked that American companies feel entitled to sweetheart defense contracts. “The U.S. has a very narrow understanding of India. Israel doesn't make similar demands,” said PR Kumaraswamy, the [author](#) of *India's Israel Policy*, who spent nine years studying at Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Late last month, Manmohan Singh, the Indian prime minister, was in Washington for meetings that primarily revolved around newly heated tensions with Pakistan. “Israel,” Kumaraswamy continued, “looks more to India as someone who it can do business with.”

But domestic politics do interfere. In the past three years, the Congress Party has been beset by rampant corruption scandals. Its minister of defense, a politician with a incorruptible reputation, is now fighting to reduce the influence India's powerful [middlemen](#)—the floating agents that help foreigners navigate India's bureaucratic thickets, many of whom have ties to

Israeli defense contractors—and has made a particular show of prosecuting graft involving Israel. “Most of the corruption reflects the problems with India,” said Kumaraswamy. “In the Israeli case, it becomes a political football.”

In 2010, India’s Central Bureau of Investigation, or CBI, recommended that the defense ministry blacklist six foreign companies for involvement in bribery scams with the departed head of the Ordnance Factories Board, India’s defense manufacturing body. The list included companies from Russia, Germany, and Singapore but also named Israel Military Industries, a firearms and ammunition manufacturer. In March of 2012, the ministry complied, [banning](#) the named contractors from operating in India for 10 years.

The investigation was remarkably similar to one the CBI launched in 2006 around an Indian Navy contract for the Barak I, a short-range air defense system. The Navy’s two contractors were Israel Aerospace Industries and Rafael, which was accused of sending kickbacks to India’s defense minister in 2000. While that case is still pending, neither IAI nor Rafael—which [makes](#) the Iron Dome, among other products—have been threatened with blacklisting.

Last December, India’s foreign investment board shot down Rafael’s joint venture request with Mahindra & Mahindra. The decision was [seen](#) as a consequence of the CBI investigation. But Acharya, the analyst, told me it was a bureaucratic move, not a retributive or diplomatic one—India’s public sector wants to maintain its domestic monopoly on weapons production. Delhi, he said, is still eager to move forward with Rafael, which is in the midst of a \$2 billion project with the Indian Navy for Barak 8, an advanced iteration of the surface-to-air missile.

In June, *Haaretz*, citing a British government report, [claimed](#) that Israel had covertly been shipping military equipment to five countries, including Pakistan. Israeli officials promptly denied the claims and lobbied swiftly to clear the air with New Delhi. Multiple analysts I spoke with believed the reports were untrue. "Israel understands India's red lines," Kumaraswamy concluded, its darkest being the lengthy, nuclear-capable conflict with Pakistan.

In July, the Indian defense ministry let slip that it is considering [buying](#) an Iron Dome system from Rafael, specifically for purposes of defending against short-range Pakistani missiles. Five months earlier, Alon Ushpiz, Israel's ambassador to Delhi, had unveiled the system in Bangalore. He had no accompanying Bollywood number. Ushpiz simply [introduced](#) India, which was seeing the Iron Dome for the first time, as Israel's "intimate partner."

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# Brothers in arms

By: Babar Sattar

WE love the Afghan Taliban — the slayers of arrogant global superpowers — but not so much their brothers-in-arms in Pakistan, the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). Is there a method to our madness that only the khaki-inspired 'strategic' mindset is capable of comprehending?

We have over 40,000 citizens and probably another 5,000 or so security personnel dead. We hear emphatic demands by TTP apologists for complete disassociation with the US war in Afghanistan. How about revisiting Pakistan's Afghan policy vis-à-vis the Taliban?

The first interaction with any Afghan outside of Pakistan in conferences etc is truly shocking. The anger towards Pakistan for being the architect of all of Afghanistan's problems is unmistakable, even if exaggerated. It is like hearing the Jamaat-i-Islami speak of the US as the fountainhead of all of Pakistan's ailments. If you ask our Afghan experts about this revulsion of our neighbour they'll tell you that you probably met the wrong folk, who are paranoid and ungrateful, just like Hamid Karzai.

Pakistan's Afghan policy is changed we are told. We no longer want Taliban rule across Afghanistan, like in the 1990s. We now want a pluralist government in Afghanistan that represents all ethnic groups, led by the Pakhtuns and with the Taliban as a dominant subset of the Pakhtun segment. Does this plan sound anymore realistic than the one we have for the TTP: we'll tell them nicely that we hate the Americans and the drones and love the Sharia and then we will live happily ever after?

If you ask intelligence gurus or diplomats who 'handled' the Afghan Taliban in the 1990s, they'll tell you candidly that the Pakistani state's influence over

the Taliban government was miniscule. Does Pakistan have leverage with the Afghan Taliban today? Much less than what Pakistan had in the 1990s you are told. Have the Taliban fundamentally changed their ideology or worldview over the last decade? They've learnt from mistakes, but there has been no radical transformation you are told.

The Taliban have a totalitarian approach to power. They don't believe in dividing the pie or sharing it. After having evaded extermination at the hands of the Americans for over a decade will they now sign on to the theoretical idea of building a pluralist federal state that distributes power between all Afghan stakeholders, including those who have been killing TTP leaders? Developing a working relationship with the world if you plan to retake Afghanistan is one thing; embracing enemies at home quite another.

So then it boils down to this. The Taliban are a totalitarian exclusionary force. Post 2014 they will control the parts of Afghanistan that border Pakistan, if not more. Let's continue to appease them and save whatever levers of influence we can, as opposed to making them more angry at us than they presently are (for betraying them after 9/11), for that is the best safeguard to prepare for the US withdrawal in 2014. And how will the Taliban treat the TTP and Fata post 2014? Abandon their brothers-in-arms and give up strategic depth in Pakistan?

The Afghan Taliban will do to Pakistan, in relation to the TTP, what Pakistan does to the US, in relation to the Afghan Taliban: support the TTP (not-so) secretly as a negotiating tool and safeguard against Pakistan and claim Fata as a strategic backwater in the internecine Afghan war that will commence post-US withdrawal. And what will Taliban success in Afghanistan do to the TTP? It will embolden it, provide it secure sanctuaries, strengthen it and encourage it to claim Pakistan just as the Taliban claim Afghanistan.

What is the cost of our flawed Afghan policy? Would there be a TTP today if Pakistan had not operationalised the jihadi project in the 1980s or nurtured the Taliban in the 1990s? What is the human cost of our 30-year engagement with Afghanistan as self-styled kingmakers? What is the economic cost inflicted by refugees, smuggling and terror? What is the social cost produced by guns, drugs and radicalisation of society? Should this be 'acceptable cost' as a strategic matter?

What is truly mind-boggling is that neither 9/11 and Pakistan's withdrawal of support for the Taliban government (but not Taliban the jihadists) nor the emergence of TTP has led us to rework our Afghan policy, one capable of cultivating sustainable peace with a troubled neighbour. Barring exceptions, neither those who wish to talk our brother terrorists out of violence, nor those vying for the state to vanquish the TTP by force, focus on the range of policies and actions imperative for establishing peace in Pakistan.

Re-establishing the writ of the state in North Waziristan that is presently the Emirate of TTP is an important first step. Even those who disagree about how to go about doing this — through talks or use of force — must acknowledge that we need to simultaneously focus on all other state policies and societal factors that ferment terror. On the external front let us start with the Afghan policy. Can we not use some cooling-off there? Let's not be imperialists, facilitators fixing the jigsaw, or adversaries selling the Taliban to the yanks.

Let us try neutral disengagement for once. Let us be isolationists not playing the big game, but focused on putting our house in order. Let us develop better control over the flow of men, material and money into Pakistan. Let India fill the vacuum created by our withdrawal from intra-Afghan affairs as a worst case, and burn its fingers like us. Let us carve in stone that non-

state actors will never again be national security assets and whatever fighting capacity we need, we'll develop within the state security forces.

Let us develop an amnesty scheme to reintegrate within society those militants who wish to give up arms. Let us develop de-radicalisation, rehabilitation and monitoring programmes to foster peace and rehabilitation within the tribal areas. Let us work on mainstreaming Fata and extending the entire scheme of constitutional rights and responsibilities to its residents. Beyond the talks versus use of force debate there is a whole range of necessary policy, governance and structural initiatives required to establish peace that we haven't even begun to identify.

*The writer is a lawyer.*

sattar@post.harvard.edu

Twitter: @babar\_sattar

# Security is imperative

Munir Akram

WHEN Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif assumed his third term in office, he proposed unconditional talks to India; sought a rapprochement with Hamid Karzai in Kabul; and offered negotiations to the Pakistani Taliban.

The harsh realities of Pakistan's security environment have, however, confronted the prime minister's goodwill in seeking to engage with Pakistan's adversaries and address its security challenges.

India initially agreed to resume talks with Pakistan, though it conditioned them on an absence of "violence and terrorism". The revival of anti-India protests in India-held Kashmir, exchanges of fire across the Line of Control and the impending national elections in India seem to have put paid to the prospects of an early resumption of the Indo-Pakistan dialogue.

Speaking at the UN General Assembly last month, Mr Sharif reaffirmed Pakistan's long-standing call for a solution to Kashmir based on the will of its people even while urging resumption of talks with India. This evoked a vicious response from his Indian counterpart: not only reiterating India's claim on Kashmir but also depicting Pakistan as the "epicentre of terrorism". Although the meeting between the two prime ministers went ahead in New York, New Delhi retracted its earlier willingness to resume the dialogue with Pakistan.

The portents are not auspicious. Pakistan-baiting will be a favoured election ploy of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), now led by Narendra Modi, the Hindu supremacist. It will oblige the ruling Congress to adopt the hardline stance evident in New York. If the BJP wins, India's belligerence may go

beyond words. For its part, Pakistan will find it difficult to deal with Modi, given that he is widely held responsible for the massacre of over 2000 Muslims in the 2002 Gujrat riots.

Given these negative trends, the statement issued by Pakistan's National Command Authority, chaired by the prime minister on Sept 5, was prescient. It declared that Pakistan "would not remain oblivious to the evolving security dynamics in South Asia and would maintain full spectrum deterrence capability to deter all forms of aggression".

Pakistan has in place a clear security posture and doctrine to deter Indian aggression. The 2002 Pakistan-India military confrontation brought home the fact that the nuclear-armed neighbours risk mutual catastrophe were they to go to war. Despite India's ambitious arms buildup, this reality of "mutual assured destruction" is unlikely to change.

The only danger of Pakistan's deterrence capability being compromised — politically or militarily — would arise if there is collusion between India and a Great Power. Pakistani strategists have noted the US desire to build India as a strategic counter to a rising China. The US discrimination against Pakistan's civilian nuclear programme, and objections to its strategic response to India's nuclear and conventional buildup, are disturbing indications of policy bias if not intent.

While Pakistan's posture towards India has strategic clarity, the same cannot be said regarding its policy towards Afghanistan and the Taliban — both the Afghan and Pakistani varieties.

The conflict in Afghanistan, which has progressively spread into Pakistan, poses a direct threat to Pakistan's external and internal security. The composition and attitude of the future rulers of Afghanistan is most relevant



for Pakistan's stability and security. An unfriendly regime in Kabul, or one under Indian tutelage, will add to Pakistan's security challenges.

However, this threat needs to be kept in perspective. Even if the future regime in Kabul is unfriendly, it cannot pose an existential threat to Pakistan. India's attempts to gain influence will end as badly as those of other external powers. At best, Afghanistan will have a weak and fractious coalition. At worst, civil war will continue.

Pakistan should make the effort to promote peace in Afghanistan. But it would be unwise to expend strategic capital to control the Afghan factions. This attempt could compromise Pakistan's priority objective of improving its own security.

Pakistan's main concern must be to insulate itself, as far as possible, from the Afghan turbulence; neutralise the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan's (TTP) war against the state; end the insurgency in Balochistan and sectarian violence in Karachi and other parts of the country. This requires a coherent policy encompassing economic, social, political and military dimensions and guided by national self-interest.

Asserting Pakistan's sovereignty must be the central principle of this policy. Islamabad should not tolerate support for the TTP or the Baloch Liberation Army from Afghanistan (or elsewhere). It should demand an end to drone strikes but also to financial support to extremist groups. Pakistan must require all Afghans, insurgent groups and the millions of refugees still in Pakistan, to return to their country.

Second, the government must reassert its monopoly over power. This entails disarming all groups, including armed wings of political parties, by persuasion, fiat and, where necessary, by force. This may evoke resistance

and violence; but the alternative, witnessed in Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq, will erode Pakistan's stability and territorial integrity.

Third, negotiations must always be the preferred solution, but not be allowed to signal the state's weakness. The uptick in terrorist attacks after the government's offer of negotiations is no accident. The threat and, where necessary, the use of force are essential elements for ending terrorism and sectarian violence.

Fourth, the government will need to utilise and work with the armed forces to impose security. Civilian rule is now too well entrenched to fear a military takeover. A demonstration by the civilian government that it has the political will to prevent chaos is the best insurance against unconstitutional alternatives.

Two other considerations should strengthen the government's determination to act boldly. One, in the absence of security, investment and economic growth are unlikely. Without growth, Pakistan's social and political problems will multiply and propel it towards chaos.

Two, chaos and terrorism can and will be used by Pakistan's adversaries to demand the neutralisation of its nuclear capability. Syria is a current example.

Mao Zedong is reported to have once admonished that "security cannot be 99pc; it must be 100pc". Pakistan's security today is only 50pc. We must make up the deficit urgently.

*The writer is a former Pakistan ambassador to the UN.*

# Hating Malala

Cyril Almeida

WHY do they hate her so? At least with the TTP it isn't hard to figure out: Malala has publicly and powerfully defied them. But why do so many ordinary, seemingly normal folk hate her?

Shame is an obvious possibility. Malala is the world's most famous teenager. Her bravery and idealism have inspired millions. And yet, we've only had the privilege of witnessing Malala's bravery and idealism because Pakistan has become the kind of place where a teenage girl is shot in the face for speaking about a girl's right to education.

That's pretty grotesque stuff, and something the haters know the rest of the world fawning over Malala is aware of.

But shame doesn't cut it as an explanation. For where's the rage against the TTP then? If the victim has earned scorn for unwittingly bearing testimony to the monstrosity that stalks this land, then why not opprobrium for the perpetrators too?

No, it feels less like guilt and shame and more like resentment. Resentment against a teenager shot in the face for speaking about a girl's right to education?

Surely, that's not what your average Pakistani has been reduced to? The easy — and to some, the obvious — answer is: yes, that is in fact what we have become.

In part because the implications of the simple answer are too horrifying to dwell on and also because simple explanations rarely fit something as complicated as societal perceptions, let's try and search for a fuller explanation.

Why are so many ordinary, seemingly normal people consumed with anti-Malalaism?

It's fair to say that your average Pakistani isn't terribly impressed by the state. He loves Pakistan, he is attached to the land that comprises Pakistan, he fiercely believes in Pakistan as an idea, but when it comes to that most basic of questions in the state-society equation — how well does your state serve your needs? — he is not terribly impressed.

Nor should he be. Pakistan is a declining state. The ability of the state to positively intervene in people's lives or to create an environment that allows people to pursue their life priorities as they see fit has been in decline for years, decades.

