

CRS Report for Congress

Received through the CRS Web

Terrorism in South Asia

Updated August 9, 2004

K. Alan Kronstadt, Coordinator
Analyst in Asian Affairs
Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division

Bruce Vaughn
Analyst in Southeast and South Asian Affairs
Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division

Report Documentation Page				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.					
1. REPORT DATE 09 AUG 2004		2. REPORT TYPE		3. DATES COVERED 00-00-2004 to 00-00-2004	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Terrorism in South Asia				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S)				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, 100 Independence Ave, SE, Washington, DC, 20540-7500				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT Same as Report (SAR)	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 30	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT unclassified	b. ABSTRACT unclassified	c. THIS PAGE unclassified			

Terrorism in South Asia

Summary

This report reviews the terrorist environment in South Asia, concentrating on Pakistan and India, but also including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Nepal. The existence of international terrorist groups and their supporters in South Asia is identified as a threat to both regional stability and to the attainment of central U.S. policy goals. Al Qaeda forces that fled from Afghanistan with their Taliban supporters remain active on Pakistani territory, and Al Qaeda is believed to have links with indigenous Pakistani terrorist groups that have conducted anti-Western attacks and that support separatist militancy in Indian Kashmir. A significant portion of Pakistan's ethnic Pashtun population is reported to sympathize with the Taliban and even Al Qaeda. The United States maintains close counterterrorism cooperation with Pakistan aimed especially at bolstering security and stability in neighboring Afghanistan. In the latter half of 2003, the Islamabad government began limited military operations in the traditionally autonomous tribal areas of western Pakistan. Such operations intensified in 2004 in coordination with U.S. and Afghan forces just across the international frontier.

The relationships between Al Qaeda, the Taliban, indigenous Pakistani terrorist groups, and some elements of Pakistan's political-military structure are complex and murky, but may represent a serious threat to the attainment of key U.S. policy goals. There are indications that elements of Pakistan's intelligence service and Pakistani Islamist political parties have provided assistance to U.S.-designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations. A pair of December 2003 attempts to assassinate Pakistan's President Musharraf reportedly were linked to both Al Qaeda and a Pakistan-based terrorist group. Lethal, but failed attempts to assassinate other top Pakistani officials in June and July 2004 killed some 20 people and also were linked to Al Qaeda-allied groups. After a long period during which few notable arrests were made in Pakistan, security officers there appear in the summer of 2004 to have made major strides in breaking up significant Al Qaeda and related networks operating in Pakistani cities.

The 9/11 Commission Report released in July 2004 contains recommendations for U.S. policy toward Pakistan. The report emphasizes the importance of prioritizing the elimination of terrorist sanctuaries in western Pakistan and near the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, and calls for the provision of long-term and comprehensive support to the government of President Musharraf so long as that government remains committed to combating terrorism and to a policy of "enlightened moderation."

The United States remains concerned by the continued "cross-border infiltration" of Islamic militants who traverse the Kashmiri Line of Control to engage in terrorist acts in India and Indian Kashmir. India also is home to several indigenous separatist and Maoist-oriented terrorist groups. Moreover, it is thought that some Al Qaeda elements fled to Bangladesh. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) of Sri Lanka have been designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization under U.S. law, while Harakat ul-Jihad-I-Islami/Bangladesh, and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)/ United Peoples Front, have been listed as "other terrorist groups" by the State Department. This report will be updated periodically.

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Terrorism in South Asia

This report reviews the terrorist environment in South Asia, concentrating on Pakistan and India, but also including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Nepal.¹ In the wake of the September 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States, President Bush launched major military operations in South and Southwest Asia as part of the global U.S.-led anti-terrorism effort. Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan has seen substantive success with the vital assistance of neighboring Pakistan. Yet the United States remains concerned that members of Al Qaeda and its Taliban supporters have found haven and been able at least partially to regroup in Pakistani cities and in the rugged Pakistan-Afghanistan border region. This area is inhabited by ethnic Pashtuns who express solidarity with anti-U.S. forces. Al Qaeda also reportedly has made alliances with indigenous Pakistani terrorist groups that have been implicated in both anti-Western attacks in Pakistan and terrorism in Indian Kashmir. These groups seek to oust the government of President Gen. Pervez Musharraf and have been named as being behind two December 2003 assassination attempts that were only narrowly survived by the Pakistani leader. Along with these concerns, the United States expresses an interest in the cessation of “cross-border infiltration” by separatist militants based in Pakistani-controlled areas who traverse the Kashmiri Line of Control (LOC) to engage in terrorist activities both in Indian Kashmir and in Indian cities.

In March 2004, the Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia, Christina Rocca, told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the top U.S. policy goal in the region is “combating terror and the conditions that breed terror in the frontline states of Afghanistan and Pakistan.”² The *9/11 Commission Report* released in July 2004 emphasizes that the mounting of large-scale international terrorist attacks appears to require sanctuaries in which terrorist groups can plan and operate with impunity. It also notes that Al Qaeda benefitted greatly from its former sanctuary in Afghanistan that was in part made possible by logistical networks that ran through Pakistan. The report further notes that Pakistan’s vast unpoliced regions remain attractive to extremist groups and that almost all of the 9/11 attackers traveled the north-south nexus from Kandahar in Afghanistan through Quetta and Karachi in Pakistan. The Commission identifies the government of President Pervez Musharraf as the best hope for stability in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and recommends that the United

¹ “Terrorism” here is understood as being “premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience” (see Title 22, Section 2656f(d) of the United States Code). See also CRS Report RL30588, *Afghanistan: Post-War Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy*, by Kenneth Katzman; and CRS Report RL31624, *Pakistan-U.S. Anti-Terrorism Cooperation*, by K. Alan Kronstadt.

² “State’s Rocca Outlines Assistance Plans for South Asia,” U.S. Department of State Washington File, March 2, 2004.

States make a long-term commitment to provide comprehensive support for Islamabad so long as Pakistan itself is committed to combating terrorism and to a policy of “enlightened moderation.”³

Al Qaeda, the Taliban, and Pakistani Extremism

The Al Qaeda-Taliban Nexus

Among the central goals of Operation Enduring Freedom were the destruction of terrorist training camps and infrastructure within Afghanistan, the capture of Al Qaeda and Taliban leaders, and the cessation of terrorist activities in Afghanistan.⁴ Most, but not all, of these goals have been achieved. However, since the Taliban’s ouster from power in Kabul and subsequent retreat to the rugged mountain region near the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, what the U.S. military calls its “remnant forces” have been able to regroup and to conduct “hit-and-run” attacks against U.S.-led coalition units, often in tandem with suspected Al Qaeda fugitives. These forces are then able to find haven on the Pakistani side of the border.⁵ Al Qaeda founder Osama bin Laden, his associate, Egyptian Islamic radical leader Ayman al-Zawahiri, and Taliban chief Mohammed Omar may themselves be in a remote area of Pakistan near Afghanistan.

The frequency of attacks on coalition forces in southern and eastern Afghanistan increased throughout 2003 and, in October, U.S. Special Envoy and current Ambassador to Afghanistan Zalmay Khalilzad warned that resurgent Taliban and Al Qaeda forces present a serious threat to Afghan reconstruction efforts. In the wake of spring 2004 military operations by Pakistan near the Afghan border, the Afghan Foreign Minister praised Pakistan for its role in fighting terrorism, but Afghan President Karzai expressed concern that militants trained on Pakistani territory continue to cross into Afghanistan to mount anti-government attacks there.⁶

³ See Sections 12.1 and 12.2 of *The 9/11 Commission Report*, available at [<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/911>]; Pervez Musharraf, “A Plea for Enlightened Moderation,” *Washington Post*, June 1, 2004.

⁴ Al Qaeda members are most readily identified as being Arabs or other non-Afghans who primarily are fighting an international jihad; Taliban members are ethnic Pashtun Afghans and Pakistanis who primarily are fighting for Islamic rule in Kabul and/or Islamabad. Al Qaeda is designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization under U.S. law; the Taliban are Specially-Designated Global Terrorists (see the U.S. Treasury Department’s master list at [<http://www.ustreas.gov/offices/eotffc/ofac/sdn/index.html>]).

⁵ Director of Central Intelligence George Tenet, Testimony Before the Senate Select Intelligence Committee, February 24, 2004. Pakistan’s western regions are populated by conservative ethnic Pashtuns who share intimate religious and tribal linkages with their counterparts in Afghanistan and who are seen to sympathize with Taliban and sometimes Al Qaeda forces while holding vehement anti-Western and anti-American sentiments (see, for example, Eliza Griswold, “In the Hiding Zone,” *New Yorker*, July 26, 2004).

⁶ Carlotta Gall, “Taliban May Be Planning Larger Attacks, U.S. Envoy Says,” *New York Times*, October 7, 2003; Sayed Salahuddin, “Kabul Asks Pakistan to Do More on (continued...) ”

Compounding the difficulty of battling regional extremists has been a major spike in Afghan opium production, spurring acute concerns that Afghanistan may soon become a “narco-state,” and that terrorist groups and their supporters in both Afghanistan and Pakistan are reaping huge profits from the processing and trafficking of heroin.⁷

The period of June-August 2004 saw significant developments in the fight against Al Qaeda-linked militants in Pakistan. On June 13, 2004, with clues taken from the scene of a terrorist attack on Karachi’s top Army general three days earlier, Pakistani agents arrested Masrab Arochi in Karachi. Arochi — a nephew of key alleged 9/11 plotter Khalid Sheik Mohammed and a cousin of Ramzi Yousef, who was sentenced to a life sentence in the United States for his role in the 1993 World Trade Center bombings — reportedly was quickly remanded to U.S. custody. Intelligence gained from him apparently led to the exposure of significant Al Qaeda networks and more captures of wanted fugitives. In July, Mohammed Naeem Noor Khan, said to be an important Al Qaeda computer expert who reportedly had made numerous trips to Pakistan’s western tribal areas, was arrested in Lahore. Two weeks later, after a 14-hour gunbattle in the northeastern city of Gujrat, Pakistani security forces arrested 13 others suspected of ties to Al Qaeda, including four foreigners. One of the captured turned out to be a Tanzanian national who had appeared on the FBI’s most-wanted list after his indictment for murder in connection with the 1998 Al Qaeda bombings of two American Embassies in East Africa. Information taken from the computers of Khan and Ghailani triggered the breakup of an apparent Al Qaeda cell by British police, and also spurred the raising of the terrorist alert level in the United States. Moreover, in the first-ever case of close Pakistani coordination with a foreign country, police in the United Arab Emirates captured “senior Al Qaeda operative” Qari Saifullah Akhtar in Dubai in early August. Akhtar is alleged to have run a terrorist training camp in Afghanistan until October 2001. At the time of this writing, Pakistan continues to arrest numerous other suspected Al Qaeda figures, and the United States expresses being “delighted” with Islamabad’s successes.⁸

⁶ (...continued)

Terrorism,” Reuters News, July 12, 2004.

