



FROM THE OFFICE OF JOHN F. TIERNEY  
*Representing Massachusetts's 6<sup>th</sup> District*

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**NATIONAL SECURITY SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING**  
*"Pakistan at the Crossroads; Afghanistan in the Balance"*

WASHINGTON, DC — Today, the National Security and Foreign Affairs Subcommittee held an oversight hearing to explore the Administration's policies toward Pakistan at a time of internal crisis with international ramifications. The hearing featured Assistant Secretary Richard A. Boucher, who serves as the Bush Administration's point person on Pakistan policy and just returned from his third diplomatic trip of the year to Pakistan.

*A copy of Chairman Tierney's opening statement as prepared for delivery is below:*

**Statement of John F. Tierney**  
**Chairman**  
**Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs**  
**Hearing on "Pakistan at the Crossroads; Afghanistan in the Balance"**  
**As Prepared for Delivery**  
**July 12, 2007**

Good morning. Today the Subcommittee continues our sustained oversight of U.S. policy toward Pakistan.

We do so for two fundamental reasons. First, Pakistan has been and remains absolutely vital for U.S. national security. The 9/11 Commission stressed, and I quote: "[i]t is hard to overstate the importance of Pakistan in the struggle against Islamic terrorism." More recently, Fareed Zakaria, among others, has reiterated that Pakistan should be considered the "central front in the war on terror."

Secondly, Pakistan finds itself at the most important crossroads it has faced in years, and it is absolutely vital that we in the United States government seize this opportunity to ask ourselves whether current U.S. policy needs to be reassessed in order to best ensure long-term U.S. national security interests.

Pakistan faces this crossroads as it rounds the bend into upcoming national elections; a crossroads represented by two ongoing dramas: (1) the full-blown judicial crisis precipitated by President Musharraf's suspension of Chief Justice Iftikhar Chaudhry and

(2) the fallout from the bloody conclusion to the tense standoff with extremists at Islamabad's Red Mosque.

Protests of President Musharraf's suspension of the Chief Justice are populated by lawyers and proponents of a robust civil society, judicial independence, and democratic rule of law, while those rising in support of the Red Mosque are populated by extremists and jihadis who wish to impose a repressive view of Islam on all Pakistanis.

This Subcommittee's May hearing focused on the links between Pakistan's rising tide of extremism and its relation to a failing Pakistani education system. The Red Mosque is merely a stark symbol of a deeper and more pervasive problem in Pakistan, where there are far more jihadis, extremist madrassas, al Qaeda operatives, Taliban safe havens, and international terrorist training camps than Pakistani government officials are willing to admit. In fact, just two months ago our own State Department concluded, "Pakistan remains a major source of Islamic extremism and a safe haven for some top terrorist leaders."

And it is vitally clear that extremism in Pakistan is of immediate concern to U.S. interests, including by having fueled a resurgence of violence in Afghanistan. The 9/11 Public Discourse Project warned that Musharraf, and I quote, "has not shut down extremist-linked madrassas or terrorist camps. Taliban forces still pass freely across the Pakistan-Afghanistan border and operate in Pakistani tribal areas." And these border groups gained political legitimacy last year when Musharraf signed a series of dubious peace deals with the Pakistani Taliban.

Pakistan's intensifying extremism also has consequences that reach far beyond Afghanistan. The 7/7/2005 London subway terrorist bombings and a later incident involving fertilizer-bombs both involved terrorists who had attended Pakistani madrasses and training camps.

Due to President Musharraf's tepid cooperation in controlling extremism and disrupting terror networks – along with signs that these crises have compromised his grip on power – there is a growing chorus calling for a significant reevaluation of U.S. policy toward Pakistan.

This past Monday alone, critical editorials ran in both the Washington Post and the New York Times. The Times noted, and I quote, "America needs to maintain friendly relations with Pakistan. This is exactly why Washington should hasten to disentangle itself from the sinking fortunes of General Pervez Musharraf – a blundering and increasingly unpopular military dictator and a halfhearted strategic ally of the United States."

The Washington Post editorial stressed their view of the Administration's policy this way, and I quote: "Pakistan's Pervez Musharraf is running out of supporters – except in Washington."

Today's hearing presents an opportunity to explore a whole slew of critical questions with the Administration's point person on Pakistan.

- For example, where does Pakistan's cooperation against international terrorism stand, especially in light of the spread of jihadi extremism in Pakistan, and what impact does this have on U.S. forces and efforts in Afghanistan and elsewhere in the world?
- Is our current aid package to Pakistan – one in which we are providing at least 10 times more for military aid than for basic education assistance – in the best long-term interests of U.S. national security?
- What should U.S. policy be with respect to Pakistan's civil society in light of the escalating crisis following President Musharraf's dismissal of the Chief Justice of Pakistan's Supreme Court?
- And what is the U.S. doing to help ensure that the upcoming Pakistani national elections occur and are free and fair – from voter registration to vote tally – and what are the consequences for President Musharraf if they are not?

The people of Pakistan stand at a crossroads, and U.S. efforts in Afghanistan and the world's success against international terrorism hang in the balance.

This Congressman feels that the United States needs to send a powerful message at this critical juncture that we stand shoulder-to-shoulder with our brothers and sisters in Pakistan in their pursuit of education for their children and democracy for their country.

It has often been said that Pakistan is a place of breathtaking complexity. It is in part because of this that our long-term national security interests are best served by forging bonds with the Pakistani people and not with any, one, particular leader.

I am pleased that our State Department's Pakistan point person is with us today in order to present the Administration's viewpoint and to engage in what I hope will be a robust discussion.