

CRS Report for Congress

Received through the CRS Web

Pakistan: Chronology of Recent Events

K. Alan Kronstadt
Analyst in Asian Affairs
Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division

Summary

This report provides a chronology of recent events involving Pakistan and Pakistan-U.S. relations. Sources include, but are not limited to, major newswires, the U.S. Department of State, and Pakistani news outlets. For a substantive review, see CRS Report RL33498, *Pakistan-U.S. Relations*. This report will be updated regularly.

- 10/20/06** — India's prime minister accepted an invitation to visit Pakistan at an unspecified date. On the same day, a fugitive Al Qaeda explosives expert was removed from the U.S. most-wanted list after the FBI determined he had been killed in an April gunfight with Pakistani authorities.
- 10/19/06** — **Former Prime Ministers Sharif and Bhutto met in London** to reaffirm a mutual commitment to their May 2006 "Charter of Democracy." On the same day, two Pakistani soldiers were shot and killed by Islamic militants in South Waziristan. Also, Information Minister Durrani urged Indian leaders to avoid making public statements that could "spoil the atmosphere" between the two countries.
- 10/17/06** — **Afghan President Karzai expressed certainty that Taliban leader Mullah Omar was in Quetta**, Pakistan. A Pakistani official rejected the allegation, saying "the entire world knows [Omar] is in Afghanistan."
- 10/16/06** — USAID launched an \$11.5 million program to improve children's health in Pakistan's FATA.
- 10/15/06** — Information Minister Durrani said that no one will be allowed to criticize "the institution of the armed forces as it is enshrined in the constitution."
- 10/11/06** — Suspected Taliban militants in North Waziristan shot and killed two men they accused of being "U.S. spies."
- 10/09/06** — Islamabad criticized a reported nuclear test by North Korea, calling it a "destabilizing" development for the entire region. President Musharraf later denied the existence of any link between Pakistan and the North Korean test. On the same day, NATO's military commander in Afghanistan met with President Musharraf in Islamabad. Also, Afghan

Acronyms:

FATA: Federally Administered Tribal Areas

- President Karzai called for a jirga of Pashtun tribes from Pakistan and Afghanistan aimed at ending the Taliban insurgency.
- 10/08/06** — U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan Crocker said the United States will train 30,000 teachers and build 50 new schools in earthquake-affected areas of Pakistan.
- 10/07/06** — Police in Baluchistan reported arresting at least 45 suspected Taliban militants in a series of raids near the Afghan border.
- 10/06/06** — President Musharraf said the 9/5 Waziristan truce was designed to marginalize rather than compromise with Islamic militants, and he insisted that the truce was working to bolster peace and stability in the FATA.
- 10/04/06** — Afghan security agents arrested 17 people allegedly trained in Pakistan to launch suicide attacks in eastern Afghanistan. On the same day, Baluchistan's chief minister accused Indian intelligence services of fueling the Baloch insurgency.
- 10/03/06** — Islamabad clarified for U.S. Ambassador Crocker that **the A.Q. Khan issue "is closed"** and that no further details about his case would be shared. On the same day, a follow-up U.S. military earthquake relief mission to Pakistan included delivery of more than 10,000 sheets of corrugated iron for home construction.
- 10/01/06** — President Musharraf told an American television interviewer that some "retired" former top officials of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) may be providing assistance to the Taliban. Two former ISI chiefs later rejected Musharraf's claim as "baseless."
- 09/30/06** — **Bombay's top police official said the 7/11 train bombings were "planned by Pakistan's [intelligence service]** and carried out by Lashkar-e-Taiba and their operatives in India." Islamabad swiftly rejected the allegation as propaganda designed "to externalize an internal [Indian] malaise." On the same day, the United States and Pakistan signed a letter of acceptance for a multi-billion dollar deal to provide Pakistan with new and used F-16 combat aircraft.
- 09/28/06** — A U.S. military spokesman in Kabul said **the number of militant attacks in eastern Afghanistan had doubled and even tripled in some cases since the 9/5 truce in Waziristan** (he did not, however, make a causal link between the two developments). On the same day, **a leaked report from the British Defense Academy said Pakistan's intelligence service indirectly supported terrorist groups**, including Al Qaeda, by supporting the Pakistan's Islamist political parties. Also, the United States and Pakistan signed two agreements on \$41 million in U.S. assistance to strengthening Pakistan's law enforcement agencies. Finally, London-based Amnesty International accused the Islamabad government of abducting hundreds of Pakistanis as part of the U.S.-led "war on terror," with U.S. agents paying thousands of dollars in "bounties" for accused terrorists who could then be held for months with no legal process.
- 09/27/06** — Islamic militants said they had "taken control" of Miramshah, North Waziristan, including opening a "Taliban office" there. A government spokesman later said the office had been closed.
- 09/25/06** — **President Musharraf's autobiography was released.** The book faced heavy criticism in Pakistan as divulging "state secrets" and being inappropriate for a sitting president. Musharraf also gave a speech in New York City, where he called "ridiculous" the claim that the Taliban were

