

**Security Challenges Involving Pakistan and Policy Implications for the Department
of Defense**

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF

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Mr. Chairman,

I am grateful to you and the members of the House Armed Services committee for inviting me to appear before you today. As a Pakistani currently living and teaching in the United States, I have a deep commitment to close and friendly ties between Pakistan and the United States. The two countries share common interests, of which the elimination of the scourge of global terrorism is currently most important. As I understand it, the purpose of this hearing is to assess the means of ensuring meaningful and productive American engagement with Pakistan. It is an honor for me to testify before this committee and to share my views, formed over a lifetime of love for Pakistan and affection for the United States.

At the outset, let me begin by saying that Pakistan has been a partner of the United States since the 1950s and the relationship has endured despite periodic differences in perspectives and expectations. Close relations between Pakistan and the United States are in the interest of both nations. The United States currently needs the friendship of a stable and democratic Pakistan in its struggle against global extremism and terrorism. Pakistan would benefit enormously from alliance with the world's sole superpower and first democracy. But the relationship between the two countries must be nuanced beyond the exchange of aid and policy concessions that has characterized their interaction over the last sixty years.

Pakistan has been an ally of the United States during the cold war, in the war of resistance against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and currently in the global war against terror. Each period of close U.S.-Pakistan ties began with great hopes and ended up in tremendous disappointment for both sides. The U.S. provided large amounts of aid and showered praise on Pakistan's military rulers during the phase of strategic cooperation, only to turn off the flow of aid when circumstances changed. Pakistan's military rulers failed to keep their own end of the bargain in most cases and failed to tell the Pakistani people the truth about why the quid pro quo came to an end, leading ordinary Pakistanis to hate the United States notwithstanding the significant amounts of economic and military aid previously disbursed.

During the Eisenhower administration, Pakistan was referred to as "the most allied ally of America in Asia." But then, during much of the 1990s, Pakistan ended up as "America's most sanctioned ally" when Congress imposed sanctions over a range of issues ranging from acquisition of nuclear weapons to human rights violations and lack of democracy. It should be the objective of U.S. policy to ensure that a similar cycle of massive aid followed by excessive criticism and sanctions is not followed.

U.S. policy makers believe that aid to Pakistan acquires leverage for the U.S. with Pakistan's most important institution, the military. American lawmakers must exercise oversight over the executive branch of government to ensure that the leverage is used to the mutual benefit of the two countries and U.S. good will is not squandered through overt threats or unproductive application of sanctions. Pakistanis are a proud people. Instead of hurting their pride by creating the impression that the U.S. looks upon them as

supplicants who can be coerced at will, diplomatic tools should be used to influence the behavior of Pakistan's rulers.

Since 9/11, the focus of U.S. policy towards Pakistan has been a replay of previous periods of engagement. Once again, large amounts of U.S. economic and military assistance, and covert aid, are flowing into Pakistan because the country's military ruler, General Pervez Musharraf, gave up support for the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and chose to become an American ally. The policy has had some benefits. Pakistani support was crucial in the U.S. effort to oust the Taliban from Kabul and most senior Al-Qaeda figures now in U.S. custody were also arrested and handed over by Pakistan's security services. But Pakistan plays a contradictory role in the struggle against global Islamist terrorism –it is considered both part of the solution and part of the problem.

Pakistan's problem with Islamist militancy is, in part, blowback from years of support for armed militias as a means of extending Pakistani influence in Afghanistan and the disputed territory of Jammu and Kashmir. In case of Afghanistan, the United States supported and encouraged 'Mujahideen' or Holy Warriors fighting Soviet occupation during the 1980s. While the U.S. disengaged from the region in the aftermath of the Soviet withdrawal in 1989, the ideologically motivated Jihadists persisted with their activities. Tolerance, and in some cases active support, by the Pakistani state enabled the Jihadists to create deep-rooted local networks that are now proving difficult to uproot.