Forget the Taliban for a minute. It's the everyday stuff that the state is supposed to provide the most that the state is failing at the most.

Basic security in neighbourhoods and homes? It's been outsourced to the citizenry, rural and urban: higher walls, stronger gates and, for those who can afford it, personal guards.

Education and health? It's been outsourced to the private sector, rural and urban: fee-charging schools, after-school tuition, private clinics, expensive medicines.

Justice? Fuggedaboutit. Water? Which brand of bottled water would you prefer? Entertainment or sport? Head to your nearest mall. Parks? See your

local land grabber first. Public transport? Take your pick between a deathtrap on wheels or on rails. Sanitation? For Chrissake. Electricity?

If it ended at that, perhaps it would be all right. But your average Pakistani doesn't just have to turn to the private market for virtually everything the state ought to be providing, he has to spend to protect himself from a predatory state.

Direct spending when it comes to dealing with, say, the lower judiciary and the police; indirect spending when it comes to dealing with, say, the health fallout of businesses and industries that pollute.

It sucks to be a Pakistani in Pakistan. And it sucks, largely, because the state is in decline.

A declining state engenders no love or loyalty. If the corpus of its laws and rules fails to create a system that delivers meaningfully and positively, why should the average citizen automatically rally to that system's defence when it is under threat?

Sixty-six years into an irreversible experiment, the state — its structure, its systems, its rules — is still up for negotiation because the state has failed to make an irrefutable case to its people that the present structure, system and rules are the only ones that can work for Pakistan.

We're still collectively standing around the drawing board, unconvinced by the model scrawled across it. And when you're still stuck at the drawing-board stage, there's always the possibility that someone will elbow their way to the board, chalk in hand, and present a different model.

Enter the Taliban.

Ever wonder why the pro-talks brigade is so quiet about what exactly can be negotiated with the Taliban? As in, what can we offer them in return for them ceasing their violence?

It's fairly obvious: the bits about Islam. Tweak a few laws here and there, suggest some modifications to the judicial process, bring religion yet more explicitly into the functioning of the state — where's the harm in any of that?

That's the problem with a state that has failed to stamp an irreversible identity for itself. By staying in the realm of the abstract, of the negotiable and re-negotiable, it opened the door to an alternative discourse, a replacement theory.

Folk may hate the Taliban's violence, but few would in principle argue against the Taliban's basic idea for the state: more religion will lead to peace, security and maybe even prosperity.

What does any of that have anything to do with Malala? Why hate a young girl with so evidently a beautiful mind and spirit?

Because she speaks of the old model, of a state that is rooted in universal and modern principles and tenets, that delivers equally to all without recourse to religion. But there's a new theory in town and it's spread far and wide in this land of ours.

The Taliban have never been and will never be the principal threat to the Pakistani state as it was once conceived, but that failed to materialise. It's the shared belief between the Taliban and the public in the essence of the Taliban mission that is the principal threat.

For better or worse, a state can't exactly swap out swathes of its population and replace them with new citizens. But a state can, in theory at least,

eliminate the purveyors of an ideology that make it possible for so many to hate a teenage girl who was shot in the face for speaking about a girl's right to education.

But can an already declining state do any such thing? Long live the Taliban!  
Down with Malala!

*The writer is a member of staff.*

cyril.a@gmail.com

Twitter: @cyalm

# Kashmir's tragic divide

By A.G. Noorani

IF the prospects of success at the inter-governmental level seem none too promising, the omens within Jammu & Kashmir are none too bright either. In fact, the situation is worse than ever before.

The people yearn for guidance from their leaders. But their leaders are hopelessly at loggerheads with one another. A debate on their unity commenced recently. Judging by past form, it is most unlikely that it will yield any results.

The unionists, the National Conference in power in coalition with the Congress, and the main opposition group, the People's Democratic Party, are preparing to fight it out in the elections to the assembly in Srinagar and to parliament in 2014. The separatist leaders are barely on speaking terms with each other.

The debate was initiated on Sept 17 in Srinagar by none other than Ashraf Sehrai, secretary general of the Tehreek-i-Hurriyat led by Syed Ali Shah Geelani, at a function to launch a book. He was provoked by a speech by a former general secretary of the bar association, G.N. Shaheen. He castigated the separatist leadership of Kashmir for lack of unity.

Shaheen suggested that all separatists should unite on one single platform to "carry forward the movement" to its logical conclusion. He did not define what that logical conclusion should be. His plea for unity stung Sehrai to the quick: "I, too, have many things to say on unity. A lot of secrets are buried in my heart. The occasion does not warrant that I should expose those secrets or use them against someone."



He proposed: "Let some one organise a mehfil-i-mubahisa (a meeting for debate) where we can discuss all these issues." A meeting of this kind has some meaning if the leading participants have the desire and will to unite. Of this, there is not the faintest sign. Far from coming closer in the multiple crises that have played havoc with the lives of the people, ever since the feckless Omar Abdullah was planted as chief minister by New Delhi, they have drifted further apart.

An informed correspondent, Shah Abbas, noted in the excellent Srinagar weekly Kashmir Life on Sept 22: "Separatist camp is now divided to the extent that even the 2010 uprising and the hanging of Afzal Guru could not reunite it."

The accord on unity and coordination between Syed Ali Shah Geelani and Mirwaiz Maulvi Umar Farooq in July 2008 came unstuck as did the coordination committee and the Muttahida Majlis-i-Mushawarat (united forum for consultation) in 2013.

There is no real ideological divide between the two top leaders. On May 17, 2013 the Mirwaiz said that Kashmir was a natural part of Pakistan. Last month, Geelani declared that Kashmir was a "natural part of Pakistan". In this they are being more royal than the king. Both swear by the UN resolutions.

Irresponsible demagoguery has debased political discourse in Kashmir; and not among the politicians alone.

To begin with, Pakistan has never claimed that the territory of Indian Jammu & Kashmir as its "natural part". Its demand rests on the people's right to self-determination as agreed upon between India and Pakistan in 1947 well

before the UN was seized of the matter and before it yielded its many resolutions — none of which is enforceable by it.

In 2013, not one of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council have endorsed any of the plebiscite resolutions of the UN Commission for India and Pakistan (1948-49).

The ceasefire resolution of Sept 20, 1965 sought to address the “political problem underlying the present conflict”. The Security Council’s resolution of 1998 after the nuclear tests by India and Pakistan also did not refer to the resolution of old.

Prof John W. Garver made a careful survey of the evolution of the Chinese position with regard to the Kashmir question during the 1989-1990 crisis when militancy was at its peak.

The last time that the Chinese leaders mentioned “the relevant decisions of the United Nations” was in February 1990 during the visit of the distinguished diplomat Iqbal Akhund to Beijing. He was national security adviser to Benazir Bhutto. Subsequently, Beijing was content to urge a ‘dialogue’ or ‘negotiations’ between Pakistan and India.

Does this shift or the one by the United Nations weaken Kashmir’s inalienable right to decide its future? Certainly not.

In the last two decades, Pakistan’s diplomacy on Kashmir has been realistic. But Geelani issued on Sept 16 a “protest calendar” avowedly to “keep the struggle alive”. It comprised a march to the offices of the UN observers in Srinagar and a memorandum to Ban Ki-moon — the secretary general.

It is not the movement but the leaders who need to keep themselves politically “alive” before an increasingly sceptical people. As Shah Abbas

points out “the larger fact on ground is that people now do not pay any heed to the protest calls of separatist leaders. Even the security authorities do not impose any restrictions on the movement of common people whenever the separatists call for any ‘challo’ or protest”.

An oppressed, downtrodden people do not deserve leaders with monumental egos each of whom tries to become the sole spokesman of Kashmir. They will not agree even on a simple programme to demand unitedly respect for the lives of the people and for civil liberties through an agreed minimum common programme for a united front. New Delhi profits by the divides among Kashmir’s politicians and rivets its control over the area with greater ease.

In all the years, the Kashmiri separatists have signally failed to evolve any constructive, viable strategy. Implicit in their strategy is the foolish assumption that they can force India to quit Kashmir. It is an assumption which Pakistan’s leaders do not share. Hence, their constructive approach in contrast to the separatist leaders’ all or nothing policy.

*The writer is an author and a lawyer.*

## Islam strictly forbids terrorism, says Grand Mufti in Hajj sermon

MOUNT ARAFAT: Saudi Arabia's top religious figure urged Muslims on Monday to avoid divisions, chaos and sectarianism, without explicitly speaking of the turmoil unleashed by the Arab Spring.

Hell is the final abode for those who spill the blood of an innocent human, said Sheikh Abdulaziz al-Sheikh, the Grand Mufti of the Ka'aba.

"Islam does not allow terrorism at any cost. Islam condemns all violence and terrorism plaguing the world today. Muslims should demonstrate a love for peace and unity," he said.

The Grand Mufti recalled the Islamic prohibition of killing and aggression, while insisting there is "no salvation or happiness for the Muslim nation without adhering to the teachings of the religion."

The top cleric also urged Muslims to avoid divisions, chaos and sectarianism.

"Your nation is a trust with you. You must safeguard its security, stability and resources," he said in his address to the Muslim world. "You should know that you are targeted by your enemy... who wants to spread chaos among you ... It's time to confront this."

Officials said around 1.5 million pilgrims descended on the site, where they offered prayers and listen to the annual sermon from the Saudi top cleric.

Helicopters hovered overhead and thousands of troops stood guard to organise roads flooded by men, women and children streaming towards Mount Arafat.

The top cleric said Muslims throughout the world were going through a difficult time, and stressed that the global economic crisis could be controlled if the Islamic economic system was adopted. "Muslims should support the community by investing in their businesses," he urged.

Chanting "Labaik Allahuma Labaik" (I am responding to your call, God), many of them camped in small colourful tents and took shelter under trees to escape temperatures of around 40 degrees Celsius (104 Fahrenheit). Special sprinklers were also helping cool the pilgrims.

The pilgrims were arriving at Arafat from nearby Mina where most of them spent the night following the traditions of the Holy Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) who performed the rituals 14 centuries ago.

They had moved to Mina on Sunday from the holy city of Mecca, home to the Grand Mosque, Islam's holiest place of worship which houses the Ka'aba towards which all Muslims pray daily five times.

On reaching Arafat, they crowded onto the hill and the vast plain surrounding it to pray until sunset, when they are due to set off for nearby Muzdalifah.

"I will pray the whole day for God to improve the situation for Muslims worldwide and an end to disputes and bloodshed in Arab countries," 61-year-old Algerian pensioner Saeed Dherari said.

Sitting at the side of an Arafat road, Syrian Ahmad al-Khader prayed for oppressed Syrians to be victorious. "I hope that God will grace all Muslims with security and stability," said 75-year-old Khader who hails from the southern province of Daraa.

"The regime is tyrannical and I pray for God to help the oppressed people," he said.

Egyptian Ahmad Ali, who performed Haj for the first time, prayed for peace in his country, where hundreds were killed in recent months in fighting between security forces and Islamist supporters of ousted president Mohamed Morsi.

In Muzdalifa, pilgrims will spend the night before moving on in the morning to start the ritual of symbolically stoning the devil.

The hajj, which officially ends on Friday, is one of the five pillars of Islam that every capable Muslim must perform at least once.

### **Numbers sharply down**

Numbers are sharply down from last year, due to fears linked to the (Middle East Respiratory Syndrome) MERS virus and to multi-billion-dollar expansion work at the Grand Mosque to almost double its capacity to around 2.2 million worshippers.

Governor of Mecca province and head of the central hajj committee Prince Khaled al-Faisal said 1.38 million pilgrims had arrived from outside of the kingdom while only 117,000 hajj permits were issued for domestic pilgrims.

This puts the number of pilgrims this year at almost 1.5 million, less than half of last year's 3.2 million after Riyadh slashed hajj quotas.

Prince Khaled told the official SPA news agency late Sunday that authorities had turned back 70,000 nationals and expatriates for not carrying legal permits and had arrested 38,000 others for performing the hajj without a permit.

Authorities had also seized as many as 138,000 vehicles for violating the hajj rules and its owners will be penalised, the prince said.

Saudi health authorities have stressed that no cases of the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) virus has been detected so far this pilgrimage. The disease has killed 60 people worldwide, 51 of them in Saudi Arabia itself.

# Need to rethink policing

Tariq Khosa

THE public is beginning to realise that the police force cannot deliver what it promises.

In *Police for the Future*, David Bayley asserts that dependence on law enforcement for crime-control exposes the police, as well as the criminal justice system, to being scapegoated. Inflated expectations lead to the loss of trust and credibility. Crime cannot be prevented exclusively through law enforcement; the police force constitutes a band-aid on cancer.

What should societies do to prevent crime? What should the police do? We cannot rely solely upon the police force to save society from crime. No single institution can do that. At the same time, we must charge the police with taking the lead in exploring what must be done. In institutional terms, that is the essence of policing.

Can this be done? I think so. Established in 1861 on the Irish Constabulary model, the police force in Pakistan has been a coercive instrument of the state, structured on a military-style force and lacking community-service qualities. Consequently, it has always been used and misused by governments both civilian and military to perpetuate their misrule and pursue ill-conceived policies that were not reflective of the societal will. Lack of public trust was the natural outcome.

Policing needs to be demilitarised. It must no longer be viewed as a war dominated by the use of force that has been devised by the senior ranks and carried out by 'troops' whose primary duty is obedience. It needs to be stood on its head.



In conventional policing, the assessment of needs and the development of strategies is achieved at the top, by senior command; lower echelons carry out the plans that headquarters formulate. In order for crime to be prevented effectively, the responsibility for diagnosing needs and formulating action plans must be given to frontline personnel.

Higher echelons should have a supporting role and should either deliver the necessary resources or manage the organisation in a facilitating manner. The roles of staff and line personnel must be reversed.

Four areas of policing require immediate reforms: restructure the urban police; adopt community policing; initiate problem-oriented policing; and fix the fractured police command.

Since the adoption of the Police Rules of 1934, no serious attention has been given to organisational restructuring. Policing large urban centres is based on the archaic rural- and town-policing formulae based on population and the number of cases, while 80pc of the force is constabulary performing mechanical functions.

Cities such as Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar, Quetta and Islamabad require a metropolitan policing model in which the basic unit of the police has to be raised from the present-day inadequate police station to a self-contained sub-division with a responsible supervisory officer providing the following essential services under one roof: registration of first-information reports or FIRs, investigation, dealing with public complaints, supervising beat patrolling, collecting criminal intelligence and addressing community concerns.

The supervisory officer of the rank of deputy or assistant superintendent of police, well-equipped and resourced, should become the hub of policing a

large city which may then be divided into four or five territorial divisions headed by superintendents or senior superintendants of the police who deal with management and resource allocation to basic units.

They should have teams of professional police officers supporting them in intelligence-based investigations and the provision of a dedicated rapid response force for raids and arrests. The divisional police commanders should then report to a senior police chief of the city. The current 80-20 junior rank to supervisory rank ratio should be 60-40.

