

UNITED STATES' STRATEGY AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS – UNDERSTANDING OTHERS' PERSPECTIVE

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**UNITED STATES' STRATEGY AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS –
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ABSTRACT

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The United States strategy for Afghanistan, Pakistan and the South Asian region at large has seen significant improvements under the new administration. Yet, some aspects of the strategy require further refinement. The regional context of the strategy needs to comprehensively take into account the competing national interests and resultant discords that vitiate the regional milieu. As a corollary, the overarching strategic concept needs to assuage regional frictions which impinge on the success of United States / coalition forces in Afghanistan and undermine Pakistan's efforts against the forces of terror. The strategy must also epitomize respect for the core national interests and sensitivities of the regional partners, in particular Pakistan; thereby, eliminating inherent risks of overstepping the "*red lines*" in the operational realm. It is in this essential strategic context that this paper seeks to delineate the way forward, based on a strategic approach that cultivates meaningful partnerships and fosters unrestrained cooperation among all stakeholders in general and between the United States and Pakistan in particular; with a view to laying the foundations of enduring and irreversible peace in the region.

UNITED STATES' STRATEGY AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS – UNDERSTANDING OTHERS' PERSPECTIVE

In October 2001, once “Operation Enduring Freedom” was initiated, it seemed certain that the forces of terror would put up a resolute and fierce resistance to the United States / coalition offensive. However, the initial success was unexpectedly expeditious and in November 2001—in a matter of few weeks—Kabul was taken over by the coalition-backed Northern Alliance forces. This led to euphoric postulations by many senior American officials and policy makers, that the fate of al Qaeda and Taliban was good as sealed and before long Afghanistan would be purged of the malaise of terrorism.¹ Contrarily, nine long years have gone by but peace continues to remain elusive. In fact, the footprint of terrorism has spread to Afghanistan's neighboring region as well. Al Qaeda and Taliban militants, who escaped from Afghanistan as a consequence to United States / coalition operations, exported this scourge to the western / northwestern region of neighboring Pakistan; and are now seeking havens in other regions, as far-away as the African continent.²

What went wrong? Is the overall strategy flawed conceptually or is there a problem in the implementation piece? Is lack of earnest cooperation and support from the regional partners the real cause? Or, conversely, is it that the United States has not been able to foster relationships of trust in the region, mainly because of erroneous perceptions concerning the commitment and intent of the regional partners. Or, could lack of success be attributed to incoherent regional context of the strategy; largely oblivious of competing national interests and discords that vitiate the regional

environment? These are some of the questions that need to be answered objectively, if impediments that elude success are to be removed.

The overarching United States policy and strategy needs to be informed by the complex inter- and intra-state frictions that characterize the milieu of Central and South Asian region.³ Such awareness would afford adoption of a regional approach that mitigates acrimony and cultivates unrestrained cooperation; amongst the regional actors and between them and the United States.

Pakistan is confronted with a multitude of challenges, many of which are not of its own making. Yet, the country is doggedly braving the hostile environment and is doing all that it can to safeguard its ethos, interests and sovereignty; while remaining relevant to the global community. In this backdrop, recourse to intrusive exhortations and unrealistic expectations by the United States—seeking more and more—invariably gives rise to frustrations and better be avoided.⁴ America needs to be supportive rather than suspicious, if it truly seeks to establish a robust and enduring partnership with Pakistan; not just in words but in deeds as well.⁵

Background

While tracing the genesis of the disorder that afflicts Afghanistan and Pakistan's northwestern frontier regions today, it is difficult to determine if it was geography which shaped the history of this region or vice versa. However, a multitude of opinions notwithstanding, Pakistan had little influence over events that determined either of the two. In actual fact, the vitiated security situation in the region is the direct outcome of two fundamentally interrelated calamitous incidents.

The first was Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in 1979.⁶ The ensuing Afghan resistance which took the shape of "*Jihad*" against the Russians completely altered the

socio-political and security fabric of the region henceforth.⁷ The blowback suffered by Pakistan—in terms of militancy, millions of refugees, exponential growth of “*madrassas*,” narcotics and proliferation of arms—was truly troublesome.⁸ However, perhaps the most detrimental consequence of this war was the influx of thousands of foreign / extra-regional militants in the region; largely Arabs, but a host of others as well—such as Chechens and Central Asians.⁹ Among them was Osama bin Laden and his companions who later became the core of al Qaeda.¹⁰ The birth of Taliban can also be traced back to this turbulent period.¹¹

The second dreadful occurrence was the incident of 9/11 and the consequent American military intervention in Afghanistan.¹² The initial campaign plan for Afghanistan did not specifically focus on prior coordination with Pakistan and the much needed hammer and anvil approach was largely nonexistent. Consequently, military operations in the Tora Bora region pushed bulk of al Qaeda and Taliban fighters across the porous Durand Line, into Pakistan’s western / northwestern tribal regions.¹³ While some militants sought refuge amongst the local populace, others melted away into the Afghan refugee camps.¹⁴

The above mentioned events profoundly altered the internal security calculus of Pakistan and brought about a host of negative trends, including guns, drugs and various manifestations of terrorism; such as suicide bombings and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) attacks.¹⁵ Yet, the beliefs, values and aspirations of Pakistani populace remain unchanged. They simply want peace and abhor all forms and expressions of terrorism; albeit, a handful of people involved in divisive activities— under the influence of global terrorist networks—draw disproportionate attention of the world community and

continually make international news. More regrettable is the fact that partially due to lack of awareness and in some measure due to negative propaganda unleashed by a section of international media, they are taken as a representation of Pakistani society by a large portion of the western world. In many ways, this misperception impinges upon the United States' policy and strategy for Pakistan as well.

The checkered history of the United States – Pakistan relationship embodies intermittent periods of harmony and accord, juxtaposed with recurring dark spells characterized by mutual distrust and disappointments. In order to develop a better understanding of the United States – Pakistan bilateral relations, the string of defining events that have shaped this relationship need to be studied and understood in the historical context.¹⁶

In its early years, after emerging as an independent state in 1947, Pakistan was faced with the all-pervading predicaments of the Cold War era; whether to align with the Capitalist West, the Communist East or to stay non-aligned. The founding fathers of the state opted for alliance with the West.¹⁷ The decision was not based on self-seeking commercial interests but was founded on common values and popular sentiment of a nascent democratic state. Conversely, India, the other beneficiary of sub-continent's partition, decided to align with the Soviet camp. Two decades or so later, both alliances were tested and significantly shaped by two major wars fought between India and Pakistan.¹⁸

From early 1950s to the present era the United States – Pakistan relationship has seen several ups and downs largely for want of a robust foundation based on mutual trust.¹⁹ However—recurring hiccups notwithstanding—ever since 2001, the

diplomatic, economic and defense ties between the two countries have grown stronger; and presently the United States and Pakistan are engaged in several meaningful initiatives. In particular, the ongoing strategic dialogue is an exceedingly useful forum that has significantly contributed towards nurturing better understanding between the two countries.²⁰ However, despite the silver lining, the relationship is by no means exemplary and continues to remain fragile largely due to a deficit of trust; reflected by persistent reservations on each other's sincerity of purpose and intent.

Evolution of United States Strategy for the Region – The Initial Phase

Nine years ago, the United States' immediate military objectives in Afghanistan were unequivocal. However, the long term political objectives were rather vague; ranging from denying al Qaeda the opportunity and capacity to attack the United States again, to creating a representative and effective Afghan government styled on democratic lines. These were two very different goals, positioned at the opposite ends of a very broad spectrum. Hence, it was not surprising that the Bush administration struggled to articulate a strategy that could find a correct balance between such disparate objectives.²¹

In the sphere of rebuilding the state and its institutions the Bonn Agreement was a remarkably useful initiative, which laid the foundations of political and civil institutions needed for the establishment of a representative government.²² In the realm of counterterrorism, the initial U.S. strategy aimed at disrupting and destroying terrorist organizations of global reach and attacking their leadership, command, control, communications, material support and finances.²³

Despite a promising start, the overall strategy proved flawed in the medium-to-long-term and led to resurgence of Taliban in 2006. Yet, the renewed threat brought no

major change in the Bush Administration's strategy for Afghanistan, which continued to typify a vague amalgam of counterterrorism, counterinsurgency and state-building efforts; without clear priorities and specific focus.²⁴ The agenda was noble in intent and undoubtedly all-inclusive in scope, yet overly ambitious and far too large to be successful.