As we speak, Pakistan's military and para-military forces are engaged in fierce battles with Taliban and Al-Qaeda supporters in parts of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) bordering Afghanistan. Pakistani forces have suffered heavy casualties during these military operations, which are cited as evidence by Pakistani officials of Pakistan's commitment to uprooting the terrorists from what U.S. intelligence estimates have described as their safe haven. Pakistani public opinion is deeply divided about the use of massive force against Pakistani tribesmen sympathetic to the Taliban and Al-Qaeda. Critics argue that the United States could leave the region once again but Pakistan would be stuck with a restive and hostile tribal population for years to come. It is important that the United States government assure the Pakistani people of a long-term commitment to Pakistan's security and integrity, to ensure that fears about future American disengagement do not weaken Pakistan's resolve to eliminate the terrorist networks.

Until recently, most discussion in Washington focused on General Musharraf rather than the Pakistani nation as the lynchpin of American policy in the region. Actual and budgeted amounts of U.S. aid for Pakistan during the period 2001-2008 total \$ 9.8 billion, most of them going to Pakistan's military. Reimbursements for Pakistan's costs in Operation Enduring Freedom and the Global War on Terror, as well as covert transfers of funds to Pakistan's army and intelligence services remain a subject of speculation and criticism by Pakistan's civilian leaders who see U.S. policy as bolstering military domination in a nation with clear democratic aspiration.

Since March 2007, when General Musharraf's decision to remove Pakistan's Chief Justice resulted in massive protests by opposition political parties and civil society organizations, U.S. policy has been somewhat modified. The U.S. government now appears to be encouraging Musharraf in compromising with the country's civilian democratic leaders, notably the pro-US exiled former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. A tentative agreement between Musharraf and Bhutto, who heads Pakistan largest political party the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), could pave the way for relatively less controversial parliamentary elections by the end of the year or in January 2008.

If Musharraf fulfils his promise of stepping down as head of Pakistan's army, Pakistan could move along the road to a gradual transition to civilian democratic government. This could be strengthen Pakistan's capacity in dealing with the terrorist threat by reducing the sharp divisions within Pakistani society that have so far undermined a concerted anti-terror effort. Given Musharraf's past record, however, it cannot be said with certainty that a smooth transition will indeed take place.

It is important that the United States end the personalization of relations and move away from looking upon Musharraf as Pakistan's savior for the U.S. Relations between the world's sole superpower and a nuclear-armed nation of 150-million people should depend upon acknowledging Pakistan's diversity and the U.S. should expand its interaction with other leaders and major political actors in Pakistan. It is true that Pakistan's army is its single most powerful and significant institution. But the objective of U.S. policy must not be to reinforce the prejudices of Pakistan's generals against Pakistan's civilians.

The U.S. must use every opportunity of diplomatic and military-to-military interaction to advise Pakistan's military leadership that the Pakistani model of military domination neither makes Pakistan secure nor does it fulfil even the short-term purpose of securing Pakistan's cooperation in the global war against terrorism.

Pakistan continues to be a major center for Islamist militancy, the legacy of the country's projection of itself as an Islamic ideological state and a bastion of religion- based opposition to communism during the cold war. Radical Islamists who came from all over the world to fight against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan went on to become allies of Pakistan's military intelligence apparatus, which used them to fight Indian control over the disputed Himalayan territory of Kashmir as well as to expand Pakistan's influence in Afghanistan. Musharraf's efforts, under U.S. pressure, to contain the Islamist radicals have consistently fallen short, leading to a resurgence of the Taliban in Afghanistan and a revitalization of Al-Qaeda in the rugged region constituting the Pakistan-Afghan border.

For six years, the U.S. accepted on face value Musharraf's assertion says that he is a leader dedicated to changing Pakistan's course from being an Islamic ideological state to a moderate Muslim country. But the imbalance between Pakistan's perceived external importance and proven internal weakness has raised fundamental questions about the dysfunction of the Pakistani state. Careful examination indicates that Musharraf's eclectic policies have been aimed less at changing Pakistan's direction and were more

part of an effort to salvage a critical policy paradigm adopted by Pakistan's military-led oligarchy since the country's early days.

