

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

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Pursuing a strong and stable relationship with Pakistan will continue to be one of America’s most important foreign policy objectives for several years to come. The range and complexity of issues involved in our relations – eliminating global terrorist networks, countering the rising tide of Islamic radicalism in Pakistan, securing and safeguarding Pakistan’s nuclear assets, and facilitating the transition to civilian-led democracy – require focused and sustained U.S. attention and deft diplomacy.¹

Recent developments in Pakistan and the U.S., however, are threatening to create misunderstandings between our two countries and to derail this critical partnership. Pakistan’s inability to control a burgeoning terrorist safe haven in its tribal areas bordering Afghanistan is causing frustration in Washington, while recently-passed U.S. legislation that conditions military assistance to Pakistan is causing doubts about the U.S. as a reliable long-term partner. Washington and Islamabad each have high expectations of the relationship. In order to sustain the U.S.-Pakistan partnership over the long-term, we need to manage these expectations and seek to align our strategic perspectives of the region more closely. We should not repeat the mistakes of the past by allowing our ties to Islamabad to founder. A second breach in the relationship, like that caused by the Pressler Amendment that cut off U.S. aid to Pakistan in 1990, would seriously jeopardize U.S. interests in South Asia and have severe implications for the global fight against terrorism.

Political Transition

Pakistan is in the midst of an historical political transition that will determine the core direction of the country at a time when extremists are seeking to provoke an Islamic revolution. We have seen dramatic developments in recent weeks and the final outcome of the political

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changes are still uncertain. Washington should welcome the transition to civilian democratic rule without backing any particular individuals or political parties. Given the perception that the U.S. has favored military over civilian rule in Pakistan in order to pursue its own counterterrorism objectives over the last six years, Washington will have difficulty convincing Pakistanis that it supports genuine democracy in Pakistan now. Unequivocal U.S. support for the democratic transition, such as recent U.S. statements criticizing the arrest of opposition politicians as well as U.S. discouragement of declaration of emergency rule in Pakistan, is necessary to try to defuse the increasingly shrill anti-Americanism that is gripping Pakistani civil society.

If the Supreme Court this week rules in Musharraf's favor on the cases before it challenging his eligibility for re-election to another five-year term, he will officially become president and all eyes will begin to shift to the 2008 general election. To lay a foundation for a credible election process, Musharraf will need to resign from the Chief of Army position. His lawyer has already announced to the Supreme Court that he will shed the military uniform before taking a new oath of office, and he has little choice but to follow through on the commitment. A second attempt to renege on his pledge, like he did in 2004, would meet with a domestic backlash and strong international condemnation. His recent announcement of a successor Chief of the Army signals that he is serious about resigning his military post.

Other preparations for a free and fair election are also necessary. The Election Commission must work with the political opposition and international observers to correct voter rolls, which apparently fail to list millions of voters. Additionally, the government must give all political parties a chance to participate fully in the process. Any attempt to manipulate the elections in favor of a particular political party would backfire and undermine the credibility of the entire process, fueling further political unrest.

Rising Extremist Violence

The increase in attacks in Pakistan over the last three months that have killed over 300 civilians and security personnel appear to be retaliation for the July 10th military operation at the Red Mosque but also seem aimed at taking advantage of the political unrest. Pakistan is now second only to Iraq with regard to the number of suicide attacks in the country during the last few months.

The attacks on government forces have mainly taken place in the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) and Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), where the Pakistan military has resumed operations against militants. Last week a suicide bomber killed 15 when he blew himself up near a police checkpoint in the town of Bannu in the NWFP. Pakistan has reported killing 150 militants in clashes over the weekend in North Waziristan. Support within the Pakistan Army itself to continue fighting in the tribal areas may be eroding, though. Circumstances surrounding the capture of over 240 Pakistani soldiers by Taliban fighters on August 30 are mysterious and some observers speculate the soldiers may have surrendered.

Despite the rising violence, Pakistanis are generally ambivalent about taking on the extremist threat directly. A recent poll taken by the U.S. nongovernmental organization Terror Free Tomorrow shows that an overwhelming majority of Pakistanis do not view the fight against terrorism as benefiting Pakistan nor do they see defeating al Qaeda as a priority for their leaders.