With regard to Pakistan the initial United States' strategic approach after 9/11 was formulated by a small circle at the top of the Bush Administration, who were largely focused on al Qaeda and the war effort in Afghanistan, rather than Pakistan's internal dynamics. The entire framework was directed towards gaining maximum logistical and operational assistance from Pakistan for successful operations in Afghanistan, in return for economic aid and diplomatic support for the Government of Pakistan.²⁵

The Obama Administration's Strategy

While President Bush frequently spoke of establishing a flourishing democracy in Afghanistan, the Obama Administration's strategy does not envisage state-building as its primary objective. Instead, it relies on a narrower approach tied more tightly to the core goal of defeating al Qaeda. In the context of counterinsurgency, the redefined strategic concept aims at degrading the Taliban while building sufficient Afghan capacity to secure and govern their country; creating conditions for initiation of transition by July 2011. The core goal of the Obama Administration's strategy for the Afghanistan and Pakistan Theater is to ***“disrupt, dismantle and eventually defeat al Qaeda in the region and to prevent its return to either country.”***²⁶

In its modified form, the strategy for Afghanistan envisages an initial surge for 18 to 24 months, aimed at reversing the Taliban momentum and stabilizing the country, followed by drawdown of forces or a process of transition. Through addition of 30,000

United States' troops, bolstered by additional NATO troops, at the fastest possible pace throughout 2010 and initiation of the transition process from July 2011, the strategy seeks to achieve three main objectives: denying safe havens to al Qaeda; reversing the momentum of Taliban; and strengthening Afghanistan's government and security forces.²⁷ Thus, in contrast to the previous strategy, the present strategy essentially rejects the option of committing forces for an indeterminate mission of state-building—without any deadlines.²⁸

One of the key facets of the redefined United States' strategic approach is the enhanced focus on Pakistan. President Obama's March 2009 speech highlighted the inextricable linkage between events in Pakistan and Afghanistan. The President also recognized the necessity of helping Pakistan in going after al Qaeda; whose leadership along with a network of other insurgent groups was located in the rugged mountains along the Pakistan - Afghanistan border. He also mentioned that Pakistan's ability to destroy terrorist safe havens in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) was tied to its own strength and security.²⁹ In order to enhance this capacity he pledged support for a \$ 7.5 billion aid package, new military equipment, and a constancy and concentration of effort.³⁰

On the whole the strategy seeks to forge a stronger partnership with Pakistan by supporting its efforts in two ways: firstly, by strengthening Pakistan's military capacity to target insurgent groups— i.e., enhancement of Pakistan's counterinsurgency capabilities; and secondly by supporting Pakistan's governmental and economic development.³¹

Improvements in the Strategy – NATO's Lisbon Summit (December 2010)

The important change that the NATO's Lisbon Summit brought about in the strategy was accent on a proposed 2014 timeframe that did not exist in the initial strategy.³² What this meant was that the United States and its NATO allies realized the ramifications of a hurried process of transition and the importance of denying al Qaeda and Taliban the option of defeating the strategy simply by waiting out or outlasting the coalition presence. The other noteworthy change was the willingness—of both the United States and the NATO partners—for a prolonged commitment; even beyond 2014.³³ While due emphasis was laid on timely completion of transition, it was evident that 2014 was seen as the desired timeframe for shifting the lead role from NATO to the Afghan Government and was not considered a sacrosanct timeline of the exit strategy.

First Annual Review - December 2010

The Afghanistan and Pakistan Annual Review was a National Security Staff (NSS) led assessment of the Obama administration's strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan.³⁴ The review report released in December 2010, soon after the NATO summit, maintained that the strategy was working well and there were notable gains in all three areas assessed by the review: al Qaeda, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Al Qaeda in Pakistan was weaker and under more sustained pressure than ever before and the United States was laying the foundations of a strategic partnership with Pakistan based on mutual respect, trust, increased dialogue, improved cooperation, and enhanced exchange / assistance programs.³⁵ The report emphasized the need for pursuing Afghanistan and Pakistan challenges in larger and better integrated political and regional contexts. It underscored the importance of a sustained long-term commitment to the region: in Pakistan by way of growing United States – Pakistan strategic

partnership; and in Afghanistan—as reflected by the NATO Summit—by entrusting the lead for security across the country to Afghans by 2014, and enduring commitment beyond 2014.³⁶

Analysis

While presently terrorism poses the greatest challenge to global security, it also offers significant opportunities in the context of establishing lasting peace and stability, primarily in the Central and South Asian region. The ubiquitous nature of threat affords convergence of interest between the regional stakeholders and between the United States and the regional powers. While on one hand it offers incentives to age old adversaries like India and Pakistan to resolve inter-state differences for the sake of a greater cause, on the other hand it creates an environment that could promote better cooperation between the United States and China, particularly in the regional context. China is directly affected by any further spread of terrorism in the region—especially in the northward direction—and has a real stake in working towards eradication of this peril. The United States needs to positively exploit this opportunity by engaging and incorporating China in the overall effort directed against terrorism in the region. Constructive engagement and diplomacy aimed at leveraging Chinese regional influence in the common cause against terrorism may contribute towards alleviating frictions and improvement of the overall United States – China bilateral relations as well; precluding the need for investing in efforts aimed at containing or creating regional counterweights against China.³⁷

The emphasis on Pakistan in the evolving United States strategy is unquestionably pronounced. However, in some measure there is a mismatch between words and actions. There is also a lack of appreciation amongst the United States’

policymakers regarding the extent of challenges faced by Pakistan and the resolve displayed by its political and military leadership in fighting the scourge of terrorism.

In order to set the record straight, the effects created by the military operations successfully undertaken by Pakistan, particularly in the last two to three years— vis-à-vis the combined efforts of 48 countries comprising the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF)—need to be compared / appraised through an objective lens, not blurred by the haze of mistrust. The statistics are indeed eye-opening. From 2002 to early 2011, Pakistan has suffered nearly 36,000 casualties including 11,240 military casualties.³⁸ The military casualties comprise about 2740 killed (*shaheed*) including a lieutenant general, two major generals and six brigadiers. In the same period Pakistani security forces have conducted hundreds of major and minor operations; killing / arresting around 18,000 terrorists including several key leaders of both al Qaeda and Taliban. The blowback has also been huge; a total of 5800 terrorist incidents in the country between 2002 and 2009; more than the combined incidents in Afghanistan and Iraq.³⁹ The misgivings regarding Pakistan's alleged hedging strategy or covert support to some factions of Afghan Taliban and other terrorist organizations, need to be reconsidered in the light of the statistics cited above. It must be appreciated that underlying linkages / interconnectedness between various terrorist organizations cannot remain hidden from Pakistan's intelligence community and it would indeed be unthinkable for Pakistan's leading intelligence agency to indirectly support perpetrators of such ghastly violence; who not only seek to destabilize the country and kill security and intelligence personnel and their families, but routinely target innocent civilians—including a large proportion of women and children—as well.

The regional context of the United States strategy needs to view the ground realities in Pakistan and the popular sentiment and sensitivities that define the national “*red lines*”, with perceptive insight; both in the psycho-social and security realms. Redefining of the war as a regional conflict, primarily for the purpose of extending coalition operations in western Pakistan if necessary; is a rather naïve and worrisome line of thinking, which needs to be substituted by a more perceptive approach—one that takes into account Pakistan’s core national interests and sensitivities, and the implications thereof.

Pakistan can win the ongoing war against the forces of terror only once the nation supports and stands united behind the armed forces. This invariably is the case when the nation sees its own military taking on the terrorists. However, the moment there is the slightest semblance of foreign involvement in Pakistan’s security paradigm, the national sentiment transforms diametrically. The drone attacks in FATA may be taking out a lot of terrorists and the gains in operational / tactical realm may well be significant; but, tactical gains—no matter how significant—can never compensate for the cost of undermining strategic goals.⁴⁰

Any act or initiative by the United States that directly or indirectly impinges on the sovereignty of Pakistan serves to vitiate the overall security environment of the country. Hence, a strategic approach that deems direct involvement in Pakistan’s security calculus—or kinetic military action against terrorists on Pakistani soil—a viable option, is fundamentally flawed, and needs to be altered and corrected.⁴¹ The answer lies in enabling / enhancing the capacity of Pakistan’s armed forces through provision of modern military hardware and cutting edge technologies—particularly in the field of

intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR)—to realize same or better effects; as an alternate to any direct American military action by the United States, including drone strikes. The United States Department of Defense, Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) Report, issued in February 2010, does reflect awareness of this verity at a plane epitomizing the interface between policy and strategy.⁴² Yet—for some reason—when it comes to implementation, a rather expedient approach focusing on immediate gains / short term operational advantages, supplants far-sighted strategic considerations.