Musharraf recently named a new Vice Chief of Army Staff who is likely to succeed him as commander of the army when Musharraf retires from service and transforms himself into a civilian president. The new VCOAS, General Pervez Ashfaq Kiyani, is known for his commitment to reorienting civil-military relations and reverting Pakistan's military to its professional functions. The United States should ensure that Musharraf keeps his promise of stepping down as army chief and it should be a clearly stated U.S. objective that Pakistan's government in future should work on the democratic principle of civilian control over security policy rather than Pakistan's historic pattern of the military insinuating itself into all aspects of civilian life.

Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and the Tribal Areas

In the years since 9/11, Musharraf's critics have attributed his failure in rooting out Al-Qaeda and the Taliban to a deliberate policy decision. Musharraf has time and again made a distinction between anti-US terrorists affiliated with Al-Qaeda, who need to be eliminated or fought, and local Islamist insurgents (whether Afghan, Pakistani or Kashmiri) who can be engaged in dialogue. India and Afghanistan have both repeatedly accused Pakistan of continuing to support terrorists targeting the two neighbors with whom Pakistan has had disputes since emerging as an independent country from the 1947 partition of British India.

As violence spiraled in Kabul and the Afghan countryside at the end of 2006, Afghanistan's President Hamid Karzai stepped up his criticism of Pakistan's role in supporting a resurgent Taliban. "Pakistan hopes to make slaves out of us, but we will not surrender," Karzai declared in a statement that marked the end of quiet diplomacy between two American allies and the beginning of more public condemnation of Pakistan by Afghanistan.

Under U.S. pressure, Pakistan has intermittently applied military force against pro-Taliban and pro-Al-Qaeda Pashtun tribesmen living along the Afghan border. But the tribesmen managed to inflict heavy casualties on the Pakistan military and in the end the government agreed to a ceasefire under a deal that restored the tribes' autonomy in return for a commitment that they would not provide sanctuary to enemies of Pakistan. The deal would have been fine if it had helped in rooting out the Taliban or Al-Qaeda but instead it simply perpetuated their influence in parts of the federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA).

Musharraf's deals with the tribal leaders have proven ineffective in ending militancy and terrorism. The Taliban stepped up their attacks inside Afghanistan and suicide bombings in Pakistan reached an all-time high within the first two months of 2007. Several press reports based on leaks by American and British intelligence sources spoke of Al-Qaeda's reorganization in Pakistan and tacit Pakistani backing for the Taliban.

The former U.S. ambassador to Pakistan, Ryan Crocker, attempted to resolve the apparent contradiction between Washington's publicly stated view of Musharraf as a critical U.S. ally in the war against terrorism and the persistent intelligence that terrorists operate and train in Pakistan with relative impunity. "Pakistan has been fighting terrorists for several years and its commitment to counterterrorism remains firm," Mr. Crocker told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee at the hearing on his nomination as U.S. ambassador to Iraq. The challenge faced by Pakistan in coming to terms with Taliban fighters along its border with Afghanistan, he explained, lies in a lack of capacity.

A compilation of published figures of terrorism-related casualties indicates that 1471 people were killed in Pakistan during 2006, up from 648 terrorism-related fatalities in the preceding year. Of these, 608 were civilians, 325 security personnel and 538 terrorists. In 2005, 430 civilians and 137 terrorists were reported killed but the number of security forces losses were a relatively low 81. But 2007 has been the worst year for terrorist activity in Pakistan and more people have died in terrorist violence during the first ten months of this year than in preceding years. So far the number of reported fatalities stands at 1890 total casualties, which includes 651 civilians, 352 security forces, 887 terrorists. The number of suicide bombings in Pakistan is also on the rise.

Amid widespread lawlessness and the emboldening of terrorist groups, Pakistan successfully continues to expand its conventional, nuclear and missile capability primarily against military threats from arch-rival India. The United States, too, tends to indulge Pakistan's requests for military hardware making it one of the biggest beneficiaries of U.S. Foreign Military Sales. Considering that India, too, is now a strategic partner of the United States and a major buyer of U.S. military equipment, members of this committee may want to consider whether it is in the interest of the United States to encourage an arms race on the South Asian subcontinent.