⁷ A. Brownfeld, “Al Qaeda’s Drug-Running Network,” *Jane’s Terrorism and Security Monitor*, February 1, 2004; Stephen Graham, “Karzai Seeks Anti-Drugs Aid Amid Fears Afghanistan Will Become ‘Narco-State,’” Associated Press Newswire, February 9, 2004; Hugh Williamson and Victoria Burnett, “Afghan Militants Linked to Drugs Trade,” *Financial Times* (London), April 2, 2004.

⁸ Paul Haven, “Arrests Damage Al Qaeda Network,” Associated Press, August 7, 2004; Mike Collet-White and Amir Zia, “Pakistan Crack Down on Militants,” Reuters News, August 8, 2004; Kamran Khan, “Al Qaeda Arrest in June Opened Valuable Leads,” *Washington Post*, August 3, 2004; “Pakistanis Tell of More Arrests,” *New York Times*, August 4, 2004; “State’s Armitage Calls for Syrian Troops Withdrawal From Lebanon,” U.S. Department of State Washington File, August 6, 2004. The United States was harshly criticized by intelligence experts for releasing Khan’s name to the press even as Khan was said to be covertly cooperating with investigators (Peter Graff, “Unmasking of Qaeda Mole a Security Blunder - Experts,” Reuters News, August 7, 2004).

Developments in the summer of 2004 mark major strides in Pakistani and multilateral efforts to eradicate Al Qaeda and other Islamic extremist groups in the region, however, the United States remains concerned by past indications of links between Al Qaeda and Pakistani intelligence agents, weapons experts, and militant leaders. There also are reports that Pakistan continues to allow Taliban militants to train in Pakistan for combat in Afghanistan and that Al Qaeda camps near the Afghan Pakistani border remain active.⁹ During the time that Islamabad was actively supporting the Afghan Taliban regime it had helped to create, Pakistan's powerful Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency is believed to have had direct contacts with Al Qaeda figures.¹⁰ Sympathetic ISI officials may even have provided shelter to Al Qaeda members in both Pakistan and Kashmir.¹¹ Two senior Pakistani nuclear scientists reportedly met with Osama bin Laden in 2001 to conduct "long discussions about nuclear, chemical and biological weapons."¹² Moreover, known Islamic extremists with ties to Al Qaeda appear to have remained active on Pakistani territory. For example, longtime Pakistani terrorist chief Fazlur Rehman Khalil, who co-signed Osama bin Laden's 1998 edict declaring it a Muslim's duty to kill Americans and Jews, lived openly in Rawalpindi, not far from Pakistan's Army General Headquarters, until his arrest in August 2004.¹³ Khalil is the leader of Harakat ul-Mujahideen, one of the many Pakistan-based terrorist groups opposed to both the continued rule of President Musharraf and to U.S. policy in the region.

Indigenous Pakistani Terrorist Groups

Pakistan is known to be a base for numerous indigenous terrorist organizations. In January 2002, Pakistan banned five extremist groups, including Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), and Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP). The United States designates LeT and JeM as Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTOs); SSP

⁹ Carlotta Gall, "Pakistan Allows Taliban to Train, a Detained Fighter Says," *New York Times*, August 4, 2004; "Intelligence Indicates Activity at Al Qaeda Camps," CNN.com, August 5, 2004.

¹⁰ James Risen and Judith Miller, "Pakistani Intelligence Had Links to Al Qaeda, U.S. Officials Say," *New York Times*, October 29, 2001. Declassified U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency documents from October 2001 indicate that the Al Qaeda camp targeted by American cruise missiles in 1998 was funded and maintained by the ISI, and that Pakistani agents "encouraged, facilitated and often escorted Arabs from the Middle East into Afghanistan" (National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book 97, available at [<http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB97/index.htm>]).

¹¹ Bob Drogin, et. al., "Al Qaeda Gathering Strength in Pakistan," *Los Angeles Times*, June 16, 2002; Philip Smucker, "Al Qaeda Thriving in Kashmir," *Christian Science Monitor*, July 2, 2002.

¹² Kamran Khan and Molly Moore, "2 Nuclear Experts Briefed Bin Laden, Pakistanis Say," *Washington Post*, December 12, 2001.

¹³ Paul Watson and Mubashir Zaidi, "Militant Flourishes in Plain Sight," *Los Angeles Times*, January 25, 2004; Mike Collet-White and Amir Zia, "Pakistan Crack Down on Militants," *Reuters News*, August 8, 2004.

appears on the State Department's list of "other terrorist groups."¹⁴ Following Al Qaeda's 2001-2002 expulsion from Afghanistan and ensuing relocation of some core elements to Pakistani cities such as Karachi and Peshawar, some Al Qaeda activists are known to have joined forces with indigenous Pakistani Sunni militant groups, including LeT, JeM, SSP, and Lashkar-i-Jhangvi (LJ), an FTO-designated offshoot of the SSP that has close ties to Al Qaeda.¹⁵ The United Nations lists JeM and LJ as "entities belonging to or associated with the Taliban and Al Qaeda organization."¹⁶

Al Qaeda reportedly was linked to anti-U.S. and anti-Western terrorist attacks in Pakistan during 2002, although the primary suspects in most attacks were members of indigenous Pakistani groups.¹⁷ During 2003, Pakistan's domestic terrorism mostly involved Sunni-Shia conflict, and a March 2004 machine gun and bomb attack on a Shia procession in Quetta killed at least 44 and injured more than 150 others.¹⁸ Some analysts believe that, by redirecting Pakistan's internal security resources, an increase in Pakistan's sectarian violence may ease pressure on Al Qaeda and so allow that group to operate more freely there.¹⁹ There have been past indications of collusion between some elements of Al Qaeda, Lashkar-e-Taiba, and influential Pakistanis. For example, of the three major Al Qaeda figures captured in Pakistan, one (Abu Zubaydah) was found at a Lashkar-e-Taiba safehouse in Faisalabad, suggesting that some LeT members have facilitated the movement of Al Qaeda members in Pakistan.²⁰ Another (Khalid Sheikh Mohammed) was seized at the Rawalpindi home

¹⁴ See CRS Report RL32223, *Foreign Terrorist Organizations*, and CRS Report RL32120, *The 'FTO List' and Congress*, by Audrey Kurth Cronin.

¹⁵ U.S. Department of State, *Patterns of Global Terrorism 2002*, April 30, 2003; Howard French, "Officials Warn of Links Between Al Qaeda, Pakistanis," *New York Times*, May 29, 2002; Hasan Mansoor, "Karachi Killings Reveal Sectarian-Jihadi Nexus," *Friday Times* (Lahore), October 10, 2003; Kamran Khan and John Lancaster, "Suspect Predicts Attack on U.S. Forces," *Washington Post*, March 7, 2003.

¹⁶ See [<http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/committees/1267/1267ListEng.htm>].

¹⁷ Among these incidents was the January 2002 kidnaping and ensuing murder of *Wall Street Journal* reporter Daniel Pearl. Also occurring in 2002 were a March grenade attack on a Protestant church in Islamabad that killed five, including a U.S. Embassy employee and her daughter, likely was the work of LeT; a May car bombing that killed 14 outside a Karachi hotel, including 11 French defense technicians, was linked to Al Qaeda; and a June car bombing outside the U.S. consulate in Karachi that killed 12 Pakistani nationals also was linked to Al Qaeda. There have been arrests and some convictions in each of these cases. See U.S. Department of State, *Patterns of Global Terrorism 2002*, April 30, 2003.

¹⁸ About three-quarters of Pakistan's Muslims are Sunnis. Major sectarian violence in 2003 included a July strike on a Quetta mosque that killed more than 50 Shiite worshipers (blamed on the militant Sunni SSP), and the October assassination of Maulana Azam Tariq, leader of the SSP and member of the Pakistani parliament, who was gunned down with four others in Islamabad.

¹⁹ "Pakistan: A New Wave of Sunni-Shiite Violence?," Stratfor.com, October 7, 2003.

²⁰ U.S. Department of State, *Patterns of Global Terrorism 2002*, April 30, 2003.

of a member of the Jamaat-i-Islami (JI), one of Pakistan's leading religious Islamist political parties. In fact, at least four top captured Al Qaeda suspects had ties to JI.²¹

In a landmark January 2002 speech, President Musharraf vowed to end Pakistan's use as a base for terrorism, and he criticized religious extremism and intolerance in the country. In the wake of the speech, about 3,300 extremists were arrested and detained, though most of these have since been released (including one man who later tried to assassinate Musharraf).²² Among those released were the founders of both Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Muhammad. Though officially banned, these groups continued to operate under new names: LeT became Jamaat al-Dawat; JeM became Khudam-ul Islam.²³ In November 2003, just two days after the U.S. Ambassador expressed particular concern over the continuing activities of banned organizations, Musharraf moved to arrest members of these groups and shutter their offices. Six groups were formally banned, including offshoots of both the JeM and SSP, and more than 100 offices were raided. Musharraf vowed to permanently prevent banned groups from resurfacing, and his government moved to seize their financial assets.²⁴ Some analysts called the efforts cosmetic, ineffective, and the result of international pressure rather than a genuine recognition of the threat posed.²⁵

²¹ "Pakistan Asked to Explain Islamic Party Link to Al Qaeda Suspects," Agence France-Presse, March 3, 2003.

²² Paul Watson, "A Delicate Balance of Rule for Pakistan's Musharraf," *Los Angeles Times*, March 5, 2004.

²³ Paul Watson, "Revolving Doors for Pakistan's Militants," *Los Angeles Times*, November 17, 2002; "Musharraf Says Heads of Two Extremist Groups Did Nothing Illegal," Agence France-Presse, March 2, 2003; "Militant Suspects Freed in Pakistan," BBC News, January 31, 2003.