Instead they appear to blame the recent violence on Pakistani counterterrorism cooperation with the U.S. and increasingly question the benefits of continuing to support U.S.-led anti-terrorism efforts in the region that, in their opinion, rely too heavily on military force.

Harmonizing U.S.-Pakistan Counterterrorism Efforts

The U.S. and Pakistan differ on how to achieve counterterrorism objectives. Our two countries share the overall goals of bringing stability to Afghanistan and preventing the rise of extremism in Pakistan. Moreover, we are in agreement that the Taliban's resurgence in Afghanistan would have a blowback effect in Pakistan. However, for a variety of reasons, including fears of creating greater instability in the country, Pakistani doubts about the U.S. long-term commitment to the region, and Islamabad's distrust of the Karzai government, Islamabad is reluctant to crack down fully on the Taliban and other extremists operating from its territory.

Also contributing to broader U.S.-Pakistan misunderstanding on counterterrorism issues is the complex political and societal dynamics in Pakistan that prevent Islamabad from taking credit for some of its counterterrorism successes. Given the Pakistani public's opposition to the war in Afghanistan and pockets of sympathy for the Taliban, Islamabad has refrained from highlighting its recent contributions in targeting senior Taliban leaders. With the assistance of Pakistan, senior Taliban military commander Mullah Akhtar Osmani was killed last December in an air strike in Afghanistan and Mullah Dadullah was killed in May in Helmand province, Afghanistan. The Pakistanis also arrested Taliban Defense Minister Mullah Obaidullah earlier in the year and eliminated key Pakistani Taliban leader Abdullah Masood in Baluchistan province in July.²

To garner the full counterterrorism cooperation the U.S. requires from Islamabad, Washington must develop a realistic and hard-nosed policy that takes on Pakistan's ambivalence toward going head-to-head with the extremists. Despite Pakistan having been one of the largest recipients of U.S. aid over the last six years — receiving well over \$10 billion — the terrorist threat emanating from Pakistan is as dangerous as ever: many of those involved in recently foiled terrorist plots across the globe received training and inspiration at terrorist training camps in Pakistan and a recent United Nations report says that 80 percent of suicide bombers that have conducted attacks in Afghanistan from 2001 – 2007 were recruited, received training, or stayed in safe houses located in the North and South Waziristan agencies of Pakistan's tribal areas.³

Pakistan believes the U.S. strategy in Afghanistan relies too heavily on military operations that result in collateral damage that further alienates the local population. Furthermore, Islamabad believes it is possible to negotiate with the Taliban in order to bring them into the political process. In his remarks at the closing ceremony of the August Peace Jirga

² “Briefing on Pakistan,” Richard Boucher, Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs, Washington, DC, July 17, 2007 at <http://www.state.gov/p/sca/rls/rm/2007/88582.htm>.

³ “Suicide Attacks in Afghanistan,” United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, September 9, 2007, pages 67 – 68.

in Kabul, Musharraf said the Taliban are part of Afghan society and can be brought into the political mainstream. While promoting an inclusive political system that provides adequate representation of Pashtuns is important to stabilizing the country, there should be no doubt about the international commitment to preventing the Taliban from again gaining influence in the country. Advocating a Taliban role affirms extremism as an acceptable ideology and undermines the establishment of pluralistic democracy in Afghanistan. Furthermore, a recent UN reports asserts that overall support for the Taliban in Afghanistan remains “astonishingly low.”⁴

Some observers believe Pakistan prefers to allow the Taliban to undermine the current dispensation in Afghanistan since the success of Karzai – perceived as a close ally of India – would be detrimental to Pakistani security interests.⁵ At the same time, however, the recent wave of terrorist attacks in retaliation for the Pakistan military’s action against extremists at the Red Mosque in Islamabad on July 10th have led to the death of over 300 Pakistani civilians and security officials, demonstrating that the Taliban can be as threatening to the Pakistani state as it is to the Karzai government.