- headquartered in Quetta, Pakistan, and insisted that Pakistan was playing a “totally neutral role” in Afghanistan. On the same day, India’s defense minister said Pakistan “remains a nursery of global terrorism.”
- 09/22/06** — **President Bush met with President Musharraf** at the White House to discuss a variety of bilateral issues, including security in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region and the 9/5 truce in North Waziristan. President Bush praised the leadership and courage of the Pakistani leader, who explained to the U.S. president that the truce represented a “holistic approach” to fighting terrorism and would help in the battle against the Taliban.
- 09/21/06** — The Commander of the U.S. European Command, Gen. Jones, told a Senate panel **it is “generally accepted” that the Taliban headquarters is somewhere in the vicinity of Quetta, Pakistan.** On the same day, New York-based Human Rights Watch released a report finding that the Islamabad government “represses democratic freedoms, muzzles the press, and practices routine torture” in (Pakistan-controlled) Azad Kashmir.
- 09/20/06** — **President Bush said he would order U.S. forces to enter Pakistan** if he received good intelligence on Osama bin Laden’s location. On the same day, President Musharraf suggested his status as army chief allowed him to undertake reform efforts he might otherwise be unable to make.
- 09/16/06** — Meeting on the sidelines of a Nonaligned Movement summit in Cuba, **President Musharraf and Indian Prime Minister Singh announced a resumption of formal peace negotiations** that had been suspended following the 7/11 Bombay bombings and also decided to implement a joint anti-terrorism mechanism.
- 09/15/06** — The U.S. Department of State’s *International Religious Freedom Report 2006* again found that in practice the Islamabad government imposes limits on the freedom of religion in Pakistan. The report noted “some steps to improve the treatment of religious minorities,” but indicated that “serious problems remained,” including discriminatory laws and violence against religious minorities. On the same day, the Pakistani Parliament unanimously condemned Pope Benedict XVI for “derogatory” remarks linking Islam with violence.
- 09/14/06** — A Pakistani federal official was kidnaped in North Waziristan.
- 09/13/06** — A senior Pakistani official said the 9/5 truce in North Waziristan would not prevent the army from “taking surgical action” against any renewed militant activities.
- 09/12/06** — President Musharraf said the Taliban were a more dangerous terrorist element than Al Qaeda due to the support the former receives in Afghanistan. Kabul rejected the claim and reiterated its complaint that the Taliban receive aid from neighboring countries. On the same day, India’s prime minister expressed concern that Islamabad “has not done enough to control” terrorist elements on its soil.
- 09/11/06** — The Islamabad government appeared to give in to the demands of Islamist parties by backing off from certain proposed changes to the controversial “Hudood” laws. Scheduled parliamentary debate on the bill was later postponed indefinitely, with opposition and human rights figures accusing the ruling party of insincerity.
- 09/07/06** — **S. 3875**, the Real Security Act of 2006, was introduced in the Senate. Sections 302 and 1232 of the act contain Pakistan-specific language on U.S. policy and assistance, including a requirement that the

Administration report to Congress a long-term U.S. strategy to engage Islamabad on “a number of critical issues that threaten to disrupt” the bilateral relationship.