²⁴ "U.S. Committed to Strong Relationship With Pakistan," U.S. Department of State Washington File, November 13, 2003; "Owais Tohid, "Pakistan Tries Again to Shutter Terror Groups," *Christian Science Monitor*, November 26, 2003; Rafaqat Ali, "Musharraf Vows to Root Out Extremism," *Dawn* (Karachi), December 5, 2003; "Pakistan Freezes Accounts of Three More Banned Islamic Groups," Associated Press Newswire, December 12, 2003. The United States had signaled increased pressure on Islamabad in October 2003 when the Treasury Department designated the Pakistan-based Al Akhtar Trust as a terrorist support organization under Executive Order 13224. Al Akhtar is said to be carrying on support for Al Qaeda and Taliban terrorist activities funded by the previously-designated Al Rashid Trust. The United States also that month identified Indian crime figure Dawood Ibrahim as a "global terrorist" with links to both Al Qaeda and Lashkar-e-Taiba. Ibrahim, wanted by the Indian government for 1993 Bombay bombings that killed and injured thousands, is believed to be in Pakistan. These moves by the U.S. government were welcomed in New Delhi, where officials continuously are urging greater U.S. attention to anti-India terrorism emanating from Pakistan ("U.S. Designates Al Akhtar," U.S. Treasury Department Press Release, October 14, 2003; "U.S. Designates Dawood Ibrahim," U.S. Treasury Department Press Release, October 16, 2003).

²⁵ Husain Haqqani, "Skepticism Over Crackdown," *Nation* (Lahore), November 19, 2003; Najam Sethi, "Writing On the Wall," *Friday Times* (Lahore), November 21, 2003.

Musharraf's further efforts to crack down on outlawed groups — along with his suggestions that Pakistan may soften its long-held Kashmir policies — may have fueled even greater outrage among radical Islamists already angered by Pakistan's September 2001 policy reversal, when Musharraf cut ties with the Afghan Taliban regime and began facilitating U.S.-led anti-terrorism operations in the region.²⁶ A December 14, 2003 remote-controlled bombing attempt on Musharraf's motorcade and dual suicide car bomb attacks on his convoy 11 days later were blamed mainly on Jaish-e-Mohammed operatives. Numerous Pakistanis and foreign nationals — including Afghans, Chechens, and Kashmiris — were arrested in connection with the attacks, with officials suggesting a possible Al Qaeda link.²⁷ The F.B.I. played a role in the investigations, and the United States has undertaken to provide improved training to Musharraf's bodyguards. Nonetheless, it is considered likely that future assassination attempts on Musharraf will occur.²⁸ In 2004, Al Qaeda-linked extremists made attempts to kill other top Pakistani officials: in June, militants attacked the motorcade of a top Pakistani Army commander in Karachi, killing ten, but leaving the general unharmed; in July, a suicide bomber murdered eight people next to the parked car of Pakistan's Prime Minister-designate, Shaukat Aziz, who also managed to escape without injuries. Low-level Pakistani security officers allegedly were involved in both attacks, heightening concerns that the government of President Musharraf is finding it difficult to control domestic extremism, especially among some elements of Pakistan's security apparatus.²⁹

Madrassas and Pakistan Islamists

The Taliban movement itself began among students attending Pakistani religious schools (madrassas). Among the 10,000-20,000 or more madrassas training up to two million children in Pakistan are a small percentage that have been implicated in teaching militant anti-Western, anti-American, anti-Hindu, and even anti-Shia values. Secretary of State Powell identified these as “programs that do

²⁶ Bryan Bender and Farah Stockman, “Extremist Influence Growing in Pakistan, US Officials Fear,” *Boston Globe*, January 11, 2004.

²⁷ Salman Masood, “Link to Qaeda Cited in Effort to Assassinate Pakistan Chief,” *New York Times*, March 16, 2004. Some also suggest a possible ISI role, noting a long history of ties between Pakistan's intelligence service and JeM leader Masood Azhar (John Lancaster and Kamran Khan, “Investigation of Attacks on Musharraf Points to Pakistani Group,” *Washington Post*, January 14, 2004). In March 2004, an audio tape believed to have been made by Al Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahri urged “every Muslim in Pakistan” to overthrow the Musharraf regime for its “surrender to the Americans” (“Uncover the Truth of Musharraf, the Traitor and the Killer of Muslims,” *Outlook India* (Delhi), March 27, 2004).

²⁸ Mubashir Zaidi, “FBI Joins Inquiry Into Blasts Aimed at Pakistani Leader,” *Los Angeles Times*, December 27, 2003; Dana Priest, “U.S. Aids Security of Musharraf,” *Washington Post*, January 3, 2004; Mazhar Abbas, “Agencies Fear More Suicide Attempts on Musharraf,” *Friday Times* (Lahore), February 13, 2004.

²⁹ Salman Masood, “A Top Pakistani General Escapes Assassination Attempt that Kills Ten People,” *New York Times*, June 11, 2004; “Al Qaeda Group Claims Bombing,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 1, 2004; “Junior Officers Tried to Kill Me: Musharraf,” *Daily Times* (Lahore), May 27, 2004.

nothing but prepare youngsters to be fundamentalists and to be terrorists.”³⁰ Many of these madrassas are financed and operated by Pakistani Islamist political parties such as Jamaat-e-Ulema Islam (JUI, closely linked to the Taliban), as well as by multiple unknown foreign entities, many in Saudi Arabia.³¹ As many as two-thirds of Pakistan’s seminaries are run by the Deobandi sect, known for its traditionally anti-Shia sentiment and linked to the Sipah-e-Sahaba terrorist group.³² Some senior members of JUI reportedly have been linked to several U.S.-designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations.³³ The JUI chief, Fazlur Rehman, was in May 2004 named Leader of the Opposition in Pakistan’s Parliament.

Since 2002, the U.S. Congress has allocated tens of millions of dollars to assist Pakistan in efforts to reform its education system, including changes that would make madrassa curriculum closer in substance to that provided in non-religious schools. The *9/11 Commission Report* recommends U.S. support for better Pakistani education. However, while President Musharraf has in the past pledged to crack down on the more extremist madrassas in his country, there is little concrete evidence that he has done so. According to two observers, “most madrassas remain unregistered, their finances unregulated, and the government has yet to remove the jihadist and sectarian content of their curricula.”³⁴ Many speculate that Musharraf’s reluctance to enforce reform efforts is rooted in his desire to remain on good terms with Pakistan’s Islamist political parties, which are seen to be an important part of his political base.³⁵

The Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) — a coalition of six Islamist opposition parties — holds about 20% of Pakistan’s National Assembly seats, while also controlling the provincial assembly in the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) and leading a coalition in the provincial assembly of Baluchistan. Pakistan’s Islamists

³⁰ “House Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Holds Hearing on FY2005 Appropriations,” FDCH Transcripts, March 10, 2004. See also RS21654, *Islamic Religious Schools, Madrasas*, by Christopher M. Blanchard.

³¹ In June 2004, the Co-Director of the Independent Task Force on Terrorism Financing told a Senate panel that, “Saudi financing is contributing to the radicalization of millions of Muslims” in places such as Pakistan and, “Foreign funding for extremist madrassas in Pakistan alone ... is estimated to be in the tens of millions, much of it historically from Saudi Arabia” (Testimony of Lee Wolosky Before the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee, “An Assessment of Current Efforts to Combat Terrorism Financing,” June 15, 2004).

³² Khaled Ahmed, “Our Madrassas and Our World View,” *Friday Times* (Lahore), March 7, 2003

³³ Praveen Swami, “A Peacemaker From Pakistan,” *Frontline* (Madras), August 15, 2003.

³⁴ Samina Ahmed and John Norton, “A ‘Moderation’ of Freedom,” *Washington Post*, June 15, 2004. See also “Unfulfilled Promises: Pakistan’s Failure to Tackle Extremism,” International Crisis Group Report 73, January 16, 2004. Author interviews with Pakistani government officials and scholars in Islamabad in January 2004 tended to confirm that movement on madrassa reform is slow, at best.

³⁵ John Lancaster and Kamran Khan, “At an Islamic School, Hints of Extremist Ties,” *Washington Post*, June 13, 2004.

denounce Pakistani military operations in western tribal areas, resist governmental attempts to reform religious schools that teach militancy, and harshly criticize Islamabad's cooperation with the U.S. government and movement toward rapprochement with India. The leadership of the MMA's two main constituents — the Jamaat-i-Islami and the Jamiat-Ulema-Islami-Fazlur, are notable for their virulent anti-American rhetoric; they have at times called for "jihad" against what they view as the existential threat to Pakistani sovereignty that alliance with Washington entails.³⁶ In addition to decrying and seeking to end President Musharraf's cooperation with the United States, many also are viewed as opposing the U.S.-supported Kabul government. In September 2003, Afghan President Karzai called on Pakistani clerics to stop supporting Taliban members who seek to destabilize Afghanistan. Two months later, the Afghan foreign minister complained that Taliban leaders were operating openly in Quetta and other cities in western Pakistan. In the wake of a March 2004 battle between the Pakistan Army and Islamic militants in the traditionally autonomous western Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), Pakistan's Interior Minister accused MMA politicians of giving a "free hand" to terrorists. Musharraf has called on Pakistan's Muslim clerics to assist in fighting extremism and improving Pakistan's image as a moderate and progressive state.³⁷

Pakistan-U.S. Counterterrorism Cooperation

According to the U.S. Departments of State and Defense, Pakistan has afforded the United States unprecedented levels of cooperation by allowing the U.S. military to use bases within the country, helping to identify and detain extremists, and deploying tens of thousands of its own security forces to secure the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. Pakistan was designated as a Major Non-NATO Ally of the United States in June 2004, and top U.S. officials regularly praise Pakistan's anti-terrorism efforts.³⁸ The State Department indicates that Islamabad has captured 550 alleged terrorists and their supporters, and has transferred more than 400 of these to

³⁶ See "US Trying to Destabilize Pakistan, Iran: MMA," *Dawn* (Karachi), November 4, 2003; "MMA Says Check on Seminaries to be Resisted," *Dawn* (Karachi), November 11, 2003. JUI leader Maulana Fazlur Rehman reportedly said he considers Americans to be "criminals" and the Taliban "innocent" ("MMA Opposes Pak-US Military Drive," *News* (Karachi), June 24, 2003).

