

## PAKISTAN'S CONTRIBUTION TO GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR AFTER 9/11

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### **Abstract**

Pakistan's contribution to the "War on Terror" far exceeds its strength and size. Pakistan lost more than 35000 lives to save American people from another 9/11 attack. Pakistan's economic loss amounted to 67 billion US dollars but still the US is not satisfied with Pakistan's performance and pressurizes it to "Do More." In this situation what should Pakistan do as a sovereign state? At the same time what is the international community's responsibility towards Pakistan as a partner in this global war? The United States (US) and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) have been fighting against the Taliban for the last decade but the war is nowhere near its end. This study is an exploration of the question whether war is the solution or the problem?

**Key Words:** War on Terror, World Response, Pakistan's Contribution, Operations, Agreements.

### **Background**

**P**akistan has always played a constructive role in the United Nations (UN) — it is one of its largest net troop contributors and its active role in the solution of world issues is internationally recognized. It borders three major strategic regions; South Asia, Central Asia and the Middle East, and its geographical proximity to Afghanistan has made it an important partner of the United States. Pakistan has played a significant role, both during the Cold War and as a non-NATO member in the US-led "War on Terror" against al Qaeda and the Taliban.

After 9/11 terrorism became a serious problem in international relations. It was the first time in recent history that the US had been confronted with such a huge disaster on its own soil. Maintaining internal security and protecting its global interests became a challenge for the American leadership. Their solution was a new kind of war against a new kind

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of enemy, a global “War on Terror.” As a result in 2001, the US launched a campaign against the al Qaeda network, which they held responsible for the attacks, and the Taliban regime in Afghanistan.

The United States embarked on this enterprise with the support of many other countries including the United Kingdom, NATO and non-NATO countries such as China and Pakistan.<sup>1</sup> But “Pakistan’s support has been most strong in terms of access (basing, sea and air access), intelligence support and logistics.”<sup>2</sup>

The 9/11 incident had strong connections with Cold War conflicts during the 1980s. The Soviet Union took the extreme step of invading Afghanistan in December 1979 to halt the fundamentalist rebellion against the Kabul regime and forestall the possibility of western involvement in the civil war. At the same time another great change occurred across the western border of Pakistan, where a revolution ousted the Shah of Iran. The cumulative effect of these historic events at Pakistan’s doorstep was an upsurge of terrorism in its many manifestations in the country.

It is generally believed that the main reason for the growth of terrorism in Pakistan was the involvement of the US in Afghanistan in the 1980s. The border region between Pakistan and Afghanistan had been turned into a base camp in the war against the Soviet Union.<sup>3</sup> The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) trained Arabs, Afghans and Pakistani militants were organised to fight against the “infidel” and assisted the operations of the Mujahideen from the Jihadi components in the tribal areas of Pakistan. They established a very large secret infrastructure for training guerillas on the Pak-Afghan border. In these camps forces were trained to wage a war of urban terror and guided in tactics such as car, bicycle and camel bombings, and assassinations<sup>4</sup> whilst the US and Saudi Arabia provided financial support to the Afghan Mujahideen. The Afghans were happy to participate, as they viewed the invasion of Soviet Union as an attempt to conquer their country and substitute their religion and society with an alien ideology and social system.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jonathan F. Lenzner, “From a Pakistani Stationhouse to the Federal Courthouse: A Confession’s Uncertain Journey in the US-led War on Terror,” *Cardozo Journal of International and Comparative Law* (Summer 2004): 8, <http://heinonline.org/HOL/LandingPage?collection=journals&handle=hein.journals/cjic12&div=15&id=&page=> (accessed March 12, 2011).

<sup>2</sup> Fair C. Christine, “Cooperation with Pakistan and India: The Counter Terror Coalition,” *RAND*, [www.rand.org](http://www.rand.org) (accessed June 2011).

<sup>3</sup> Shuja Nawaz, “Learning by Doing the Pakistan Army’s Experience with Counterinsurgency,” *Atlantic Council*, February 2011, 5.

<sup>4</sup> Muhammad Amir Rana, “Dynamics of Taliban Insurgency in FATA,” *Pak Institute for Peace Studies* (PIPS), 46-47.

<sup>5</sup> Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: The Power of Militant Islam in Afghanistan and Beyond* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010), 13.

The country became a hotbed of proxy warfare by a number of external forces. The terrorists tried to foster sectarian and communal divisions, and also gained power as in helping them competing external powers pursued their own interests

After the withdrawal of Soviet Union in 1989, Pakistan assisted in forming an Afghan government in Kabul composed of war lords. But civil war broke out and they were replaced by the Taliban. However, the events of 9/11 changed the whole scenario turning erstwhile Mujahideen into terrorists. As a result the US and its coalition forces invaded Afghanistan and ousted the Taliban from power. The US and coalition forces launched Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) to save Americans from another 9/11. Pakistan supported and cooperated with the US and the coalition forces in OEF.

### **Operation Enduring Freedom Post-9/11**

The goal of invading Afghanistan after 9/11 was to dislodge the Taliban and to capture and kill al Qaeda operatives. The US succeeded in removing the Taliban but they re-emerged as a major force — particularly in the Pashtun regions.

Pakistan has also deployed a large number of troops along the Afghanistan border in support of OEF and employed a large portion of its logistical reserves to support the coalition.<sup>6</sup> The Taliban and al Qaeda members, on the other hand, have managed to re-assemble in the tribal areas between Afghanistan and Pakistan. In this war against the terrorist groups Pakistan has been able to kill and capture many top leaders of Taliban and al Qaeda.