While hard core Taliban elements with links to al-Qaeda will have to be defeated militarily in both Afghanistan and Pakistan, Washington, Kabul, and Islamabad should devise together a strategy to siphon off “guns-for-hire” that would be willing to become part of civilian society. According to the British House of Commons Defense Committee Report on “United Kingdom Operations in Afghanistan,” released in July, British commanders in Helmand province reported that there were two levels of Taliban fighters: “tier one” fighters who are religious fundamentalists who would never accept a compromise with government and “tier two” fighters whose allegiance was not based on ideology but who were in effect hired guns and more amenable to reconciliation.⁶

Pakistani Tribal Areas. Perhaps the greatest challenge in the U.S.-Pakistan relationship is to develop an effective strategy to root out the terrorists from the Tribal Areas. Senior U.S. intelligence officials revealed over the summer that the Pakistani peace deals in the FATA have not achieved the desired objectives and, in fact, have allowed the region to develop into an al-Qaeda stronghold. Pakistani extremists also took advantage of the decreased military pressure by attempting to institute strict Islamic edicts in the region--the same tactics employed by the Taliban in Afghanistan in the mid-1990s. The extremists have sought to close down girls’ schools, barbershops, and video stores, and are increasingly challenging the writ of the government, even in some of the settled areas of the Northwest Frontier Province.

While focusing greater attention to combating this problem, it is important to acknowledge the tremendous losses the Pakistan Army has suffered in these areas over the last five years. The peace deals were implemented because of these losses as well as the growing disillusionment among military cadre over fighting their own citizens. Part of the government’s plan in initiating the peace deals was to restore the traditional form of governance in the region

⁴ “Suicide Attacks in Afghanistan,” page 12.

⁵ Ejaz Haider, “Reconciling with ground realities,” *The Friday Times*, www.thefridaytimes.com/17082007/page7.shtml on 8/20/2007.

⁶ British House of Commons Defense Committee Report on “United Kingdom Operations in Afghanistan,” Thirteenth Report of session 2006-07, July 18, 2007, page 28.

and to co-opt the tribal elders and political representatives through an infusion of economic assistance for new roads, hospitals, and schools.

The U.S. revelations about al-Qaeda's safe haven in the border areas coincided with the Pakistan military's July 10th storming of the Red Mosque in Islamabad, which left at least 100 dead. Reports indicate that there were links between the leadership of the Red Mosque and al-Qaeda elements in the Tribal Areas. The combination of events led Pakistan to send fresh military reinforcements to the region, reactivate military checkpoints, and resume limited military operations.

While Pakistan's willingness to go back on the military offensive in the tribal areas is welcome, Islamabad's efforts alone are unlikely to address the serious threat from the region. U.S. and Afghan forces repeatedly have pursued insurgents to the border, but are banned from crossing into Pakistan in hot pursuit. Senior Pakistani military officials do not support the extremists in the tribal areas, yet they do not view the situation with the same urgency as the U.S. They also are reluctant to engage in a full-out confrontation with the extremists in these areas because of the risk that it would destabilize Pakistan.⁷

Washington must convince Islamabad to work more closely in joint operations that bring U.S. resources and military strength to bear on the situation and employ a combination of targeted military operations and economic assistance that drives a wedge between the Pashtun tribal communities and the international terrorists. A large-scale U.S. troop invasion of Pakistan's Tribal Areas would have disastrous consequences for the Pakistani state and would not provide a lasting solution to the problem. A more effective strategy involves working cooperatively with Pakistan's military to assert state authority over the areas and once they are secure, provide substantial assistance to build up the economy and social infrastructure. The Administration already is moving in this direction with a pledge of \$750 million over five years to develop the tribal areas.

Over the longer term, U.S. assistance should encourage political reform that incorporates the institutions of the tribal lands fully into the Pakistani system. Some have argued that the Pakistan military is loath to implement political reform in these areas and that only the democratic parties would move in this direction. In late July Pakistan People's Party (PPP) leader Benazir Bhutto filed a petition with the Supreme Court, seeking enforcement of the Political Parties Act in the FATA that would extend Pakistan election laws to the region and encourage political activity. Political parties currently are prohibited from functioning in the FATA, although there are 12 seats reserved for FATA members in the National Assembly (lower house of parliament) and eight in the Senate. The petition claims that since the political parties are not allowed to field candidates for elections, the mosques and madrassahs (religious schools) have been able to assert undue political influence in the region.⁸

⁷ Moeed Yusuf, "Tackling Pakistan's Extremists: Who Dictates, Us or Them?" The Brookings Institution, September 6, 2007 at <http://www.brookings.edu/views/op-ed/yusuf20070906.htm>.