³⁷ "Karzai Tells Pakistan Clerics - Don't Back Taliban," Reuters News, September 12, 2003; Shaun Waterman and Anwar Iqbal, "Taliban Leaders Plotting in Cities," *Washington Times*, November 14, 2003; "MMA Accused of Patronizing Terrorists," *Dawn* (Karachi), April 1, 2004; Rana Qaisar, "Clerics Asked to Help Fight Terror," *Daily Times* (Lahore), February 18, 2004.

³⁸ Ally designation was made on June 16, 2004, by President Bush under Section 517 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended. In January 2004, the Commander of the U.S. Central Command, Gen. Abizaid, said, "Pakistan has done more for the United States in the direct fight against Al Qaeda than any other country" (Ron Lorenzo, "Abizaid: Pakistan Best Ally in War on Terror," *Defense Week*, February 2, 2004).

U.S. custody, including several top suspected Al Qaeda leaders.³⁹ Pakistan also has been ranked third in the world in seizing terrorists' financial assets.⁴⁰

Obstacles

Many experts aver that, beginning with the policies of President Gen. Zia in the 1980s, Islamabad's leaders have for decades supported and manipulated Islamic extremism as a means of forwarding their perceived strategic interests in the region. Thus, despite Pakistan's "crucial" cooperation, there continue to be doubts about Islamabad's full commitment to core U.S. concerns in the vast "lawless zones" of the Afghan-Pakistani border region where Islamic extremists find shelter.⁴¹ Until September 2001, Islamabad's was one of only three world governments to recognize the Afghan Taliban regime, and Pakistan had been providing material support to the Taliban movement throughout the 1990s. Especially worrisome are indications that members of the Taliban continue to receive logistical and other support inside Pakistan. Senior U.S. Senators reportedly have voiced such worries, including concern that elements of Pakistan's intelligence agencies might be helping members of the Taliban and perhaps even Al Qaeda.⁴² In August 2003, at least three Pakistani army officers, including a lieutenant colonel, were arrested on suspicion of having ties to Islamic extremists. Soon after, Deputy Secretary of State Armitage was quoted as saying he does "not think that affection for working with us extends up and down the rank and file of the Pakistani security community."⁴³

In October 2003 testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Assistant Secretary of Defense Peter Rodman said, "There are elements in the Pakistani government who we suspect are sympathetic to the old policy of before 9/11," adding that there still exists in northwestern Pakistan a radical Islamic infrastructure that "spews out fighters that go into Kashmir as well as into Afghanistan." Nine months later, a senior Pakistan expert told the same Senate panel that, "in the absence of greater U.S. guarantees regarding Pakistan's long-run security interests, it is dangerous [for the Pakistani military] to completely remove the threat of extremism to Kabul and Delhi." He went on to characterize a full and sincere decision by Islamabad to eradicate extremism as "tantamount to dismantling a

³⁹ Among those captured are Abu Zubaydah (March 2002), believed to be Al Qaeda's field commander; Ramzi bin al-Shibh (September 2002), said to be a key figure in the planning of the September 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States; Khalid Sheik (March 2003), alleged mastermind of the September 2001 attacks and close associate of Osama bin Laden.

⁴⁰ U.S. Department of State, *Patterns of Global Terrorism 2002*, April 30, 2003.

⁴¹ Statement of George Tenet Before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, "Worldwide Threats to National Security," February 6, 2002.

⁴² James Dao, "Terror Aid From Pakistan Concerns Senators," *New York Times*, February 13, 2003. See also Testimony of Timothy Hoyt Before the Joint Hearing of the Subcommittees on Asia and the Pacific and International Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Human Rights, October 29, 2003.

⁴³ Zaffar Abbas, "Pakistan Arrests Army Officers," BBC News, August 31, 2003; "Armitage: Some Pakistanis Reluctant to Work With US," Reuters News, September 30, 2003.

weapons system.”⁴⁴ Until July 2004, the number of Al Qaeda figures arrested in Pakistan had been fairly static for more than one year, causing some U.S. military officials to question the extent of Islamabad’s commitment to this aspect of U.S.-led counterterrorism efforts.⁴⁵

A July 14, 2004 hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee focused specifically on Pakistan and counterterrorism. One area in which there appeared to be consensus among the three-person panel of veteran Pakistan watchers was the potential problems inherent in a perceived U.S. over-reliance on the individual of President Gen. Pervez Musharraf at the potential cost of more positive development of Pakistan’s democratic institutions and civil society. Many analysts believe such development is key to the long-term success of stated U.S. policy in the region. According to one witness, the United States is attempting to deal with Pakistan through “policy triage and by focusing on the personal leadership of President Musharraf,” both of which are “flawed concepts.” Another witness provided a similar analysis, asserting that Musharraf is best seen as a “marginal satisfier” who will do only the minimum expected of him. For instance, in the wake of more serious counterterrorism efforts in the summer of 2004, Musharraf “is likely to return to his satisfier mode.” This expert recommended that, “The United States must alter the impression our support for Pakistan is essentially support for Musharraf,” a sentiment echoed by Pakistani analysts, as well. Thus, the statement of the *9/11 Commission Report* that Musharraf’s government is the “best hope for stability in Pakistan and Afghanistan” does not appear accurate to all informed observers.⁴⁶

Pakistani Military Operations

Background. In an effort to block infiltration along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, Islamabad had by the end of 2002 deployed some 70,000 troops to the region. In April 2003, the United States, Pakistan, and Afghanistan formed a Tripartite Commission to coordinate their efforts to stabilize the border areas. In June 2003, in what may have been a response to increased U.S. pressure, Islamabad for the first time sent its armed forces into the FATA in search of Al Qaeda and Taliban fighters who have eluded the U.S.-led campaign in Afghanistan. By September 2003, Islamabad had up to 25,000 troops in the tribal areas, and a major operation — the first ever of its kind — took place in coordination with U.S.-led forces on the Afghan side of the border. A firefight in early October saw Pakistani security forces engage suspected Al Qaeda fugitives in South Waziristan, the southernmost of the FATA’s seven districts which borders Afghanistan’s Paktika province. Eight were killed and

⁴⁴ “Senate Foreign Relations Committee Holds Hearing on Security and Democracy in Afghanistan,” FDCH Transcripts, October 16, 2003; Testimony of Professor Vali Nasr, “Senate Foreign Relations Committee Holds Hearing on Pakistan and Counterterrorism,” FDCH Transcripts, July 14, 2004.

⁴⁵ Author interviews with U.S. military officials, Islamabad, January 22-23, 2004.

⁴⁶ See the testimony of Ambassador Teresita Schaffer and Professor Marvin Weinbaum, “Senate Foreign Relations Committee Holds Hearing on Pakistan and Counterterrorism,” FDCH Transcripts, July 14, 2004; Ahmed Quraishi, “Assassination: The Message,” *News* (Karachi), August 3, 2004; Section 12.2 of *The 9/11 Commission Report*, available at [<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/911>].

another 18 captured.⁴⁷ The operations encouraged U.S. officials, who saw in them a positive trend in Islamabad's commitment to tracking and capturing wanted extremists on Pakistani territory. Still, these officials admitted that the Pakistani government finds it more difficult politically to pursue Taliban members who enjoy ethnic and familial ties with Pakistani Pashtuns.⁴⁸

After the two December 2003 attempts on President Musharraf's life, the Pakistan military increased its efforts in the FATA. Many analysts speculated that the harrowing experiences brought a significant shift in Musharraf's attitude and caused him to recognize the dire threat posed by radical groups based in his country.⁴⁹ By February 2004, Musharraf made his most explicit admission to date that Muslim militants were crossing from Pakistan into Afghanistan to battle coalition troops there. In the same month, the Vice Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff told a Congressional panel that the Islamabad government had "taken some initiatives to increase their military presence on the border, such as manned outposts, regular patrols, and security barriers."⁵⁰ Islamabad's more energetic operations in the western tribal regions have brought vocal criticism from Musharraf's detractors among Islamist groups, many of whom accuse him of taking orders from the United States.⁵¹

Spring 2004 Offensives. In March 2004, up to 6,000 Pakistani soldiers took part in a pitched, 12-day battle with Islamic militants in South Waziristan. More than 130 people were killed in the fighting, including 46 Pakistani soldiers, but no "high-value" Al Qaeda or Taliban fugitives are known to have been killed or captured. Pakistani officials called the operation a victory, but the apparent escape of militant leaders, coupled with the vehement and lethal resistance put up by their well-armed cadre (believed to be remnants of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan), led many observers to call the operation a failure marked by poor intelligence and hasty planning.⁵² During the course of the battle, Pakistani troops began bulldozing the homes of Wazirs who were suspected of providing shelter to "foreign terrorists," and

⁴⁷ John Lancaster, "Pakistan Touts Control of Border," *Washington Post*, September 2, 2003; "Pakistan Army Launches Border Operation," BBC News, September 4, 2003; "Pakistan's Army Kills 12 in Attacks Against Qaeda," *New York Times*, October 2, 2003.

⁴⁸ See the testimony of both William Taylor and Brig. Gen. Gary North in "Transcript: Senate Foreign Relations Committee Holds Hearing on Security and Democracy in Afghanistan," FDCH Transcripts, October 16, 2003.

⁴⁹ David Rhode and Carlotta Gall, "Pakistani Offensive Aims to Drive Out Taliban and Al Qaeda," *New York Times*, February 23, 2004.

⁵⁰ "Pakistan Says That Afghan Rebels May Be Using Its Soil," Reuters News, February 12, 2004; Statement of Gen. Peter Pace Before the House Committee on Armed Services, February 4, 2004;

⁵¹ "Fazl Accuses Govt for Taking Dictation From US for Tribal Operation," Pakistan Press International, January 14, 2004; "US Provoking Tribesmen Against Army, Says Qazi," *Dawn* (Karachi), February 24, 2004.

⁵² Pamela Constable, "Conflict Ends in Pakistani Tribal Lands," *Washington Post*, March 29, 2004; Owais Tohid, "Mixed Results for Pakistan's Tribal Offensive," *Christian Science Monitor*, March 31, 2004.

the United States made a short-notice delivery of 2,500 surplus protective vests to the Pakistani military.⁵³

Concurrent with these developments, the Islamabad government made progress in persuading Pashtun tribal leaders to undertake their own efforts by organizing tribal “lashkars,” or militias, for the express purpose of detaining — or at least expelling — wanted fugitives.⁵⁴ After being presented with a list of several dozen such fugitives, tribal leaders in South Waziristan formed two lashkars and succeeded in capturing and handing over more than half by the end of January 2004. Yet political administrators in the district, impatient with the slow pace of progress, issued an “ultimatum” that included threats of steep monetary fines for the entire tribe, as well as for any individuals who provide shelter to “unwanted foreigners.”⁵⁵ After March’s military setback, a deadline was set for foreigners living in the tribal areas to register with the government and surrender their weapons with the understanding that they would be allowed to remain in Pakistan if they forswore terrorism. After the original deadline passed without a single registrant coming forward, the government extended the deadline on several occasions, the final one passing on May 10.