As terrorist activity is increasing, the economy of Pakistan has been sliding downward. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) has fallen due to high level of security risk. The cumulative economic impact runs into billions of dollars and Pakistan is likely to continue to suffer as long as there is no peace in Afghanistan.<sup>7</sup>

### **World Response to Global War on Terror**

In the case of the 9/11 attacks, Taliban support of al Qaeda rose to neither the *Nicaraguan* level, nor to that of *Tadic*. Whilst it is true that the Taliban tolerated the presence of al Qaeda, and arguably offered it sanctuary, they exercised no

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<sup>6</sup> "International Contribution of the War against terrorism," (Extract) *IPRI Factfile* vol. VIII, no. 2 (February 2006):17, <http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Jun2002/d20020607contributions.pdf> (accessed August 2011).

<sup>7</sup> "Pakistan: A Victim of Terrorism," *IPRI Factfile* vol. III (December 2010): v, <http://ipripak.org/factfiles/ff129.pdf> (accessed August 2011).

meaningful control over the organization. Nor has any evidence materialized that the Taliban were complicit in the 9/11 attacks. Indeed, they did not even provide financing, training, or materiel to al Qaeda, standards which both the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and ICTY rejected as meeting the armed attack threshold. Quite the contrary, the Taliban were more dependent on al Qaeda for supporting them in their fight with the Northern Alliance, both in terms of financing and fielding the 055 Brigade.<sup>8</sup>

However, the international community fully supported strikes on the Taliban. Indeed, over a month after Operation Enduring Freedom began, the Security Council condemned the Taliban “for allowing Afghanistan to be used as a base for the export of terrorism by the al Qaeda network and other terrorist groups and for providing safe haven to Osama Bin Laden, al Qaeda and others associated with them.”

The ‘war on terror’ launched with a broad base of international support and the Northern Alliance ousted the Taliban from power. In all 33 countries sent their troops as part of International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). Germany, France, the Netherlands and a few other countries are contributing towards development assistance in Afghanistan.<sup>9</sup>

The government of Germany was not inclined to play a leading role as a combatant in the war against the Taliban. German forces were deployed in the Northern Province of Afghanistan in Mazar-i-Sharif and in Kanduz. Their main focus was on training the security forces and other developmental activities. The people of Germany did not support military deployment in Afghanistan, making it hard for the German government to extend military operations in the country.<sup>10</sup>

France offered limited support — Chirac delivered his message and provided military cooperation on the condition that France was to be consulted in advance of action and the goal of that action must clearly be directed at the elimination of terrorism.<sup>11</sup> But the next President, Nicolas Sarkozy, tried to strengthen France’s relations with the US. He made efforts to improve and strengthen the Atlantic Alliance and enhanced the French contribution to ISAF in Afghanistan. He increased the French forces by providing 3000 more personnel and sent trainers for the Afghan Army to help

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<sup>8</sup> Michael N. Schmitt, “Responding to Transnational Terrorism under the Jus Ad Bellum: A Normative Framework,” *Naval Law Review* (2008): 20.

<sup>9</sup> Lt. Gen. Talat Masood (ret), “Leading change and its impact on GWOT: International Perspective,” Margalla Paper 2008, *National Defence University*, Islamabad, 17.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>11</sup> Benedicte Suzan and Philip H. Gordon, “France, the United States and the War on Terror,” *Brookings*, January 1, 2002, [www.brookings.edu/articles/2002/0101france\\_gordon.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/articles/2002/0101france_gordon.aspx) (accessed April 14, 2011).

train them to fight against the Taliban. France also agreed to support reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan.<sup>12</sup>

However, no single European leader seems to be in a position to adopt a different or independent stance to that of the US. Although the European Union has emerged as a strong economic community, it is still far from becoming an autonomous military power, capable of taking a unified position on defence issues or on Global War on Terror.<sup>13</sup>

Russian President Vladimir Putin was the first foreign leader who condemned the incident of 9/11. Putin decried it as “Barbarous terrorist acts aimed against wholly innocent people,” and expressed Russia’s “deepest sympathies to the relatives of the victims of this tragedy, and the entire suffering American people.” However, Moscow faced an urgent practical question: What role should Russia play?<sup>14</sup>

### **Global War on Terror and Pakistan’s Position**

Due to its geographical location and its links to major regional players like India, Iran, Afghanistan and China, the US needed Pakistan’s support. Pakistan provided logistical support, intelligence sharing and air bases to the US and for NATO operations against al Qaeda and the Taliban. Pakistan provided different types of support demanded by the US such as, “over flight rights, access to Pakistani air, naval and land bases, crush the domestic elements who are in support of terrorism against Americans and its allies, end every logistic and diplomatic support to Taliban.”<sup>15</sup>

Former President, Pervez Musharraf, had already ended diplomatic relations with the Taliban Government due to growing instability in Afghanistan and accepted all the US’s demands without any hesitation. He justified it in a meeting with his generals and prominent politicians that “the US will react like a wounded bear and it will attack Afghanistan.”<sup>16</sup>

The whole world was now looking towards Pakistan and without its help it was unlikely the US would have been able to pursue its interests in the region. Pakistan’s contributions to the “war on terror” was pivotal and it is generally recognized that, “without the active and sincere participation of Pakistan, the desired results in terms of breaking the al Qaeda network could

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<sup>12</sup> Lt. Gen. Talat Masood, “Leading Change and its Impact on GWOT,” 18.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Peter Rutland, “Russia’s Response to US Regional Influence,” [se2.isn.ch/serviceengine/Files/.../en/Russia\\_Response\\_US.pdf](http://se2.isn.ch/serviceengine/Files/.../en/Russia_Response_US.pdf) (accessed September 2011).

<sup>15</sup> Hafeez Malik, *US Relations with Afghanistan and Pakistan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 188-189.