The implications and nuances of the surge by ISAF / United States forces in Afghanistan also need to be evaluated objectively. As experienced in the past, up-scaling of military operations in the southern and south-eastern regions of Afghanistan leads to escalation, rather than reduction of threat faced by Pakistan; simply because of increased influx of the Taliban and al Qaeda fighters into Pakistani territory.⁴³ Any strategy that seeks to evict the terrorists from Afghanistan without taking into account their next destination is essentially one-dimensional and simplistic.

In a milieu as complex as the Pakistan – Afghanistan border region, a subtle balance between inclusiveness and synergy is perhaps the most needed adaptation for the United States.⁴⁴ Conduct of supporting, synergetic and harmonized operations by United States / ISAF and Pakistani military in respective areas of responsibility—without crossing borders, i.e. staying west and east of the Durand Line respectively—is perhaps the best suited approach in the military context. However, military instrument on its own invariably lacks sufficiency as strategic objectives can seldom be achieved solely through military action. Hence, military operations need to be carried out as part of a

larger and comprehensive whole-of-government(s) approach; including not only United States' government agency partners, but private and non-governmental sector as well.⁴⁵

In the regional context, the ups and downs of Pakistan – Afghanistan relationship are worrisome and there is a pressing need for both states to work towards a robust and stable relationship. Multiple channels of open dialogue aimed at seeking improved political, military and economic cooperation, are undeniably the need of the hour. The Turkish initiative of hosting the Pakistan, Afghanistan and Turkey Trilateral Summit has contributed towards enhancing engagement and cooperation between the two countries along multiple tracks.⁴⁶ Likewise in the realm of security cooperation the Afghanistan-Pakistan-ISAF Tripartite Commission has contributed towards enhancing trust and eradicating underlying fissures between the two neighbors.⁴⁷ There is a need to explore further avenues of such cooperative engagement.

The links between the security forces of the two countries could be significantly strengthened by incorporating Pakistan in the training of Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), particularly the Afghan National Army (ANA). Keeping in view the similarities in language, culture, religion and social practices, Pakistan's military trainers and training institutions are best suited for this task. This initiative may also prove instrumental in fortifying the foundations of a robust long-term relationship between the two countries and their armed forces.

By far, the most disquieting and divisive factor in the regional setting is the India-Pakistan antagonism, which directly and profoundly impinges upon all strategies and efforts aimed at defeating terrorism. The deeply adversarial nature of the relationship between the two states impacts on the regional stability and security in multiple ways

and indeed merits a separate study. Nevertheless, some of the more significant implications are briefly outlined in the ensuing text:-

- Commitment of a large portion of Pakistan's armed forces along the Line of Control / eastern borders; impinging upon Pakistan's military potential in regions along the western borders / FATA.
- Motivation for the youth in many parts of Pakistan, including the region of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, to rise up in support of their Kashmiri kindred; being subjected to brutal repression by Indian forces on the other side of the Line of Control.
- Increase in Pakistan's economic difficulties and resultant unrest in the country as a consequence to water sharing disputes with India. The forces of terror are the obvious beneficiaries of all such negative developments.
- Exacerbation of Pakistan's already fragile internal security calculus as a consequence to divisive Indian involvement in the western province of Baluchistan.
- Frequent encumbrances in Pakistan – Afghanistan relationship due to the negative impact of Indian involvement in Afghanistan.

The American policy makers are not oblivious to the matter, but for reasons falling in the realm of expediency, the United States' strategy falls short of delineating a viable approach towards resolution of India – Pakistan disputes; in the absence of which lasting and irreversible peace in the region remains unrealized. ⁴⁸

Perhaps the most disruptive impediment in the success of the present United States' strategy is the trust deficit between the United States and Pakistan. Whether it

be the Woodward's book titled *Obama's Wars*, the CNAS report by General Barno, titled *Responsible Transition: Securing U.S. Interests in Afghanistan beyond 2011*, the report by Council on Foreign Relations, titled *Independent Task Force Report Number 65, U.S. Strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan*, or other policy documents released on the subject in the recent past—largely identical suspicions with regard to Pakistan's role and motives in the ongoing war are a source of serious concern.⁴⁹

It is imperative that the United States must stop viewing Pakistan through a prism tainted by preconceived suspicion. The misgivings about Pakistan's overall approach largely stem from the flawed assumption that Pakistan feels compelled to adopt an allegedly divisive approach to counter Indian hegemonic designs. This line of thinking is based on speculative assumptions and affords credence to conspiracy theories. Hence, it must be discarded in the larger interest of both the United States and Pakistan.

It is also crucial that the United States – Pakistan partnership should be sufficiently robust to sustain disruptive events and incidents that the terrorists may perpetrate to sever the relationship. The aspersions cast by the United States media on the future of the United States – Pakistan relationship do not help the cause in any manner. However, far more detriment is caused by the needless statements of analysts and think tanks; such as that “*we are only one successful car bomb away from a breach in our relations with Pakistan.*”⁵⁰ Instead of making statements that embolden the terrorists, there is a need to adopt measures to ensure that partnerships against terrorism do not get disrupted by their divisive actions.

Islamabad and Washington also need to close the gap with regard to their perceptions on the core of the problem. Washington's view that the safe havens in

Pakistan constitute the main stay of al Qaeda and Taliban resistance downplays the fact that situation in FATA is a consequence of the collapse of security in Afghanistan and not the other way around.⁵¹ It must also be appreciated that terrorists continue to change their havens in quest for safety and relative freedom of action. Afghanistan is home to Afghan Taliban and a preferred base for al Qaeda for obvious reasons. Their shifting hideouts and havens in FATA / northwestern regions of Pakistan merely constitute a temporary arrangement. As a corollary, the indigenous forces of terror that have mushroomed in Pakistan, consequent to the Afghan imbroglio, would lose their source of strength and inspiration as and when peace returns to Afghanistan. Thereafter, in all likelihood, it would be relatively simpler for Pakistan to work out a politico-military strategy for their marginalization and ultimate elimination. Hence, the assertion that the “*problem lies in Pakistan*” is a gross overstatement.⁵² The regional linkages and interconnections need to be viewed holistically and equitably to develop a sensible insight of the real problem and more importantly—to delineate the path towards a genuine solution.

There is a profound relationship between terrorism and the economic challenges faced by Pakistan. Possibly, the best way of assisting Pakistan in reversing the tide of terrorism is by strengthening its capacity to deliver economic and social progress to its people, specifically in the context of generating employment amidst rising demographic pressures and a substantial “youth bulge.”⁵³ Although the new U.S. strategy recognizes the importance of investing in Pakistan’s future, the resources it plans to marshal are modest in comparison to both the challenges Pakistan confronts as well as the central importance the administration assigns the country in its regional policy.

Pakistan's economy has been badly hit by the regional developments in the aftermath of 9 / 11 and the ensuing war against terrorism. Foreign investment in the country has dwindled in the wake of security challenges and the government has not been able to focus on the economic revival due to its perpetual involvement in the security related issues.