The next area of reforms deals with community policing. Not a single police department in our country has a community policing or crime-prevention branch at the police headquarters. No strategic thinking is taking place at the command level in terms of the prevention of crime. There is no exploration of cause and effect. Fire-fighting approaches have failed.

Let us rethink the whole philosophy of community policing. The frontline of policing should be comprised of experienced and carefully selected neighbourhood or community police officers (CPOs) who assess all the security needs of areas assigned to them and determine corrective action. The CPO must be known as 'our police officer'.

CPOs cannot reform society, but they can at least be expected to address local circumstances that lead to crime and disorder. They would be the general practitioners of policing, concentrating on consultations with people who have incipient problems and the care of victims of crime. The creation of frontline CPO officers would institutionalise preventive diagnosis and problem-solving; they must be the best and the brightest of them all.

Given the current state of lawlessness, adopting a problem-oriented approach to policing is crucial. When Rudy Giuliani, then New York mayor,

took this approach, it brought down the annual murder rate from 2,000 to 600 in two years in the 1990s.

The idea is to identify a problem, create a task force comprised of police and representatives of relevant departments, and then go all out to address the issue within a time frame. Zero tolerance for even minor deviance leads to the prevention of major crimes. The certainty of punishment is more effective than the selective severity of punishment. Knee-jerk responses to crime situations always flop and reduce the credibility of the state.

A case in point is the Sindh government's recent, failed de-weaponisation campaign. We did not examine the causes of the failure of two earlier national campaigns in the 1990s and in 2003-4. Criminals do not cough up illegal weapons as a result of media warnings. Such campaigns are part of a sustained policy, not requiring publicity and fanfare but intelligence-based vigilance and the cooperation of the community. Hence, the need for community policing based on public trust.

Finally, the current fractured command of the police has resulted in a politicised, criminalised and brutalised force that has lost the trust of the citizens. The politicians, policymakers and police commanders are equally responsible. The posting of independent, honest, brave and law-abiding police chiefs will stem the rot. Such officers need to be sought in this rudderless state.

*The writer is a retired police officer.*

# Risk of American failure

By: Mahir Ali

THE idea of bringing the government of the United States of America to its knees has a certain appeal in various parts of the world.

Broadly speaking, though, the reasons for this are very different from the motivations that guide the hardcore conservatives who bear primary responsibility for driving the dysfunctionality that has been evident in Washington over the past couple of weeks.

And it could get much worse unless tomorrow's deadline for raising the nation's debt ceiling is met. Negotiations were under way at the time of writing, and it seemed probable that some sort of agreement would be worked out to forestall a crunch that threatened not only to halt the US economic recovery but to undermine the intricately interconnected international financial system.

Theoretically, that wouldn't necessarily be an undesirable outcome. It is not particularly difficult, after all, to picture global capitalism as an insatiable beast that invariably preys on the weak. But is there a short-term alternative other than complete chaos — which, in many cases, would enhance the pain of the most vulnerable sections of society?

In the American domestic context, the most disturbing implications of a default would be a potential inability to issue social security cheques or pay medicare bills. Somewhat perversely, that goes to the heart of the issues at stake in the congressional negotiations over the shutdown and the borrowing ceiling.

An irrationally conservative core in the Republican caucus is determined to somehow kill the Affordable Care Act, popularly known as Obamacare, notwithstanding its approval by both houses of Congress and, just last year, its endorsement by the Supreme Court.

Even in its initial form, the proposed law fell short of the universal healthcare provisions that have been the norm in most Western democracies for decades. Then it was further watered down, disqualifying the government from competing as a health insurer on an equal footing with private entities.

The aim was to reduce the proportion of Americans who find themselves unable to pay their medical bills. The act also entailed the expansion of Medicaid, which offers health coverage of those too poor to afford insurance.

But it seems two-thirds of those who would have been covered by this extension will be left out, as they happen to live in Republican-controlled states that have refused to participate in the programme — despite the fact that it would be completely covered by the federal government for the first three years, and to the extent of at least 90pc thereafter.

This sort of bloody-mindedness is one of the aspects of American exceptionalism that foreigners find hard to grasp. The naysayers cite the principle of individual liberty. But in most cases their understanding of the concept is convoluted.

It encompasses the right to bear arms, never mind that the ubiquity of gun ownership leads to the periodic massacre of innocents. But it does not extend to the right to medical care for everyone who needs it.

It could, of course, be argued that the US sustains similar hypocrisies on a worldwide scale, ostensibly supporting democratic trends but quietly slipping

into bed with dictatorships wherever and whenever it suits its purposes to do so.

It is also hard to ignore the fact that the opponents of big government in the US tend to shut their eyes to Washington's more egregious transgressions on this score.

The revelations facilitated by Edward Snowden, for instance, about the scale of the National Security Agency's domestic spying operations have not prompted any Tea Party protests.

Some commentators attribute the current impasse to the increasing degree of political polarisation in the US, which is a valid point. On any conventional scale, though, the divide is not between left and right so much as between the centre-right and the far right, between a degree of reason and complete irrationality, with the banner for the latter tendency being held up by fanatics such as Texan Republican senator Ted Cruz.

It is not entirely surprising that Cruz and others of his ilk are being referred to as Banana Republicans or being compared with suicide bombers. What's scary, though, is the degree to which Tea Party stalwarts are able to intimidate the Republicans as a whole.

It is widely presumed that were the House of Representatives speaker John Boehner to introduce a resolution lifting the debt ceiling and ending the government shutdown, it would readily pass, notwithstanding the House's Republican majority — based more on the gerrymandering of congressional districts than on the popular vote — because many Republicans are wary of the Tea Party's extremism.

But Boehner has been reluctant to do so for fear of igniting the wrath of his party's Taliban tendency.

The latter, meanwhile, has been so adamant about defunding or postponing the Affordable Care Act because it realises that once it is implemented, it would become much harder to oppose.

As this week began, both sides were reportedly anticipating a negative market reaction, in the hope that it would make their adversaries more amenable to a compromise. Yet the markets remained steady in the expectation of an imminent deal.

Although there are better than ever chances of some sort of accommodation being hammered out at the eleventh hour, it is likely to be a time-constrained modus vivendi. If so, the prospect of a US default will rear its head once more a few weeks hence, and the shutdown may only be temporarily suspended.

Voters, who polls suggest are more inclined to blame the current impasse on the Republicans, will have the opportunity to offer a verdict in the November 2014 midterm elections. Should the status quo indefinitely persist, though, the international perception of the US as a potentially failed state can only grow.

mahir.dawn@gmail.com

# Rethinking government

By: Shahid Kardar

THE most critical constraint today to the effective functioning of the government is the latter's overextended mandate, beyond its core role, and the competence level of its workforce.

The institutional architecture of running the government is not the outcome of any 'grand' design or prioritisation of government roles derived from any strategic vision.

The existing structures have evolved from those inherited at the time of Pakistan's independence in response to a number of external and internal factors: (a) the constitutional division of subjects between the federal and provincial governments; (b) federal and provincial legislation; (c) international economic, social and political conditions; (d) changing government priorities and ad-hoc decisions taken to address particular problems; (e) political expediency and domestic socio-political pressures. The overall trend has been for structures to grow because it has been relatively easy for new departments, agencies and staff positions to be created or added, but once established, their continued maintenance is supported by stakeholders and system beneficiaries.

As a result, some functions have become obsolete and some have been rendered redundant over time. Also, there is a lot of work duplication even after the 18th Amendment under which a host of functions have been hived off to the provincial governments — but without resulting in any shrinkage in the size of the federal government.

Even within governments interrelated functions have been fragmented across two or more departments or autonomous bodies. Resultantly, it is



difficult to differentiate the work of some ministries from that of the autonomous bodies attached to them, diffusing a number of mandates between a large number of agencies and creating inefficiency and problems of policy and implementation coherence and coordination.

However, now with budgetary constraints, competing imperatives, pallid growth and the rising expectations of citizens, governments need to reconsider the functions they should perform, and accordingly re-engineer the institutional set-up.

This would necessarily warrant an overriding vision informing the future role of government. It would involve differentiating between a set of activities that the government should neither do nor pay for, those it should undertake and pay for and those it should pay for but not necessarily perform itself.

Such an effort can be facilitated by harnessing a whole range of instruments (eg telecommunication and internet technology) to improve the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of services, and by partnering with a rapidly maturing private sector. This is an opportune time to conduct an assessment of the kind of roles that the government can play.

The functions it should perform and pay for (its sole responsibility) would include only those in defence, foreign policy, fiscal and monetary policy, justice, law and order and some categories of physical and social infrastructure that the market and the private sector cannot undertake.

The list of what the government should neither do nor pay for but in which it is currently engaged includes running retail outlets for articles of daily use or consumption, banks, airlines, steel mills, etc. Determining the activities that

the government should pay for but not necessarily do itself is a more difficult exercise but the following should be able to illustrate this point.

It is the moral duty of the state to ensure that the population gets free and good quality elementary education. Such an obligation translated into concrete action merely requires the government to pay for education.

It does not mean that the government should produce or provide the service itself. In fact, there is enough evidence that if the government provides the service we will continue to have ghost schools, ghost teachers, non-merit based appointments and teachers not attending schools.

There will be no accountability of the service provider (the teacher). In other words, the students and parents (service recipients) will have little, if any, recourse to those to whom the teacher is answerable for service provision.

A large part of the regulatory framework exists because there is lack of clarity on the role of government. This situation creates employment opportunities for skills that the market neither demands nor produces.

In several instances, new products and instruments have become available that are better replacements and more effective mechanisms for achieving the objectives underlying the promulgation of existing laws or institutional and administrative arrangements for their enforcement.

Take, for instance, the case of Grade-11 boiler inspectors recruited and trained to enforce legislation that may have been relevant 80 years ago. They are today expected to inspect and certify boilers manufactured by multinationals like Siemens.

In an era in which technology for manufacturing boilers has taken a leap forward even in Pakistan, the provincial industries department is staffed by

professionally ill-equipped boiler inspectors performing this regulatory function. This role could easily be outsourced to universities and private firms providing engineering services and which can be pre-qualified based on well-drafted selection criteria.

Similarly, there are provincial building and electricity inspectors to ensure the safety and security of private buildings used for public purposes, for example, cinema houses. The objective can be better achieved if such buildings are com-prehensively covered by private insurance companies.

Through this instrument, cinema owners can be spared the frequent visits of government employees who would be denied the opportunity for extortion on the basis of the regulatory functions mandated to them. Moreover, the security and safety of the public using these buildings would also be assured, since private insurance companies would ensure the proper construction and maintenance of the property.

The need to reinvent government is also important to bring it in harmony with the demands of a modern economy and the requirements of the technological revolution being spawned by 21st-century science. The demands of a globalised economy require the private sector in Pakistan to adopt internationally recognised technologies, production techniques and management practices to remain competitive with world suppliers of similar goods and services.

However, although the government, which is supposed to facilitate the operations of the private sector expects the latter to become modern in its outlook, it has yet to accept that its own skills, procedures and work processes are antiquated and outmoded.

*The writer is a former governor of the State Bank of Pakistan.*

# Pakistan faces energy crisis

By Henna Saeed

Pakistan is in the midst of one of the worst energy crises in its history. The prolonged outages are slowing the pace of economic activity and sparking public unrest.

Pakistan is in the midst of one of the worst energy crises in its history.

The prolonged outages are slowing the pace of economic activity and sparking public unrest.

Disappointed with the authorities, people are now coming up with their own solutions to combat the power shortage.

In Punjab alone, the average daily electricity shortfall is around 7,000 megawatts.

That means power outages of some 12 hours in rural and urban areas.

This has prompted lawyers and petitioners in Lahore courts to come up with some innovative ways to get work done.

Because electricity is only available for about half of the eight-hour court day, typewriters are back in fashion.

Khursheed Ahmad, Oath Commissioner at Lahore High Court, said: "The power crisis is affecting business badly. Customers and lawyers come in a hurry and want their documents typed immediately.

"In this scenario, this typewriter is a life-saver as it operates manually without electricity."

For the same reason, tailors have removed electric motors from their sewing machines and returned to manual machinery.

It is the only way these daily wage earners can continue to stay in business.

Master Younas, a tailor, said: "The machines cannot work without electricity and in the current situation, we are left with no option but to reattach these hand machines to stitch and complete our clothing assignments."

The electric iron has been reduced to a prop while the gas-powered iron does all the work.

It is extremely hot and causes great discomfort to the user, but these cost-efficient irons are a must-have in Pakistan now.

The electricity outages are also affecting commuters.

Dark roads make it difficult for people to travel at night and the incidence of accidents is high.

The government has initiated a solar light project in Lahore as a solution.

A Chinese company has installed 100 solar-powered lamps on Wahdat Road, and even that has come under the political spotlight.

Members of the opposition Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, led by Imran Khan, oppose it, saying it is expensive, especially if implemented on a larger scale.

Shafqat Mehmood, a PTI Member of the National Assembly, said: "That is going very micro. The issue is not to go that micro. Yes, they may have their reasons, they may have done it, I don't know why?"

"If they had to do it, they should do it in a bigger area. Conservation is one part of solving the problem of load-shedding but there are other parts - cheaper generation, better management and newer more cheaper sources of energy."

The current Nawaz Sharif-led government has faced criticism for projects such as installation of solar and LED lights across Pakistan. But experts have said it is high time the current government formulate a department of policy makers and think tanks for each sector so that they may be able to foresee the problems and prioritise the resources according to the needs of the people, so that they may not have to devise their own alternative solutions.

## **India, China near pact aimed at keeping lid on border tension**

India and China are close to an agreement to stop tension on their contested border touching of confrontation while they try to figure out a way to break decades-old stalemate on overlapping claims to long stretches of the Himalayas.

The border defense cooperation pact that diplomats are racing to finalize ahead of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to China next week is a small step forward in a complicated relationship marked by booming economic ties but also growing distrust.

In May, the two armies ended a three-week standoff in the western Himalayas after Chinese troops set up a camp at least 10 km (6 miles) inside territory claimed by India, triggering a public outcry and calls that India should stand up to its powerful neighbor.

China denied that troops had crossed into Indian territory.

Under the new agreement, the two nuclear-armed sides will give notice of patrols along the ill-defined border. They will ensure that patrols do not "tail" each other to reduce the chance of confrontation.

The two armies, strung out along the 4,000-km (2,500-mile) border from the high altitude Ladakh plateau in the west to the jungles of Arunachal Pradesh in the east, have also agreed to set up a hotline between top ranking officers, in addition to existing brigade-level contacts.

"The key issue is maintaining peace and tranquillity on the border," said an Indian government official.

The border defense cooperation agreement is built on existing confidence-building measures and is designed to ensure that patrolling along the Line of Actual Control, as the unsettled border is called, does not escalate into an unintended skirmish, he said.

"Barring last minute problems, there should be an agreement. It's a question of crossing the Ts and dotting the Is," the officer said, speaking on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the issue.

India and China fought a brief border war in 1962 and since then ties have been mired in distrust. China lays claims to more than 90,000 square km (35,000 sq miles) of land in the eastern sector. India disputes that and instead says China occupies 38,000 sq km (14,600 sq miles) of territory on the Aksai Chin plateau in the west.