<sup>16</sup> Ahmed Rashid, *Decent into Chaos* (New York: Penguin Group, 2008), 120.

not have been achieved.”<sup>17</sup> This fact was also realized by the Americans and both countries were drawn into an intensive cooperative relationship. Instead of Iran, India, China and Central Asia, Pakistan became the frontline ally in eliminating al Qaeda and its network; as Ayaz Amir said, “the road to the Taliban, in American eyes, goes through Pakistan.”<sup>18</sup>

The US preferred Pakistan’s cooperation over India’s due to two reasons: one was Pakistan’s geographic proximity to Afghanistan and the second was that the Indian army was equipped with Russian weapons and training.<sup>19</sup> While many routes through Central Asia reach Afghanistan Pakistan bordered the country and already had links with the Taliban regime — a situation too significant to be overlooked. The US and NATO expenditure would be doubled if Pakistan had not cooperated. Although China has condemned the 9/11 attacks and has extended cooperation, China’s love-hate relationship with the US and its suspicion of the American presence in Afghanistan and Central Asia would have made operations in alliance with the Chinese too difficult.<sup>20</sup>

Also, Pakistan not only has a long border with Afghanistan but it has a long coastline which was very important for US forces and they stationed in the Indian Ocean if they wanted their forces to reach Afghanistan quickly and easily.<sup>21</sup>

The invasion of Afghanistan could not have been easily accomplished without the cooperation of Pakistan as expressed by an American journalist: “Powell had already told Bush that whatever action he took, it could not be done without Pakistan’s support. So the Pakistani had to be put on notice.”<sup>22</sup> The US leadership praised Pakistan for its contribution to the War on Terror. The Commander of the US Central Command, Gen. Abizaid, said, in January 2004, that Pakistan had done more for the United States in its fight against al Qaeda than any other country, and the US declared Pakistan as its key ally and upgraded it in June 2004 as a “major non-NATO ally.”<sup>23</sup>

This act of terrorism raised a wave of deep grief, anger and retaliation in the United States. Their first target from day one was Osama bin Laden’s al Qaeda movement about which they said that it was their first target. The

<sup>17</sup> Fazal-ur-Rehman, “Pakistan and the War on Terrorism,” *Strategic Studies*, vol. 23, no. 3 (Autumn 2003): 69.

<sup>18</sup> Quoted by Munawar Hussain, *Pak-US Cooperation in War against Terrorism: Causes and Implications* (Islamabad: Area Study Centre, Quaid-i-Azam University, 2005), 41.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 43.

<sup>22</sup> Bob Woodward, “Bush at War,” (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002), 58; Quoted by Munawar Hussain, *Pak-US Cooperation in War against Terrorism*, 44.

<sup>23</sup> K. Alan Kronstadt, “Terrorism in South Asia,” *CRS Report for Congress*, December 13, 2004.

second target were the Taliban who had given refuge to Osama and his network. The third target is the long war against terrorism at the international level. The thing to ponder is that in these three targets nobody is talking about war against Islam or the people of Afghanistan. Pakistan was being asked to support this campaign. What was this support? Generally speaking, these were three important things in which America was asking for Pakistan's help. First was intelligence and information exchange, second was the use of Pakistan's airspace and the third support in logistic.<sup>24</sup>

Due to diplomatic relations between Pakistan and the Taliban the US had been keen to get its support in the war against al Qaeda and its networks in Afghanistan. This relationship of Pakistan and the Taliban regime was very significant in pursuing US military and political interest in the region. The Taliban regime was basically run by the Pashtun, an ethnic group of Afghanistan, who have the same culture and traditions as the Pashtun's of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan in Pakistan. Most of the leaders of the Taliban regime graduated in Pakistani religious institutions and the Taliban leadership had good relations with the right wing Pakistani political and religious leadership.<sup>25</sup>

The US demanded that Pakistan cut themselves off completely from al Qaeda activity and break their diplomatic ties with the Taliban, freezing all their assets, stopping fuel supplies, provide the US with intelligence information about both organizations and allow it to use its airspace for offensive military operations in Afghanistan and bases for US forces in Pakistan, logistics, and the like.<sup>26</sup> Pakistan was thus the most useful ally in the international coalition which allowed it to pursue its own national interests as well as contributing to global peace and security. Pakistan's decision to join with the US was based on four incentives; the country's security; its economic revival; the security of its nuclear assets and the Kashmir cause.

The US Departments of State and Defense also praised Pakistan's support as an unprecedented level of cooperation in allowing the US to use their military bases, helping them identify and detain extremists and deploying tens of thousands of its own security forces to secure the AfPak border.<sup>27</sup>

### **Steps Taken by Pakistan after 9/11 Incident**

Pakistan supported all UN resolutions aimed at preventing terrorism. Pakistan was a signatory to ten out of twelve UN anti-terrorist conventions on the suppression of terrorism bombings, and it signed the OIC Convention on

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Munawar Hussain, *Pak-US Cooperation in War against Terrorism*, 44-45.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 63.

<sup>27</sup> K. Alan Kronstadt, "Terrorism in South Asia."

combating international terrorism.<sup>28</sup> The Government of Pakistan also took significant steps after 9/11 including:

1. Cooperation with the international coalition to curb terrorism.
2. Immigration control measures to keep a check on the movement of potential extremists.
3. Action against fanatical and extremist organizations and groups.
4. Detention of Jihadi leaders.
5. Banning Jihadi organizations.
6. Reformation and regulation of madrassahs encompassing:
  - (a) NOC (No Objection Certificate) for the opening of madrassahs.
  - (b) The registration of madrassahs.
  - (c) A review of their syllabi.
  - (d) A curb on the number of foreign students attending them.
7. Regulation of Mosques:
  - (a) NOC required for opening a mosque.
  - (b) Political activities in mosques made unlawful.
  - (c) The use of loudspeakers restricted to the Azaan (the call to prayer).