The direct consequence for Pakistan of relentless military competition with India has been the internal weakening of the country. Pakistan's supposed ability to externally project its power is not matched with the strength of an effective state at home. In the process of building extensive military capabilities, Pakistan's successive rulers have allowed the degradation of essential internal attributes of statehood.

An important attribute of a state is its ability to maintain monopoly, or at least the preponderance, of public coercion. The proliferation of insurgents, militias, Mafiosi and high ordinary criminality reflect the state's weakness in this key area. There are too many non-state actors in Pakistan –ranging from religious vigilantes to criminals – who possess coercive power in varying degrees. In some instances, such as the case of the madrasa students' sit-in at the Islamabad library, the threat of non-state coercion in the form of suicide bombings weakens the state machinery's ability to deal with the challenge to its authority.

Domestic Political Change and Its Security Implications

General Musharraf was recently “elected” president by the parliament and provincial legislatures that were elected in the tainted 2002 elections just as their term enters its last days. Most opposition parties, except Bhutto’s PPP, resigned from parliament to protest the election, the results of which are pending as the Supreme Court reviews the legality of a serving general securing elected office. Unless the Supreme Court rules against him, Musharraf is likely to be deemed “elected” for a five year term as President. Legal challenges, street protests, political deals and international maneuvers that preceded the vote will most likely continue as Musharraf tries to legitimize his power. But the only way for Musharraf to gain acceptance at home would be to keep his promise of retiring from his army command before November 15 and accepting to preside over a transition to civilian rule. If the transition to democracy is not effected, Pakistan will not be able to focus its energies on fighting terrorism and will continue to be torn by domestic politics.

Legislative elections are scheduled to be held before January 2008 and current opinion polls indicate that Musharraf’s supporters are unlikely to win in significant numbers. According to a poll conducted by the International Republican Institute (IRI) in July, 32 percent of those polled would vote for Bhutto’s PPP, up ten percent from September 2006. Former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif’s Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) would get 19 percent of the vote nationwide, up 5 percent since last year. Musharraf’s PML (Q) party has lost support to PPP and PML (N) and its support stands at 23 percent, down from 27 percent in the previous poll. The Islamist MMA would get no more than 5 percent of the votes though the concentration of its support in the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) bordering Afghanistan remains an important factor.

After talks with Bhutto, General Musharraf has announced a plan for national reconciliation that offers hope for diminishing some of the extreme polarization characterizing Pakistani politics of the last several decades. The first step in this process is a tentative arrangement between Musharraf’s military regime and Benazir Bhutto’s Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), which has borne the brunt of military repression since its founding in 1967. Until now, Musharraf and Pakistan’s military have seen the PPP and other democratic parties as their enemy.

Recently the government announced an end to corruption prosecutions against Bhutto, her husband and her colleagues that have not matured into convictions or confessions after pending for many years, in some cases over a decade. This has been done through a law called the National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO), which is being challenged in court by anti-Bhutto hardliners. Other elements of the Musharraf-Bhutto agreement relate to assurances of a free and fair parliamentary election and an end to the ubiquitous role of the military-intelligence machinery in the political arena.

While remaining an opposition party, the PPP is reciprocating Musharraf’s gesture with steps that could defuse the volatile political situation created by street protests and violent demonstrations. PPP legislators did not join the rest of Musharraf’s opposition in resigning in protest over Musharraf’s recent “election” though they did not vote for him

either. The stage is now set for Ms Bhutto's return to Pakistan, and the rejuvenation of the PPP which is already Pakistan's largest political party. Although Ms Bhutto is considered a polarizing figure by some, her clear stand against religious extremism and the terrorists can only strengthen Pakistan's resolve in dealing with this menace. The United States should continue, through diplomatic means, to encourage reconciliation between Musharraf and the politically popular Bhutto. The national reconciliation process should also be extended to include Nawaz Sharif, whom Musharraf overthrew and who was recently sent back into exile in Saudi Arabia.