A Chinese airline last week blocked two Indian archers from disputed Arunachal Pradesh from travelling to China, souring the mood in India just days before Singh travels to Beijing.

"The fundamental problem they are not tackling is defining the Line of Actual Control and then a settlement of the border," said Srikanth Kondapalli, a China expert at New Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University.

#### BEEFING UP DEFENCES

One reason tension has risen is that both countries are upgrading civil and military infrastructure on either side of the frontier.



China has vastly improved its roads and is building or extending airfields on its side of the border in Tibet. It has placed nuclear-capable intermediate missiles in the area and deployed about 300,000 troops across the Tibetan plateau, according to a 2010 Pentagon report.

India has also woken up and is in the midst of a 10-year plan to scale up its side of the border with a network of roads and airfields. In July, the cabinet cleared the raising of a new mountain corps comprising about 50,000 troops to be deployed on the Chinese border.

"China has developed the border infrastructure so intricately that its roads and tracks even in high mountainous regions look like fingers running down your spine," said retired Lieutenant General Prakash Katoch who commanded the Indian army's Special Forces wing.

Chinese nuclear and missile assistance to Pakistan as well as a widening trade deficit in China's favor have added to Indian fear about encirclement. China, on the other hand, is concerned about Tibetan activists using India as a base to further their separatist aims.

"It strikes me that many of the usual grievances have grown in prominence over the past several months: Chinese incursions on the border, the issuance of irregular visas, continued Chinese support for Pakistan's nuclear program, and so on," said Shashank Joshi, a fellow at the Royal United Services Institute in London.

"It also seems that India is eager to keep these grievances in check."

## **Pakistan won't tolerate any foreign intervention: Nawaz**

The top political and military leadership on Tuesday took serious note of incidents of terrorism in the country as well as aid and funding by the neighbouring India and Afghanistan to subversive elements in Pakistan, saying that any foreign intervention in Pakistan's affairs would not be tolerated.

A high-level meeting was held in the capital with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in the chair. The meeting was attended by Adviser to the Prime Minister on National Security and Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz, Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan, Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) General Ashfaq Pervez Kayani, Foreign Secretary Jalil Abbas Jilani, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs Tariq Fatemi and ISI Director General Lt Gen Zaheerul Hasan. The meeting was held to review the national security and took key decisions.

Sources said the political and military leadership was unanimous in their view that any foreign intervention in Pakistan's affairs would not be tolerated. Held a few days before Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's proposed visit to the United States, the meeting discussed threadbare agenda of the visit, key national and regional issues, and strategy for talks with the Taliban.

Sources said that the Adviser to the PM on National Security and Foreign Affairs Sartaj Aziz gave a detailed briefing to the participants about the recently concluded visit of US Special Representative to Afghanistan-Pakistan James Dobbins.

Sources quoted Sartaj Aziz as saying that during the meeting with Dobbins, detailed deliberations were held regarding the prime minister's visit to the US. He further said that Pakistan's reservations on the US policies in the region were openly expressed. The political and military leadership expressed its resentment over the allegations by India and Afghanistan involving Pakistan in terrorism, Indian and Afghan intervention in Pakistan and violations of ceasefire at the Line of Control (LoC).

They expressed their firm resolve not to interfere in the internal affairs of the neighbouring countries and not to allow them to meddle in Pakistan's internal affairs. They expressed their determination to foil any attempt with full force by any country in the region to dominate Pakistan. The meeting decided to make it clear to the United States administration that it would be unacceptable for Pakistan to give the role of "policeman" to India in the region as it would adversely affect the already strained ties between the two neighbourly countries.

The meeting also deliberated upon the proposed US-Afghanistan bilateral Security Agreement under which the Afghan government could seek US assistance for intervention in Pakistan in the event of any terror incident in Afghan soil. The participants declared that Pakistan would not accept this kind of agreement and if the country is made target of any such intervention it would be considered as an attack on the country.

It was decided that Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, during his meeting with US President Obama, would forcefully raise issues regarding Afghan and Indian involvement in terror activities in Pakistan and would make it clear to him that the centres of terrorism are located in the two countries and not in Pakistan.

A military official informed the meeting that Afghan intelligence agency was engaged in terrorism in the entire country, especially Balochistan, and it was also funding banned outfits, including Tehreek-e-Taliban for their subversive activities.

Officials said Sunday the long-delayed security deal on the future of US forces in Afghanistan is close to being completed, after marathon talks in Kabul between President Hamid Karzai and US Secretary of State John Kerry. Both sides said that the issue of US troop immunity remained a sticking pointing after intense efforts to hammer out a deal that would allow between 5,000 and 10,000 US soldiers to remain in Afghanistan after 2014.

US officials travelling with Kerry said that only details of the Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) had not been agreed, and that the US and Afghan teams would now review the draft document.

## Afghan-US pact still hangs in the balance

By Hafizullah Gardesh

Afghan analysts say the security pact on which Afghan President Hamid Karzai and United States Secretary of State John Kerry reached preliminary agreement last week is still far from a done deal.

The long-awaited Bilateral Security Agreement is intended to govern US-Afghan defense cooperation after most of the NATO-led troop contingent leaves Afghanistan next year. Its full terms have not been made public, although Kerry and Karzai indicated at that end of their October 11-12 talks that most of the major issues had been resolved.

Karzai said he had received written guarantees respecting Afghan sovereignty, detailing Washington's commitment to defend the country from external attack, and ensuring that American forces would not carry out independent operations.

However, the grueling two-day negotiations failed to produce an agreement on the crucial issue whether the US soldiers who stay on in Afghanistan to train the national security forces should have immunity from prosecution.

President Barack Obama has said immunity is essential if the troops are to remain, but Karzai said this would need to be debated by a *loya jirga*, or nationwide assembly, which he said would be held within the next month.

"Legal immunity does not lie within the powers of the Afghan government, but is a matter for the people of Afghanistan, and the *loya jirga* will decide on it," he told

reporters during a joint press conference with Kerry.

The Secretary of State, for his part, said the legal position would need to be the same as applied wherever US troops were stationed around the world.

"Immunity does not mean freeing US forces accused of wrongdoing. If our soldiers in Afghanistan commit a crime, they would be prosecuted under US law in the US," he said. "We need to say that if the issue of jurisdiction cannot be resolved, then unfortunately there cannot be a bilateral security agreement."

Ramazan Bashardost, an Afghan lawmaker frequently critical of the government, said the true outcome of the Kerry-Karzai talks was far from clear.

"What is broadcast in the media is different from what is going on behind the scenes. Neither the Afghan government nor the US ever tells the truth to their peoples," he said. "I have no confidence that these negotiations conducted by Hamid Karzai are sincere and in the interests of Afghanistan."

Bashardost compared the draft pact to the US-Afghanistan Strategic Partnership Agreement, signed last year, which laid out the basis for bilateral relations post-2014. He said the US had failed to honor that agreement, which envisaged that American-run detention facilities and responsibility for special operations would be transferred to Afghan forces, and which also covered aid and development.

Bashardost said the Bilateral Security Agreement should extend to protecting Afghanistan from the rocket attacks Kabul has repeatedly accused Pakistan of launching across the border. Pakistani officials have denied that their forces have carried out deliberate strikes.

"The US, just as it neglected [action on] the rocket attacks from Pakistan on Afghanistan and ignored the strategic agreement, will do the same with the security agreement, because there is nothing to guarantee implementation of such



agreements," he said.

Political analyst Wahid Mozhda said there was clearly a great gulf between the two sides.

"There were differences between what Karzai and Kerry said. Kerry didn't mention the issues on which Karzai said they had reached agreement," he told IWPR. "He only insisted that legal immunity for Americans in Afghanistan was a requirement that the US could not concede, but he made no comments confirming what Karzai had said. That means Kerry probably didn't agree with it."

Mozhda noted other regional tensions arising as a result of the NATO troop exit, such as the 40-year deal which Russia recently agreed with Tajikistan to extend its military presence there. This would help protect the Central Asian state from militant threats emerging in Afghanistan, but would also strengthen Moscow, a long-time US adversary, he added.

Mozhda said there was no need to call a loya jirga to consider granting legal immunity to US soldiers, as the issue had been discussed and rejected by a previous assembly.

He warned that if the security agreement went ahead, it would not result in stability.

"When the agreement with the US is signed, Afghanistan will not benefit, because the United States' opponents in Afghanistan and in other countries will not remain silent. They will start fighting the Americans, and the countries behind these opponents will increase their backing for them."

Taliban leader Mohammad Omar, in an address posted online to mark the festival of Eid al-Adha, insisted that the Bilateral Security Agreement "will never be accepted" and warned that his movement would continue its fight.



Some analysts argue that the Afghan government is so vulnerable that it is in no position to drive a hard bargain with the US.

Political and defense affairs analyst Jawed Kohistani said he understood that Afghanistan's National Security Council had been unhappy with the way Karzai dealt with Kerry, and had complained that he took an unnecessarily tough stand.

Kohistani said a weak state like Afghanistan needed a strong strategic partner like the US, and a continuing American military presence would help protect it against internal strife as well as external threats.

"We already rely on US support, including for our army. We need to continue receiving help from the US and its allies until we become self-reliant," he said, adding, "Trust me, if the US stops helping our army for one month, our army will dissolve."

Like other analysts, Kohistani noted Karzai's and Kerry's demeanor at their joint press conference, which he said pointed to tensions between the two men.

Ordinary people in Kabul shared this perception.

"During the [press] conference, I saw how they said one thing while their appearance and facial expressions said something different," said Nur Mohammed, who works for an international organization. "They seemed like two enemies, without even a normal smile visible, so it's clear there are still many problems remaining."

He said Washington would need to respect Karzai's wishes if it intended to maintain the relationship, adding that the political realities were so complex that it was hard for Afghans to know what would ultimately benefit them.





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"If the US leaves Afghanistan, we face the Taliban, Pakistan, and Iran," he said. "If the US stays in Afghanistan, the war gets longer, more brutal and more complicated. Either way, Afghans suffer."

**Hafizullah Gardesh** is Afghanistan editor for the Institute for War and Peace Reporting.

# USA responsible for making Pakistan most dangerous country

10 October, 2013



**By Asif Haroon Raja**

The US leaders and media often cite Pakistan as the most dangerous country in the world. If it is true, it didn't attain this status at its own. Outsiders are responsible for making Pakistan a nursery of terrorism, or epicenter of terrorism, as recently described by Manmohan Singh, or the most dangerous country. Ironically, the ones responsible for converting a law abiding and peaceful country into a volatile country are today in the forefront censuring it. Till the onset of Afghan Jihad in 1980, Pakistan was a moderate and nonviolent country. It did suffer from the pangs of humiliation for having lost its most populous East Pakistan and grieved over non-resolution of Kashmir dispute pending since January 1948 UNSC resolution. Both wounds had been inflicted upon Pakistan by its arch rival India. Pakistan had to perforce go nuclear in quest for its security because of India's hostile posturing and nuclearisation.

Invasion and occupation of Afghanistan by Soviet forces in December 1979 brought five million Afghan refugees in Pakistan. These refugees disturbed the peace of Frontier Province and Balochistan where bulk got permanently settled. 2.8 million Afghan refugees have still not returned to their homes and besides becoming an economic burden, have posed serious social and security hazards. Foreign agencies carrying an agenda to destabilize Pakistan have been recruiting bulk of terrorists from within them.

Once the US decided to back proxy war in Afghanistan, CIA commissioned thousands of Mujahideen from all over the Muslim world and with the assistance of ISI, motivated, trained and equipped them to assist Afghan Mujahideen in their fight against Soviet forces. Large number of seminaries imparting religious training to the under privileged children were tasked to impart military and motivational training as well and prepare them for Jihad. FATA and Pashtun belt of Balochistan contiguous to Afghanistan were converted into forward bases of operation from where young Jihadists were unleashed. For next nine years the youth were continuously recruited and launched to fight the holy war against evil empire. Saudi Arabia became the chief financier of Jihad. It provided heavy funds to Sunni Madrassahs only. ISI took upon itself as the chief coordinator of the entire war effort while CIA restricted its role to providing arms, funds and intelligence only.

The whole free world led by USA enthusiastically applauded the heroics of holy warriors and none cared about astronomical fatalities and critical injuries suffered by them. The maimed for life, widows and orphans were patted and told that it was a holy war fought for a noble cause and huge rewards awaited them in the life hereafter. The single point agenda of the US was to defeat the Soviet forces with the help of Muslim fighters. Not a single soldier of any country including Pakistan took part in the unmatched war between a super power and rag-tag, ill-clothed and ill-equipped Mujahideen.

None bothered about the ill-effects this long-drawn war will have upon this region in general and Pakistan in particular acting as the Frontline State. Although Pakistan was only supporting the proxy war and was not directly involved, but it remained in a state of war and it faced continuous

onslaughts of KGB-RAW-KHAD nexus as well as attacks by Soviet trained Afghan pilots and soldiers in the form of air assaults, artillery barrages and missile/rockets attacks. Throughout the nine-year war, Pakistan faced twin threat from its eastern and western borders. By virtue of occupation of Wakhan corridor by Soviet troops, USSR had become immediate neighbor of Pakistan and had hurled repeated threats to wind up training centres and stop meddling in Afghanistan or else be prepared for dire consequences. Moscow's age-old dream of reaching warm waters of Arabian Sea through Balochistan haunted Gen Ziaul Haq, but he stoutly held his ground. Pakistan's relentless support ultimately enabled the Mujahideen to achieve the miracle of the 20th century. They defeated the super power and pushed out Soviet forces from Afghanistan in February 1989.

All foreign Jihadists who had come from other countries were not accepted by their parent countries. They had no choice but to stay put and get settled in Afghanistan and in FATA since they had collectively fought the war and had developed camaraderie with the Afghans and tribesmen. The US who had enticed and displaced them and used them as cannon fodder to achieve its interests was morally bounded to resettle them. It was honor bound to help Pakistan in overcoming the after effects of the war. FATA that had acted as the major base for cross border operations deserved uplift in socio-economic and educational fields. Afghanistan required major rehabilitation and rebuilding after its devastation. Nothing of the sort happened.

The US coldheartedly abandoned Afghanistan, Pakistan and Jihadists and instead embraced India which had remained the camp follower of Soviet Union since 1947 and had also partnered Soviet Union in the Afghan war and had vociferously condemned US-Pakistan proxy war. This callous act opened the doors for religious fanaticism and militarism. Pakistan suffered

throughout the Afghan war and continues to suffer to this day on account of the debris left behind by Soviet forces and proxy war. By the time last Soviet soldier left Afghan soil, Pakistani society had got radicalized owing to free flow of weapons and drugs from Afghanistan and onset of armed uprising in occupied Kashmir.

Pakistan's efforts to tackle the fallout effects of the war got seriously hampered because of harsh sanctions imposed by USA under Pressler Amendment in October 1989 and political instability throughout the democratic era from 1988 to 1999. Besides, Iran and Saudi Arabia started fuelling sectarianism in Pakistan throughout 1990s in a big way. Sipah-e-Muhammad Pakistan and Majlis-e-Wahadat ul Hashmeen were funded by Iran and Sipah-e-Sahabha Pakistan, now named as Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat (Sunni Deobandi) were supported by Saudi Arabia, which gave rise to religious extremism and intolerance and sharpened Shia-Sunni divide. Masjids and Imambargahs as well as religious clerics were incessantly attacked by the zealots of two communities. Threat of sectarian violence that had become menacing in Punjab in 1997-1998 had to be dealt with sternly. But the Punjab Police operation had to be curtailed because of severe pressure from Human Rights activists and NGOs on charges of extra judicial killings. Resultantly, the disease remained uncured.