#### *Provision of Air Bases*

Pakistan allowed the US and its coalition forces to use its air bases/airfields in Pasni, Jacobabad, Shamsi and Dalbadin. Pakistan also permitted the US to land planes anywhere in Pakistan in the case of an emergency and access to Kohat and Zhob air bases was also provided.<sup>29</sup>

#### *Support of an Air Corridor*

Pakistan provided an air corridor for the use of the US and its coalition forces in launching air strikes on Afghanistan because it would have been difficult for the US to keep launching ground operations into Afghanistan. In providing such a resource Pakistan's government had to reschedule/redirect many commercial flights; 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of Pakistan airspace was provided to US forces for

<sup>28</sup> Dr. Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema, "Global War on Terror: Pakistan's Contributions," South Asian Strategic Stability Institute (SASSI), 11, [http://www.sassi.org/pdfs/Dr\\_Pervaiz\\_Cheema\\_Paper.pdf](http://www.sassi.org/pdfs/Dr_Pervaiz_Cheema_Paper.pdf) (accessed August 6, 2011).

<sup>29</sup> "Pakistan Must Evict US from Secret Base," *Press TV*, July 9, 2011, <http://www.presstv.com/detail/188351.html> (accessed July 15, 2011).



OEF operations and about seven thousand air force personnel were allocated to the role.<sup>30</sup>

#### *Support of Naval Facilities*

Pakistan's Naval forces extended support to the US and coalition forces in landing ships at Pasni and even curtailed its training operations in order to accommodate the US and Coalition Navies. It is reported that twenty five thousand Pakistan Navy personnel, 50 aircraft and 2,000 Coalition military personnel were imbedded in these locations, using up to 100,000 gallons of fuel a day. The US Amphibious task force (TF 58) was involved for a hundred days of surface operations and landed 275 craft for offloading. US 400 C-17 and C-130 helicopters were used in various sorties and about 8000 Marines, 330 vehicles and 1350 tons of cargo were regularly used throughout the operation, with one officer from Florida stating that "these efforts may be the largest amphibious operation conducted by the US Marine Corp since the Korean War."<sup>31</sup>

#### *Support for Logistic Supply by Road*

For logistic support by road, Pakistan allowed the US and NATO to use Pakistani supply routes for about 75 per cent of its gas, food and military equipment requirements. This supply route made a significant contribution to the success of operations in Afghanistan, but many were destroyed or damaged by tribal militants.<sup>32</sup>

#### *Sharing Intelligence Information*

Pakistan provided the US with vital information on various terrorist and extremist outfits helping avert terrorist attacks and facilitating arrests that broke the back bone of major terrorist organizations. In August 2006 Pakistan shared its intelligence information with the UK and played a pivotal role in attack prevention, allowing them to take pre-emptive action against terrorists planning to use chemical explosives on a civil airplane.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> "Pakistan," *United States Central Command*, <http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/pakistan-uscentcom.htm> (accessed August 6, 2011).

<sup>31</sup> C. Christine Fair, "The Counter terror Coalition Cooperation with Pakistan and India," 27-33.

<sup>32</sup> "Pakistan's Role in Global War on Terrorism: and Areas of Clash with United States," *Pakistan Defence*, <http://www.defence.pk/forums/strategic-geopolitical-issues/29111-pakistan-s-role-global-war-terrorism-areas-clash-united-states.html> (accessed August 6, 2011).

<sup>33</sup> Dr. Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema, "Global War on Terror."

### *Support in Operation Enduring Freedom*

Pakistan extended its support to the OEF. The air bases of Dalbandin and Jacobabad were very close to Afghanistan and proved vital when the US launched its major military operations, of which there were more than 57,000 attacks from these bases. Pakistan allowed the US military to instal radar at three of its airfields, enabling the latter to cover Pakistan's whole airspace. Additionally, Pakistan deployed more than 115,000 army and paramilitary forces along the Afghan and Iranian borders to arrest al Qaeda and Taliban militants trying to cross over. As a result of the US OEF, more than 3500 members of al Qaeda were caught trying to escape in to Pakistan.<sup>34</sup>

The inaugural meeting of the Defense Cooperation Group (DCG) was held in September 2002 and was comprised of a two-day session, including discussions on military cooperation, security assistance, and anti-terrorism. It provided an excellent forum for the exchange of views on security matters and following on from this meeting joint US-Pakistan Military Exercises were launched in October 2002, in which 120 soldiers from each country participated in what was called Inspired Gambit III.<sup>35</sup>

Pakistan and the US also established a joint working group on counter-terrorism and law enforcement. Their main agenda was bilateral law enforcement issues such as counter-terrorism, counter-narcotics, extradition, people-trafficking, money laundering, drug cartels and drug abuse control, poppy eradication, police and legal system reforms and issues related to the repatriation of Pakistani nationals detained in the US. Both countries agreed to enhance mutual cooperation and work together in all these areas to make them stronger and more effective.<sup>36</sup>

Collaboration of the Intelligence Agencies also proved a great success with the CIA and law enforcement agents worked together with the Pakistani authorities successfully flushing out al Qaeda and Taliban militants from all over Pakistan.<sup>37</sup>

### *Banning of Militant Organizations*

On January 12, 2002 Pakistan banned religious militant organizations and took measures to prevent their formation under other names and collecting open donations for their activities. Lashka-e-Jhangvi, Sipah-e-Muhammad, Sipah-e-Sahaba, TJP, Tehrik-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat Muhammadi (TNSM), Jaish-e-

<sup>34</sup> "Pakistan's War on Terror," *IPRI Factfile*, vol. VIII, no. 2 (February 2006): 28.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

<sup>36</sup> Sadia Akram, "Pakistan's Role in War against Terrorism after 9/11," (dissertation, National Institute of Pakistan Studies, Quid-i-Azam University Islamabad, 2009), 79-80.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 80.