The U.S. government should also take an active behind-the-scenes interest in ensuring that Bhutto is provided sufficient security upon her return to Pakistan, given the threats against her life publicly pronounced by Taliban and al-Qaeda leaders within the past one week.

Given Pakistan's strategic significance, its domestic developments are of great importance to the United States. Discreetly sharing concerns and advising a government that depends heavily on support from the United States should not be construed as interference in Pakistan's internal affairs. Given the overall atmosphere of anti-Americanism in Pakistan, US officials should remain cautious against attracting charges of intervention in domestic politics while at the same time making American preferences well known.

Pakistan's next parliamentary elections should be a step towards transforming the country into a democracy and to return it to civilian rule. Political reform in Pakistan should be a critical element of US policy toward Pakistan. Pakistan has still not been able to evolve into a democracy 60 years after being carved out of British India essentially because many of the country's leaders, including Musharraf, assumed that the army has the rightful authority to run Pakistan. If there is a common thread running through Pakistan's checkered history, it is the army's perception of itself as the country's only viable institution and its deep-rooted suspicion of civilian political processes.

The United States is viewed by most Pakistanis as being firmly behind the army. The three periods of significant flow of U.S. aid to Pakistan have all coincided with military rule in Pakistan. According to figures provided by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Congressional Research Service (CRS) since 1954 the United States has committed \$ 21.2 billion in economic and military aid for Pakistan. This includes the budgeted figure for 2008. Of these \$ 17.7 billion were given during 32 years of military rule while only \$ 3.4 billion were provided to civilian regimes covering 19 years. On average, US aid to Pakistan amounts to \$ 559.9 million for each year the country has been under military rule compared with only \$ 181.2 million per annum under civilian leadership.

The Islamist Surge

For years, the international community has been concerned more about the rising influence of Pakistan's Islamists, who made their strongest showing in a general election

during the 2002 parliamentary polls. The Islamists secured only 11.1 percent of the popular vote but carried 20 percent of the seats in the lower house of parliament. Since then, they have pressed for Taliban-style Islamization in the Northwest Frontier Province bordering Afghanistan, where they control the provincial administration. In recent months, Taliban-style movements have manifested throughout Pakistan, spreading far beyond the tribal areas of Waziristan and Bajaur where they first started.

Several districts in NWFP including Lakki Marwat, Malakand, Dera Ismail Khan, Tank and Bannu have seen an erosion of the state's control in the face of Taliban vigilantism. Beheadings, recorded on videotapes that are later distributed widely to spread terror as well as to seek new recruits, have been reported with increasing frequency. Not long ago, Taliban supporters raised their head at the Red Mosque in Pakistan's capital Islamabad. Although the military forcefully put down the Taliban threat at the Red Mosque after postponing military action for over six months, the event served as a reminder of the rising influence of the extremist movement.

Musharraf's government has continued to make a distinction between 'terrorists' (a term applied to members of Al-Qaeda members, mainly of foreign origin) and 'freedom fighters' (the officially preferred label in Pakistan for Kashmiri militants). Authorities have remained tolerant of remnants of Afghanistan's Taliban regime, hoping to use them in resuscitating Pakistan's influence in Afghanistan in case the U.S.-installed Karzai regime falters.

This duality in Pakistani policy is a structural problem, rooted in history and a result of consistent State policy. It is not just the inadvertent outcome of decisions by some governments (beginning with that of General Ziaul Haq in 1977), as is widely believed. Pakistan's leaders have played upon religious sentiment as an instrument of strengthening Pakistan's identity since the country's inception. As any Pakistani elementary school student knows, Pakistan is an 'ideological state' and its ideology is Islam.