⁸ "BB moves SC for politicking in FATA," *Daily Times*, July 31, 2007.

Washington should also prioritize development of Reconstruction Opportunity Zones (ROZs) that would build up industrial zones in the Northwest Frontier Province and other areas that would produce textile goods receiving preferential access in the U.S. The ROZ initiative is an integral component to our overall strategy to develop the FATA and uproot terrorism from the border areas. The Bush Administration first announced this initiative over 18 months ago. The U.S. Administration and Congress should work together expeditiously to get this critical project off the ground.

Pakistani Regional Relationships

Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations. Our ability to defeat al-Qaeda's capabilities and ideology rests on a strategy that integrates our diplomatic and security efforts toward Afghanistan and Pakistan and that focuses more intently on improving these two key countries' relations with each other. The Afghanistan Freedom and Security Support Act of 2007 that is now before the U.S. Senate acknowledges this linkage and authorizes the President to appoint a special envoy to promote closer Afghanistan-Pakistan cooperation. This is an important initiative and should be taken up as quickly as possible.

This senior envoy would need to take a pro-active role in mediating disputes between Afghanistan and Pakistan, prodding both countries to develop a fresh strategic perception of the region based on economic integration, political reconciliation, and respect for territorial boundaries. To achieve stability in the region, Pakistan will have to root out Taliban ideology from its own society and close down madrassahs and training camps that perpetuate the Taliban insurgency. For its part, Afghanistan will have to acknowledge the sanctity of the border dividing Pashtun populations between the two countries and ensure adequate representation of Pashtuns in the Afghan government.

Pashtuns in Afghanistan number about 12 million, making up 42 percent of the Afghanistan population, while the Pashtun population in Pakistan stands at about 25 million, constituting around 15 percent of the total Pakistani population. British colonialists had purposely divided the ethnic Pashtun tribes in 1893 with the Durand Line, which now constitutes the 1,600-mile porous border between Afghanistan and Pakistan.⁹ Afghanistan at one time claimed Pashtun tribal areas in Pakistan and has never officially recognized the Durand Line. Pakistan in the past has countered Pashtun nationalism within its own orders by promoting pan-Islamic extremism in Afghanistan.

The Afghanistan-Pakistan peace jirga that was held in early August in Kabul was a first step in bringing local leaders together from both sides of the border in face-to-face talks. While no one expected immediate breakthroughs, the gathering represented an important step in beginning to build confidence between the hostile neighbors. Pakistani and Afghan delegates, numbering around 700, focused on terrorism as a joint threat to the two nations and urged their governments to make the war on terror an integral part of their national policies and security strategies.

⁹ Congressional Research Services Report for Congress, "Pakistan-U.S. Relations," Order Code RL33489, K. Alan Kronstadt, Specialist in Asian Affairs, Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division, August 24, 2007, p. 16.

One highlight of the jirga was President Musharraf's admission during the closing ceremonies that Afghan militants received support from within Pakistan. His statements represented a welcome departure from past rhetorical barbs blaming Afghanistan's woes entirely on President Karzai. Musharraf's remarks demonstrate that the two sides have made some limited progress in improving relations since the historic tripartite meeting hosted by President Bush in September 2006.

Pakistan-India Relations. India and Pakistan have achieved tangible progress in the peace talks that started in January 2004. They have held dozens of official meetings, increased people-to-people exchanges, increased annual bilateral trade to over \$1 billion, launched several cross-border buses and train services, and liberalized visa regimes to encourage travel between the two countries. During a meeting in September 2006—just two months after the Mumbai commuter train blasts that killed nearly 200—Prime Minister Singh and President Musharraf established a joint terrorism mechanism and agreed to expedite resolution of disputes over the Siachen Glacier and Sir Creek, a narrow strip of marshland separating the province of Sindh in Pakistan and the state of Gujarat in India.

Perhaps the most significant progress has been the narrowing of differences over how to address the seemingly intractable issue of Kashmir. President Musharraf and Prime Minister Singh are beginning to craft their statements on Kashmir in ways that narrow the gap between their countries' long-held official positions on the disputed territory. President Musharraf declared last December in an Indian television interview that Pakistan would give up its claim to Kashmir if India agreed to a four-part solution that involves keeping the current boundaries intact and making the Line of Control (LOC) that divides Kashmir irrelevant, demilitarizing both sides of the LOC, developing a plan for self-governance of Kashmir, and instituting a mechanism for India and Pakistan to jointly supervise the region. In 2003, Musharraf dropped Islamabad's long-held insistence on a United Nations plebiscite to determine the status of Kashmir.