Muhammad, and Lashkar-e-Taiba have all been banned by the government of Pakistan.<sup>38</sup>

#### *Deployment of Army at Afghan Border*

Pakistan has deployed more than 120,000 soldiers along the Pak-Afghan border. Pakistan had never had experience prior to this of deploying of its troops to fight non state actors in mountainous tribal areas. It had to set up around 100 check posts to monitor the movement of militants across the border — not an easy job in such inhospitable terrain with its inadequate infrastructures and the constant threat from seven major tribal agencies.<sup>39</sup> Former President Pervez Musharraf stated in his inauguration address that; “we have attacked the terrorists in our mountains. That was not easy job to enter into an area where even the British did not go in the colonial period of over centuries. And we entered this area with the whole army in all the seven Tribal Agencies. And we dared to launch an operation there in one of the Agencies, the South Waziristan Agency. We have captured, seized all the valleys in South Waziristan agency where they have established sanctuaries.”<sup>40</sup>

#### *Operations against al Qaeda and its Network*

Pakistan has made a very important contribution in restraining and marginalizing al Qaeda whose leaders and operatives have been arrested or killed as a direct result of strong security and administrative actions.

People from Afghanistan, along with members of al Qaeda and other terrorists, were forced by the conflict to retreat to the more lawless regions of Pakistan and mixed with local tribes. This situation created problems for Pakistan's administration, and the US increased pressure on former President Parvez Musharraf to launch military operations in the tribal areas in 2002. It was from that date that terrorist attacks really took off in Pakistan. Despite great sacrifices Pakistan still succeeded in capturing more than 400 al Qaeda and Taliban members and killing many in 2003. In 2004 Pakistan launched its military operation in the tribal region of North Waziristan, in which Pakistan security forces killed more than 300 foreign fighters and al Qaeda suspects. Although these operations were successful they generated a great deal of resentment from the people and religious political parties of Pakistan. In response the people from those tribal areas took arms against the Pakistani

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<sup>38</sup> “Pakistan: Countering Global Terrorism,” *Institute of Regional Studies*, Islamabad, 16.

<sup>39</sup> Dr. Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema, “Global War on Terror,” 11.

<sup>40</sup> Pervez Musharraf (former President) on the role of Pakistan in WOT, Inaugural address in the seminar, “Global Terrorism: Genesis, Implications, Remedial and Countermeasures,” organized jointly by Institute of Regional Studies and Hanns Seidel Foundation, Munich, Islamabad, August 29-31, 2005, 8.

forces and inflicted huge losses as acknowledged by the US State Department Coordinator for Counter Terrorism, Daniel Benjamin, who in his statement admitted that, “Pakistan has suffered grievously from militancy and I believe that Pakistan’s leadership understands very well the nature of threat and the imperative to combat it.”<sup>41</sup>

Consequently, Pakistan’s army succeeded in capturing about 600 foreign militants out of 6000 and killing 150 during operations throughout 2005, though 200 Pakistanis lost their lives in doing so. Arguably, such actions prove that Pakistan has contributed to the War on Terror more than any other ally of US and paid a great price in doing so.<sup>42</sup> On Pakistan’s role against global terrorism, Former President, Pervez Musharraf said: “We have broken the back of al Qaeda and destroyed its vertical and horizontal communication links. We have captured more than 700 terror operatives.” He further said that, “I can challenge that no other country has done more than Pakistan in the counter-terror campaign.”<sup>43</sup>

#### *Operations in the Tribal Areas*

As a result of the US invasion of Afghanistan, al Qaeda and the Taliban entered the lawless tribal regions of Pakistan where no regular Pakistani armed forces had yet been deployed. Afghan leaders and fighters who had fought against the Red Army returned to fight against US and Coalition forces in Afghanistan. The tribal people welcomed them according to their traditional codes of Pashtunwali life. They consolidated their existing network of facilitators and sympathisers and when Pakistan deployed its regular army to clear the region of militants and al Qaeda’s members, Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) emerged led by Baitullah Mehsud after Nek Muhammad was killed in action. From 2006 the TTP started to attract militants and rebellious groups from Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to fight against the Pakistani army and installations. For the first time Pakistan had to fight against home-grown insurgents.<sup>44</sup>

Pakistan initiated a peace dialogue with the Baitullah Mehsud-led Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) but these were set aside under pressure from the US. The fundamental objectives of the TTP were to enforce Shariah (Islamic Law), unite against NATO forces and carry out a defensive jihad

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<sup>41</sup> Syed Moazzam Hashmi, “War on Terror Costs Pakistan Heavily,” *Yangtze Yan*, [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/world/2010-12/14/c\\_13648334.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/world/2010-12/14/c_13648334.htm) (accessed September 4, 2011).

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> “Global Terrorism, Genesis, Implication, Remedial and Countermeasures,” *Institute of Regional Studies*, 2009, viii.

<sup>44</sup> Shuja Nawaz, “Learning by Doing the Pakistan Army’s Experience with Counterinsurgency.”

against the Pakistani army. The US had grave concerns about the ongoing negotiations due to the TTP leader Baitullah Mehsud's announcement of a jihad against the US and Coalition forces in Afghanistan. The situation became even more unfavorable when the US killed eleven Pakistani soldiers in an air strike on a paramilitary check-post. Although Pakistan reacted angrily to the incident, the US insisted it had informed them of the attack well in advance.<sup>45</sup>

Pakistan conducted peace agreements with the Taliban but when they violated the Nizam-e-Adl Regulation 2009 in the Malakand Division, Pakistan took the strategic decision to launch military operations aimed at marginalising and eliminating terrorist outfits from tribal areas. The government also took the decision to have a consistent policy of non-reconciliation with militants and the Army has launched a number of military operations in FATA, Malakand and Swat regions since 2002. The military operations had three phases: the first to dismantle al Qaeda and Taliban networks, the second focused on gathering information about the Taliban and the third to launch military operations.<sup>46</sup>