The United States and the international community also need to take into account the impact of the recent floods on Pakistan's efforts directed against terrorism.⁵⁴ Although the recent report by the Council on Foreign Relations, titled *Independent Task Force Report Number 65, United States Strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan*, takes this aspect into consideration, it mostly relates to economic ramifications of the devastation and its linkage with terrorism in the country. For the most part, the military angle seems to be ignored.⁵⁵ Pakistan has displayed immense tenacity by ensuring that the military operations against the terrorists continue unabated even during the worst period of the flood. Nonetheless, employment of over 70,000 troops on disaster relief and management duties all over the country has placed the Armed Forces under immense strain. This additional employment and its impact needs to be viewed in the backdrop of the overall commitment of the armed forces; over 148,000 actively engaged in military operations along the western borders and continued large-scale employment along the Line of Control / India - Pakistan border.⁵⁶

In the field of economic cooperation, the United States has already initiated measures such as Kerry-Lugar-Berman Bill, envisaging an aid of \$7.5 billion over a period of five years, apart from assistance provided for flood relief. However, aid alone would never be enough. It is actually trade which needs to be the focus. In the near

term, preferential trade access by the United States to Pakistan's textiles and clothing industry would be a bold and substantial step to help the country. Textiles are the lifeblood of the Pakistani economy and its largest industrial employer. Preferential access would be a transformative measure as enhanced trade would create jobs and durable income streams. Aid often does neither.⁵⁷

Pakistan needs to be assisted through a bold and exhaustive program to realize comprehensive economic and social revival. Such a program must entail measures to meet Pakistan's energy deficit and critical infrastructure needs. It must also help restore a positive climate for domestic and foreign investment. Given that Pakistan has incurred a huge economic cost since 2001—around \$40 billion, excluding the impact of second and third order effects on the economy—such investment would signal to the Pakistani people that the United States / international community has a stake in strengthening the country's long-term stability.⁵⁸

Investment in Pakistan's economy would also contribute significantly towards improving the public sentiment concerning the United States in Pakistan. The partnership between the United States and Pakistan can only be firmly grounded once there is an improvement in the people-to-people relationships.⁵⁹ The people of Pakistan need to view America as a friend and an ally and the people of United States need to view Pakistan as a partner and part of the solution—and not the problem. In this context it is also necessary that the doors of America are opened to Pakistani entrepreneurs and even common citizens as well.

The public sentiment in Pakistan concerning America is negatively impacted by the perception that it does not welcome Pakistani visitors. This perception has been

reinforced by heavy-handed American border security policies and clumsy implementation. For instance, after the attempted targeting of an airplane in Detroit on Christmas Day 2009, the United States required citizens of fourteen countries, including Pakistan, to be screened separately at airports. The Pakistani populace widely interpreted these requirements as unfair and discriminatory. Other miscommunications and security precautions have even disrupted official Pakistani travel within the United States. While it is well within the rights of the U.S. government to secure its borders, future decisions concerning travel restrictions should take into account Pakistani sensitivities as well.⁶⁰

Likewise, the senior United States officials need to educate themselves about the social and religious sensitivities of Pakistani people. At times use of a single inappropriate term or uncalled-for assertion by them could seriously impinge upon the Pakistani public sentiment concerning the United States.⁶¹

The Way Forward

The present United States strategy has evolved over a period of time and is undeniably an improvement over the previous strategy. Not much is wrong with the basic premise of disrupting, dismantling and eventually defeating al Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan region and preventing its return to either country. However, it has to be understood that political problems cannot be exclusively addressed by military strategies, devoid of requisite political considerations. Thus, creation of political conditions, essential for the successful implementation of this strategy, need to be the area of focus. Considerable work is required to be done in this domain.

As far as Pakistan is concerned, the success of the strategy largely hinges on four fundamental lines of effort:

- Eradicating the trust deficit between the United States and Pakistan, through better understanding of each other's core national interests and sensitivities and adopting measures that would create reciprocal respect and positive sentiments in the hearts and minds of the people of the two countries.
- Addressing the negative impact of the adversarial relationship between India and Pakistan.
- Helping Pakistan achieve economic stability, particularly in the aftermath of the recent floods.
- Better coordination and intelligence sharing between ISAF and Pakistan's Armed Forces; and assisting / enabling Pakistan's armed forces through provision of cutting edge technologies.
- The last two points are self-evident and need no elaboration; however, the first three aspects are covered in more details in the ensuing discourse.

The forces of terror pose an existential threat to Pakistan and winning the ongoing war against them is central to the survival and prosperous future of the country. The people of Pakistan are aware of this reality and largely support military action against the militants; taken by their own security forces. As far as United States' strategy is concerned, perhaps the wisest and most advantageous approach would be to assist Pakistan's armed forces in accomplishing the desired results; minus any form of direct military involvement / action that hurts the sentiments of the Pakistani people.

As mentioned earlier the trust deficit between United States and Pakistan is inextricably linked with perceptions concerning India – Pakistan relationship.⁶² It is true that Pakistan cannot ignore the threat that emanates from its eastern borders.⁶³ Yet, at the same time Pakistan also understands the value of peace with India; and linkage between the same and overall prosperity of the country. Accordingly, the political leadership of Pakistan has repeatedly expressed the desire to establish durable peace with India— as long as it is an honorable rapprochement, based on equality and seeking just settlement of the core issues.

The reluctance of India to genuinely discuss and address the two core issues—Kashmir and sharing of water—constitutes the real impediment; removal of which requires meaningful encouragement—if not intercession—by the United States. During his election campaign President Obama often spoke of the need to address Pakistan – India relations. However, he later dropped suggestions of an initiative on Kashmir in the face of Indian opposition.⁶⁴ Even the portfolio of the special representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan—which initially included India as well—was changed in the face of Indian opposition.⁶⁵ Nevertheless, the opportunity of addressing the situation is still there. A realistic way forward in this regard could be:

- Creation of conditions and incentives that could lead to initiation of purposeful dialogue between India and Pakistan—unlike the present parleys characterized by friction and mistrust. India’s willingness to accede meaningful self-governance to Kashmiri masses, considerable drawdown of over half a million strong Indian security forces in Kashmir and bringing

an end to the human rights violation could serve as the basis of an interim settlement.⁶⁶

- Concurrent efforts to resolve the other core issue concerning sharing of water. Keeping in view the agriculture based economy of Pakistan, this issue is highly sensitive and potentially a source of violent conflict between the two states. America needs to play a role in convincing India to stop the construction of controversial hydraulic structures on the western rivers, in violation to the Indus Water Treaty signed by the two countries in 1960.⁶⁷
- India's involvement in Pakistan's western province of Baluchistan, largely through its presence in Afghanistan, also needs to be stopped. Both the United States and Afghanistan need to play a role in this regard.
- If the above mentioned issues are addressed all other issues, including institutionalizing both nuclear and conventional military restraints, could be routinely addressed, over a period of time.

Lastly, terrorism cannot be defeated without economic and social progress. The short-term solvency and long-term development needs of Pakistan require U.S. support.⁶⁸ The Kerry-Luger-Berman Bill, authorizing \$7.5 billion of civil assistance funds to Pakistan over a period of five years, is a significant step by the United States. However, economic assistance alone would never be sufficient to meet the enormous economic challenges faced by Pakistan, exacerbated by the devastation caused by the recent floods.⁶⁹ The United States' Congress needs to adopt legislations that extend preferential trade access by liberalizing tariffs on imports from Pakistan, particularly in the domain of cotton, textile and clothing products. United States is Pakistan's top

export market, as almost one fourth of Pakistan's exports are bound for the United States. If the barriers are removed and the presently high tariffs are reduced, there would be no negative effects on the United States economy; however Pakistan's economy would get a substantial boost. It is indeed the single most effective step the United States could take to stimulate Pakistan's economy.⁷⁰ It would also be a meaningful indication to the people of Pakistan that the United States is truly interested in the long term stability of the country.

Measures by Pakistan

On its part, Pakistan must be more purposeful in meeting the challenges of good governance and efficient management of the national economy.⁷¹ Unprecedented inflation has hit the general masses—particularly the salaried class—in a big way. Though the economic decline is partially linked to the security situation of the country and in some measure to major natural calamities, such as the 2010 floods; it is also due to economic mismanagement / flawed fiscal policies. The end result is that unrest caused due to economic turmoil is contributing towards fueling militancy in the country.

In the realm of military operations, the five fundamentals identified by Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff, General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani—winning public opinion, media support, reliance on military's capability and resolve, belief that it is our war and not the United States' war and a comprehensive strategy based on four different phases, namely clear, hold, build and transfer—should remain strong and intact. As stated by General Kayani, at present Pakistan's military operations in FATA are in a transitory phase; from hold to build. In order to ensure that the cleared areas stay clear of the terrorists, the gains must be consolidated and secured areas must be expeditiously

stabilized.⁷² The civil administration needs to put its act together to exploit the platform afforded by the military prong; and must do so sooner than later.