Unseating of democratically elected heavy mandate of Nawaz Sharif led government by Gen Musharraf and the latter opting to ditch Taliban regime and to fight global war on terror at the behest of USA energized anti-Americanism, religious extremism and led to creation of Mutahida Majlis Ammal (MMA), an amalgam of six religious parties, which formed governments in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. MMA on the quiet nurtured extremist religious groups that were also funded by foreign powers.

The fact that after 9/11, the US chose Pakistan to fight the war as a Frontline State is a clear cut indication that Pakistan at that time was viewed as a responsible and valued country and not a dangerous country. However, Pakistan's nuclear program was an eyesore for India, Israel and USA. The planners had made up their minds to intentionally create anarchic conditions in Pakistan so that its nukes could be whisked away under the plea that it was unstable and couldn't be trusted.

The initial attempt towards that end was to first allow bulk of Taliban and al-Qaeda leaders and their fighters to escape to FATA from Afghanistan and soon after forcing Pakistan to induct regular troops into South Waziristan (SW) to flush them out. This move created a small rivulet allowing terrorism to seep into FATA, which kept gushing in because of RAW led and CIA backed covert war at a massive scale and turning the rivulet into a river. Likewise, another rivulet was created in Balochistan. Concerted and sustained efforts were made to destabilize FATA and Balochistan and gradually sink Pakistan in sea of terrorism. Six intelligence agencies based in Kabul kept sprinkling tons of fuel on embers of religious extremism, sectarianism, ethnicity and Jihadism.

The US instead of helping in resolving Kashmir dispute misguided Gen Musharraf to forget about UN resolutions and float an out of box solution and try and resolve the dispute in accordance with the wishes of India. In order to woo India, Musharraf gave it in writing that he will not allow Pakistan soil to be used for terrorism against any neighboring country including India. While making this commitment unilaterally, he committed the fatal mistake of not imposing this condition on India. To further please USA and India and make the latter agree to sign peace treaty, he bridled all Jihadi groups

engaged in Kashmir freedom struggle as well as in sectarianism. He also allowed India to fence the Line of Control. These moves did please India but angered Jihadis and sectarian outfits and in reaction, they hastened to join Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and turn their guns towards Pak security forces dubbed as mercenaries of USA fighting US war for dollars.

But for phenomenal clandestine support by foreign powers to the TTP in the northwest and to the BLA, BRA and BLF in the southwest, extremism and terrorism could have got controlled after major operations launched in Malakand Division including Swat, Bajaur and SW in 2009 and minor operations in other tribal agencies. The disarrayed network of TTP was helped to get re-assembled and regrouped in North Waziristan and that of Maulana Fazlullah in Kunar and Nuristan in Afghanistan. As opposed to good work done by Pak security forces in combating and curbing terrorism in Pakistan, the US-NATO forces operating in Afghanistan along with Afghan National Army kept making one blunder after another and in the process kept sinking deeper and deeper into the quagmire. Rather than correcting their follies, they chose to make Pakistan a scapegoat and declared it responsible for their failures. Rather than doing more at their end, they asked Pakistan to do more which was already doing much more than its capacity.

Since the aggressors underestimated their enemy they took things too lightly. Their intentions lacked sincerity and honesty and their stated objectives were totally different to their actual unspoken objectives which were commercial in nature. Above all they had no legitimate grounds to destroy a sovereign country and uproot its people which had played no role in 9/11. As a result, rather than devotedly fighting to win the war in Afghanistan, the assailants got deeply involved in drug business and other

money-making schemes. The ruling regime led by Hamid Karzai became a willing partner in such shady businesses. American security contractors, defence merchants, builders and intelligence agencies started multiplying their wealth and lost their moral and professional ethics. Other than materialistic ventures, they got more involved in money-spinning covert operations against Pakistan, Iran, China and Middle East than in fighting their adversary. Taliban and al-Qaeda combine took full advantage of their self-destructive activities and opening of the second front in Iraq. After regrouping and re-settling in southern and eastern Afghanistan, they started striking targets in all parts of the country. War in Iraq helped al-Qaeda in expanding its influence in Arabian Peninsula and turning into an international organization.

The US has made a big mess in Afghanistan, in Iraq and in Libya and is now making another mess in Syria. It has lost the confidence of its most allied ally Pakistan by mistreating and distrusting it. Having lost on all fronts because of its tunnel vision and mercantile greed, it now wants the most dangerous country Pakistan to ignore the raw deal it gave all these years and to not only help ISAF in pulling out of Afghanistan safely but also to convince the Taliban to agree upon a negotiated political settlement. At the start of the Afghan venture, Pakistan was chosen by Washington to ensure success and in the endgame Pakistan is again being relied upon to bail it out of the mess. In the same breadth, the US is unprepared to cease drone attacks in FATA despite repeated requests that drones fuel terrorism. It is still focused on carving a lead role for India in Afghanistan. It is not prepared to stop its interference in internal affairs of Pakistan or to dissuade India from destabilizing Balochistan. Whatever socio-economic promises made are futuristic in nature and tied to conditions. US media and think tanks continue to demonize Pakistan. Its tilt towards India is too heavy and prejudicial



behavior towards Pakistan

As a result of the US skewed policies with ulterior motives, Pakistan is faced with the demons of ethnicity, sectarianism, Jihadism, religious extremism and terrorism. While TTP is aligned with about 60 terrorist groups, in Balochistan there are more than two dozen terrorist groups. In Karachi, other than armed mafias, political parties have armed wings and are involved in target killings. Rangers and Police are engaged in targeted operation in Karachi and are producing productive results. 150,000 troops combating the militants in the northwest enjoy a definite edge over them. Major parts of Frontier Corps, Frontier Constabulary, Levies and Police are fighting the Baloch separatists and sectarian forces targeting Hazaras and have contained anti-state forces. All major cities are barricaded with road blocks and police piquets and yet terrorists manage to carryout acts of terror. The miscreants are fighting State forces with tenacity because of uninterrupted financial and weapons support from foreign agencies. Once external support dries up, their vigor will wane rapidly and sooner than later they will give up fighting.

With so many grave internal and external threats, most of which were invented and thrust upon Pakistan by foreign powers and duly exacerbated by meek and self-serving political leadership, Gen Ashfaq Pervez Kayani's hands remained full. He has saddled the COAS chair for six years and during this period he had to face many a critical situations. It goes to his credit that he handled each crisis competently, astutely and honorably. During his eventful command, he tackled the challenge of terrorism, which he rightly described as the biggest threat to the security of Pakistan, boldly and produced pleasing results. Above all, he kept the morale of all ranks in the Army high and earned their respect and admiration. The list of his

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achievements is long and I have been highlighting those in my articles off and on. His successor has so far not been named but whosoever replaces him will find it difficult to fit into his shoes. I am sure he will breathe more freely and relax once he retires on November 29, 2013. We thank him for his laudable contributions and wish him sound health and happiness in all his future doings. Let us hope and pray that this senseless war comes to an end at the earliest, putting an end to chirping tongues deriving sadistic pleasure in describing Pakistan as the most dangerous country.

**The writer is a retired Brig, defence analyst, columnist, historian and a researcher.**  
**asifharoonraja@gmail.com**

## If Not Now, When?

It is possible to imagine a scenario more favorable to Israel than the current one, but it is not easy.

Syria is giving up its chemical weapons. In the civil war there, Hezbollah and Iran are bleeding. The Egyptian Army has ousted the Muslim Brotherhood, restored a trusted interlocutor for Israel, and embarked on a squeeze of Hamas in Gaza. In Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the prime minister, has overstretched; the glow is off his aggressive stand for Palestine.

Saudi Arabia is furious with President Obama over his policies toward Egypt, Syria and Iran. It has scant anger left for Israel. Sunni-Shiite enmity, played out in a Syrian conflict that could make the 30-year religious war in Europe seem short, feels more venomous today than the old story of Arabs and Jews. The power and prosperity of Israel have seldom, if ever, looked more sustainable in its 65-year history.

Of course things can change in the Middle East — of late very fast — but if Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, is inclined to take risks from strength, the present looks propitious. As he wrote in an open letter to Israelis in July, “We have built a wonderful country and turned it into one of the world’s most prosperous, advanced and powerful countries.”

This is true. Israel is a miracle of innovation and development. Tel Aviv, at once sensual and vibrant, is a boom town. Go there and smile.

For almost three months now Israelis and Palestinians have been negotiating peace in U.S.-brokered talks. They have been doing so in such quiet that the previous sentence may seem startling. Nobody is leaking. Because expectations are low, spoilers are quiescent. There is a feeling nobody

opposed to a resolution need lift a finger because the talks will fail all on their own. This is good. Absent discretion, diplomacy dies.

Ample cause exists for skepticism. The Palestinian leader, Mahmoud Abbas, insists that not one Israeli soldier will be allowed in Palestine; Netanyahu wants Israeli troops in the Jordan Valley for decades. There are hundreds of thousands of Israeli settlers in the West Bank with no plans to go anywhere. Several members of the Israeli government scoff at the notion of Palestine; Netanyahu has become a liberal Likudnik, of all things. The Palestinian national movement is split, incitement against Israel continues, and the idea of a two-state outcome is losing favor. All this before Jerusalem and the Palestinian right of return are even broached.

Still, with scarcely a murmur, the talks continue. They are almost a third of the way into the allotted nine months. Well before that time is up, the two sides' final positions will have become clear. There will be gaps. That will be the moment for the United States to step forward with its take-it-or-leave-it bridging proposal. That will be the time of the leaders — Netanyahu, Abbas and Obama — and the test of their readiness for risk in the name of a peace that can only come with painful concessions.

Israel is strong today for many reasons. A core one is the resilience and stability of its democratic institutions. There is, however, a risk to this: No democracy can be immune to running an undemocratic system of oppression in territory under its control.

To have citizens on one side of an invisible line and disenfranchised subjects without rights on the other side does not work. It is corrosive. A democracy needs borders. It cannot slither into military rule for Palestinians in occupied West Bank areas where state-subsidized settler Jews have the right to vote

as if within Israel. If Israel is to remain a Jewish and democratic state — and it must — something has to give. Netanyahu knows this.

Palestinians must also make painful choices. They are weak, Israel is strong — and getting stronger. The world is never going back to 1948.

In Jerusalem's Old City I was walking this year down from the Damascus Gate. Crowds of Palestinians were pouring out of a Friday service at the Al Aqsa Mosque. A large group of Orthodox Jews was moving in the opposite direction, toward the Western Wall. Into this Muslim-Jewish melee, out of the Via Dolorosa, a cluster of Christians emerged carrying a large wooden cross they tried to navigate through the crowd. It was a scene of despair for anyone convinced faiths and peoples can be disentangled in the Holy Land. Looked at another way it was a scene of hope, even mirth.

# Syria - al-Qaeda proliferation threatens Turkey

The Syrian civil war is turning into a nightmare for Turkish Premier Recep Tayyip Erdogan, a firm supporter of the rebels since the conflict began in spring 2011.

Erdogan was certain the rebels would bring about the rapid demise of his former friend and ally, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, replacing him with an Islamic regime run by his fellow Sunnis from the Muslim Brotherhood. More than two years and 100,000 fatalities later, things have not gone according to Ankara's plan: the entry of Lebanon's Hezbollah Shiite movement into the field at Assad's side has turned the battle to his advantage.

In spite of Turkey's efforts, a US-led intervention against Damascus was averted, while Syrian Kurds have seized part of the north. Should they succeed in declaring their independence, they might one day claim Turkish Kurdistan as part of their new entity.

The rebel Free Syrian Army, which is ideologically aligned with the Muslim Brotherhood, is losing ground and authority to represent the uprising, as another 60 resistance groups have just dissociated themselves.

The 11 most powerful of these have already allied themselves with al-Qaeda, with the foundation of a caliphate based on sharia or Islamic law as their declared objective.



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A good part of the rebel-held areas along the Turkish border are falling into the hands of the two major al-Qaeda linked jihadist formations: the al-Nusra Front and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria. Atrocities are being denounced, and the rise of a jihadist zone so close to home is setting off alarms in Ankara.

"Turkey has a new neighbor, the decapitators" said Sozcu opposition daily.

Instead of a Muslim Brotherhood-run Syrian state, Turkey now discovers an Afghanistan of sorts has cropped up just across its border: no matter what the results of the planned Geneva II peace conference, it will be hard to get rid of it in the years ahead.

Opposition leader Kemal Kilicdaroglu has charged Erdogan and his "sectarian" Syria policy with spawning this disaster.

Along with Syrian Kurds now engaged in battle with the jihadists, Erdogan's principle of "any enemy of Assad is my friend" has de facto led to his supporting the jihad, allowing free passage of militias, arms and money through the border.

The brains behind this strategy, which has also caused tensions with the United States, is National Intelligence Organization (MIT) chief Hakan Fidan, according to The New York Times.

Ankara has repeatedly denied it is supporting the jihad, but Human Rights Watch recently charged Turkey could be held responsible for al-Qaeda's atrocities in Syria.



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The Turkish army for the first time announced recently it has raided al-Qaeda positions near the border city of Azaz in response to a mortar shell that fell in Turkish territory.

Erdogan may have "looked the other way" while al-Qaeda proliferated across the border, "but now those times are over" wrote Hurriyet daily. Turkey is increasingly in jeopardy, and the danger is no longer Assad, but al-Qaeda.

"The Turkish people are asking themselves what the government - which previously gave logistical support to radical Islamists fighting Assad - is doing to combat this threat", Hurriyet editorialized.



# Iran gives Russia copy of US ScanEagle drone as proof of mass production

US spy drone given to prove Iran's forces have mass produced the drone they claim to have captured a year ago

[Iran](#) has given [Russia](#) a copy of a US spy drone as proof that its elite forces have reverse-engineered and mass produced the American unmanned aerial vehicle [they claim to have captured a year ago](#).

Iranian media reported yesterday that the copy of the ScanEagle drone was provided to Russia on the sidelines of a meeting in Tehran between Farzad Esmayeeli, the air defence commander of Khatam al-Anbia, the Revolutionary Guards' military and industrial base, and Viktor Bondarev, head of the Russian air force.

In December 2012, a guards' commander said his forces had got their hands on a ScanEagle, promising Tehran would mass produce it. The US authorities denied those claims at the time, saying all its [drones](#) were fully accounted for.

"The drone built by the Islamic republic's Revolutionary Guards is a symbol of the technical capabilities of the Islamic Iran and today we presented a real model of it as a gift to Russian air force ... and the Russian people," Esmayeeli said after meeting with Bondarev, according to the semi-official Fars news agency.

Iran's state English-language newspaper, Tehran Times, said the two met on Sunday and spoke on a range of air defence issues but it did not give further details.