On April 24, 2004, the five most-wanted Pashtun tribesmen “surrendered” to government authorities and were immediately granted amnesty in return for promises that they would not provide shelter to Al Qaeda members or their supporters. All five are reported to be supporter’s of Maulana Fazlur Rehman’s JUI Islamist party. Islamabad insisted that this “Shakai agreement” would mark no diminution of its counterterrorism efforts, but the top U.S. military officer in Afghanistan, Lt. Gen. David Barno, expressed concern that Pakistan’s strategy of seeking reconciliation with foreign militants in western tribal areas “could go in the wrong direction.” Almost immediately upon making the deal, the most outspoken of the tribal militants, 27-year-old Nek Mohammed, who had fought with the Taliban in Afghanistan, issued threats against Islamabad and pledged his fealty to fugitive Taliban chief Mohammed Omar. During the following weeks, a series of what some analysts called “spurious” deals were struck between the government and foreign militants, but these proved unsuccessful after the foreigners failed to register, and numerous tribal militias sought but failed to capture any of them.⁵⁶

⁵³ Owais Tohid, “Pakistan Marks Pro-Al Qaeda Clan,” *Christian Science Monitor*, March 23, 2004; U.S. Embassy Islamabad Press Release, March 24, 2004.

⁵⁴ There are indications that such progress has come through outright coercion. The top U.S. commander in Afghanistan, Gen. Barno, said that Pakistani government and military officials have threatened tribal leaders with “destruction of homes and things of that nature” unless they cooperate (“U.S. Says Pakistan is Confronting Tribal Leaders,” *New York Times*, February 17, 2004).

⁵⁵ David Rhode and Ismail Khan, “Pakistan Adopting a Tough Old Tactic to Flush Out Qaeda,” *New York Times*, January 31, 2004; Ismail Khan, “Operation in S. Waziristan,” *Dawn* (Karachi), February 18, 2004; Iqbal Khattak, “Army Ready to Search South Waziristan,” *Daily Times* (Lahore), February 18, 2004.

⁵⁶ “Rebel Tribesmen Agree to Surrender,” *Gulf News* (Dubai), April 24, 2004; M. Ilyas Khan, “Who Are These People,” *Herald* (Karachi), April 2004; “US ‘Concern’ at Pakistan (continued...) ”

In response to the apparent failure of its conciliatory approach, Islamabad ordered authorities in South Waziristan to shutter more than 6,000 merchant shops in an effort to use economic pressure against uncooperative tribesmen, and a “massive mobilization” of Federal troops was reported. Then, on June 10, the government rescinded its amnesty offer to the five key militants noted above and issued a “kill or capture” order against them. The next day, fixed-wing Pakistani warplanes reportedly bombed three compounds being used by militants in South Waziristan, including one that was described as a terrorist training camp. More than 20,000 troops were said to be involved in a sweep operation that left about 72 people dead, including 17 soldiers, after three days of fighting.⁵⁷ On June 18, Nek Mohammed was located, apparently through signals intelligence, and was killed along with seven others in a missile attack. Pakistani security officials took full credit for Nek’s elimination and denied any foreign role, but numerous reports from local witnesses described the presence of an aerial drone, and doubts about Pakistan’s material capability to effect such an operation led some to conclude that the United States had been involved in the attack.⁵⁸ As of early August 2004, sporadic and lethal skirmishes continue in western Pakistan.

Fallout. As was noted above, President Musharraf’s post-September 2001 policy reversals and his efforts to crack down on Islamic extremist groups likely motivated the two deadly December 2003 attempts to assassinate the Pakistani leader. As Pakistan’s coercive counterterrorism policies became more vigorous, numerous observers warned that increased government pressure on tribal communities and military operations in the FATA were creating a backlash, sparking unrest and strengthening pro-Al Qaeda sentiments both there and in Pakistan’s southern and eastern cities.⁵⁹ Developments in 2004 appear to have borne out these analyses. As his army battled militants in South Waziristan in June, President Musharraf reportedly told an interviewer that he was concerned about “fallout” from the recent military operations, and a Pakistan Army spokesman drew direct links between a six-week-long spate of mostly sectarian bombings and killings in Karachi and government efforts to root out militants in South Waziristan (at least 72 people were killed between May 3 and June 10, including ten murdered when suspected

⁵⁶ (...continued)

Strategy,” BBC News, May 3, 2004; Zeeshan Haider, “Pakistani Militant Says Taliban Boss His Leader,” Reuters News, May 6, 2004; “Pakistan Dealing With Both Hands,” Stratfor.com, May 13, 2004; “Pakistan Amnesty Deal Hit By Setback,” BBC News, May 124, 2004; “Lashkar Completes Hunt in Azam Warsak,” *News* (Karachi), May 19, 2004.

⁵⁷ Ismail, Khan, “Wana Amnesty for Militants Revoked,” *Dawn* (Karachi), June 10, 2004; Salman Masood, “Pakistan Bombs Compounds Used by Foreign Militants,” *New York Times*, June 11, 2004; Munir Ahmad, “Pakistan Ends Operation Against Al Qaeda suspects,” *Washington Post*, June 14, 2004.

⁵⁸ “Pakistan Army Kills Tribal Leader,” BBC News, June 18, 2004; Ismail Khan and Dilawar Khan Wazir, “Night Raid Kills Nek, Four Other Militants,” *Dawn* (Karachi), June 19, 2004.

⁵⁹ See, for example, Iqbal Khattak, “Military Operation in Waziristan May Backfire,” *Friday Times* (Lahore), February 20, 2004; Simon Denyer and Zeeshan Haider, “Pakistan Risks Enraging Tribes in Bin Laden Hunt,” Reuters News, March 21, 2004; Mazhar Abbas, “Wana to Karachi: Militants Take on the Army,” *Friday Times* (Lahore), June 18, 2004.

Islamic militants attempted to kill a top Pakistani Army commander in Karachi). A leading pro-Taliban militant in the tribal areas accused Islamabad of “conniving” with the U.S. government to kill Nek Mohammed, and he warned that the military operation in South Waziristan would lead to further violence across Pakistan. Moreover, several international aid organizations suspended their operations in the Baluchistan province after receiving threats of suicide attacks.⁶⁰

Islamic militant outrage appeared to again be peaking in mid-summer 2004: During the week spanning July and August, a suicide bomber killed a senior Pakistani intelligence officer in Kohat near the tribal areas; another suicide bomber murdered nine people in a failed attempt to assassinate Pakistan’s Prime Minister-designate (an Al Qaeda-affiliated group claimed responsibility for the attack); and gunmen killed a police officer in a failed effort to assassinate the Baluchistan Chief Minister. As conflict and bloodshed in Pakistan increase, analysts again express acute concerns about the country’s fundamental political stability.⁶¹

U.S. Military Presence and U.S. Government Assistance. The issue of small-scale and sporadic U.S. military presence on Pakistani soil is a sensitive one, and reports of even brief incursions from neighboring Afghanistan have caused tensions between Islamabad and Washington.⁶² In December 2003, some 2,000 American troops based in Afghanistan were involved in Operation Avalanche, an effort to sweep Taliban forces from that country’s south and east. In March 2004, U.S. and Afghan forces conducted Operation Mountain Storm in the same areas, employing new tactics and in coordination with Pakistani troops across the international border.⁶³ A press report in January 2004 had suggested that the U.S. military in Afghanistan had plans for a spring offensive that would “go into Pakistan with Musharraf’s help” to neutralize Al Qaeda forces, a suggestion that President Musharraf’s said was “not a possibility at all.” The Commander of U.S. Central Command Gen. Abizaid stated that he had no plans to put U.S. troops in Pakistan against Islamabad’s wishes, and a senior U.S. diplomat and senior U.S. military officer later told a House Armed Services Committee panel that it is “absolutely” the policy of the United States to keep its troops on the Afghan side of the Afghan-Pakistani border. In April 2004, the U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan caused some further annoyance in Islamabad when he said that the Pakistani leadership must solve

⁶⁰ “Musharraf Worried About Wana Operation Fallout,” *Dawn* (Karachi), June 21, 2004; Hafiz Wazir, “Pakistan Kills Pro-Al Qaeda Tribal Fighter,” Reuters News, June 18, 2004; Rahimullah Yusufzai, “Militants’ Commander Warns of Wana Fallout,” *News* (Karachi), August 1, 2004; “Agencies Halt Pakistan Operations,” BBC News, June 6, 2004.

⁶¹ “Bomb Kills Pakistan Intelligence Chief,” CNN.com, July 28, 2004; “Several Arrests Made in Pakistan Attack,” *New York Times*, August 1, 2004; “Pakistan Politician Survives Raid,” BBC News, August 2, 2004. On political stability, see, for example, the testimony of witnesses before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on “Pakistan and Counterterrorism,” July 14, 2004; “Musharraf’s Tightrope Act,” *Jane’s Intelligence Digest*, August 6, 2004.

⁶² “Pakistan Protests at US Incursion,” BBC News, May 5, 2004.