The operations in South Waziristan were initially unsuccessful - many Pakistani soldiers lost their lives in search operations or surrendered to the militants. The reason was that "the Pakistan Army was neither well-equipped nor properly trained for frontier warfare. It lacked mobility both on the ground and in the air. A limited helicopter fleet, including a squadron supplied by the United States that was based in Tarbela — far from the FATA, and responsible for supporting a wide arc of close to 800 miles of territory abutting Afghanistan — was inadequate for the task."<sup>47</sup> From 2001 onwards the Pakistan Army and security forces conducted six more major military operations:

1. Al-Mizan Operation (The Balance) was conducted in South Waziristan in 2001-02.
2. Sherdil Operation (Lion-heart) was launched in Bajaur in 2007.
3. Zalzala Operation (Earthquake) was conducted in South Waziristan in 2008.
4. Rah-e-Haq Operation (The True Path) was launched in Malakand and Swat in 2008.
5. Rah-e-Rast Operation (The Correct Path) was launched in Malakand and Swat in 2009.

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<sup>45</sup> Faryal Leghari, "Dealing with FATA: Strategic Shortfalls and Recommendations, Perspective on Terrorism," *A Journal of the Terrorism initiatives*, vol. 2, no. 10, <http://www.terrorismanalysts.com/pt/index.php/pot/article/view/54/html> (accessed August 4, 2011).

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Shuja Nawaz, "Learning by Doing the Pakistan Army's Experience with Counterinsurgency."

6. Rah-e-Nejaat (The Path to Salvation) was conducted in South Waziristan in 2010.

There were also a number of minor operations going on against militant groups such as Sirat-e-Mustaqeem, Darghalam, Bia-Darghalam and Kwakhbadesham in the Khyber Agency. Operation Rah-e-Rast was the most successful in restoring the writ of the government in the Malakand Division and dislodging the militants' infrastructure in the area. Compared to 313 operational attacks conducted in the previous year, 596 operational attacks were launched by security forces in 2009. During the year, 12,866 militants were arrested including 75 al Qaeda and 9,739 local Taliban and militants belonging to other banned groups and Baloch insurgents. The Taliban militants had to change their tactics, relying more on coordinated attacks instead of using lone suicide bombers.<sup>48</sup>

The Pakistan army had already conducted three previous operations in Swat prior to the Rah-e-Rast, with little achievement. The common public perception had been that every time an operation ended, "the Taliban emerged stronger than before." Pakistan had deployed 100,000 soldiers with two division size forces in FATA in 2007-2008 for the operation in South Waziristan. The army conducting the operation included 38 surgical air attacks by the Pakistan air force and 25 land operations in which 930 militants including 508 foreigners had been killed. But the withdrawal from the FATA checkpoints gave space to the TTP.<sup>49</sup> Eventually the Taliban became more aggressive and started beheadings in Mingora.<sup>50</sup> As already pointed out the reason was that the Pakistan Army was neither well-equipped nor properly trained for frontier warfare. It lacked mobility both on the ground and in the air.<sup>51</sup> But the army set up border posts along the Afghan frontier, in very rough terrain, and discovered the difficulty of visually policing an area characterized by tall mountains and deep ravines. In short, it was impossible to effectively seal the frontier even with well nigh one thousand posts strung along the border. And also these separately located posts were often found in territories under the influence of local tribal leaders and war lords, and the army had to make deals with them just to allow supplies through to Pakistani forces. A unique situation was created for Pakistani forces. On the one hand they were making peace agreements with the tribal forces, and on the other they were trying to prevent FATA from being used as a sanctuary for

<sup>48</sup> "Pakistan Security Report 2009," *Pak Institute for Peace Studies* (PIPS), January, 2010.

<sup>49</sup> Faryal Leghari, "Dealing with FATA: Strategic Shortfalls and Recommendations, Perspective on Terrorism."

<sup>50</sup> Syed Manzar Abbas Zaidi, "Pakistan's Anti-Taliban Counter-Insurgency" *RUSI Journal* (Feb/March 2010): 14.

<sup>51</sup> Shuja Nawaz, "Learning by Doing the Pakistan Army's Experience with Counterinsurgency."

terrorists. Another reason was that the initial supply of limited night-vision devices provided by the US was of 1970s vintage. The devices were impossible to use in moonlight and the US finally demanded that the devices be collected and brought to a single location periodically so that they could verify that they had not been relocated to the eastern frontier with India. Apart from fuelling mistrust between the “allies,” these measures also reduced the efficacy of the equipment.<sup>52</sup>

#### *Rah-e-Rast Operation*

The Rah-e-Rast operation was launched in 2009 and proved a remarkable success in Pakistan's counter insurgency campaign. The operation succeeded thanks to the strategy of targeting weapons, ammunition dumps, caves and training centers. Cobra gunships targeted only small houses in the main cities of Sultanwas, Matta and Mingora, while in Kanju, Kabal and also in Mingora the land forces fought hand-to-hand. The Pakistani Army took a calculated risk that the Taliban would abandon their garrison positions in congested areas in order to launch direct attacks and so help avoid collateral damage. But they miscalculated as due to insufficient resources the road exits and mountain passes had not all been blocked. Eventually a large number of Taliban disappeared in pickup vehicles that could not be monitored without more helicopter coverage. Rah-e-Rast was operated more critically than other operations, as security forces were able to arrest high level militants and to dislodge the Taliban from their positions, forcing them to flee.<sup>53</sup>

In Rah-e-Rast the army adopted a strategy of dividing Swat into northern and southern regions and deployed one and a half divisions of troops into each one. These troops numbered in excess of 52,000, including two wings of FC and special service commandos. The army also cleared the area before launching military operations and displaced 3,000,000 people. Two million shifted to official camps and after air strikes supported by infantry attacks, the army was able to clear the area from militants, though it failed to arrest the TNSM leadership. It was believed that the TNSM had fled to Afghanistan through Dir. They also inflicted casualties on the army using their knowledge of the terrain, employing Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and booby traps. The army assisted with relocating displaced people back into Swat and Malakand and by doing this the army realized that the assistance of the civilians was important to the success of a military operation.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>53</sup> Syed Manzar Abbas Zaidi, “Pakistan's Anti-Taliban Counter-Insurgency,” 14.