Iran first claimed to have captured a US drone two years ago when the Guards [displayed a drone](#), believed to be an RQ-170 Sentinel. They claimed to have brought it down electronically but the US said the aircraft had merely malfunctioned.

Since then, Iranian officials have claimed advances in drone technology and have put on show a number of US and Israeli drones their elite forces alleged to have shot down. Hezbollah's leader, Hassan Nasrallah, said last October that a drone shot down by Israel was assembled in Lebanon but designed in Iran.

It is unclear how reliable the Iranian claims about its drone capabilities are. In September 2012, the Guards [unveiled Shahed-129](#), an "indigenous" reconnaissance drone, alleged to have a range of up to 1,200 miles – capable of reaching Israel – and with 24 hours' fly time.

In February, Iranian television [broadcast a programme showing video footage and still images](#) the authorities claimed were extracted from the RQ-170 drone captured in 2011. The programme also showed pictures of what was described as a ScanEagle drone production line in Iran. Fars described ScanEagle as a small, long-endurance unmanned aircraft.

"As standard payload ScanEagle carries either an inertially stabilised electro-optical or an infrared camera," [Fars said](#). "The gimbaled camera allows the operator to easily track both stationary and moving targets, providing real-time intelligence."

Russia has infuriated the Iranian military in recent years for its failure to deliver Tehran with S-300 air defence systems it had agreed in a 2007 contract to supply but abandoned in 2010 owing to international sanctions against the Islamic republic. In response, Iran filed a lawsuit against Russia

with the International Chamber of Commerce's court of arbitration but said in June that will drop the case if Russia changed its decision.

This month, Iran's foreign ministry spokeswoman, Marzieh Afkham, [said talks were underway between Tehran and Moscow](#) with regards to the S-300 systems. In September, a spokesman for the Russian president, Vladimir Putin, [denied](#) the Kremlin had ordered the delivery of the air defence systems.

# India PM fails to strike nuclear deal in Russia

MOSCOW: Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh failed Monday to strike a long-delayed nuclear power deal with Russia during talks with President Vladimir Putin that also focused on big arms and energy deals.

Singh is using one of his last major foreign trips as prime minister before 2014 general elections to seek resolutions to lingering issues with two of India's most important regional partners.

The 81-year-old prime minister will leave Russia for China on Tuesday in a bid to forge closer economic relations and ink a pact to ease tension along their disputed border in a remote Himalayan region.

His trip to Moscow was preceded by gruelling behind-the-scenes negotiations on the next phase of a Russian-built nuclear power plant on India's south coast -- one of the current government's signature projects.

Singh said India and Russia enjoyed a "privileged strategic partnership" that enabled the two giants to coordinate their foreign policy views.

Yet he made no mention of an historic deal for the Kudankulam plant that was first signed in 1988 by then Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi and former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.

The collapse of the Soviet Union and Russia's subsequent years of economic mayhem meant that construction of the plant did not begin until 2002.

Work has been nearly completed on the first two units despite local protests that halted progress for six months in 2011-2012.

India now hopes to strike deals for an additional two reactors at the same location as it looks to meet surging electricity demand.

But the 2010 Fukushima nuclear power plant accident prompted India to adopt a strict new safety liability law that Russia believes should not be applied to this project since it was conceived in Soviet times.

Negotiations about how the dispute can be skirted in time for Singh's meeting with Putin went down to the wire, and failed, despite optimism from India's outgoing government head.

The two sides instead issued a joint statement saying they had "agreed to speed up work on drafting a general framework agreement" on the third and fourth blocks at Kudankulam.

Putin and Singh also took a veiled swipe at Pakistan for its conflicted relations with the Taliban movement that is making its presence felt more prominently in Afghanistan amid the United States' ongoing drawdown of troops.

"Nations that aid terrorists by abetting and protecting them are guilty of committing the acts of terror to the same extent as the criminals who actually perpetrate these crimes," the two leaders' joint statement said.

Russia has been India's biggest weapons supplier for decades and arms talks are always a component of the annual round of meetings between the Indian prime minister and the Russian head of state.

Moscow news reports said the sides were closing in on an agreement for Russia to upgrade four existing Indian diesel-electric submarines and lease out several more.

A Russian military source told the state-run RIA Novosti news agency that New Delhi was also interested in financing the construction of a nuclear-powered submarine that could be delivered to India in the years to come.

“Joint (military) projects confirm the high level of our technical and industrial cooperation,” Putin said after the talks.

Singh and Putin said in a separate statement that they intended to “study the possibility” of Russia sending petroleum products to India by rail for the first time.

# Pakistan secretly endorsed drone strikes: Report



**WASHINGTON: Pakistan for years secretly approved of US drone attacks on its territory despite public denunciations, [The Washington Post](#) reported Wednesday, citing secret documents.**

The purported evidence of Islamabad's involvement came as Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif visited the White House and urged an end to the attacks, which are widely unpopular with the public.

The support for drone attacks has long been widely suspected, although strikes reported by the *Post* involved several years up to 2011 – before a slowdown in strikes and Nawaz's election in May.

The newspaper said that top-secret documents and Pakistani diplomatic memos showed that the Central Intelligence Agency had drafted documents to share information on drone attacks with Pakistan.

At least 65 drone strikes were marked for discussion with Pakistan, including through briefings at its embassy in Washington and in materials sent physically to senior officials in Islamabad.

In one case in 2010, a document describes hitting a location "at the request of your government." Another file referred to a joint effort at picking targets.

The article – co-written by Bob Woodward, one of the two journalists who broke the Watergate scandal in the 1970s – said that the documents also showed that the United States raised concerns that extremists were linked to the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI).

In one incident, then secretary of state Hillary Clinton confronted Pakistan about cell phones and written materials from dead bodies of militants that showed links to the ISI.

In turn, a Pakistani memo gave the names of 36 US citizens believed to be CIA agents and urged the embassy in Washington not to issue visas to them, the newspaper said.

The report came a day after [Amnesty International](#) said that the United States may have broken international law by killing civilians with drones.

It pointed to an October 2012 attack that killed a 68-year-old grandmother as she picked vegetables.

For the first six months of 2011, 152 combatants were killed, according to a table cited by the *Post* that did not list any civilian casualties.

The Obama administration has defended drone strikes as a better way to avoid civilian casualties, saying that it carefully selects al Qaeda-linked extremists in lawless parts of Pakistan.





## US backs TTP talks decision but avoids comments on call to end drone strikes



WASHINGTON - The US supports Islamabad's decision on holding talks with the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, senior US officials said on Thursday but offered no elaboration on American response to Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's call end to drone attacks on Pakistani territory.

In a background brief with reporters, senior State Department officials also echoed agreement with Pakistan on nudging peace progress with India.

The State Department and administration officials also sounded amenable to Islamabad's concerns on misuse of Afghan soil by India and Afghanistan against Pakistani interests.

"He (PM Sharif) indicated his intentions (to hold talks with the Taliban) and we indicated our support," a senior State Department official said, when questioned about US reaction to Islamabad's decision to hold talks with TTP.

Nawaz told at the conclusion of his talks with US President Barack Obama that the US was informed that Pakistan had made a conscious decision on holding talks with the TTP as part of efforts to contain militancy. He sought the US support on the issue.

Asked pointedly about US reaction to the controversial drone strikes issue on Pakistani soil, the official termed it a classified subject. Instead, he referred reporters to President Obama's speech on the issue a few months ago and Secretary of State John Kerry's remarks during a trip to Pakistan.

The official also declined to comment on revelations in *The Washington Post* story that Pakistan and the United States cooperated on some of the drone strikes on Pakistani territory.

The senior American official said Nawaz "raised the drone issue in (both) public and private" discussions.

## Secret memos reveal explicit nature of U.S., Pakistan agreement on drones

Despite repeatedly denouncing the CIA's drone campaign, top officials in Pakistan's government have for years secretly endorsed the program and routinely received classified briefings on strikes and casualty counts, according to top-secret CIA documents and Pakistani diplomatic memos obtained by The Washington Post.

The files describe dozens of drone attacks in Pakistan's tribal region and include maps as well as before-and-after aerial photos of targeted compounds over a four-year stretch from late 2007 to late 2011 in which [the campaign](#) intensified dramatically.

Markings on the documents indicate that many of them were prepared by the CIA's Counterterrorism Center specifically to be shared with Pakistan's government. They tout the success of strikes that killed dozens of alleged al-Qaeda operatives and assert repeatedly that no civilians were harmed.

Pakistan's tacit approval of the drone program has been one of the more poorly kept national security secrets in Washington and Islamabad. During the early years of the campaign, the CIA even used Pakistani airstrips for its Predator fleet.

But the files expose the explicit nature of a secret arrangement struck between the two countries at a time when neither was willing to publicly acknowledge the existence of the drone program. The documents detailed at least 65 strikes in Pakistan and were described as "talking points" for CIA briefings, which occurred with such regularity that they became a matter of diplomatic routine. The documents are marked "top secret" but cleared for release to Pakistan.

A CIA spokesman declined to discuss the documents but did not dispute their authenticity.

Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, the spokesman for Pakistan's Foreign Ministry, said his government does not comment on media reports that rely on unnamed sources. But Chaudhry added that Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, who took office in June, has been adamant that "the drone strikes must stop."

"Whatever understandings there may or may not have been in the past, the present government has been very clear regarding its policy on the issue," Chaudhry said. "We regard such strikes as a violation of our sovereignty as well as international law. They are also counter-productive."

Chaudhry said Pakistan's government is now unified against U.S. drone strikes, which are deeply unpopular within Pakistan, and has made its disapproval clear to senior U.S. and United Nations officials.

CIA strikes "have deeply disturbed and agitated our people," Sharif said in a speech Tuesday at the U.S. Institute of Peace, during his first visit to Washington since taking office this year. "This issue has become a major irritant in our bilateral relationship as well. I will, therefore, stress the need for an end to drone attacks."

In a meeting Wednesday with President Obama, Sharif said, he emphasized "the need for an end to such strikes." Sharif did not publicly elaborate on how Pakistan would seek to halt a campaign that has tapered off but remains a core part of the Obama administration's [counterterrorism strategy](#).

There was no immediate comment from Pakistan's military or intelligence service, but Talat Masood, a retired Pakistani general, said the revelation

that Pakistan's government was well-informed about the drone program will likely "put cold water on the hype" within Pakistan over the issue.

"I think people knew it already, but this makes it much more obvious, and the [Pakistani] media and others will have to cool off, " said Masood, a military analyst.

## **Distrust amid cooperation**

The files serve as a detailed timeline of the CIA drone program, tracing its evolution from a campaign aimed at a relatively short list of senior al-Qaeda operatives into a broader aerial assault against militant groups with no connection to the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.

The records also expose the distrust and dysfunction that has afflicted U.S.-Pakistani relations even amid the undeclared collaboration on drone strikes.

Some files describe tense meetings in which senior U.S. officials, including then-Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, confront their Pakistani counterparts with U.S. intelligence purporting to show Pakistan's ties to militant groups involved in attacks on American forces, a charge that Islamabad has consistently denied.

In one case, Clinton cited "cell phones and written material from dead bodies that point all fingers" at a militant group based in Pakistan, according to a Pakistani diplomatic cable dated Sept. 20, 2011. "The U.S. had intelligence proving ISI was involved with these groups," she is cited as saying, referring to Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence agency.

In a measure of the antagonism between the two sides, a 2010 memo sent by Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs to its embassy in Washington outlined a plan to undermine the CIA.

“Kindly find enclosed a list of 36 U.S. citizens who are [believed] to be CIA special agents and would be visiting Pakistan for some special task,” said the memo, signed by an official listed as the country’s director general for the Americas. “Kindly do not repeat not issue visas to the same.”

The earliest of the files describes 15 strikes from December 2007 through September 2008. All but two of the entries identify specific al-Qaeda figures as targets.

The campaign has since killed as many as 3,000 people, including thousands of militants and hundreds of civilians, according to independent estimates.

There have been 23 strikes in Pakistan this year, far below the peak in 2010, when 117 attacks were recorded. The latest strike occurred Sept. 29, when three alleged fighters with ties to the militant Haqqani network were killed in North Waziristan, according to news media reports.

Several documents refer to a direct Pakistani role in the selection of targets. A 2010 entry, for example, describes hitting a location “at the request of your government.” Another from that year refers to a “network of locations associated with a joint CIA-ISI targeting effort.”

The files also contain fragments of code words — including SYL-MAG, an abbreviation of Sylvan Magnolia — that correspond to covert drone operations. The code word was later changed to Arbor-Hawthorn.

In time, the CIA identified so many suspected al-Qaeda and militant compounds that it gave them coded designations, including MSC 215 for a Miran Shah compound where explosives were manufactured and SC 5 for Spailpan Compound No. 5 in South Waziristan.

The dates and number of strikes generally correspond with public databases assembled by independent groups, indicating that those organizations have reliably tracked drone attacks from media reports, even if the number of civilian casualties has often been a source of dispute.

## **Evolution of CIA strategy**

The documents confirm the deaths of dozens of alleged al-Qaeda operatives, including Rashid Rauf, a British citizen killed in 2008 who “helped coordinate al-Qaeda’s summer 2007 plot to blow up transatlantic flights originating from Great Britain,” one memo said.

But the documents also reveal a major shift in the CIA’s strategy in Pakistan as it broadened the campaign beyond “high-value” al-Qaeda targets and began firing missiles at gatherings of low-level fighters.

The files trace the CIA’s embrace of a controversial practice that came to be known as “signature strikes,” approving targets based on patterns of suspicious behavior detected from drone surveillance cameras and ordering strikes even when the identities of those to be killed weren’t known.

At times, the evidence seemed circumstantial.

On Jan. 14, 2010, a gathering of 17 people at a suspected Taliban training camp was struck after the men were observed conducting “assassination training, sparring, push-ups and running.” The compound was linked “by vehicle” to an al-Qaeda facility hit three years earlier.

On March 23, 2010, the CIA launched missiles at a “person of interest” in a suspected al-Qaeda compound. The man caught the agency’s attention after he had “held two in-car meetings, and swapped vehicles three times along the way.”



Other accounts describe militants targeted because of the extent of “deference” they were shown when arriving at a suspect site. A May 11, 2010, entry noted the likely deaths of 12 men who were “probably” involved in cross-border attacks against the U.S. military in Afghanistan.

Although often uncertain about the identities of its targets, the CIA expresses remarkable confidence in its accuracy, repeatedly ruling out the possibility that any civilians were killed.

One table estimates that as many as 152 “combatants” were killed and 26 were injured during the first six months of 2011. Lengthy columns with spaces to record civilian deaths or injuries contain nothing but zeroes.

Those assertions are at odds with research done by human rights organizations, including Amnesty International, which released a report this week based on investigations of nine drone strikes in Pakistan between May 2012 and July 2013. After interviewing survivors and assembling other evidence, the group concluded that at least 30 civilians had been killed in the attacks.

White House spokesman Jay Carney acknowledged Tuesday that drone strikes “have resulted in civilian casualties” but defended the program as highly precise and said there is a “wide gap” between U.S. estimates and those of independent groups.

