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Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee:

Thank you for inviting me to testify. As requested, I will focus my remarks on nuclear safety and security in Pakistan, and what further steps the United States and Pakistan might consider to reduce the likelihood that Pakistan’s nuclear weapons and bomb-grade fissile material might fall into the hands of extremist elements.

There is much we do not know about the stewardship of Pakistan’s nuclear arsenal. Stewardship arrangements changed for the better after national leaders could no longer plausibly deny the evidence regarding A.Q. Khan’s misdeeds. Subsequently, public statements by authoritative Pakistani officials have mostly been confined to organizational matters, but very little else, leaving much room for conjecture.

Current events in Pakistan provide ample grounds for further uncertainty. The country’s political leadership is unsettled, especially with respect to relations among Pakistan’s President, Prime Minister, and Chief of Army Staff. All three positions have key roles in Pakistan’s National Command Authority, which oversees all matters pertaining to nuclear weapons. Control over the nation’s nuclear assets will remain in the hands of the military, even if the locus of power shifts away from the President.

The assessments that follow cannot be provided with a high degree of confidence. I can, however, offer educated guesses based on the Stimson Center's work for over fifteen years with colleagues in Pakistan to reduce nuclear dangers on the Subcontinent. In 1995, Stimson began to host Pakistani military officers from the Strategic Plans Division at Joint Staff Headquarters. The SPD now handles most nuclear-related matters. Pakistan also has a Strategic Command responsible for operational matters. In 2006, Stimson began to host Visiting Fellows from Pakistan's Nuclear Regulatory Authority, which looks after civil nuclear facilities. One of the PNRA's responsibilities is to help prevent acts of terrorism against these facilities.

Pakistan's nuclear assets are its most closely guarded man-made objects. My sense is that the guardians of these "crown jewels" are now subject to improved personnel reliability screening procedures, and that security practices at sensitive sites have also been upgraded. The United States has over six decades of experience regarding security arrangements for nuclear weapons. We have developed a body of knowledge regarding best practices that might be of interest to other nations. (Clearly, the keepers of the U.S. nuclear arsenal need to relearn these lessons, given grave lapses in U.S. security procedures in the recent past.)

At first, I suspect that it was not easy to have official discussions with Pakistanis on best practices for nuclear security. There is very great suspicion in Pakistan about U.S. intentions regarding its nuclear assets. One example: When General Pervez Musharraf announced to the nation that he was severing ties with the Taliban and joining forces with the Bush administration's "war on terror," one reason he gave for doing so was that to rebuff Washington's demands could jeopardize Pakistan's strategic assets.

Pakistan's mistrust of the United States grows with every press report or idle comment about U.S. contingency plans to "seize" or

otherwise take action against Pakistan's nuclear assets in the event of an imminent breakdown of governmental authority or a prospective rise of Islamist extremists into leadership positions.

I do not know whether such plans exist. I do believe, however, that if such plans exist and if they were to be executed, the results would almost certainly be catastrophic for Pakistan, India, and the United States. I also believe that speculation regarding U.S. contingency plans reinforces the natural instinct of Pakistani military authorities to keep U.S. officials at a very "safe distance" from their nuclear assets.

Providing "best practices" on how to improve security at sensitive sites can be provided at a safe distance: The United States doesn't need to visit such facilities in order to impart the lessons we have learned based on long experience. Nor does it require classified sensors and technologies to upgrade the security perimeters at sensitive sites. Statements by Lt. General (retired) Khalid Kidwai, the Director General of the SPD, suggest that Pakistan has, after due deliberation, been willing to accept U.S. advice and assistance regarding personnel reliability programs, export controls, and safe transportation and storage - as long as it is provided at a safe distance. Under these ground rules, there are clear limits as to what kind of U.S. assistance on nuclear safety and security, if offered, Pakistan would be willing to accept.

How safe and secure, then, are Pakistan's nuclear assets? I do not place much credence in scenarios that project a takeover of the Pakistan government or Army leadership by Islamic extremists.

To be sure, there are ample reasons to be worried about the growth of Islamic extremism in Pakistan, as is most evident in the borderlands with Afghanistan and now in parts of the North West Frontier Province. Car bombs and suicide bombers are now part of Pakistan's woes. While holding the reins of power, General

Musharraf forged a political alliance with the country's religious parties, and the negative consequences of this partnership are now becoming increasingly evident. Because these and so many other contributing factors have led to Pakistan's misfortunes, it will take many years for the country to be placed on a sound footing.

Even so, Pakistan retains many positive attributes. Despite that country's many strains, the Pakistan Army leadership continues to follow the principle of unity of command: decisions are made from the top down, and senior officers follow their orders. Pakistan's two largest political parties do not define themselves primarily in religious terms. Civil society has not given up the fight for Pakistan's future, as is evident from the lawyers' movement to push for an independent judiciary. Many capable Pakistanis can be called upon by a government that is willing to confound cynics and tackle the country's many problems.

Pakistan's religious parties do not fare well in national elections. The most hard-core Islamic extremists have turned against their former handlers in Pakistan's military and security services, but they are in no position to take over the state. Acts of Muslim-on-Muslim violence, especially those that claim the lives of innocent bystanders, do not win hearts and minds.

If the takeover threat by extremists is overblown, what developments in Pakistan would most threaten the safety and security of Pakistan's "crown jewels"? There are many ways to answer this question. The scenarios that worry me the most are a breakdown of the unity of command within the Pakistan Army, and a serious crisis or a military clash with neighboring India.

When tensions rise precipitously with India, the readiness level of Pakistan's nuclear deterrent also rises. Because the geographical coordinates of Pakistan's main nuclear weapon storage sites, missile, and air bases can be readily identified from satellites - and

therefore targeted by opposing forces -- the dictates of deterrence mandate some movement of launchers and weapons from fixed locations during crises. Nuclear weapons on the move are inherently less secure than nuclear weapons at heavily guarded storage sites. Weapons and launchers in motion are also more susceptible to "insider" threats and accidents.