<sup>54</sup> Shuja Nawaz, “Learning by Doing the Pakistan Army's Experience with Counterinsurgency.”

*Rah-e-Nijat*

The main domain of the TTP and other militants was South Waziristan — the area the Mehsud tribe used for attacks and suicide bombings. The Pakistan government was not ready to start this operation as 20,000 of its men were already deployed in different areas of Swat. But Rah-e-Nijat (The Path of Salvation) was launched on October 17, 2009 to fight the militants in Waziristan to ensure the success of the Rah-e-Rast operation in Swat. They succeeded in recapturing the ground lost to the Taliban. In this operation about 30,000 troops participated in the tribal belt of South Waziristan. Rah-e-Nijat was launched mainly in the Mehsud region and it was believed that there were 10,000 militants and about 1500 foreign militants in the area, most of them Uzbeks. In total more than six hundred militants were killed. The leader of the TTP Baitullah Mehsud was also killed in a drone missile strike in August. Without any tough resistance, the Pakistan army retook significant areas in four weeks such as Makeen, Kanigaram, Laddah, Kotkai and Sararogha. But the leaderships of the TTP — Hakimullah Mehsud and Wali-ur-Rahman — fled to safe areas from where they initiated terrorist attacks and suicide bombings all over the country.<sup>55</sup> According to Wali-ur-Rehman, thousands of TTP militants had been sent to Afghanistan and that the move was consistent with Taliban strategy of waging a guerrilla war. He also claimed that the Taliban were still strong in South Waziristan as their retreat had been a tactical withdrawal in the wake of the Rah-e-Nijat operation.<sup>56</sup>

*Search Operations*

Pakistan's security forces conducted 464 search operations in 2009 in different areas of the country, FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa proving the most volatile regions.<sup>57</sup> A huge number of explosive devices and detonators, improvised explosive devices, antipersonnel and anti-tank landmines, guns — including anti-aircraft guns — suicide vests, rocket launchers, mortar shells, hand grenades, timed devices and hideout maps were seized by the security forces in search operations. The security forces seized 60,000 kgs of illegal explosive materials in DG Khan alone.<sup>58</sup> In 2009, 21 suicide bombs were foiled in different parts of Pakistan. The security forces captured two trucks full of explosives and weapons made in India from Landi Kotal. In these search operations 2,595 militants from different groups surrendered.<sup>59</sup> In 2010 in all 435 search operations were conducted by the security forces. The

<sup>55</sup> Syed Manzar Abbas Zaidi, "Pakistan's Anti-Taliban Counter-Insurgency," 14-15.

<sup>56</sup> Abdul Basit, "Dynamics of Taliban Insurgency in FATA," *Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies* (PIPS), 103-104.

<sup>57</sup> "Security Report 2009," *Pak Institute for Peace Studies*, 29.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.



security forces recovered suicide jackets, explosives, weapons and NATO goods.<sup>60</sup>

### **Pakistan's Contribution in Holding Peace Agreements**

Pakistan tried its best to bring peace to the region and for this purpose conducted peace dialogues and started reconciliation efforts. It regarded peace agreements as the corner stone for stability and a long time solution to the conflict. In order to achieve it the Pakistan government signed a number of different accords with tribal elders including:

#### *Agreement with Local Tribes*

On June 27, 2002 the Pakistani Army entered into an agreement with the local tribes of South Waziristan. It agreed that the house and property of any person found harbouring a foreigner would be destroyed.<sup>61</sup>

#### *Shakai Agreement*

Pakistan signed an agreement with Nek Muhammad in 2004 at Shakai in Waziristan Agency. The terms of the agreement were that the security forces would leave the area immediately after the announcement of the agreement. The government would pay compensation for the deaths and loss of the property suffered by the tribes during military operations. The government would release all the innocent people it had arrested and would henceforth minimize its interference in tribal affairs. The government would give a one month deadline to foreign elements to voluntarily surrender to the government or announce to start leading a life in accordance with the law after registration with the authorities. The tribes would not conduct any violent activity in Pakistan, nor allow the use of their area against any other country.<sup>62</sup> These agreements were concluded because it was Pakistan's belief that force alone cannot bring peace. But Pakistan's peace efforts were sabotaged by the US missile strike from a drone that killed Nek Muhammad. Pakistan was thus unable to pursue further peace agreements with other leaders of the Taliban and Pakistan military force and installations came under intense attacks. Yet, Pakistan did not stop its efforts in holding peace agreements and constantly tried to bring stability to the region and reach an agreement with the second leader of TTP.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>61</sup> Muhammad Amir Rana, "Dynamics of Taliban Insurgency in FATA," 232.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 232.

<sup>63</sup> Masood Khan, "Pakistan's Role in Global War on Terrorism and Areas of Clash with United States."

### *Agreements with Ahmedzai Tribes*

The Government of Pakistan made two peace agreements with Ahmedzai Wazir militants and Ahmedzai tribes in South Waziristan in October and November 2004.<sup>64</sup> The terms of the agreement demanded that economic sanctions imposed on Waziristan were lifted and all detained tribesmen released in return for the cessation of attacks on Pakistan's forces. The Ahmedzai Wazirs also agreed to cooperate in tracking down militants. The government ended the check post at Angor Adda, a border area near Wana. The situation changed when the militants resumed attacks on army camps. Then the government conducted an agreement with Ahmedzai tribes in November 2004. In this agreement the Ahmedzai tribe committed to hand over six wanted militants to the government. The tribesmen agreed not to attack government installations and forces, and not to use Pakistani territory to attack any foreign forces.