Several of the files are labeled as “talking points” prepared for the DDCIA, which stands for deputy director of the CIA. Michael J. Morell, who held that position before retiring this year, delivered regular briefings on the drone program to Husain Haqqani, who was the Pakistani ambassador to the United States at the time.

The CIA also shared maps and photographs of drone operations in Pakistan that have not previously been shown publicly. The maps contain simplistic illustrations, including orange flame emblems to mark locations of strikes. The photos show before-and-after scenes of walled compounds and vehicles destroyed by Hellfire missiles, some marked with arrows to identify bodies amid the rubble.

The documents indicate that these and other materials were routinely relayed "by bag" to senior officials in Islamabad.

When contacted Wednesday, Haqqani declined to comment and said he would not discuss classified materials.

In one case, Morell indicated that the CIA was prepared to share credit with the Pakistanis if the agency could confirm that it had killed Ilyas Kashmiri, an al-Qaeda operative suspected of ties to plots against India. The agency would do so "so that the negative views about Pakistan in the U.S. decision and opinion making circles are mitigated," according to a diplomatic memo.

But Morell was also sent on occasion to confront Pakistan with what U.S. officials regarded as evidence of the nation's support for terrorist groups. In June 2011, he arrived at the embassy with videos showing militants scrambling to clear materials from explosives plants that the United States had discovered and called to the attention of counterparts in Pakistan.

Rather than launching raids, the Pakistanis were suspected of tipping off the militants, who dispersed their materials in a "pickup truck, two station wagons and at least two motorcycles to multiple locations in South Waziristan," according to the memo summarizing the meeting with Morell.

Morell warned that "these videos left a bad taste" among lawmakers and other senior officials in Washington.

*Tim Craig in Islamabad and Scott Wilson, Evelyn Duffy and Julie Tate in Washington contributed to this report.*

## An evolving US-Pakistan relationship

By Editorial

Published: October 25, 2013



We really have no power to stop the drones, so rather than focusing on things that lie out of reach, it may have been more sensible to aim for those that can be grasped. PHOTO: REUTERS

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's meeting in Washington with President Barack Obama has, of course, been closely watched. The meeting marks the first face-to-face interaction between the two men since Nawaz was elected to power in May this year and obviously holds considerable significance given how central Pakistan-US relations are to the region, and developments within our own country too, where the battle with militancy continues and debate rages over just how the issue should be dealt with. Ties with the US

are, of course, also central in terms of our floundering economy and the \$1.6 billion in aid quietly handed over by Washington just ahead of Sharif's arrival in the US capital will have been received with relief.

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” We really have no power to stop the drones, so rather than focusing on things that lie out of reach, it may have been more sensible to aim for those that can be grasped

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There were also other good signs, with the Pakistan's prime minister and his wife both warmly received by their hosts. But beyond the formalities of any such trip, it is of course, the actual talks themselves which are most significant.

[At a joint media talk with President Obama](#) after they ended, Prime Minister Sharif said they had proceeded along positive lines and tensions had been cleared. This, of course, is good news and we must hope the gains made now can translate into a more lasting relationship of cooperation between the two nations. But reading a little more carefully between the lines, it is also obvious there were disagreements. While Mr Sharif, of course under immense pressure over the issue from home, made it a point to mention in his remarks that the matter of drones had been discussed, Obama made no reference to the matter. From this we can assume that the US has no real intention of changing its policy on the matter. As has been the case in the past, it seems unprepared to alter its stand on the question. And a [report published by The Washington Post](#), just as the two leaders went into talks, said that for years Pakistan had secretly endorsed the US drone policy. The detailed article backed by documentation referred to requests from Pakistan for specific targets to be hit and also mentioned US concerns of links

between militant insurgents and Pakistan's ISI. Identification found on the bodies of some militants was mentioned as proof of this. The report will, of course, only add further fuel to the drone fire.

Given all this, we wonder if it was really worth wasting so much breath on the drone issue. After all, we know perfectly well, for all the pretence to the contrary, that we cannot really do much to alter Washington's stance on this. In real terms, we are not equal partners; Pakistan today is dependent on the US and cannot do without it. This is a fact. We really have no power to stop the drones, so rather than focusing on things that lie out of reach, it may have been more sensible to aim for those that can be grasped. Kashmir, an issue also raised by the Pakistan's prime minister, is too one about which little can be done, though President Obama did emphasise the need for better relations to be built between Pakistan and India for the sake of regional stability and balance. Regional matters were also brought up by Vice-President Joe Biden who brought up the transitional phase coming up in Afghanistan during his discussions with Mr Sharif.

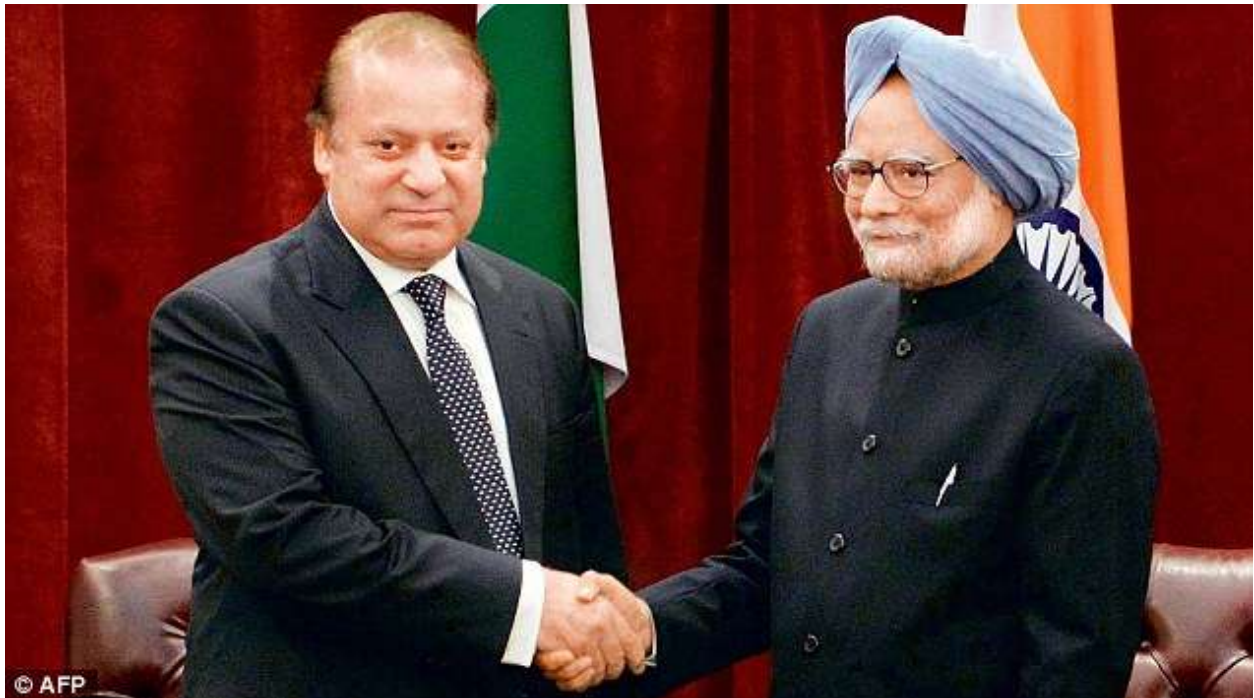
While we are, of course, pleased the meetings in Washington have gone well, including the talks with President Obama, for the future Pakistan may need to think more realistically about what it can obtain from this relationship. The drones, undesirable as they are, may go on. But perhaps we can, through well-planned negotiations, persuade the US to play a bigger role in bringing development to the tribal areas. This, too, is after all key to ending militancy. In the economic sector, where Pakistan is urgently in need of help, it will be necessary to turn to the US private sector and persuade it to invest. The security and militancy issue again ties in to this factor and brings us back in a full cycle to our starting point: the need to deal with it effectively and seek what help the US can offer us to make this possible.

The trust deficit that still stands between Islamabad and Washington, dating back to events of 2011 and the raid in May that year by US forces to remove Osama bin Laden still stands in the way of full cooperation. Prime Minister Sharif may like us to believe he won over US officials during his trip. But an indication of US doubts over this, perhaps, came in the fact that for now President Obama did not say he would be accepting any invitation to Pakistan. This marks a definite change in tone from what we saw after he first assumed office for his first term. Since then we have, of course, had not just the bin Laden raid but the Raymond Davis affair too. As the saga of Dr Shakil Afridi continues to simmer on, there is a danger we could see a repetition of the tensions that arose over Davis. There must be a genuine effort made to avoid this and a plan of action devised for this. At the moment none seems to exist.

In the world of politics, rhetoric is, of course, unavoidable. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif can then be excused for resorting to it during his visit. On the whole, the visit has gone well and this, too, is something to build on. But those in charge of matters in Islamabad need also to think about how Pakistan can draw benefits from the US, keeping in view the way all the cards lie. This is important to our need to move on from the point we now stand at, resurrect our country, look truth in the face and accept that all these steps are vital in the endeavour to strengthen ties with an important ally whose role for now remains vital to the region and its future.

## Home truths from Nawaz Sharif: Pakistan's PM says India has more faith in his country's army than he does

By [SAURABH SHUKLA](#)



In a sensational disclosure previously kept under wraps by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, his Pakistani counterpart Nawaz Sharif said he had less faith in the Pakistan Army than India when the two met in New York last month on the sidelines of UN General Assembly.

The remark was not in jest, but came in the course of an intense discussion between the two premiers during their one-hour meeting on September 29. Sharif's remarks were reported in a 'Record of Discussion' (RoD) made by the prime minister's aides and compiled by the Prime Minister's Office to be



shared with top government functionaries of the Indian government. Mail Today has accessed this document.

Sources say that discussions provide insights into the meeting of the prime ministers in the New York Palace Hotel's fourth floor Stanford Room.

Pakistan's PM Nawaz Sharif (left) made the surprising comment during his New York meeting with Indian PM Manmohan Singh

The meeting happened amid a tense standoff, and Sharif repeatedly tried hard to push for dialogue between the foreign offices of the two countries first, before involving the Pakistan Army in resolving the standoff on the Line of Control.

The revelation comes on a day when the tensions between the two countries have escalated; a Junior Commissioned Officer (JCO) was killed on October 28 during a cease-fire violation by Pakistan in the Uri sector of north Kashmir.

The firing took place in the wee hours of Monday when troops of the Indian Army's 8 Kumaon regiment were patrolling along the LoC in Uri sector, 120km northwest of Srinagar.

An Army official said that an area domination patrol party came under firing from the Pakistan side after midnight at 12.15am on Monday leading to the death of the JCO, Prakash Chander, of Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand.

Officials said the Army didn't retaliate but lodged a protest with the Pakistani Army over a hotline.

The two leaders met on September 29 in New York, on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly

## **Violation**

It is apparent, however, that Pakistani assurances are not translating into action. On Saturday, India had slammed Pakistan for claiming that it had not been given adequate evidence on the 26/11 attacks, where Islamabad is yet to bring the perpetrators of the 2008 attacks to justice.

The ceasefire violation took place at Bhim post near Kaman Bridge, the place where the Srinagar- Muzaffarabad bus crosses the LoC.

Last week, a BSF soldier was killed and six others wounded after Pakistani troops fired at 50 Indian posts along the International Border in Jammu.

There has been a steep rise in cease-fire violations along the LoC and the International Border in Jammu and Kashmir in past few weeks. Officials say over 135 ceasefire violations have been reported in 2013, the highest in the last eight years.

At the New York meeting, the conversation began with Sharif clearing the air on the dehati aurat controversy that had broken out earlier in the day. The RoD notes that Sharif pushed for talks led by the foreign office, but Singh stuck to his guns and insisted talks cannot be held between the civilian officials.



The Pakistan Army continues to violate the ceasefire along the Line of Control

## **NY meeting**

Sharif again revised his proposal and suggested that talks can be at the level of the Director General of Military Operations and the Foreign Office, which was also declined by Singh.

It was then that the Indian Prime Minister repeated his assertion that those who have caused the incidents on the Line of Control and the International Border will have to resolve it, and that militaries both countries should be involved.

Sharif signed off with the remark reposing mistrust in his own army, telling Singh that India had more faith in their capabilities than he did.

The remark is significant because it revealed that Sharif continues to struggle with a powerful army at home.

It is also a reassertion that India will have to deal with multiple power centres in Pakistan, even more significant in the present context when the pressure is on Sharif to give a powerful post-retirement role to his hard-line Army Chief General Ashfaq Kayani. The general wants to handle Pakistan's Kashmir and Afghanistan affairs as National Security Advisor, and control Sharif's foreign and strategic policy.

Sharif also raised the issue of Baluchistan, to which Manmohan responded that no evidence has been handed over by Pakistan on this accusation which has been leveled earlier as well.

## **Response**

Last week, on his way back from the summit meetings in Russia and China, Manmohan expressed his disappointment at the happenings on the LoC.

"Let me say that I am disappointed, because in the New York meeting, there was a general agreement on both the sides that peace and tranquillity should be maintained on the border, on the Line of Control as well as on the international border and this has not happened," he said.

Nawaz's statement exposes the fissures in the Pakistan establishment, but it also brings to the fore his Janus-faced approach, as he is neither willing nor capable of reining in the army, but he is willing to run down his own army to show the international community that he holds the reins of power in Pakistan.

## Region Slowly Turns to Diplomacy in Syria Crisis.



In short, the winds of change, particularly regarding the Syrian crisis, are making themselves felt throughout the region, rattling the likes of Saudi Arabia who seek to resist the shift taking place at all costs. (Photo: AP - Hassan Ammar)

By: Ibrahim al-Amin

Published Wednesday, October 30, 2013

**The Middle East has retreated from the brink of a regional war over Syria to a sudden flurry of diplomacy to resolve the crisis, forcing old rivals to reconsider their high-stakes positions.**

Many countries in the region who staked so much on toppling the Damascus regime now seem to be in a rush to change their ways, after Washington's

recent climbdown and push to find a diplomatic solution for the nearly three-year crisis.

Undoubtedly, the overall environment in the region – with the exception of Saudi Arabia – has begun to change, particularly given the recent opening of diplomatic channels between Iran and the United States. But it will take time for the rosy scenarios that some are drawing to become reality.

The strategic pivot that started it all was the Russia-US deal that that allowed Iran to play a more central role. The election of Hassan Rouhani in the summer partially paved the way for this diplomatic turn, but the fall of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt has had a more decisive impact on the changes underway.

What in fact happened over the past period is as follows:

- Hamas took the initiative to initiate contacts with Hezbollah, which in turn encouraged Turkish and Qatari officials to begin a more intensive engagement with Iran, which was open to these discussions, hoping they would bear fruit in resolving the Syrian crisis.

- The Iranians told the Qataris and Turks that Tehran’s current strategy is to find ways to address the hotspots and tensions in the region, advising them to take concrete and positive steps on the Syrian crisis, which was translated into the release of the Lebanese hostages in Syria in mid-October.

In short, the winds of change, particularly regarding the Syrian crisis, are making themselves felt throughout the region, rattling the likes of Saudi Arabia who seek to resist the shift taking place at all costs.– Qatar, for its part, expressed its readiness to reestablish contact with Hezbollah, keeping them separate from the Syrian matter, due to the fact that Doha cannot

make any sudden turns in its foreign policy and prefers a far slower pace than many would like.