⁶³ “US Launches Major Al Qaeda Hunt,” BBC News, March 20, 2004; David Sanger and Eric Schmitt, “New U.S. Effort Steps Up Hunt for Bin Laden,” *New York Times*, February 29, 2004.

the ongoing problem of militant infiltration into Afghanistan or “we will have to do it for ourselves.” U.S. military officials in Kabul say that Pakistan has agreed to allow “hot pursuit” up to ten kilometers into Pakistani territory, although this is officially denied by the Islamabad government.⁶⁴

Since the spring of 2002, U.S. military and law enforcement personnel reportedly have been engaging in direct, low-profile efforts to assist Pakistani security forces in tracking and apprehending fugitive Al Qaeda and Taliban fighters on Pakistani territory, especially with signals and other intelligence. U.S. forces in Afghanistan reportedly provide significant support to Pakistani forces operating near the Afghan border, including spy satellites, electronic surveillance planes, armed aerial drones, and sophisticated ground sensors.⁶⁵ Security-related U.S. assistance programs for Pakistan are said to be aimed at bolstering Islamabad’s counterterrorism and border security efforts, and have included U.S.-funded road-building projects in the Northwest Frontier Province and Federally Administered Tribal Areas, the provision of night-vision equipment, communications gear, transport helicopters, and, currently in the pipeline, six used C-130 transport aircraft. The United States also has undertaken to train and equip new Pakistan Army Air Assault units that can move quickly to find and target terrorist elements.⁶⁶ The Department of Defense reports Foreign Military Sales agreements with Pakistan worth \$27 million in FY2002 and \$167 million in FY2003.⁶⁷ Along with direct U.S. Foreign Military Financing for Pakistan totaling nearly \$375 million for FY2002-FY2004, Congress has allocated billions of dollars in additional defense spending to reimburse Pakistan and other cooperating nations for their support of U.S. counterterrorism operations. The Asian Development Bank calculates that Pakistan received \$581 million in U.S. logistics support for the latter half of 2003 alone, an amount equal to 38% of Pakistan’s total defense expenditures during that period.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ Christine Spolar, “U.S. Plans Al Qaeda Offensive That Would Reach Inside Pakistan,” *Chicago Tribune*, January 27, 2004; Stephan Graham, “U.S. Military ‘Sure’ to Catch Bin Laden,” *Chicago Tribune*, January 29, 2004; “House Armed Services Committee Holds Hearing on Afghanistan Security and Reconstruction,” FDCH Transcripts, April 29, 2004; “Envoy Warns Pakistan Over Havens,” CNN.com, April 5, 2004; author interviews with U.S. military officials, Kabul, January 16, 2004. Pakistan also denied a February report claiming that it had agreed to allow U.S. Special Forces soldiers on its territory in return for a softened U.S. policy toward Pakistan’s apparent role in nuclear proliferation activities (Seymour Hersh, “The Deal,” *New Yorker*, March 8, 2004).

⁶⁵ Josh Meyer and Greg Miller, “Terror Plotter May Be Trapped,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 19, 2004.

⁶⁶ Statement of Lt. Gen. Walter Sharp Before the House Committee on Armed Services, April 29, 2004; Mubasher Bukhari, “US Choppers Given to Army Aviation Wing,” *Daily Times* (Lahore), July 25, 2004; U.S. Department of State, *Congressional Budget Justification for Foreign Operations, FY2005*, released February 10, 2004.

⁶⁷ See Defense Security Cooperation Agency Facts Books 2003, available at [<http://www.dsca.osd.mil>].

⁶⁸ *Pakistan Economic Update (July-December 2003)*, Asian Development Bank, March 2004, available at [http://www.adb.org/documents/economic_updates/pak/].

The first half of 2004 saw clear indications that both the United States and Pakistan have re-invigorated their efforts to find and capture those terrorists and their supporters remaining in Pashtun-majority areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan. Moreover, President Musharraf has taken steps to crack down on indigenous Pakistani extremist groups. Many of these groups have links not only to individuals and organizations actively fighting in Afghanistan and Pakistan, but also with groups that continue to pursue a violent separatist campaign in the disputed Kashmir region along Pakistan's northeast frontier. A November 2003 cease-fire agreement between Pakistan and India holds at the time of this writing, and appears to have contributed to what New Delhi officials acknowledge is a major decrease in the number of "terrorist" infiltrations.⁶⁹ However, separatist militants vowed in January 2004 to continue their struggle regardless of the status of the nascent Pakistan-India dialogue.

Terrorism in Kashmir and India

Kashmiri Separatism

Separatist violence in India's Jammu and Kashmir state has continued unabated since 1989. New Delhi has long blamed Pakistan-based militant groups for lethal attacks on Indian civilians, as well as on government security forces, in both Kashmir and in major Indian cities.⁷⁰ India holds Pakistan responsible for providing material support and training facilities to Kashmiri militants. According to the U.S. government, several anti-India militant groups fighting in Kashmir are based in Pakistan and are closely linked to Islamist groups there. Many also are said to maintain ties with international jihadi organizations, including Al Qaeda:

- Harakat ul-Mujahideen (an FTO-designate), based in Muzaffarabad (Azad Kashmir) and Rawalpindi, is aligned with the Jamiat-i Ulema-i Islam Fazlur Rehman party (JUI-F), itself a main constituent of the MMA Islamist coalition in Pakistan's National Assembly;

⁶⁹ In July 2004, an Indian Home Ministry official told the Indian Parliament that there were 30 "infiltration incidents" at the Kashmiri LOC during the first half of 2004, compared to 164 and 138 during the same periods of 2002 and 2003, respectively. ("Infiltration Up But J&K Violence Down," *Times of India* (Delhi), July 7, 2004).

⁷⁰ Grenade and bomb attacks against civilians have been a regular occurrence in India and Indian Kashmir for many years. Among the notable terrorist incidents in recent times were a May 2002 attack on an Indian army base in Kaluchak, Kashmir that killed 37, many of them women and children (New Delhi identified the attackers as Pakistani nationals); a July 2002 attack on a Jammu village that killed 27; an August 2002 grenade attack in Kashmir that killed nine Hindu pilgrims and injured 32 others; a September 2002 attack on a Gujarat temple that left 32 dead; a March 2003 massacre of 24 Hindu villagers in Nadimarg, Jammu; a July 2003 attack on a Jammu village that killed seven and injured more than 20; a July 2003 bus bombing in a Bombay suburb that left four dead and 42 injured; and a pair of August 2003 car bombings in a crowded Bombay district that killed 52 and injured some 150 more. Indian authorities linked each of these attacks to the LeT, although the last may have been planned by indigenous elements (John Lancaster, "India Shocked by Bombay Bombings, and Suspects," *Washington Post*, September 12, 2003).

- Hizbul Mujahideen (on the State Department's list of "other terrorist groups"), believed to have bases in Pakistan, is the militant wing of Pakistan's largest Islamic political party and leading MMA member, the Jamaat-i-Islami;
- Jaish-e-Mohammed (an FTO-designate), based in both Peshawar and Muzaffarabad, also is aligned with JUI-F; and
- Lashkar-e-Taiba (an FTO-designate), based in Muzaffarabad and near Lahore, is the armed wing of a Pakistan-based, anti-U.S. Sunni religious organization formed in 1989.⁷¹

JeM claimed responsibility for an October 2001 suicide bomb attack on the Jammu and Kashmir state assembly building in Srinagar that killed 31 (they later denied the claim). In December 2001, the United States designated both LeT and JeM as Foreign Terrorist Organizations shortly after they were publically implicated by New Delhi for an attack on the Indian Parliament complex that killed nine and injured 18. This assault spurred India to fully mobilize its military along the India-Pakistan frontier. An ensuing 10-month-long standoff in 2002 involved one million Indian and Pakistani soldiers and was viewed as the closest the two countries had come to full-scale war since 1971, causing the U.S. government to become "deeply concerned ... that a conventional war ... could escalate into a nuclear confrontation."⁷²

Pakistan's powerful and largely autonomous ISI is widely believed to have provided significant support for militant Kashmiri separatists over the past decade in what is perceived as a proxy war against India.⁷³ In March 2003, the chief of India's Defense Intelligence Agency reported providing the United States with "solid documentary proof" that 70 Islamic militant camps are operating in Pakistani Kashmir. In May, the Indian Defense Minister claimed that about 3,000 "terrorists" were being trained in camps on the Pakistani side of the LOC. Some Indian officials

⁷¹ U.S. Department of State, *Patterns of Global Terrorism 2002*, April 30, 2003. Among the State Department's "other terrorist groups" active in Kashmir are the Al Badhr Mujahideen, the Harakat ul-Jihad-e-Islami, and the Jamiat ul-Mujahideen. All are said to have bases in Pakistan, and all are designated by the Indian government as being terrorist organizations (Indian Ministry of Home Affairs, "The Prevention of Terrorism Act, 2002," available at [<http://mha.nic.in/poto-02.htm#schedule>]).

⁷² Statement of Director of Central Intelligence George Tenet Before the Senate Armed Services Committee, "Worldwide Threat: Converging Dangers in a Post-9/11 World," March 19, 2002.

⁷³ "Although Pakistan did not begin the [1989] uprising in Kashmir, the temptation to fan the flames was too great for Islamabad to resist. Using guerrilla warfare expertise gained during the Afghan war, Pakistan's ISI began to provide active backing for Kashmiri Muslim insurgents" (Dennis Kux, *The United States and Pakistan 1947-2000: Disenchanted Allies*, Washington: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2001, p. 305). Many Indian analysts emphasize evidence of a direct link between Pakistan-sponsored militancy in Kashmir and the wider assortment of radical Islamic groups active in Pakistan after 2001, with one going so far as to call Lashkar-e-Taiba a "wholly owned subsidiary of the ISI" (Indrani Bagchi, "Beyond Control," *India Today* (New Delhi), December 8, 2003).

have suggested that Al Qaeda may be active in Kashmir.⁷⁴ Deputy Secretary of State Armitage reportedly received a June 2002 pledge from Pakistani President Musharraf that all “cross-border terrorism” would cease, followed by a May 2003 pledge that any terrorist training camps in Pakistani-controlled areas would be closed. Yet, in September 2003, Indian PM Vajpayee reportedly told President Bush that continued cross-border terrorism from Pakistan was making it difficult for India to maintain its peace initiative, and a series of bloody attacks seemed to indicate that infiltration rates were on the rise.⁷⁵

President Musharraf adamantly insists that his government is doing all it can to stem infiltration at the LOC and calls for a joint Pakistan-India monitoring effort there. Positive signs have come with a November 2003 cease-fire agreement between Pakistan and India along the entire LOC and their shared international border (holding at the time of this writing) and a January 2004 pledge by Musharraf reassuring the Indian Prime Minister that no territory under Pakistan’s control could be used to support terrorism. Ensuing statements from Indian government officials confirmed that infiltration rates were down significantly. However, a spate of separatist-related violence in Indian Kashmir in June 2004 increased in July, with shootouts and bombings causing scores of deaths. The July resignation of the chairman of the moderate faction of the Hurriyat Conference of Kashmiri separatist groups, Molvi Abbas Ansari, is another development that some say erodes hopes for center-state accommodation. Moreover, while on a July visit to New Delhi to meet with top Indian leaders, Deputy Secretary of State told reporters that “the infrastructure [in Pakistan] that supports cross-border activities [in Kashmir] has not been dismantled.”⁷⁶

Indigenous Indian-Designated Terrorist Groups

The United States does not designate as terrorist organizations those groups that continue violent separatist struggles in India’s northeastern states. Some of the groups have, however, been implicated in lethal attacks on civilians and have been designated as terrorist groups by New Delhi under the 2002 Prevention of Terrorism Act.⁷⁷ Among the dozens of insurgent groups active in the northeast are:

⁷⁴ “India Says It Has Given Proof of 70 Islamic Militant Camps in Pakistan-Controlled Kashmir,” Associated Press Newswires, March 14, 2003; “3,000 ‘Terrorists’ Being Trained in Pakistani Kashmir: India,” Agence France Presse, July 30, 2003. In October 2003, the Indian Chief of Army Staff raised the possibility of an Al Qaeda presence, as “most of the terrorists killed in [Jammu and Kashmir] are foreign nationals these days” (“Al Qaeda Presence Not Ruled Out in J&K,” *Hindu* (Madras), October 12, 2003).