Pakistan's alliance with the United States has been an important part of the Pakistani ruling elite's strategy for building the Pakistani state. If Islam was the cement that would unite the disparate ethnic and linguistic groups within Pakistan, the United States was seen as the source of funding for a country that inherited only 17 percent of British India's revenue sources at its independence in 1947. The U.S.-Pakistan alliance was initiated when Pakistan's first indigenous military commander, General Ayub Khan visited Washington in 1953 and sought a "deal whereby Pakistan could -- for the right price—serve as the West's eastern anchor in an Asian alliance structure."

An analysis of Pakistan's 60-year history shows that it is the Pakistani military's desire to dominate the political system and define Pakistan's national security priorities that has been the most significant though by no means the only factor in encouraging an Islamic ideological model for Pakistan. By putting all its weight behind the Pakistani military, the U.S. has inadvertently reinforced Pakistan's ideological model.

Pakistan's military has historically been willing to adjust its priorities to fit within the parameters of immediate U.S. global concerns. The purpose has been to ensure the flow of military and economic aid from the United States, which Pakistan considers necessary for its struggle for survival and its competition with India. Pakistan's relations with the U.S. were part of the Pakistani military's policy tripod that emphasized Islam as a national unifier, rivalry with India as the principal objective of the state's foreign policy, and an alliance with the United States as a means to defray the costs of Pakistan's massive military expenditures.

An important component of Pakistan's state ideology is fear and hatred of India, which is also the justification for Pakistan's continuous efforts to militarily equal India including the development of nuclear weapons. On each occasion that Pakistan's path has diverged from the one jointly charted with the United States, competition with India has been one of the factors. Containing Indian influence is one of the justifications given within Pakistan for tolerating the Taliban and Islamist militants continue to be seen by some members of the Pakistani ruling elite as an unconventional counterweight to India's preponderant power. Although the Musharraf regime has begun a process of mending fences with India, Pakistan's fundamental fears and concerns about India have not been addressed

Pakistan's rulers have traditionally attempted to "manage" militant Islamism, trying to calibrate it so that it serves the state's nation-building function without destabilizing internal politics or relations with Western countries. The alliance between mosque and military in Pakistan helps maintain, and sometimes exaggerates, the psycho-political fears about national identity and security that help both, the Islamists and the generals, in their exercise of political power.

The past patterns of U.S. economic and military assistance have allowed Pakistan's military leaders to believe that they can compete with India as long as they can make themselves useful to the United States. U.S. assistance should be calibrated to transform Pakistan from a military-dominated state to a democratic one instead of being the source of the delusions of grandeur of Pakistan's unaccountable generals.

Conclusion

The United States made a critical mistake in putting faith in one man –General Pervez Musharraf –and one institution –the Pakistani military – as instruments of the US policy to eliminate terrorism and bring stability to the Southwest and South Asia. A robust U.S. policy of engagement with Pakistan that helps in building civilian institutions, including law enforcement capability, and eventually results in reverting Pakistan's military to its security functions would be a more effective way of strengthening Pakistan and protecting United States policy interests there.

U.S. support for the Pakistan military should not reinforce the Pakistan army's view of itself as the country's only savior –a mindset that has prevented the emergence of other national and state institutions. The U.S. must seek an orderly transition from military to

civilian rule based on civilian, rather than military, ascendancy. The new civilian government must then be fully supported in (1) developing a comprehensive strategy of isolating and marginalizing ideological supporters of Islamist extremism; (2) Deploying the military to eliminate terrorist safe havens; and (3) Implementing a program of demobilization, disarmament and reintegration for the thousands of young Pakistanis who have been inducted over the years into Jihadist organizations (often with State acquiescence).

Since 9/11, Musharraf has invoked three principal arguments to secure international backing and to justify his continuation in power. Developments over the last year or so have diminished each of these arguments.

The first reason given for accepting Musharraf in power is his status as an ally in the global war against terrorism. Musharraf's efficacy as a bulwark against terrorism has been exposed as parts of Pakistan slip further under the influence of Islamist extremists and reports emerge of Al-Qaeda's safe haven in remote regions of the country.