- The Turks and the Qataris are also facing a test in northern Syria, where they have sway over many armed groups loosely operating under the umbrella of the Free Syrian Army (FSA). Saudi is making a bid through the Salafi groups it controls to dominate the area in order to prevent the FSA from entering negotiations with the regime, something that Ankara and Doha were willing to consider.

- While Hezbollah was generally responsive to Qatari overtures, the Resistance nevertheless pressed the Gulf emirate to take bolder steps that would reflect their shifting position on Syria. President Bashar al-Assad, who has received letters from both Qatar and Turkey, has been less interested in opening up any channels, given the scale of enmity between the two sides since the outbreak of the crisis.

In short, the winds of change, particularly regarding the Syrian crisis, are making themselves felt throughout the region, rattling the likes of Saudi Arabia who seek to resist the shift taking place at all costs. In the end, the kingdom's stubborn stance cannot resist the will of Washington, if the latter does commit itself to a diplomatic approach to the region's mounting tensions.

But those who rush such critical matters risk disappointment when events do not unfold as quickly as they had imagined.

# Is The US Losing Saudi Arabia To China? – Analysis



*U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry meets with Saudi Arabian Foreign Minister Saud Al-Faisal and Saudi Arabian Ambassador to the U.S. Adel al-Jubeir. State Dept. photo.*

By Daniel Wagner and Giorgio Cafiero

October 30, 2013

Saudi Arabia's declared intention to pivot away from the U.S. in foreign policy implies a shift toward Beijing, which predates both the Obama presidency and the Arab Awakening. While a full-fledged "divorce" from the U.S. appears highly unlikely at this juncture, there is genuine cause for concern in Washington. The Saudi government's decision has potentially profound implications regionally, as cooperation between Saudi Arabia and the U.S. has been a hallmark of the Middle East's political landscape for the past 80 years.

The U.S. and Saudi Arabia have maintained a strategic partnership since World War II based on a common understanding — Saudi Arabia provides



the U.S. with oil and the U.S. in turn provides a security umbrella to the Kingdom. The two have for many years also shared mutual interest in containing Communism and Arab nationalism, which has led to many joint U.S.-Saudi campaigns throughout Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Latin America. Washington and Riyadh's shared objective of countering the influence of post-revolutionary Iran has also served to strengthen their ties.

Part of what is at issue here is a simmering, lingering tension between Saudi Arabia and the U.S. The U.S. has beaten the 'democracy' drum in the Middle East for decades, particularly since 9/11, which has not sat well with the distinctly undemocratic Saudi polity. The fact that 15 of the 19 hijackers of 9/11 were Saudi nationals prompted greater scrutiny in Washington about the nature of the bilateral relationship, as have questions about human rights in the Kingdom since that time. Saudi officials view U.S. hegemony in the post-Cold War era as having a destabilizing impact on the Middle East. Saudi Arabia sees itself as paying a price for reckless and poorly executed U.S. foreign policy, with the U.S., for example, having refused to pressure Israel to make concessions to the Palestinians (consistent with the Saudi Initiative of 2002) and having toppled Saddam Hussein against Riyadh's advice.

The Saudis saw the U.S. decision to remove Saddam as misguided from the beginning, and anticipated that any democratically-elected national Iraqi government would be Shi'ite-majority and politically tied to Iran. However, when protests erupted in Bahrain in 2011, the Saudis did not wait for a permission slip from the White House before waging a harsh crackdown to defend the Sunni-dominated monarchy in Manama. Riyadh views the prospects of political change in Bahrain as another potential Saudi loss and Iranian gain, rooted amid concern that Saudi Arabia's own Shi'ite community

would rise up against the House of Saud, in response to a Shi'ite take-over of Bahrain.

In addition to viewing American officials as clueless about the Middle East's realities, the evolution of the Arab Awakening has led many in Riyadh to question Washington's loyalty to the Kingdom and its allies. When protests erupted across Egypt in 2011, the Saudis were disappointed at the passivity of the Obama Administration, which stood by as the power of its strategic partner for 30 years (Hosni Mubarak) disintegrated. Washington's subsequent decision to withhold a portion of military aid to General Sisi has further irked the Saudis, who back the interim government in Cairo. Many Saudis also accuse the U.S. of betraying the rebels fighting the Assad government in Syria, and Riyadh was angered when the Obama Administration decided not to strike Syria following President Assad's alleged use of chemical weapons.

The Obama Administration's recent diplomatic gestures toward Iran are interpreted in Riyadh as a prelude to a possible shift in the regional balance of power, in which the Saudis may play a secondary role. The Saudis do not, therefore, see the opening as a possible opportunity to reduce the noise between Washington and Tehran, as well as regional tension; rather, the Saudis view the idea of peace with Iran as a quid pro quo in which they lose if Tehran wins. Moreover, the very idea that the Obama Administration would engage in dialogue with Tehran is seen in Riyadh as more reason to question Washington's loyalties and approach, and less reason to maintain a strong alliance with the U.S.

On the China question, Saudi Arabia has diversified its trading partners over the past quarter century – away from the U.S. and toward Asia. In 2009 Saudi exports to China exceeded those to the U.S. for the first time, and the

Kingdom exports in excess of three times more to five Asian countries (China, Japan, South Korea, India and Singapore) than to Europe and North America combined. By 2030 Chinese demand for oil is expected to reach more than 16 million barrels per day, while U.S. demand is expected to decrease, and U.S. oil imports are expected to dwindle in the age of fracking. Within the context of Chinese demand, Saudi Aramco's CEO stated a few years ago that "the writing is on the wall" and that China is the future growth market for Saudi petroleum. In doing so, Saudi Arabia is joining the world's major Muslim powers (Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mauritania, Nigeria, Pakistan, Sudan and Turkey) that have also deepened their economic ties with China over the past decade.

China's military currently lacks the capacity to police the Persian Gulf and safeguard shipping, and no country other than the U.S. has the capacity to provide a security umbrella to countries in the region. The Saudis will therefore remain dependent on the U.S. in that regard, which also suits Beijing's interest for the time being. China has been content not to be seen as actively promoting regional stability, but rather to ride the coat tails of the U.S. militarily. China is also happy to play the spoiler against U.S.-led efforts to isolate Iran from the international economy, having become Iran's number one export partner — which points to an inherent contradiction in the Saudis' approach to the Chinese.

Additionally, the prospects for deeper Saudi-Sino relations are dimmed by their opposing stakes in the Syria crisis, and the ongoing tension in China's Xinjiang province, which has ignited sensitivities across the Muslim world. As China deftly plays off of Iran and Saudi Arabia's conflict for its own benefit, Riyadh is not convinced that Beijing will avoid deepening ties with Iran in the future. The Saudis are thus unlikely to risk a total disconnect with Washington, as it appears that Riyadh knows doing so would not be in its

own long term interest. The Saudis are thus unlikely to risk a complete break with Washington, but rather, have its cake and eat it too, by giving itself the freedom to pursue its diplomatic initiatives while maintaining a functional relationship with Washington.

What seems most likely is that China, Saudi Arabia and the U.S. will practice a rather awkward triangular balance of power in the Persian Gulf, reflective of an understanding of their mutual and interwoven dependencies, which limits their mutual capacity to deny each other a preeminent role in the region. China and Saudi Arabia realize that with U.S. military bases in all of Saudi Arabia's fellow Gulf Cooperation Council member states, neither Beijing nor Riyadh will be capable of removing the U.S. from its position as the most dominant military actor in the Persian Gulf. Saudi Arabia will also benefit from maintaining both countries as top destinations for its future oil exports.

Meanwhile, the U.S. will want to secure Saudi backing for current and future initiatives in the region – however seemingly unlikely that may appear at this time. Shared interests in weakening Hezbollah and militant hardline Takfiri groups (such as al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula) will continue to provide Washington and Riyadh with interest in maintaining cooperative relations. China is no more likely to displace the U.S. security umbrella in the region than it is to single handedly upend U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. So while the U.S. is not in imminent danger of 'losing' Saudi Arabia to China, it is in danger of exercising far less power in the region, which has been on a downward trajectory since 2011. Saudi Arabia has carefully considered the implications of its pivot away from the U.S., but it also knows what is in its own interest. Riyadh has secured Washington's attention as a result of its actions last week. It has no illusions that the Obama Administration will suddenly do the opposite of what it is doing in

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Iran and Syria. By the same token, the stakes are high for Washington, as Beijing waits in the wings for the right time to capitalize on future opportunities that the fissure between Riyadh and Washington produces.

**Daniel Wagner** is CEO of Country Risk Solutions, a cross-border risk advisory firm, and author of the book "Managing Country Risk". **Giorgio Cafiero** is a research analyst with CRS based in Washington.

## **Defense ministry says US drones killed 67 civilians since 2008**



**ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's defence ministry said Wednesday US drone strikes in the country's tribal areas have killed 67 civilians since 2008, a surprisingly low figure given previous casualty estimates.**

The figure represents three percent of the total killed in the past five years according to ministry data given in a written answer to a question from the Pakistani Senate.

The submission said there had been 317 drone strikes in Pakistan since 2008, killing 2,160 militants and 67 civilians.

The US defends the campaign as just, legal and accurate, insisting past estimates of civilian casualties in the hundreds are excessive.

Pakistan regularly condemns the attacks as a violation of sovereignty and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif used a trip to Washington last week to press for their end.

According to the defence ministry submission, not a single civilian died in the 59 strikes conducted in 2012 and 2013, but 319 militants were killed.

The areas targeted by drones are off-limits to foreign journalists and aid groups, making it extremely difficult to verify the number and identity of those killed in drone strikes.

The London-based Bureau of Investigative Journalism puts the total death toll since the campaign began in Pakistan in 2004 at between 2,525 and 3,613.

The Bureau says that between 407 and 926 of those killed were civilians -- 16 to 25 percent of the total, much higher than the new Pakistani government figure would suggest.

UN special rapporteur Ben Emmerson said in a written report this month that Pakistan had told him that 400 of the 2,200 victims of drone attacks over the past decade -- 18 percent -- were civilians.

Last week Amnesty International highlighted two drone attacks it said appeared to have no legal justification and called on Washington to investigate.

The drone programme, which began under president George W. Bush, accelerated significantly after Barack Obama came to power but has tailed off noticeably in the past year.



## Iran May Drop Gas Pipeline Project with Pakistan



TEHRAN (FNA)- Iran's top oil ministry official announced on Wednesday the country is likely to give up on the multi-billion-dollar pipeline project which was due to take its rich gas reserves to energy hungry Pakistan.

"The contract for supplying gas to Pakistan is likely to be annuled," Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh told reporters on the sidelines of a gas forum here in Tehran on Wednesday.

Zanganeh did not state any further details in this regard.

The pipeline is almost complete on the Iranian side long ago, but the Pakistani side, which has long been under the United States' heavy pressures to give up the project, has been short of financing. Pakistan has

run into repeated problems to pay for the 780 kilometer (485 mile) section to be built on its side of the border.

In a recent demand, the Islamabad officials demanded Iran to finance their part of the project as well.

Yet, earlier this week Pakistani Foreign Ministry Spokesman Aizaz Chaudhry once again reiterated that Islamabad is resolved to pursue expedition of the pipeline project.

“It (IP) should be seen in the context of acute energy crisis that we have in our country,” said the Pakistani official, adding that his government is pursuing the case to accelerate the implementation process of the project.

Early in October, Pakistani Petroleum and Natural Resources Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi asked Iran to finance \$2bln in the construction of Pakistan’s side of the IP gas pipeline project.

The Pakistani petroleum minister said preparatory work was complete, but they had asked Iran to provide \$2bln for the construction work.

Iran and Pakistan officially inaugurated the construction of the border part of the multi-billion-dollar gas pipeline project in March.

The project kicked off in a ceremony attended by former Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and his former Pakistani counterpart Asif Ali Zardari at the two countries’ shared border region in Iran’s Southeastern city of Chabahar.

The 2700-kilometer long pipeline was to supply gas for Pakistan and India which are suffering a lack of energy sources, but India has evaded talks. In

2011, Iran and Pakistan declared they would finalize the agreement bilaterally if India continued to be absent in the meeting.

Iran has already constructed more than 900 kilometers of the pipeline on its soil.

According to the project proposal, the pipeline will begin from Iran's Assalouyeh Energy Zone in the South and stretch over 1,100 km through Iran. In Pakistan, it will pass through Baluchistan and Sindh but officials now say the route may be changed if China agrees to the project.

# Taliban must be part of peace, political process, says Nawaz

Talks yet to begin; Ch Nisar tasked with leading dialogue; terror attacks have caused setback to peace talks; Pakistan needs to end extremism and violence to attract foreign investment; Taliban have a vital role in Afghanistan's settlement



**LONDON: Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif on Tuesday said talks with the Pakistani Taliban had not begun yet, as incidents of terrorism had caused a setback to his government's efforts to ensure lasting peace and economic stability in the country.**

However, he said Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan had been tasked with initiating the dialogue with the Taliban. Speaking exclusively to The News in the morning prior to his speech at the World Islamic Economic Forum here, Nawaz said his government was serious in bringing peace to the

country through talks and in this regard it formally announced its plans for peace talks.

“We formally announced our intentions, as a consensus was reached at the All Parties Conference but there have been setbacks due to the continuing terrorism incidents. We want to speed up this process,” said Nawaz.

The premier said his government wanted to bring peace and stability in the country in order to create the kind of “economic climate” necessary to attract foreign investment and urged the Taliban to become a part of peace and political process.

“Pakistan needs to end violence, extremism and feuds. Several Muslim and non-Muslim countries of the world want to invest in Pakistan but we must have a safe and secure environment in the country. Overseas Pakistanis are very keen to invest in Pakistan too, so are many Islamic countries and investors from elsewhere. Pakistan’s progress is linked with the improvement of law and order,” said the premier, praising the 9th WIEF moot in London which saw representation from more than 115 countries of the world, including at least 15 heads from Islamic countries.

“Prime Minister David Cameron has played a key role in facilitating this conference and his role is appreciable. I believe there should be more investment, trade, commerce and economic cooperation all over the world, in the UK, in Islamic countries and in Pakistan.

“When there is more trade and economic cooperation in the world, the whole world will benefit. Pakistan should be ready to take advantage of this and play its role in the future economic activities of the world.”

Nawaz Sharif said during his talks with Prime Minister David Cameron and Afghan President Hamid Karzai, the issue of Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar will also be discussed. He said Pakistan wanted the Taliban to be part of any future settlement in Afghanistan and believed peace and stability could not be achieved without the full representation of all the parties of Afghanistan, including the Taliban.

“We want the Taliban to talk to the High Peace Council for the sake of peace, stability and brotherhood in Afghanistan. Peace will be achieved in Afghanistan when all parties are part of the dialogue process and that’s also good for peace in Pakistan. Pakistan will play its role to make sure that there is stability in Afghanistan.”

Nawaz Sharif said the Islamic countries could invest in Pakistan to help it deal with the economic crisis. “We are in touch with various countries and I am meeting several delegates in this conference to talk about the energy crisis and the opportunities for investment.”



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