- 09/05/06 — **The Islamabad government and pro-Taliban militants in North Waziristan signed a truce** to ensure “permanent peace” in the region. Under the deal, the Taliban vowed to distance themselves from foreign militants and to end the cross-border movement of militants into Afghanistan, while government forces agreed to refrain from further military operations in the area and to withdraw from numerous checkposts. While many observers feared the arrangement would in effect create a sanctuary for extremists, a White House spokesman insisted that the cease-fire deal would not diminish Pakistani efforts to pursue Al Qaeda members.
- 08/30/06 — Negotiations between government officials and tribal leaders in North Waziristan reportedly reached an impasse over the latter’s demands for “huge compensation” for damages caused by military operations in the region. On the same day, pro-Taliban militants in North Waziristan beheaded two men they accused of being “U.S. spies.”
- 08/29/06 — Parliament rejected a no-confidence motion against Prime Minister Aziz, with only 40% of National Assembly members voting in favor.
- 08/28/06 — India’s prime minister said the peace process with Pakistan “cannot go forward if Pakistan does not deal with terrorism firmly.
- 08/27/06 — The Commander of the U.S. Central Command, Gen. Abizaid, held meetings with top Pakistani leaders in Islamabad.
- 08/26/06 — Pro-Taliban militants in South Waziristan threatened to behead some 30 tribal leaders there “if they continued spying for U.S. forces in Afghanistan.”
- 08/25/06 — **A cease-fire agreement between the Islamabad government and Islamic militants in North Waziristan was extended for another two weeks.** Ten militants were released from prison as part of the agreement.
- 08/24/06 — Thousands of members of the MQM party rallied Karachi in support of proposed changes to the controversial Islamist “Hudood” laws.
- 08/23/06 — **At the 18th meeting of the U.S.-Pakistan-Afghanistan Tripartite Commission,** the Pakistani and Afghan armies agreed to conduct joint patrolling of their shared border. On the same day, President Bush telephoned President Musharraf to thank him for Pakistan’s help in fighting terrorism and in foiling an alleged plot to destroy U.S. passenger jets over the Atlantic. Also, a top Indian official said there was no evidence Pakistan was acting to dismantle the “infrastructure of terrorism” on its territory.
- 08/21/06 — **A bill to amend the controversial Islamist “Hudood” laws** was introduced in Parliament by the ruling PML party. Human rights groups called the proposed changes “grossly inadequate” for ending legalized discrimination and to deter violence against women. On the same day, Sindh’s police chief said the car used in the 3/2 bombing of the U.S. Consulate in Karachi had come from North Waziristan.
- 08/16/06 — Pakistan and China signed two new agreements on defense cooperation and military assistance.
- 08/15/06 — The United States and Pakistan signed an agreement on \$22 million in U.S. assistance to Pakistani democracy and governance programs. On the