If a crisis spills over into combat, no one can count on rosy scenarios. Previous wars between India and Pakistan have been marked by surprises, but no surprise would be worse than a breakdown of command and control relating to nuclear weapons. An escalating war with nuclear forces in the field would increase the probability of accidents, miscalculations, and the use of nuclear weapons.

Since 2002, India and Pakistan have avoided crises. Usually, these crises relate to the dispute over Kashmir. But the Line of Control dividing Kashmir, which has previously been the scene of heavy shelling and high levels of infiltration supported by Pakistan's military and intelligence services, has been fairly quiet. After the last India-Pakistan crisis, sparked by an attack on the Indian parliament by Islamic extremists, Pakistan's diplomatic stance toward the Kashmir dispute has become more pragmatic. Confidence-building measures have been adopted to ease tensions and promote modest trade along the Line of Control.

It is still possible, of course, that a horrific act of violence within India by Islamic extremists could spark another confrontation. But the Pakistan Army leadership can be expected to try to avoid having heightened security concerns on two fronts. This means that, as long as activities along the border with Afghanistan preoccupy Pakistan's military and intelligence services, they will seek to avoid serious tensions with India.

The Pakistan Army's unity of command, which is essential for nuclear security, would be greatly stressed in the event of an escalating war with India. The Pakistan Army's unity of command can also be jeopardized by a prolonged period of turbulence and infighting among the country's President, Prime Minister, and Army Chief. Under the current Pakistani Constitution, the President picks the Army Chief. But Pakistan's Constitution is far from being a settled document, and one of the amendments currently under consideration would shift this important prerogative to the Prime Minister. The President is also the head of Pakistan's National Command Authority, as presently constituted. This, too, might change in the event of a shift of power in favor of the Prime Minister.

The triangular jockeying for power in Pakistan isn't new. At times, political leaders have chosen Army Chiefs, but their track record has not been good. (Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was hanged by his choice, Zia ul Haq, and Nawaz Sharif was toppled, jailed, and exiled by his choice, Pervez Musharraf.) Unwelcome outcomes usually result when Pakistani Army Chiefs are elevated to help advance political agendas rather than by seniority and professionalism.

Pakistan's Army reflects popular sentiment. It follows that, if national governments do not address popular grievances, those grievances will grow, including within the Army. If national divisions widen, they will also widen within the military. Therefore, prolonged incompetence, turmoil, and failed politics at the national level spell trouble for nuclear safety and security.

What, then, can the United States do to help Pakistan improve nuclear safety and security? We can continue to offer suggestions for best practices and technical assistance. Security measures can always be improved – and not just for Pakistan. Pakistani authorities are more likely to accept U.S. offers of assistance that meet the “safe distance” rule and are pursued in a low-profile way.

This is admittedly a modest near-term agenda. But grander schemes are unlikely to succeed, and may impair further success through smaller steps.

The United States can also help promote nuclear safety and security on the Subcontinent by acting as a crisis manager if and when Pakistan and India again go eyeball to eyeball. Lessons can be learned from U.S. diplomacy during previous confrontations, but crisis management is by nature pursued on an *ad hoc* basis. Crisis avoidance and peace making are far, far better than crisis management. The United States has focused very little on ways to promote a Kashmir settlement and reconciliation between India and Pakistan.

Over the long haul, the most effective measures to promote nuclear safety and security are those that help Pakistan to find its footing. A well governed, stable society that is at peace with its neighbors is one in which nuclear weapons are well guarded. Some elements within Pakistan will remain unalterably opposed to government authority. The United States can help Pakistan's military to counter threats to internal security, but this will take time – and a reorientation of a Pakistani military mindset that has previously focused to a very great extent on India's military capabilities.

The United States can't build a more stable, well governed Pakistan – this is the job of Pakistanis. But U.S. policies toward South Asia can still influence outcomes, even if they don't determine them. The first term policies of the George W. Bush administration toward South Asia were exceptional. The administration forced significant changes in Pakistan's policies after 9/11, it engaged in successful preventive diplomacy during the 2001-2002 crisis, and it improved bilateral ties with India as well as Pakistan – all significant feats.

During the second Bush administration, U.S. policies toward South Asia have been demonstrably unwise and unsuccessful. It appears that the topmost regional policy initiative during the second term – at least as measured by the personal engagement of top administration officials -- has been a civil nuclear cooperation agreement with India. This was an odd choice, given Pakistan's manifold and growing difficulties. The agreement, which could weaken global nonproliferation efforts, is currently stalled by political difficulties within India.

When Pakistan's difficulties forced this issue to the top of the administration's agenda, it reacted by reaffirming its support for General Musharraf, a leader whose good works have subsequently been overshadowed by the accumulation of poor decisions that have made him one of the most disliked men in Pakistan. Pakistan's history of military strongmen who have lost public confidence suggests that their departure is key to the country's renewal. The Bush administration thought otherwise: As Musharraf's fortunes dwindled, the administration sought partners for him – principally Benazir Bhutto – on the mistaken assumption that he remained indispensable to stabilization.

Retrieving U.S. standing in Pakistan will be a long, hard slog, since American interests are now widely viewed as pro-Musharraf and anti-Pakistan. Political stability and good governance will be slow in coming in a post-Musharraf Pakistan. These goals will not be advanced by U.S. disengagement. Congress can help Pakistan to find its footing by providing bottom-up, non-military assistance programs that manifestly improve standards of living within the country. Military assistance programs that help Pakistan's armed forces to counter the common threat of Islamic extremism would also be wise investments in the future.