Taliban sympathizers virtually control several districts in Pakistan's Northwest Frontier Province bordering Afghanistan. Reports of beheadings, targeting alleged American spies and "loose" women, filter through almost on a weekly basis. Terrorist bombings, including suicide attacks, have claimed more lives in Pakistan during the past two years than in several preceding years.

Musharraf appears to have no plan for a sustained war with the terrorists. He alternately compromises with extremist sympathizers and pushes his army to fight high profile battles that inflame passions but do little to eliminate terrorist strongholds. When radical clerics used Islamabad's red mosque to Talibanize the Pakistani capital earlier this year, Musharraf waited for several months before using force against them. In the process, he strengthened the resolve of the terrorists and gained little except a tactical victory when he finally used special operations forces to flush out the radicals from the mosque.

Political distractions have prevented Pakistani intelligence from even doing the one thing they did regularly to appease the United States. In the first few years since 2001, several leading Al-Qaeda members were arrested in Pakistan. There have been no significant arrests of Al-Qaeda leadership figures in Pakistan for over a year.

Musharraf's second claim to legitimacy rested on the notion that he is good for Pakistan's stability mainly because the country's economy has grown at a rate of 6-8 percent annually under military rule. This rapid economic growth, however, is the result of macroeconomic restructuring, capital inflows and privatization of state enterprises and banks. It is not based on major expansion in manufacturing or agriculture, the areas that affect the lives of a majority of Pakistanis. As a result, it has benefited only a small group with ties to Pakistan's military and civilian oligarchy.

There is virtually little trickle-down. As Pakistanis riot periodically and violent extremists broaden their recruitment base, it is becoming increasingly clear that Musharraf's much touted economic achievements are somewhat limited in impact and will not be enough to stabilize the world's only majority Muslim nuclear armed nation.

Musharraf's supporters have often invoked a third argument in his favor, that of him being not repressive like other military dictators. Pakistan has had a succession of flawed civilian and military rulers, the argument goes, and it is more important for the country to have an effective helmsman than a democratically elected one. A former U.S. ambassador to Pakistan once went to the extent of asserting that Musharraf should not even be called a dictator because of his acceptance of a relatively free media.

But Musharraf has always been selectively repressive and repression is rising as threats to Musharraf's continuing in power increase. The media, too, is now under attack as exemplified in the recent beating up of journalists by police in Islamabad. The Musharraf regime has used the justification of the war against terror to orchestrate the disappearance of some Islamic activists and many members of political parties opposed to military rule.

Beginning with his botched decision to remove Pakistan's Chief Justice in March, Musharraf has exposed his darker side. For example, armed Musharraf supporters shot and killed opposition activists and attacked media organizations in Karachi on May 12 to prevent the Chief Justice from addressing a rally in Musharraf's hometown. Musharraf stopped law enforcement agencies from investigating the killings even though some of the shootings were recorded and shown on television. More recently, television images of police brutality against lawyers demonstrating peacefully and journalists covering these demonstrations have totally erased the impression of Musharraf as a benign dictator.

Normalization of relations between India and Pakistan and Pakistan's return to democracy is most likely the key to the withdrawal of the military from the political arena as well as to Pakistan's long term stability. Pakistan's minority Islamists would lose credibility and legitimacy if democratic institutions operate successfully and are dominated, through free and fair elections, by secularists and moderates.

Instead of thinking only in terms of the extremes of showering Pakistan, mainly its military, with aid or of cutting that aid off, U.S. policy makers should look at the totality of the picture in Pakistan. A policy of nuanced engagement, in which U.S. officials – including senior military commanders – frankly share their concerns with Pakistan's rulers and the people, would be a better way of shoring up Pakistan as a frontline state in the war against terror.

It is my view that the U.S. Congress, as well as the Executive Branch, should take measures that demonstrate convincingly an international interest in Pakistan's return to democracy with full participation of all major representative political personalities and parties. These measures could include funding for full monitoring of the forthcoming

elections and a willingness of the executive branch to ensure that Musharraf abides by his commitment to a democratic transition.