It is critical that the two sides maintain momentum in the peace process, since the state of Pakistan-India ties will be a major determinant of overall regional stability. The peace process has understandably slowed due to the recent political instability in Pakistan. In a welcome development, Indian and Pakistani officials have agreed to meet next week in New Delhi to discuss nuclear confidence building and expand on their counterterrorism joint mechanism. If, as expected, Pakistan holds general elections early next year, the peace process could become vulnerable, if new leaders fail to express commitment to the peace talks early on in their administration.

One reason for continued Pakistani ambivalence toward the Taliban stems from the concern that India is trying to encircle it by gaining influence in Afghanistan. In this context, the Taliban offers the best chance for countering India's regional influence. Pakistan believes ethnic Tajiks in the Afghan government receive support from New Delhi. India, in cooperation with Russia and Iran, supported the Afghan Northern Alliance against the Taliban in the late 1990s and almost certainly retains links to Northern Alliance elements now in the Afghan government. Pakistan also complains that the Indian consulates in the border cities of Jalalabad and Kandahar are involved in fomenting insurgency in its Baluchistan province.

Because of the regional rivalry between Pakistan and India, Islamabad has been reluctant to allow Indian trans-shipment of goods across its territory into Afghanistan. The U.S. should encourage India and Pakistan to work toward greater economic cooperation in Afghanistan as a way to defuse their tensions. Participants in unofficial talks on improving Indo-Pakistani ties have suggested that the two countries add Afghanistan as an agenda item in their formal dialogue.¹⁰

Pakistan–China Relations. Pakistan and China have had long-standing strategic ties. China is Pakistan's largest defense supplier and the Chinese view Pakistan as a useful counterweight to Indian power in the region. In the run-up to Chinese President Hu Jintao's visit to Pakistan last November, media reports speculated that Beijing would sign a major nuclear energy cooperation agreement with Pakistan.¹¹ In the end, however, the Chinese leader provided a general pledge of support to Pakistan's nuclear energy program but refrained from announcing plans to supply new nuclear reactors. China has helped Pakistan build two nuclear reactors at the Chasma site in the Punjab Province and has provided Pakistan with nuclear technology as far back as the 1970s. China also is helping Pakistan develop a deep-sea port at Gwadar in the Pakistani province of Baluchistan, near the mouth of the Persian Gulf.

One source of tension between Beijing and Islamabad that has surfaced in the past has been over the issue of rising Islamic extremism in Pakistan and the ability of Chinese Uighur separatists to receive sanctuary and training among other radical Islamist groups on Pakistani territory. To mollify China's concerns, Pakistan in recent years has begun to clamp down on Uighur settlements and on religious schools used as training grounds for militant Islamists.¹² Their tensions over Islamic extremism flared earlier this year when Islamic vigilantes from the Red Mosque kidnapped several Chinese citizens they accused of running a brothel in Islamabad. Many believe Islamabad's decision to use military force against the extremists at the Red Mosque stemmed largely from the incident with the Chinese citizens, which greatly embarrassed the Musharraf regime.

Pakistan–Iran Relations. Pakistan's relations with Iran have been far from smooth over the last three decades. Relations soured following the 1979 Iranian Revolution due to Pakistani President Mohammad Zia ul-Haq's previous support of the Shah's regime and his encouragement of Sunni militant organizations that pushed a strict Sunni interpretation of Islam and targeted the minority Shiia population in Pakistan. Iran, in turn, began to export to Pakistan Shiia militants to counter the Sunni extremists. Sectarian violence has ebbed and flowed over the last fifteen years in Pakistan and continues to have a chilling impact on Iranian–Pakistani relations.

¹⁰ Chandan Mitra, "J & K: Out of the box," *The Pioneer*, September 13, 2007 at http://www.dailypioneer.com/columnist1.asp?main_variable=Columnist&file_name=mitra%2Fmitra265.txt&writer=mitra.