### *Sararogha Peace Agreement*

In February 2005 Pakistan reached a peace agreement with Baitullah Mehsud at Sararogha in Waziristan. This agreement came into existence after severe conflicts with tribes in Waziristan. Maulana Fazlur Rehman, leader of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI), played his role in mediating the agreement and the ceremony ended with shouts of "Death to America!"<sup>65</sup> Due to the high number of civilian and armed forces' casualties, the government was forced to bring these warring groups to a peace agreement. In order to avoid further army and civilian bloodshed, the government entered into this agreement and put some conditions on Baitullah Mehsud and his tribe to stop attacks on government installations and army check points, also asking for assurance that foreign militants would live peacefully. The government offered that it would not hand over them to any other country. This agreement also failed when Baitullah's tribe broke the conditions of the agreement resulting in clashes with the army and FC.<sup>66</sup>

### *Miramshah Agreement*

In 2006, the government of Pakistan entered into an agreement with local commanders of the Taliban to withdraw troops from the region, release 165

<sup>64</sup> Muhammad Amir Rana, "Dynamics of Taliban Insurgency in FATA," 233.

<sup>65</sup> Mir Amir, "War and Peace in Waziristan," *Asia Times* (online) [http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South\\_Asia/GE04Df03.html](http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/GE04Df03.html) (accessed August 6, 2011).

<sup>66</sup> Muhammad Amir Rana, "Dynamics of Taliban Insurgency in FATA," 232; also see, Masood Khan, "Pakistan's Role in Global War on Terrorism and Areas of Clash with United States."

detainees, return their weapons and abolish twelve check points. According to a Taliban statement they had also been assured by the Jirga that the government would compensate them for losses suffered during military operations. In February 2008, the government revived the same agreement with the Dawar and Wazir sub-tribes of the Utmanzai tribe, which applied to the whole of North Waziristan, Miranshah and Mirali.<sup>67</sup>

#### *Bajaur Agreement*

On February 23, 2009, Pakistan made an agreement with Taliban militants in the Bajaur Agency in an attempt to bring peace to this troubled area. The government promised to compensate militants and tribesmen for the loss of life and property during military operations. All government employees dismissed on suspicion of having links with the Taliban were reinstated in their roles. The Taliban also agreed to back down on their demands for the army to be pulled out of the Bajaur and agreed not to hinder troop movements in the area.<sup>68</sup> On March 11, 2009 another agreement, held between political administrators and the Khar, Salarzai, Utmanzai tribes of the Bajaur Agency, decided that all militant organizations should be abolished and their members surrendered to both the tribal leaders and the government. The Taliban would then lay down their weapons and be registered with their respective tribes, while the elders would furnish surety bonds for their good behaviour. Parallel courts would not be established nor the government's writ challenged in any other manner. Foreign elements — including Afghan nationals — would not be provided with shelter and that shops or houses would not be rented out to them. Government officials and security forces personnel would not be targeted or abducted and government installations, including buildings of schools, colleges, hospitals and check points, would not be attacked. The security forces would have the freedom to move freely about the agency and if attacked would be entitled to retaliate. Terrorists would not be allowed to use the area for sabotage activities and the tribesmen would be bound to restrict cross-border movement and the infiltration or interference in the affairs of other countries. The government would carry out development work in the area after peace had been restored.<sup>69</sup>

#### *Agreement with the Taliban of Swat/Malakand Division*

The government made an agreement with Suifi Muhammad, chief of TNSM on February 16, 2009.<sup>70</sup> The people of Swat and the Malakand Division were happy with the existing system and demanded justice system be set up according to Shariah Law. The Taliban also demanded the same system to be implemented. It was agreed that government would not launch a military

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 234.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 234-235.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 235.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

operation in the area and Shariah would be imposed in Malakand. In return, the TNSM agreed not to conduct any activity against the military or the government. In order to bring peace and stability to the region, the government agreed to implement the Nizam-e-Adel Regulation in Swat and the Malakand Division according to the militants' demand. But even so, the Taliban continued their activities and took the law into their own hands. Consequently the government was forced to launch military operation.<sup>71</sup>

### **Conclusion/Recommendations**

A lot of discussion has been made through print and electronic media that war is not the solution of the problem. Many seminars and lectures have been delivered that political dialogue and reconciliation is the only solution to eliminate terrorism because killing of one militant produces ten more militants who emerge stronger than before. Such an environment helps the militant organizations to advance their agenda and promote their cause. For elimination of militancy and terrorism, Pakistan and the international community have, therefore, to initiate coherent and meaningful consultations with tribal leaders, democratic parties, civil society organizations, academia, think tanks and professionals.

Dialogue and peace negotiations should be used as a tool to eliminate the causes of terrorism. It is a general rule that when people are treated with dignity, kindness and respect, they become friends and when they are treated with aggression and arrogance they turn into enemies. Therefore human and economic resources that are wasted on fighting long wars and aggression can be better spent on the much needed sectors like education, healthcare and poverty eradication.

All religions and particularly Islam, do not preach the killing of innocent people. Therefore a joint struggle is needed to make people understand that religion is not the cause, but it is a pretext used by the terrorists to accomplish their own agenda. That is why there is a dire need of developing a strategy to achieve success in gaining peace and security in the region. It is a war that needs internal, as well as external cooperation. All regional and international powers share a vested interest in peace in this region and this can only be obtained by cooperation, dialogue and a sincere endeavour to solve the disputed issues causing extremism and terrorism. ■

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<sup>71</sup> Masoodur Rehman, "US War on Terrorism: Implications for Afghanistan and Pakistan," (dissertation, Department of defence Strategic Studies, QAU, Islamabad, 2010), 72, Muhammad Amir Rana, "Dynamics of Taliban Insurgency in FATA," 235.