Conclusion

The evolving U.S. strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan region does reflect the United States commitment towards a long-term engagement in the region. It also reflects United States' intent to lay the foundations of a lasting strategic partnership with Pakistan, based on mutual respect, trust, increased dialogue, improved cooperation, and enhanced exchange / assistance programs. However, in order to succeed the strategy must adopt clearly visible short and medium term measures that unequivocally exhibit the earnestness of the United States' intent to the local populace of Pakistan and the region at large. In simple terms, words must translate into deeds and deeds must reflect sincerity of purpose. Though the new thinking does focus on the whole-of-government approach, yet it needs to further enhance the focus on the diplomatic, information and economic instruments of national power, as in all probability, at the end of the day the efficacy of these facets of the overall approach may prove to be the difference between success and stalemate. The strategy must also focus on creating the right conditions for its implementation; conditions that help create an environment of peaceful cooperation and harmony in the region. Such conditions may only come to pass once the fissures and frictions that mar the interrelationships of the regional players are removed; the trust deficit between the United States and the regional partners is mitigated; and most importantly once the United States unreservedly understands and respects the perspective of its strategic partners.

Endnotes

¹ In May 2003, the then United States Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld suggested that the war in Afghanistan was in a “cleanup” phase. Rowan Scarborough, “War on Terrorism in ‘Cleanup’ Phase,” *Washington Times*, May 2, 2003, http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_g01637/is_200305/ai_n7511726 (accessed December 20, 2010).

² The ungoverned spaces in Africa offer promising havens to all terrorist networks including al Qaeda. With increased United States / coalition pressure in Afghanistan and South Asian region more and more terrorist organizations are looking towards Africa as their next destination. In June 2006 an online publication of al Qaeda in Saudi Arabia, ran a four-page article by one Abu Azzam al Ansari entitled “Al-Qaeda is moving to Africa.” As per the author of the Sada al-Jihad magazine, many terrorist networks sense that the African continent has not yet found its proper and expected role and the next stages of the conflict will see Africa as the battlefield. J. Peter Pham, “America in Africa: Securing U.S. Interests and Promoting a Continent’s Development”, *The Nelson Institute for International and Public Affairs*, January 2007, 11-12, http://www.jmu.edu/nelsoninstitute/America_in_Africa.pdf (accessed December 20, 2010).

³ South Asia is one of the most precarious regions of the world with convoluted security, primary due to anecdotal degree of internal disputes within the regional players. Consequently, bilateral relations are generally defined by animosity and mistrust. Dhurba Rizal, “Faltering Footprints of Security in South Asia,” *Global Consortium on Security Transformation (GCST) Policy Brief Series, no.4*, http://www.securitytransformation.org/images/publicaciones/147_GCST_Policy_Brief_4_-_Faltering_Footprints_in_South_Asia.pdf (accessed December 23, 2010).

⁴ U.S. Defense Secretary, Robert M. Gates made a statement on December 16, 2010, in Washington, that Pakistan has committed over 140,000 troops to operations along the border of Afghanistan, in coordination with Afghan and coalition forces on the Afghan side. He also acknowledged that the present kind of military operations in the tribal areas would have been considered unthinkable just two years ago; and the Pakistani military has simultaneously been contending with the historic flooding that has devastated much of the country. Yet, he said that the U.S. officials believe that Pakistan can and must do more to shut down the flow of insurgents across the border. Karen Parrish, “Gates: Afghanistan Progress Exceeds Expectations,” *American Forces Press Service, United States Central Command*, December 16, 2010, <http://www.centcom.mil/press-release/gates-afghanistan-progress-exceeds-expectations> (accessed January 15, 2011).

⁵ As far as words go, America has repeatedly pledged to forge a long term strategic partnership with Pakistan. The United States Department of Defense Quadrennial Defense Review— issued in February 2010—clearly posits that U.S. efforts in Afghanistan are inextricably linked to its partnership with Pakistan—one based on mutual interest and respect. It goes on to say that United States is strengthening Pakistan’s capacity to target those extremists who threaten both countries, and the military partnership between the two countries is strengthened through cooperation in the effort of eliminating terrorist safe havens. It also says that though the U.S. – Pakistan partnership is focused urgently on confronting al Qaeda and its allies, America’s interest in Pakistan’s security and prosperity will endure long after the campaign ends. Yet, many in Pakistan feel that there is a mismatch between words and deeds and in many ways United States’ actions on ground infringe on the sovereignty of Pakistan. U.S. Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, February 2010 (Washington DC:

Pentagon, 2010), 7, http://www.defense.gov/qdr/images/QDR_as_of_12Feb10_1000.pdf (accessed February 10, 2011).

⁶ The Russians invaded Afghanistan in December 1979, using the provisions of the Soviet – Afghan Treaty of 1978 as justification. Babrak Karmal was appointed as the President of the puppet regime. The intervention marked the beginning of a decade-long occupation that resulted in the death of one million Afghans, flight of over three million refugees to Pakistan, over a million to Iran and displacement of millions of others internally. Thomas Barfield, *Afghanistan – A Cultural and Political History* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2010), 213.

⁷ In line with historical precedence, the resistance movement against the Russians took the form of “*Jihad*” (meaning struggle ordained by faith), against the foreign invaders, because it was the classic way of overcoming the tribal or “*qawm*” (clan) barriers that normally prevented unity among Afghan factions. It was also a legacy of Abdur Rahman Khan, creator of the modern state of Afghanistan, who had so permanently fused the defense of the nation with the defense of religion that the two seemed inseparable after that. Thus, regardless of their different backgrounds and goals, the resistance fighters all styled themselves “*mujahedeen*.” Ibid., 234.

⁸ The explosive growth of “*madrassas*” or Islamic religious schools in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan was profoundly linked and was a blowback of Afghan *Jihad*. Such schools churned out “*mujahedeen*” at rapid pace, who fought the *West’s War* against the Russians. Thus, these “*madrassas*” were not only patronized by Pakistan and Saudi Arabia but the United States as well. Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of Its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers Inc., 2002), 265.

⁹ During the Soviet occupation Islamic militants from the Middle East and elsewhere in the world arrived in Afghanistan in hordes to fight alongside the “*Afghan Mujahideen*.” In 1986, in conformity with Ronald Reagan’s Presidential Directive, the CIA lent substantial support to this activity, and due to that supportive stance, as many as nearly 35,000 Arab-Afghans received military training in Pakistan, at an estimated cost to the CIA of some \$800 million in the years up to and including 1988. In the enthusiasm for making life as difficult as possible for the Soviet Union, little thought was given to the longer-term consequences and the likelihood that these militants, might later turn to subversion in their own countries—or even attack the United States itself. Ibid., 280-81.

¹⁰ Maleeha Lodhi, “The Future of Pakistan-US Relations: Opportunities and Challenges,” *INSS Special Report* (April 2009): 2, <http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf&AD=ADA497485> (accessed December 20, 2010).

¹¹ The first reference to the Taliban (meaning religious student) was made in the late nineteenth century, when Mullah Powindah took on the title of “*Badshah-e-Taliban*,” or “King of the Taliban” in 1894, in the area that is now North Waziristan (part of FATA). His example was followed by the legendary Fakir of Ipi, who also fought the British in the 1930s and ‘40s. The modern day Taliban emerged from the refugee camps established along the Pakistan – Afghanistan border in 1980s. Some observers believe that the genesis of Taliban was more or less spontaneous, while others feel that they are a product of a more deliberate process. The Taliban gender policies reflected the realities of the refugee camps; a totally cash based economy where male heads of families signed the roll for rations. Unlike the traditional subsistence agriculture and herding that depended on women and where female labor was

valued. This system of cash transactions and top down distribution reflected the impact of patronage network that paved the way for the rise of Taliban culture. Shuja Nawaz, "Learning by Doing: The Pakistan Army's Experience with Counterinsurgency," *South Asia Center of the Atlantic Council of the United States* (February 2011): 4, http://www.acus.org/files/publications_pdfs/403/020111_ACUS_Nawaz_PakistanCounterinsurgency.pdf (accessed March 5, 2011); David Isby, *Afghanistan, Graveyard of Empires: A New History of the Borderlands* (New York: Pegasus Books LLC, 2010), 82.