¹¹ Jo Johnson, Farhan Bokhari, and Edward Luce, "U.S. Fears China–Pakistan Nuclear Deal," *The Financial Times*, November 16, 2006, at www.ft.com/cms/s/0/0bcea362-75e1-11db-aea1-0000779e2340.html, (September 12, 2007).

¹² Ziad Haider, "Clearing Clouds Over the Karakoram Pass," *YaleGlobal Online*, March 29, 2004, at <http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/display.article?id=3603&page=2> (September 12, 2007).

Pakistan's support of the Sunni Taliban in the mid-1990s significantly raised tensions between Tehran and Islamabad. These tensions climaxed in August 1998 when the Taliban killed several Iranian diplomats in the northern Afghan city of Mazar-e-Sharif. Iran responded by amassing its military along the border with Afghanistan. If fighting had broken out between Iranian forces and the Taliban, Pakistan would have likely been drawn into the conflict in support of the Taliban. It is difficult to imagine Pakistan would have officially sanctioned nuclear cooperation with such an unsteady neighbor, although some analysts believe the bulk of the nuclear cooperation occurred in the early 1990s before the Taliban had emerged and shortly after the U.S. had cut off assistance to Pakistan.

Pakistan's halt to official support for the Taliban following 9/11 has helped to improve Pakistani– Iranian ties, and both countries are actively engaged in talks on developing an Iran–Pakistan–India oil and gas pipeline.

Nuclear Issues

Preventing Pakistan's nuclear weapons and technology from falling into the hands of terrorists is a top priority for the U.S. President Musharraf recently made a series of promotions to key Army posts aimed at ensuring continuity in Army policies during the political transition. The round of promotions is critical to maintaining the professionalism and institutional integrity of the Army and reassuring the international community that the military remains committed to the fight against terrorism and protection of the country's nuclear assets.

While there is no immediate threat to the security of Pakistan's nuclear weapons during the current political transition, Washington will need to be diligent in pursuing policies that promote the safety and security of Islamabad's nuclear assets. The results of investigations into Pakistani nuclear scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan's nuclear black market and proliferation network demonstrate the devastating consequences of nuclear proliferation by individuals with access to state-controlled nuclear programs.

Although A.Q. Khan avoided engaging al-Qaeda on nuclear issues, earlier revelations about a group of former Pakistani military officials and nuclear scientists who met with Osama bin Laden around the time of 9/11 reminds us of the continuing threat of the intersection of terrorism and nuclear weapons in Pakistan. On October 23, 2001, acting on an American request, Pakistani authorities detained Bashiruddin Mahmood and Abdul Majeed, two retired Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) officials. Since their retirement from the PAEC in 1999 they had been involved in relief work in Afghanistan through a non-governmental organization they established called Ummah Tameer-e-Nau (UTN). In November 2001, the coalition forces found documents in Afghanistan relating to UTN's interest in biological weapons. This prompted Pakistani security forces to arrest seven members of UTN's board, most of whom were retired Pakistani Army officials and nuclear scientists.¹³

¹³ Zahid Hussain, *Frontline Pakistan: The Struggle with Militant Islam* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), pp. 154 – 155.

Former Director of Central Intelligence George Tenet speculates in his memoirs that UTN's contacts with the Taliban and al-Qaeda may have been supported by some elements within the Pakistani military and intelligence establishment. Tenet says Pakistani interrogations of the seven board members were initially insufficient. He further notes that despite CIA warnings to Pakistani officials about UTN's activities before 9/11, it was only when President George W. Bush dispatched him to Pakistan in November 2001, following revelations of a meeting between bin Laden, Ayman al-Zawahiri, and UTN leaders, that Musharraf took serious action.¹⁴

Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

Washington is unlikely to succeed in stabilizing Afghanistan and preventing the Taliban from regaining influence in the country unless it addresses Pakistani stakes in Afghanistan and integrates U.S. security and diplomatic policies toward these two key countries. In this regard, the U.S. should follow through with suggestions to establish a senior envoy to focus solely on working with both Pakistani and Afghan officials to address their political and historical tensions and encourage greater security and economic cooperation. As part of this effort, the U.S. will need to spur Pakistan to adjust its security perceptions of the region and demonstrate U.S. sensitivity to Pakistan's core security interests and willingness to use influence with both Kabul and New Delhi to address these concerns. Washington should continue and expand the Pakistan-Afghanistan jirga process as a way to bring together local leaders from both sides of the border.