⁷⁵ Chidanand Rajghatta, “Cross-Border Terror Continues, Vajpayee Tells Bush,” *Times of India* (Delhi), September 25, 2003; Scott Baldauf, “Insurgents Push Into Kashmir,” *Christian Science Monitor*, October 7, 2003.

⁷⁶ “Infiltration Up But J&K Violence Down,” *Times of India* (Delhi), July 7, 2004; M. Saleem Pandit, “Ansari Exit spells Trouble for Peace,” *Times of India* (Delhi), July 7, 2004; “Armitage Finds Pakistan-India Relations Improving,” U.S. Department of State Washington File, July 15, 2004.

⁷⁷ Indian Ministry of Home Affairs, “The Prevention of Terrorism Act, 2002,” available at (continued...)

- the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB);
- the National Liberation Front of Tripura;
- the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA); and
- the United National Liberation Front (seeking an independent Manipur).

The Indian government has at times blamed Bangladesh, Burma, Nepal, and Bhutan for “sheltering” one or more of these groups beyond the reach of Indian security forces, and accuses Pakistan’s intelligence agency of training members and providing them with material support. In December 2003, after considerable prodding by New Delhi, Bhutan launched military operations against NDFB and ULFA rebels based in border areas near India’s Assam state. The leader and founder of the ULFA was captured and, by February 2004, India’s Army Chief declared that nearly 1,000 militants in Bhutan had been “neutralized” — killed or captured. Both Burma and Bangladesh may move to increase pressure on Indian rebels based on their territory.⁷⁸

Also operating in India are Naxalites — communist insurgents engaged in violent struggle on behalf of landless laborers and tribals. These groups, most active in inland areas of east-central India, claim to be battling oppression and exploitation in order to create a classless society. Their opponents call them terrorists and extortionists. Most notable are the People’s War Group (PWG), mainly active in the southern Andhra Pradesh state, and the Maoist Communist Center of West Bengal and Bihar. In 2004, for the first time and without public explanation, the United States designated these groups as Foreign Terrorist Organizations (it is likely that the move was spurred by a U.S. interest in assisting both New Delhi and Nepal in efforts to combat Maoist insurgents in Nepal⁷⁹). Both also are designated as terrorist groups by New Delhi; each is believed to have about 2,000 cadres. PWG fighters were behind an October 2003 landmine attack that nearly killed the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. In July 2004, the government of Andhra Pradesh lifted an 11-year-old ban on the communist militant People’s War Group (PWG) in preparation for upcoming peace talks.⁸⁰

India-U.S. Counterterrorism Cooperation

One facet of the emerging “strategic partnership” between the United States and India is increased counterterrorism cooperation. The U.S.-India Joint Working Group on Counterterrorism was established in January 2000 to intensify bilateral

⁷⁷ (...continued)

[<http://mha.nic.in/poto-02.htm#schdule>].

⁷⁸ Wasbir Hussain, “Going for the Kill,” *Outlook India* (Delhi), December 22, 2003; Nirmal Banerjee, “N-Proliferation From Pak Dangerous: Vij,” *Times of India* (Delhi), February 5, 2004; “Screws Tighten on Indian Rebels,” BBC News, January 2, 2004.

⁷⁹ Author interview with U.S. State Department official, May 11, 2004.

⁸⁰ See “The 14 Spokes of a Revolution,” *Outlook India* (Delhi), October 20, 2003; “India: Terrorist Groups,” South Asia Terrorism Portal, available at [<http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/terroristoutfits/index.html>]; Omer Farooq, “Indian State Lifts Bans on Rebel Group,” Associated Press, July 21, 2004.

cooperation. In November 2001, President Bush and Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee agreed that “terrorism threatens not only the security of the United States and India, but also our efforts to build freedom, democracy and international security and stability around the world.”⁸¹ In May 2002, India and the United States launched the Indo-US Cyber Security Forum to safeguard critical infrastructures from cyber attack. The State Department believes that continued engagement with New Delhi will lead to India’s playing a constructive role in resolving terrorist insurgencies in Nepal and Sri Lanka. Calling New Delhi a “close ally of the United States in the global war on terrorism,” the Bush Administration has undertaken to provide India with better border security systems and training, and better intelligence in an effort to prevent future terrorist attacks. Moreover, the two countries’ militaries have continued to work together to enhance their capabilities to combat terrorism and increase interoperability.⁸²

The seating of a new left-leaning national government in New Delhi in May 2004 appears as yet to have had no noticeable effect on continued U.S.-India security ties. A sixth meeting of the bilateral Defense Policy Group in June ended with a joint statement that recognized “growing areas of convergence on fundamental values” including combating terrorism. Shortly after, during a visit to New Delhi to meet with top Indian leaders, Deputy Secretary of State Armitage told reporters that the new Indian government appears to be just as desirous of enhanced U.S.-India relations as the previous one and that the United States has “absolute confidence that the U.S.-India relationship is going to grow in all its aspects.”⁸³

Other South Asian Countries

Bangladesh

There is increasing concern among analysts that Bangladesh might serve as a base from which both South and Southeast Asian terrorists could regroup. There have been reports that up to 150 Taliban and Al Qaeda fighters fled to Bangladesh from Afghanistan in December 2001 aboard the *MV Mecca*, which reportedly sailed from Karachi to Chittagong.⁸⁴ This was evidently not the beginning of Al Qaeda connections with Bangladesh. Al Qaeda had reportedly recruited Burmese Muslims, known as the Rohingya, from refugee camps in southeastern Bangladesh to fight in

⁸¹ “Joint Statement of U.S., India on Terrorism, Bilateral Ties,” U.S. Department of State Washington File, November 9, 2001.

⁸² U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Resource Management, “FY2004 Performance Plan,” March 2003. Assistant Secretary of State Christina Rocca, “U.S., Regional Governments Cooperating Against South Asian Terrorism,” U.S. Department of State Washington File, October 29, 2003; U.S. Department of Defense, Office of the Press Secretary, “Joint Statement on U.S.-India Defense Policy Group,” August 8, 2003.

⁸³ “Indo-US Defense Policy Group Meeting Concludes,” Indian Ministry of Defense Press Release, June 3, 2004; “U.S.-India Ties Remain Strong with Congress Party Government,” U.S. Department of State Washington File,” July 14, 2004.

⁸⁴ Alex Perry, “Deadly Cargo,” *Time Asia*, October 21, 2003.

Afghanistan, Kashmir and Chechnya.⁸⁵ An Al Qaeda affiliate, Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami (HuJI) was founded by Osama bin Laden associate Fazlul Rahman.⁸⁶ HuJI is also on the State Department's list of other terrorist organizations.⁸⁷ Rahman joined bin Laden's World Islamic Front for the Jihad Against the Jews and the Crusaders in 1998.⁸⁸ It has the objective of establishing Islamic rule in Bangladesh. HuJI has recruited its members, thought to number from several thousand to 15,000, from the tens of thousands of madrassas in Bangladesh, many of which are led by veterans of the "jihad" against the Soviets in Afghanistan. The organization is thought to have at least six camps in Bangladesh as well as ties to militants in Pakistan.⁸⁹ The Bangladesh National Party coalition government includes the small Islamic Oikya Jote party which has connections to HuJI.⁹⁰ It was reported that French intelligence led to the arrest of 16 Bangladeshis on December 4, 2003 in Bolivia for allegedly planning to hijack a plane to attack the United States. According to reports, they were later released for lack of evidence. 11 Bangladeshis were arrested in Saudi Arabia on August 14, 2003 on suspicion of planning a terrorist act.⁹¹

The Rohingya Solidarity Organization (RSO) is the largest organization representing the over 120,000 Rohingyas in Bangladesh.⁹² The number of Rohingyas varies depending on the level of pressure they are under in their homelands in Burma. The Rohingya also speak the same language as Bangladeshis from the Chittagong area. These "destitute and stateless people" have proved to be a "fertile ground" for recruitment to various militant Islamist groups.⁹³ The RSO has reportedly received support from the Jamaat-e-Islami in Bangladesh. Afghan instructors are reported to have been seen in RSO camps.

There are also reports, based on information derived from the interrogation of Jemaah Islamiya (JI) leader Hambali, who was arrested in Thailand in August 2003, that indicate that he had made a decision to shift JI elements to Bangladesh in response to recent counter-terrorist activity in Southeast Asia. It is also thought that

⁸⁵ Zachary Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia*, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003), p. 174.

⁸⁶ Zachary Abuza, *Militant Islam in Southeast Asia*, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003), p. 174.

⁸⁷ *Patterns of Global Terrorism 2002*, United States Department of State, Office of the Coordinator of Counter-terrorism, April, 2003.

⁸⁸ Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda* (New York: Berkeley Books, 2003), p.60.

⁸⁹ *Patterns of Global Terrorism, 2002*, United States Department of State, Office of the Coordinator of Counter-terrorism, April, 2003, p.133-4.

⁹⁰ Bertil Lintner, "Bangladesh: Breeding Ground for Muslim Terror," [http://www.atimes.com] See also Bertil Lintner, "Religious Extremism and Nationalism in Bangladesh," Paper presented at the Center for Security Studies, Honolulu, August 19, 2002.