¹² The 9/11 terrorist attacks brought about an immediate U.S. / coalition military intervention. Pakistan— despite having supported Taliban heretofore—immediately saw the gravity of the terrorist act perpetrated by the Taliban and the inevitability of the U.S. retributive response. Pakistan not only withdrew its support of Taliban but supported and enabled United States led coalition in their 2001 intervention in Afghanistan. Ever since 2001, Pakistan's policy has been based on cooperation with U.S. and continued support for the global war on terror. David Isby, *Afghanistan, Graveyard of Empires*, 95.

¹³ The "Durand Line" refers to the poorly marked border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. It is approximately 2,640 kilometers (1,610 miles) long. It was established after the 1893 Agreement between the government of colonial British India and Afghan Amir Abdur Rahman Khan for fixing their respective spheres of influence. It was named after Henry Mortimer Durand, the Foreign Secretary of British India at that time. The single-page agreement which contains seven short articles was signed by H. M. Durand and Amir Abdur Rahman Khan, agreeing not to interfere beyond the frontier line between Afghanistan and what was then colonial British India and now Pakistan. A joint British-Afghan survey took place starting from 1894, covering some 800 miles of the border. The demarcation of this Line caused incessant difficulties. It took until 1897 for the task to be completed, and even then there were some stretches that had not been covered. In its final form, the Line took little note of ethnographic and topographical factors. Tribes, and at places even villages were divided. Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A Short History of its People and Politics* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 108.

¹⁴ Lodhi, "The Future of Pakistan - U.S. Relations," 2.

¹⁵ The first suicide attack in Pakistan took place in 1995 when an Egyptian bomber rammed his explosive-laden truck into the Egyptian Embassy in Islamabad, which killed 14 people. However, the first suicide attack—as part of the wave of terrorism which started after 9/11—occurred in May 2002, outside the American consulate in Karachi, killing 12 people. There was only one suicide attack in 2003, five attacks in 2004, two attacks in 2005 and six attacks in 2006. The real surge came in 2007 with 47 suicide attacks killing 538 people and ever since the increased frequency of such incidents remains unabated, with 63 attacks in 2008, 87 attacks in 2009 and 68 attacks in 2010. Abdullah Hairan, "The History of Suicide Attacks in Pakistan," *Ground Report, News World*, November 10, 2007, <http://www.groundreport.com/World/The-History-of-Suicide-Attacks-in-Pakistan/2837772> (accessed December 28, 2010); Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS), "*Pakistan Security Report 2010*," http://www.san.pips.com/index.php?action=reports&id=psr_1 (accessed December 28, 2010).

¹⁶ Ever since its inception, Pakistan's relations with the U.S. have been characterized by recurring ups and downs. From early 1950s to mid 1960s the relations were nothing less than exemplary. From mid 60s the relations started deteriorating in the wake of somewhat neutral U.S. stance during the India – Pakistan Wars. In late 1970s all aid to Pakistan was suspended by President Jimmy Carter as a consequence to construction of a uranium facility by Pakistan.

However, consequent to Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, U.S. started viewing Pakistan as a frontline ally in the effort to block Soviet expansionism. All sanctions were waived and the Reagan Administration pledged a five-year, \$3.2 billion aid package for Pakistan. With the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, Pakistan's nuclear activities again came under intensive U.S. scrutiny and in 1990 President George H.W. Bush again suspended aid to Pakistan, under the provisions of the Pressler Amendment. The U.S. disengagement from Pakistan after 1990 seriously affected the perceptions of Pakistani populace; as many Pakistanis believed that they were used and ditched. However, consequent to 9/11 and American intervention in Afghanistan, Pakistan once again became a front line state and the relationship transformed dramatically. It was in a way a déjà vu of the 1980s. K. Alan Kronstadt, "Pakistan – U.S. Relations," *Congressional Research Service* (February 6, 2009): 32, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33498.pdf> (accessed December 24, 2010).

¹⁷ As a consequence of joining two regional defense pacts in 1955, the South East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) and the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) or "Baghdad Pact," Pakistan became one of the most important security assistance partners of the U.S. of that era. President Dwight D. Eisenhower famously called Pakistan America's "most allied ally in Asia." *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Conflicting expectations of the security relationship bedeviled U.S. – Pakistan bilateral ties in the aftermath of Indo - Pakistan wars of 1965 and 1971. Even though United States suspended military aid to both countries involved in the conflict, the suspension of aid affected Pakistan much more severely, as India continued to receive aid from Soviet Union. K. Alan Kronstadt, "Pakistan – U.S. Relations," *CRS Issue Brief for Congress*, linked from *CRS Web* (January 28, 2005): 2, <http://www.fas.org/man/crs/IB94041.pdf> (accessed January 24, 2011).

¹⁹ U.S. disengagement from Pakistan and Afghanistan after 1990 had serious and lasting effects on the perceptions of Pakistani people. However, after a decade of alienation, U.S. relations with Pakistan once again transformed in quite a dramatic fashion; this time as a consequence to the tragic incident of 9/11. In recognition of Pakistan's renewed importance, President George W. Bush designated Pakistan's as a major non-NATO ally of the United States in 2004. A congressional Pakistan Caucus was formed the same year to facilitate dialogue amongst Pakistani-Americans and their political representatives in Congress, and to improve / strengthen bilateral relations between the two states. Kronstadt, "Pakistan – U.S. Relations," 4.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 33.

²¹ Sebastian Gorka, "U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan: The Lessons of History," *inFocus Quarterly IV, no. 1* (Spring 2010): <http://www.jewishpolicycenter.org/1630/us-strategy-afghanistan-history-lessons> (accessed December 28, 2010).

²² "The Agreement on Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan Pending the Re-establishment of Permanent Government Institutions," more commonly known as the Bonn Agreement, was the first of a series of agreements which laid the foundations of political and civil institutions and successfully involved the international community, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, to provide humanitarian, political, economic, and security assistance needed to rebuild Afghanistan. "Agreement on Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan Pending the Re-establishment of Permanent Government Institutions," *The*

Washington Post, December 5, 2001, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/world/texts/bonnagreement.html> (accessed December 28, 2010).

²³ George W. Bush, *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington D.C: The White House, September 2002), 5 <http://merln.ndu.edu/whitepapers/USnss2002.pdf> (accessed December 29, 2010).

²⁴ Sgt. Sara Wood, "President Bush Outlines Strategy for Afghanistan," *American Forces Press Service*, February 15, 2007, <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=3066> (accessed December 31, 2010).

²⁵ On initiation of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), Pakistan agreed to provide flyover and landing rights, access to naval and air bases, and critical petrol supplies. Much of the logistical support was initially provided without any of the formal agreement or user fees that are normally required for such privileges; demonstrating Pakistan's full support. Pakistan followed through with its agreement for military and intelligence support. In the first five months of the war, over 28,000 sorties overflew Pakistani airspace from carriers in the Indian Ocean and Pakistan provided fuel to aircraft, averaging 100,000 gallons per day, initially without any established repayment mechanism. As stated by a U.S. Central Command Officer "Pakistan provided more support, captured more terrorists and committed more troops than any other nation in the Global Counterterrorism Force". Liam Collins, "United States Diplomacy with Pakistan following 9/11: A Case Study in Coercive Diplomacy," *Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs*, May 16, 2008, 7, <http://www.princeton.edu/research/cases/coercivediplomacy.pdf> (accessed February 2, 2011).

²⁶ Council on Foreign Relations, "Overview of the Afghanistan and Pakistan Annual Review," December 16, 2010, 5, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/.../overview-afghanistan-and-pakistan-annual-review> (accessed December 31, 2010).

²⁷ Other prongs of the strategy focused on holding Afghan Government leaders accountable for corruption and assistance in areas that could specifically benefit the Afghan people. Karen De Young, "Obama Outlines Afghan Strategy," *Washington Post*, March 28, 2009, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/03/27/AR2009032700836.html> (accessed December 31, 2010).

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ FATA is a territory covering some 27,000 square kilometers perched on the border between Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province and southern Afghanistan and is home to over 3.5 million Pashtun tribesmen. The region comprises seven tribal agencies and six smaller frontier regions. Historically, it has been a largely autonomous region (even during British times i.e. prior to the partition of the subcontinent). Pakistan Army entered FATA for the first time after U.S. arrival in Afghanistan, consequent to 9/11. However, politically, even today the region is only nominally controlled by the federal government through the Governor of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, who exercises his powers on behalf of the President of Pakistan. Shuja Nawaz, "FATA – A Most Dangerous Place," *Center for Strategic & International Studies* (January 2009): 1-2, <http://www.shujanawaz.com/pdf/FATA%20-%20A%20Most%20Dangerous%20Place.pdf> (accessed February 13, 2011).