Washington should encourage New Delhi and Islamabad to engage directly with one another on the issue of Afghanistan and help identify regional economic or political initiatives on which the two can cooperate. Pakistan should not expect the U.S. to discourage India from having a role in Afghanistan, since Washington views New Delhi's example as a pluralistic democracy as a positive influence in helping Afghanistan develop itself into a stable democracy. Washington should consider fostering regional trade cooperation initiatives among Pakistan-India-Afghanistan that would encourage Pakistan to allow India to transship goods destined for Afghanistan reconstruction programs through its territory as stipulated in H.R. 2446. The U.S. could support a high-profile regional trade initiative with Indian, Pakistani, and Afghan representatives somewhere in the region that also involves participation by U.S. companies currently involved in the Afghan reconstruction effort.

The U.S. will need to build up Pakistan's capacity to take on the Taliban and al-Qaeda in the Tribal Areas and focus substantial attention on developing these areas economically. Washington must convince Islamabad to work more closely in joint efforts that bring U.S. resources and military strength to bear on the situation in North and South Waziristan and employ a combination of targeted military operations and economic assistance programs that drives a wedge between the Pashtun tribal communities and the international terrorists. A large-scale U.S. troop invasion of Pakistan's Tribal Areas could have disastrous consequences for the Pakistani state and would not provide a lasting solution to the problem. A more effective strategy involves working cooperatively with Pakistan's military to assert state authority over the areas and once they are secure, provide substantial assistance to build up the economy and social infrastructure. Washington's pledge of \$750 million to develop the tribal areas over the next five

¹⁴ George Tenet, *At the Center of the Storm* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2007), p. 286.

years is welcome but the aid should not be delivered until it is clear the Pakistani authorities have the upper hand in the region and can ensure the aid does not fall into the wrong hands. This will require U.S. access to the region and a clear commitment from the Pakistan government to counter Taliban ideology.

USAID has implemented assistance programs in the FATA for several years, including road building and school construction, and through opium cultivation eradication programs that were successful in the 1980s. Although the U.S. will have to provide aid initially through Pakistani government channels, USAID should seek out potential NGOs that could work in these areas so that eventually it can work through them rather than relying solely on the local administration.

The U.S. should conduct counterinsurgency training programs for the Pakistan military, especially the Frontier Corps, whose troops know the terrain of the FATA, but have little counterinsurgency training. This training will both build trust and stronger ties between the U.S. military and its Pakistani counterparts as well as better prepare the Pakistan Army to fight al-Qaeda in the Tribal Areas.

To address rising Islamic extremism, Washington should encourage the Pakistan government to enforce the rule of law against militants who use the threat of violence to enforce Taliban-style edicts and close down madrassahs that are teaching hatred against the West that leads to terrorism. Washington, in coordination with the United Kingdom and European allies, should make clear to Pakistan that the Taliban do not have a place in any future government in Afghanistan and that only those who firmly renounce violence and participate in the current political process will have a say in running the country.

The U.S. should refrain from conditioning assistance to Pakistan as it sends a wrong signal at a time when we need to demonstrate that the fight against terrorism is a joint endeavor that benefits Pakistan as much as it does the U.S. and global community. Given the abrupt cut-off of U.S. aid to Pakistan in 1990 because of nuclear concerns, the U.S. lost valuable leverage with Pakistani leaders and created a feeling of mistrust between our two countries that still plagues the relationship. Because of the 1990 aid cut-off, Pakistan views the U.S. as a fickle partner that could exit the region at any time. This lack of faith in U.S. commitment to the region hurts our ability to garner the kind of counterterrorism cooperation we require from the Pakistani government. Pakistani soldiers are dying in the battle against terrorism and average Pakistanis are beginning to question whether these sacrifices are being made solely at the behest of the U.S. rather than to protect their own country. Conditioning assistance only fuels the idea that Pakistan is taking action to fight terrorism under coercion, rather than to protect its own citizens.

The U.S. should encourage the current transition to civilian-led democratic rule, yet not try to micro-manage it from Washington. The Pakistani people by and large do not support extremist policies and would likely vote into power one of the secular democratic parties so long as they have a range of political choices and perceive the elections as transparent and free.