⁹¹ Anand Kumar, "Bangladesh Weak Link in War on Terror," *The Straits Times*, December 16, 2003.

⁹² Bertil Lintner, "Bangladesh: Breeding Ground for Muslim Terror," [http://www.atimes.com]

⁹³ *Ibid.*

key JI operative Zulkifi Marzuki may already be in Bangladesh.⁹⁴ The decision to move operations west may also be evident in the arrest of 13 Malaysians and six Indonesians, including Hambali's brother Rusman Gunawan, in Pakistan in September 2003. Bangladeshis have been among those arrested in Pakistan on suspicion of being linked to terrorist organizations.⁹⁵ Some have speculated that JI militants, thought to be from Malaysia and Singapore, would not have made it to southeastern Bangladesh without some degree of tacit agreement from the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence of Bangladesh which is thought, by some, to have close ties with ISI.⁹⁶ It is also thought that Fazlul Rahman's Rohingya Solidarity Organization, which is based in southeast Bangladesh, has also established ties with JI.⁹⁷ These reports are difficult to confirm.

Despite these apparent developments within Bangladesh, visiting Secretary of State Colin Powell told his Dhaka audience in June 2003 that "Bangladesh has been a strong supporter in the war against terrorism because their enlightened policy is that terrorism ... effects us all."⁹⁸ The Government of Bangladesh has also denied that Bangladesh has become a haven for Islamic militants, such as the Taliban or Al Qaeda.⁹⁹ The Bangladesh government has also denied allegations made by Indian Deputy Prime Minister Advani that Bangladesh had aided Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence and Al Qaeda elements.¹⁰⁰ It has also been reported that the Bangladesh Rifles and police have captured weapons during anti-terrorist operations in the southeastern border region with Burma in August and September 2003.¹⁰¹ (For further information on Bangladesh see CRS Report RS20489, *Bangladesh: Background and U.S. Relations*, by Bruce Vaughn.)

Nepal

The Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)/ United Peoples Front has been identified as an Other Terrorist Group by the U.S. Department of State.¹⁰² On October 31st 2003, the United States Government went further and announced that for national security reasons it was freezing Maoist terrorist assets. The security situation in

⁹⁴ Kimina Lyall, "Hambali Moved JI Front Line to Bangladesh, Pakistan," *The Australian*, September 27, 2003.

⁹⁵ "Pakistan Nabs Six More Terror Suspects," *Xinhua News Agency*, September 26, 2003.

⁹⁶ Bertil Lintner, "Bangladesh: Celebrations and Bombs," [http://www.atimes.com]

⁹⁷ Statement of Dr. Zachary Abuza, House International Relations Subcommittee on International Terrorism, Non-proliferation and Human Rights, October 29, 2003.

⁹⁸ Secretary of State Colin Powell, "Press Briefing," Dhaka, Bangladesh, June 19, 2003.

⁹⁹ "Bangladesh Calls Time Article on Militant Fictitious," *Associated Press*, October 16, 2002.

¹⁰⁰ "India's Remarks on Bangladesh Aiding Terrorists Rejected," *Xinhua News Agency*, November 8, 2002.

¹⁰¹ "Bangladesh Country Report," *Economist Intelligence Unit*, October, 2003.

¹⁰² *Patterns of Global Terrorism*, United States Department of State, Office of the Coordinator of Counter-Terrorism, April, 2003.

Nepal has deteriorated since the collapse of the cease fire between the Maoists and the government on August 27, 2003. By some estimates, the numbers of Nepalese killed since August has risen significantly. This brings the total number killed since 1996 as high as 9,100 by some accounts. It has also been reported that the Maoists' anti-United States rhetoric has grown and that there is a "potential threat to U.S. staff and facilities in Nepal, including aid programs."¹⁰³ Currently, an estimated 32,000 Maoist fighters are opposed by 120,00 Nepalese soldiers and police.¹⁰⁴ India has acknowledged a link between the Maoists and leftist extremists in India.¹⁰⁵

The Maoists' message frequently calls for the end of "American imperialism" and for the "dirty Yankee" to "go home." The Maoists' Chief Negotiator and Chairman of the "People's Government," Baburam Bhattarai, reportedly threatened the United States with "another Vietnam" if the United States expands its aid to Nepal.¹⁰⁶ In September, Bhattarai sent a letter to the U.S. Ambassador in Kathmandu which called on the United States to stop "interfering" in the internal affairs of Nepal.¹⁰⁷ Maoists claimed responsibility for killing two off-duty Nepalese security guards at the American Embassy in 2002,¹⁰⁸ and the Maoists have made it known that American trekkers are not welcome in Maoist-controlled Nepal.¹⁰⁹ Further, the Maoists stated on October 22nd that American-backed organizations would be targeted. Rebel leader Prachanda is reported to have stated that groups funded by "American imperialists" would not be allowed to operate in Nepal.¹¹⁰

After the cease fire, the Maoists appeared to be shifting from large-scale attacks on police and army headquarters to adopting new tactics that focused on attacks by smaller cells conducting widespread assassinations of military, police and party officials.¹¹¹ The unpopularity of this policy appears to have led the Maoists to shift policy again in October and declare that they would not carry out further political killings or further destroy government infrastructure. Despite this guarantee, attacks continue. Regional leader of the Maoists, Ram Prasad Lamichhane of the Gandak

¹⁰³ "Nepal's Forgotten Rebellion," *Jane's Foreign Report*, October 23, 2003.

¹⁰⁴ Chitra Tiwari, "Violence Soars After Peace Talks Fail," *The Washington Times*, November 1, 2003.

¹⁰⁵ "New CRPF Unit to Fight Naxals Likely," *Business Standard*, November 5, 2003.

¹⁰⁶ Thomas Bell, "Maoist Army Wins Hearts and Minds in West Nepal," *The Globe and Mail*, September 18, 2003.

¹⁰⁷ Binaj Gurubacharya, "Maoist Rebel Leader Asks U.S., China, India to Stop Interfering in Nepal," *Associated Press*, September 25, 2003.

¹⁰⁸ Binaj Gurubacharya, "Nepal Rebels Threaten U.S.-Funded Groups," *Associated Press*, October, 22, 2003.

¹⁰⁹ Amy Waldman, "Chance for Peace Fades in Nepal as Deaths Rise," *The New York Times*, October 13, 2003.

¹¹⁰ Binaj Gurubacharya, "Nepal Rebels Threaten U.S.-Funded Groups," *Associated Press*, October 22, 2003.

¹¹¹ "Nepal: Back to the Gun," *International Crisis Group*, October 22, 2003.

region, renounced the party for using terrorism in November 2003.¹¹² The Maoists' guarantee against terrorist attacks did not extend to projects "run directly by the United States."¹¹³ The United States Agency for International Development and Save the Children both operate in Nepal. On October 27, Maoist leader Prachanda stated that "we will ensure that no American citizens — tourists or officials — except those who come to the battlefield with the Nepal Army would be caused any harm by the Maoist militia."¹¹⁴ (For further details on the Maoists and Nepal see CRS Report RL31599, *Nepal: Background and U.S. Relations*, by Bruce Vaughn.)

Sri Lanka

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) of Sri Lanka have been identified as a Foreign Terrorist Organization by the United States Department of State.¹¹⁵ More than 64,000 people have died in Sri Lanka's unresolved civil war over the past 20 years. The LTTE is reportedly responsible for more suicide attacks than any other terrorist organization worldwide.¹¹⁶ Hopes for a peace agreement with the LTTE, that would grant the Tamils a degree of autonomy in the northeast, have been put into doubt by recent moves by President Kumaratunga. Kumaratunga, who was wounded in a LTTE attack, reportedly believes that her political rival, Prime Minister Wickremesinghe, has been too ready to make concessions in negotiations with the LTTE. Their differences highlight debate in Sri Lanka and elsewhere, on the best means for addressing terrorism and the best mix of a military and political solution.¹¹⁷ The LTTE has thus far stated that they remain committed to the peace process despite recent political turmoil and infighting inside the Sri Lankan government.¹¹⁸ LTTE "Supremo" Velupillai Prabhakaran has sought guarantee that the government will honor the cease fire during the period of internal turmoil within the Sri Lankan government. The Norwegian government has played an active role in trying to broker a lasting peace between the LTTE and the Sri Lankan government. Hardliners, represented by the President, have accused the Norwegians of exceeding their authority in trying to broker a peace agreement.¹¹⁹ There is concern among some analysts that the rivalry between the president and the prime minister could lead the LTTE to relaunch a terrorist campaign to force the president back to the negotiating table. Others feel that the LTTE will be hesitant to do so because it would thereby

¹¹² "Regional Leader of Nepali Maoists Quits Party," *BBC News*, November 10, 2003.

¹¹³ Kedar Man Singh, "Nepal's Maoist Rebels Say They Will Not Carry Out Political Killings," *Agence France Presse*, October 22, 2003.

¹¹⁴ Kedar Man Singh, "Nepal Maoists Say Americans Safe," *Agence France Presse*, October 27, 2003.

¹¹⁵ "Foreign Terrorist Organizations," United States Department of State, Office of Counter-terrorism, May 23, 2003.

¹¹⁶ "Sri Lanka's Crisis," *International Herald Tribune*, November 13, 2003.

¹¹⁷ Elizabeth Sullivan, "Taming Terror Takes Toughness and Persuasion,," *The Plain Dealer*, November 6, 2003.

¹¹⁸ "Turmoil May Stall Tamil Peace Talks," *Irish Times*, November 6, 2003.

¹¹⁹ "Norwegian Envoys Head for Talks with Tamil Tiger Supremo," *Channelnewsasia*, November 13, 2003.

loose the political legitimacy that they have been gaining.¹²⁰ The United States has recognized that the LTTE is engaged in a peace process and holds the hope that the LTTE will renounce terrorism and cease terrorist acts. Until such time, the United States Government has stated that it will not remove the LTTE from the Foreign Terrorist Organization list.¹²¹ (For further details on the LTTE and Sri Lanka see CRS Report RL31707, *Sri Lanka: Background and U.S. Relations*, by Bruce Vaughn.)

¹²⁰ "Sri Lanka Likely to Remain a Simmering Political Risk," *Dow Jones International News*, November 9, 2003.

¹²¹ Richard Boucher, "Status of LTTE, Press Statement," *Presswire*, October 3, 2003.

Figure 1. Map of South Asia

Adapted by CRS from Magellan Geographix. Boundary representations not authoritative.