³⁰ Young, "Obama Outlines Afghan Strategy."

³¹ David H. Petraeus, "Statement before the Senate Armed Services Committee on the Posture of U.S. Central Command," March 16, 2010, <http://armed-services.senate.gov/statement/2010/03%20March/Petraeus%2003-16-10.pdf> (accessed February 19, 2011).

³² Lisbon Summit declaration issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Lisbon, November 20, 2010, linked from *The North Atlantic Treaty Organization Home Page*, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_68828.htm (accessed December 22, 2010).

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Council on Foreign Relations, "Overview of the Afghanistan and Pakistan Annual Review," 5.

³⁵ Ibid., 1.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ In the recent past America has toughened its approach towards China. In fact U.S. officials want India to take a bigger role in East Asia. One reason for improvement in U.S. – India relationships during the Bush Administration was because India was seen as a counterweight to China. The result was a civil nuclear cooperation agreement between India and U.S., which conferred respectability on India's hitherto pariah nuclear program. The Economist, "India and America – A Damp Squib," October 28, 2010, <http://www.economist.com/node/17361540> (accessed December 28, 2010).

³⁸ Masood Raja, "US-Pakistan Relations: The Need for a Strategic Vision," *Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations*, March 14, 2011, <http://www.shafr.org/2011/03/14/us-pakistan-relations-the-need-for-a-strategic-vision/> (accessed March 17, 2011).

³⁹ Ian S. Livingston and Michael O'Hanlon, *Brookings Pakistan Index: Tracking Variables of Reconstruction and Security* (February 24, 2011): 1 – 9, <http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/Programs/FP/pakistan%20index/index.pdf> (accessed January 18, 2011); Shuja Nawaz, "Learning by Doing: The Pakistan Army's Experience with Counterinsurgency," *Atlantic Council*, (February 2011): 10 – 12, http://acus.org/files/publication_pdfs/403/020111_ACUS_Nawaz_PakistanCounterinsurgency.pdf (accessed January 19, 2011).

⁴⁰ U.S. drone attacks have more than tripled since January 20, 2009, ever since President Barack Obama took over the Presidency. A BBC report of July 24, 2010, indicates that there were 25 drone strikes between January 2008 and January 2009, in which around 200 people were killed. In the year 2010, at least 90 attacks by U.S. drones killed more than 831 persons, as against 46 such attacks killing 536 in 2009. The annual report of the Conflict Monitoring Centre released on January 4, 2011 revealed that, while a total of 2,043 people, mostly civilians, were killed in U.S. drone attacks during the preceding five years, 929 of those casualties were reported in FATA alone in 2010. IFSLA (Interdisciplinary Forum for the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach), Conflict Monitoring Center (CMC), "Annual Report on CIA's Target Killing Campaign in Pakistan's Tribal Area," January 4, 2011, <http://brokesch.blogspot.com/com/2011/01/conflict-monitoring-center-cmc-annual.html> (accessed February 18, 2011).

⁴¹ In September 2008, U.S. Special Forces troops apparently staged a helicopter raid in the South Waziristan village of Angoor Adda, where at least 20 people were reported killed, women and children among them. The Pakistani Government strongly condemned the “completely unprovoked act of killing” and lodged formal protest with the U.S. Embassy for the gross violation of Pakistan’s territory” and grave provocation. Both houses of the Pakistani Parliament issued unanimous resolutions strongly condemning the attack. In a strongly worded statement, Pakistan’s Army Chief General Kayani said, “the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country will be defended at all cost and no external force is allowed to conduct operations inside Pakistan.... There is no question of any agreement or understanding with the Coalition Forces whereby they are allowed to conduct operations on the Pakistani side of the border.” Plans for further U.S. ground incursions reportedly were suspended to allow the Pakistani military to press its own attacks, although some observers say the Pentagon had underestimated the strength of the Pakistani response to cross-border raids. The backlash caused U.S. officials to focus only on an intensified Predator missile strike campaign. Kronstadt, “Pakistan – U.S. Relations,” 22.

⁴² The U.S. Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), released in February 2010, highlights the importance and need for building the security capacity of partner states. It states that the United States is committed to strengthening Pakistan’s capacity to target those extremists who threaten both conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq have made it clear that this dimension of United States strategy has never been more important. The key QDR initiatives in this mission area include: Creating mechanisms to expedite acquisition and transfer of critical capabilities to partner forces; strengthening and institutionalizing general purpose force capabilities for security force assistance; and strengthening and expanding capabilities for training partner aviation forces; apart from enhancing linguistic, regional, and cultural ability; and strengthening capacities for ministerial-level training. Quadrennial Defense Review Report, February 2010, vii.

⁴³ Lodhi, “The Future of Pakistan-U.S. Relations.” 3.

⁴⁴ General (Retired) Gary Luck, Colonel (Retired) Mike Findlay and the JWFC Joint Training Division, *Joint Operations: Insights and Best Practices*, 2nd ed., July 2008, 3, <http://www.ndu.edu/pinnacle/docUploaded/Insights%20on%20Joint%20Operations.pdf> (accessed March 12, 2011).

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁴⁶ The Afghanistan, Pakistan and Turkey trilateral summit is an initiative by Turkey to bridge the differences between Afghanistan and Pakistan and to enhance the cooperation between the two neighbors in multiple areas including security cooperation. The process has led to increased contacts among members of the parliaments, high-level military officials, directors of intelligence organizations and other officials and experts of the participating countries. The last summit held in Istanbul in December 2010 was the fifth such meeting and was attended by the Presidents of the three countries. Apart from signing a number of agreements and Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs), the three leaders agreed to hold joint military exercises in the first half of 2011. Hasan Jaral, “Turkey, Afghanistan, Pak to hold joint drill,” *PAK-NEWS*, December 25, 2010, <http://pak-news.net/turkey-afghanistan-pak-to-hold-joint-drill/> (accessed January 18, 2011).

⁴⁷ The tripartite commission is a recurring security dialogue forum between Afghanistan, Pakistan and ISAF military leaderships. Ever since its inaugural session—held in Islamabad in

2003—the commission has met for 32 times. The last meeting held in Kabul in December 2010 was attended by Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff General Kayani, Afghan Chief of General Staff, General Karimi and Commander ISAF, General Petraeus. It was a particularly useful meeting that focused on possible areas of security cooperation in 2011. The group also discussed the outcome of the Lisbon Summit, the U.S. National Security Staff (NSS) led Afghanistan-Pakistan Strategic Review, recent progress in reintegration of reconcilable elements, Pakistani initiatives to build on its counterinsurgency operations in the past 22 months, and ways in which security cooperation and infrastructure improvements might foster economic development. NATO International Security Assistance Force Afghanistan, News Release, "*Afghan Chief of General Staff hosts Tripartite Commission in Kabul*," <http://isaf-live.webdrivenhq.com/article/isaf-releases/afghan-chief-of-general-staff-hosts-tripartite-commission-in-kabul.html> (accessed January 10, 2011).

⁴⁸ The Obama administration acutely recognizes the effects of India – Pakistan adversarial relationship on the regional peace and stability. The comments by senior U.S. officials / policy makers quoted at a number of places in Bob Woodward's book, *Obama's Wars*, demonstrates varying views on the subject amongst senior U.S. officials. Yet, the common thread that links all views is based on the realization that the road to peace in Afghanistan runs through Kashmir. President Obama cannot afford to keep ignoring this blood feud as there can be no peace in the South Asian Region till the time differences between the two antagonists are resolved. It may only happen with a greater commitment from the United States. Ahmed Rashid, "The Road to Kabul Runs Through Kashmir," *Foreign Policy Magazine* (November 10, 2010): 2, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2010/11/10/The_Road_to_Kabul_Runs_Through_Kashmir (accessed January 17, 2010).

⁴⁹ The trust deficit between the United States and Pakistan is symptomatic of a deeper problem, rather than the problem itself. It masks a complex of issues that impinge on some of the fundamentals of the two countries' foreign policies, not only concerning systemic problems on each side, but also their respective national interests and public policies. Touqir Hussain, "US-Pakistan Relations: What Trust Deficit?" *The Middle East Institute Policy Brief*, no. 31, November 2010, <http://www.mei.edu/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=Eiv03FkZVdQ%3D&tabid=539> (accessed February 16, 2011).