- same day, Pakistani police reportedly arrested 29 Taliban fighters at a private hospital near Quetta, Baluchistan.
- 08/14/06** — Pakistan’s Ambassador to Sri Lanka was nearly killed by a roadside bombing in Colombo that left seven people dead. It was not clear if the Ambassador was being targeted.
- 08/13/06** — Pakistan reported having turned over to Afghanistan 57 suspected Taliban fighters over a period of four weeks.
- 08/11/06** — **A reported terrorist plot to destroy American passenger jets flying out of London** led to the arrest of numerous British citizens with family ties to Pakistan, as well as **at least seven arrests in Pakistan**, including Rashid Rauf, described as a British citizen from Pakistan, and several Pakistani citizens. Pakistani officials claimed Rauf had close ties to Al Qaeda and had received weapons training near the Afghan border. Other reports linked Rauf to the Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorist group. Britain and the United States praised Pakistan for its role in breaking up the alleged plot. On the same day, the U.S. State Department issued terror alerts for U.S. citizens in Pakistan and India, warning that foreign terrorists and possibly Al Qaeda members were planning attacks on public facilities in the run-up to those countries’ independence day celebrations.
- 08/08/06** — The United States and Pakistan signed an agreement on \$41 million in U.S. assistance to Pakistani health programs.
- 08/07/06** — Suspected Islamic militants in North Waziristan beheaded a man they accused of being a “U.S. spy.”
- 08/01/06** — The United States and Pakistan signed two agreements on \$13.7 million in U.S. assistance to expanding Pakistan’s economy through small business loans.
- 07/28/06** — The Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Pace, met with President Musharraf in Rawalpindi to discuss issues of mutual interest, then traveled to Afghanistan, where he urged Kabul and Islamabad to cooperate in fighting the Taliban.
- 07/26/06** — **The top U.N. envoy in Afghanistan said the Taliban insurgency there was being aided by money and fighters coming across the border from Pakistan.** On the same day, Secretary of State Rice sent a letter to Congress indicating that no F-16 combat aircraft or related equipment will be delivered to Pakistan until Islamabad provided written security assurances that no U.S. technology will be accessible by third parties. Islamabad later denied that any “extraordinary” security requirements were requested.
- 07/24/06** — Following a meeting between government officials and Waziri tribal elders, the government released from detention another 25 tribesmen and closed six military checkpoints in North Waziristan.
- 07/22/06** — **The 6/25 cease-fire agreement between Islamabad and Islamic militants in North Waziristan was extended for another month.**
- 07/21/06** — The first **meeting of the U.S.-Pakistan Joint Committee on Science and Technology** ended in Washington. On the same day, **about 200 Baloch militants, including 6 commanders, surrendered to government authorities**, who granted amnesty in return for the rebels’ expressions of regret and vows to obey the law. Also, in a reciprocal gesture of goodwill,

Islamic militant in North Waziristan released four Pakistani paramilitary troops they had held for three months.

- 07/20/06** — During a **House International Relations Committee hearing on the proposed sale to Pakistan of F-16 combat aircraft** and related munitions and equipment, committee leadership expressed displeasure at the Bush Administration's congressional notification procedure and several Members raised concerns that U.S. defense technology could be transferred from Pakistan to China. **H.J.Res. 93**, disapproving the proposed sale, was introduced in the House. On the same day, **President Musharraf gave a speech to the nation** in which he lauded national economic gains; warned that the Taliban were "getting stronger" in Afghanistan and decried the "Talibanization" of Pakistan's tribal areas; addressed unrest and federal development programs in Baluchistan; and called New Delhi's postponement of the Pakistan-India dialogue "a victory for the terrorists." Musharraf offered Pakistani assistance to India in investigating the 7/11 Bombay bombings (New Delhi later rejected the offer, suggesting it was not sincere). Also, about 300 Pashtun tribesmen and clerics held a tribal council with government officials to seek restoration of peace in North Waziristan. Islamabad released 32 more detained militants in a gesture of goodwill.
- 07/19/06** — In a three-day sweep, **police in Baluchistan arrested more than 200 Afghans suspected of being Taliban militants**. On the same day, Pakistani and Indian security officials met in Lahore for regular talks on border security and counternarcotics. Also, Pakistani authorities shut down 156 radio stations for operating illegally and for "fanning sectarian hatred and anti-state feelings" in western tribal areas.
- 07/17/06** — Foreign Secretary Khan called India's delay of peace talks a "negative development" and reiterated Pakistan's "firm policy and commitment" to preventing terrorist groups from operating on or from its territory. On the same day, Pakistan's air force chief reportedly acknowledged that jet aircraft had been used in the fight against Baloch rebels.
- 07/16/06** — **New Delhi announced the delay of peace talks with Islamabad** planned for July 20-21, saying "the environment is not conducive." On the same day, India's defense minister said "Pakistan has not stopped giving its soil for terrorists' use."
- 07/15/06** — India's foreign secretary said the 7/11 Bombay bombings made it "very difficult to take forward the peace process."
- 07/14/06** — **Indian Prime Minister Singh suggested that culprits in the 7/11 Bombay bombings were "support[ed] by elements across the border"** and said Pakistan must uphold its vow to crack down on terrorist groups in order for the bilateral peace process to go forward. Islamabad called Singh's assertions "unsubstantiated." On the same day, **a suicide bomber killed a leading Shiite cleric** and a child in Karachi. Thousands of angry mourners marched the following day.