⁵⁰ In a discussion by the experts of CFR sponsored Independent Task Force on U.S. Strategy for Pakistan and Afghanistan, Mr. James Dobbins, Director, International Security and Defense Policy Center, National Security Research Division, commented while answering a question that one thing that the CFR report does clearly indicate is that "*we are only one successful car bomb away from a breach in our relations with Pakistan*." Council on Foreign Relations, "Transcript, U.S. Strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan," December 16, 2010, <http://www.cfr.org/pakistan/us-strategy-pakistan-afghanistan/p23657> (accessed December 20, 2010).

⁵¹ Lodhi, "The Future of Pakistan-U.S. Relations." 3.

⁵² During his visit to Pakistan in January 2011, United States' Vice-President Joseph Biden alluded that the real problem and threat emanated from the al Qaeda safe havens in Pakistan. He spoke of the need for more pressure on the Taliban from Pakistan's side of the border. In response Pakistani senior officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs insisted that the Americans hold the key to any approach that the Afghans, led by President Hamid Karzai, might want to take on the issue of reconciliation, because the road to success in Afghanistan lies

through Afghanistan itself. The Afghan reconciliation process hinges largely on Afghan stakeholders and the allies will have to refocus on where the problem lies. Imtiaz Gul, "Fixing Afghanistan via Pakistan?," *The Express Tribune with the International Herald Tribune*, January 14, 2011, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/103294/fixing-afghanistan-via-pakistan/> (accessed March 14, 2011).

⁵³ Pakistan is going through a massive youth bulge with approximately 63 percent of the population (around 113 million) under the age of 25. Pakistan needs an annual growth of eight percent to channel its massive youth bulge; ensuring that the situation becomes an opportunity rather than a liability. Pakistan News Blog, *Youth Bulge: Innovation through New Lens*, <http://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=Youth+Bulge+in+Pakistan&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8> (accessed January 28, 2011).

⁵⁴ The summer 2010 floods were the worst-ever in the history of Pakistan. Over 20 million people were affected—more than the Asian tsunami in 2004 and Kashmir earthquake in 2005 combined—and its height, water covered a fifth of the country. However, despite fears of the United States / international community that the floods will slow Pakistan's efforts to combat terrorism and mount operations against militant groups, the floods did not curtail Pakistani military's internal reach or resolve in combating terrorism. S. Akbar Zaidi, "Pakistan after the Floods," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, September 29, 2010, <http://www.carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=41635> (accessed December 18, 2010).

⁵⁵ Council on Foreign Relations, "U.S. Strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan," Independent Task Force Report Number 65, 16, http://www.cfr.org/content/publications/.../Pakistan_Afghanistan_TFR65.pdf (accessed December 31, 2010).

⁵⁶ Shuja Nawaz, "Learning by Doing," 10.

⁵⁷ Lodhi, "The Future of Pakistan-U.S. Relations," 3.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁵⁹ The ex U.S. special representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Richard Holbrooke mentioned after a high level meeting with the Pakistani officials in Washington in March 2010 that one of the biggest U.S. concerns about Pakistan is the fact the public understanding in Pakistan of what the United States is doing is just not where it should be. Pakistanis believe that the U.S. only cares about one or two issues concerning Pakistan, such as war in Afghanistan and the nuclear issue. Opinion polls show less than one in five Pakistanis view the United States favorably despite a tripling of civilian aid over the next five years. Sue Fleming, "In Pakistan, Money Alone can't buy U.S. Love," *International Business Times*, March 27, 2010, <http://in.ibtimes.com/articles/17799/20100326/in-pakistan-money-alone-can-t-buy-u-s-love.htm> (accessed December 31, 2010).

⁶⁰ Council on Foreign Relations, "U.S. Strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan," 55.

⁶¹ The U.S. officials are not sufficiently sensitive to the conservative nature of Pakistani society and their diplomatic jargon is not tailored accordingly. For example by conflating the notions of conservatism and extremism (which carry entirely different connotations) and dismissing both, the U.S. officials inadvertently seek to promote western ideals in a country

where an overwhelming majority is opposed to them. This leads to resentment against the United States, which is in turn exploited by the extremists. Moeed Yousaf, "Prospects of Youth Radicalization in Pakistan: Implications for U.S. Policy," *The Brookings Project on U.S. Relations with the Islamic World*, no. 14, October 2008, <http://www.scribd.com/doc/13390263/Prospects-of-Youth-Radicalization-in-Pakistan-Implications-for-US-Policy> (accessed January 20, 2011).

⁶² As alluded by Woodward in his book *Obama's War*, the United States views Pakistan's intentions with skepticism because it believes that Pakistan feels compelled to adopt measures contrary to American interests, just to remain viable vis-à-vis India. Bob Woodward, *Obama's Wars* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2010), 208.

⁶³ As highlighted by Maleeha Lodhi a former Ambassador of Pakistan to United States, the threat cannot be ignored by Pakistan for three reasons; first is history of conflict (three wars and four near wars); second is unresolved disputes including that over Kashmir; and third is India's military posture with vast bulk of its land, air and sea forces deployed against Pakistan. These assets can be quickly mobilized, as they were in 2002, for military action or for exercises in coercive diplomacy. Lodhi, "*The Future of Pakistan-U.S. Relations*," 4.

⁶⁴ Kashmir is a 86, 000 square miles region located at the confluence of the Himalayan Range with the Hindukush and Central Asia. It is bordered by China, India, Pakistan and Afghanistan, towards northeast, south, west and northwest respectively. At the time of the partition of the Indian sub-continent it was one of the five hundred and sixty two princely states of India. Jammu and Kashmir was a predominantly Muslim majority state but the ruler or "*Maharaja*" was Hindu, who maliciously signed the instrument of accession with India against the wishes of the Kashmiri people. Pursuant to the illegitimate accession of Kashmir by the Maharaja with India, the Indian Army troops landed in Srinagar and reacted expeditiously to save the Valley from falling to the indigenous Kashmiri fighters and the tribesmen. The illegal "Instrument of Accession" had, nonetheless, made it abundantly clear that "the Hindu ruler of Kashmir," and not the people of Kashmir, had acceded to India, since their wishes were disregarded once their fate was being decided. Khan, Naseer Ali, *Kashmir Dispute: Significance of its Early Resolution*, Research Project (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, March 12, 2010), 5 - 10.

⁶⁵ Ambassador Richard Holbrooke's role as Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan was initially intended to coordinate the regional initiative including management of India – Pakistan relationship. However, the idea of doing so died due to a vociferously negative Indian reaction. Paul Staniland, "Caught in the Muddle: America's Pakistan Strategy," http://www.twq.com/11winter/docs/11winter_Stalinand.pdf (accessed January 21, 2011).

⁶⁶ Lodhi, "*The Future of Pakistan-U.S. Relations*."4.

⁶⁷ The Indus Waters Treaty 1960 is a water-sharing treaty between India and Pakistan, signed in September 1960 by the then Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and President Mohammad Ayub Khan. The treaty was brokered by the World Bank (then the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development). In accordance with Article III of the Treaty, India is obligated to let flow all the waters of the Western Rivers, and not to permit any interference with these waters, except for limited domestic, agricultural and hydro-electric power generation uses, specified in Annexure C of the Treaty. Para (4) of Article III also specifies that except for a limited quantity specified in Annexure D and E of the Treaty, India shall not store any water of,

or construct any storage works on the western rivers, namely, the Indus, Jhelum and Chenab Rivers. Indus Waters Treaty, <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTSOUTHASIA/Resources/223497-1105737253588/IndusWatersTreaty1960.pdf> (accessed January 20, 2011).

⁶⁸ Lodhi, "The Future of Pakistan-U.S. Relations."4.

⁶⁹ Council on Foreign Relations, "U.S. Strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan," 12.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 49.

⁷¹ Lodhi, "The Future of Pakistan-U.S. Relations."5.

⁷² Zahid Hussain, "Kayani Spells out Terms for Regional Stability," *Pakistan Defense*, February 2, 2010, <http://www.defence.pk/forums/land-forces/24313-chief-army-staff-coas-general-ashfaq-parvez-kayani-12.html> (accessed January 15, 2011).

