Pakistan and South Asia’s Security Nexus: Scenarios for the Future

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Foreword

Ambassador Fred Tanner
Director of the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP)

The Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP) had the honour to organise an international research seminar on “Pakistan and South Asia’s Security Nexus: Scenarios for the Future” on 9 June 2009 in Geneva. I wish to express our gratitude to the National Defence University (NDU) in Islamabad, the Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the United Nations in Geneva, and the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs for their support and contributions to that event.

Ten months after Asif Ali Zardari was sworn in as the new President of Pakistan, five months after Barack Obama’s inauguration as President of the United States, six months after the Mumbai attacks and one month after the general elections in India, this international research seminar offered a unique opportunity on several counts: to analyse the political and security situation at both the national and regional levels in South Asia; to confront views and perceptions from within and outside the region; and to envisage possible scenarios for internal and international developments affecting this part of the world. Indeed, such developments may have a crucial impact not only on regional but also global security.
In a neutral setting, high-level Pakistani Government leaders and independent academic experts from the region, the United States and Europe addressed the geo-strategic situation of a volatile region located between the Middle East, Central Asia and China, marred by protracted conflicts such as those in Kashmir and Afghanistan.

Issues discussed included:

1. The evolution of relationships between the domestic actors in Pakistan.
2. The future of the special relationship between Pakistan and India, two nuclear powers committed to a strategic approach based on gradual normalisation, confidence-building measures and conflict prevention mechanisms, but still vulnerable to any escalation of bilateral tension.
3. The development of the “war on terror” in the region, taking into account Pakistan’s crucial position as a neighbour both of Afghanistan and India, and also the influence of Islamist extremism in the region as well as the partnership between the Pakistani Armed Forces and the United States.
4. The prospects for South Asia’s economic integration, in particular the potential of Pakistan’s reforms and their resilience to the global financial crisis; Pakistan’s renewed access to global markets; but also the challenges of a growing population confronted with rising energy and food prices and high spending on poverty alleviation.

I trust that the findings which emerged from this seminar and the thorough discussion that it allowed will be helpful to analysts, policymakers and practitioners. May these results contribute to effective and peaceful responses to the security challenges of Pakistan and South Asia.
The South Asian region has great significance in the global security context. Over the last decade, much of the focus has been on Pakistan, a pivotal state in the global campaign against terrorism. With its natural and human resources, and location at the crossroads of Central Asia, South Asia and the Middle East, Pakistan has the potential to be a global economic hub in future.

This seminar has addressed the security issues pertaining to Pakistan and South Asia and has analysed their economic challenges and opportunities. Against the backdrop of interdependent and sometimes conflicting geo-strategic interests of the states concerned, coupled with misleading perceptions created by the international media, the importance of organising such a seminar cannot be overemphasised. The people of Pakistan lack trust in the policies and actions of the Western countries regarding Afghanistan and, broadly speaking, South Asia in general. It is hoped that an objective analysis of the security dynamics in South Asia will promote a better appreciation of the challenges and opportunities confronting this region.

The independent experts have correctly identified the inter-linkages between the security, political, social and economic issues in Pakistan, as well as the inseparable connections between internal and external factors that determine its policy options and priorities. It is hoped that this work will promote better understanding of Pakistan’s geo-political situation and economic potential. What has clearly emerged is the dire need to develop wide-ranging and integrated solutions to the multi-sectoral issues facing South Asia.

The views expressed during the seminar, which are aptly summarised by the authors of this report, contribute to a better understanding of the
complexities involved. They also identify the practical limitations to the envisioned ideal solutions and address some of the possible ways to move forward. These deliberations are essential for any policymaker to arrive at an impartial and comprehensive picture of the context and to come up with a pragmatic solution to the problems discussed.

It would be worthwhile to have a follow up to these discussions to assess subsequent developments and to refine practical solutions in light of experience.

I welcome the combined efforts of the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP), the National Defence University (NDU) in Islamabad, and the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs to facilitate a comprehensive and in-depth study of these issues. The GCSP is known for its independence and impartiality. NDU is renowned for open and frank debates amongst the top civil and military policymakers in Pakistan. Finally, this seminar is also a manifest example of institutional collaboration between Pakistan and Switzerland.
Summary

Through their contributions to the International Research Seminar held on 9 June 2009, panel experts and discussion partners arrived at the following general findings:

1. Pakistan’s current security situation is challenging on numerous fronts – political, economic and social – and will require the implementation of comprehensive and integrated solutions.

2. Further social and economic development remains the key solution to alleviate most of Pakistan’s current security challenges, which are complicated by the exploitation of poor people by the Taliban. As long as some part of the population remains mired in extreme poverty, without adequate access to education and economic opportunities, the socialising effects of radical Islam will continue to have an impact.

3. Pakistan’s internal situation is inextricably affected by a number of external factors. It is therefore unfair to assume that the country can handle its current domestic security situation alone. It is in the interest of all nations involved in the conflict in Afghanistan as well as all other South Asian states to support a strong Pakistan that can effectively counter the threat of global terrorism.
A. Analysis of the Current and Future Geo-Strategic Environment in Pakistan and South Asia

Pakistan’s Current Security Challenges

The security environment in and around Pakistan since the start of the conflict in Afghanistan in October 2001 has been volatile. The past few years especially have seen a string of high-profile events that have compounded the external factors outlined above. These include the siege of the Lal Masjid in Islamabad in July 2007, in which state security forces attacked Islamist hardliners supporting the Taliban who had been holed up inside; the assassination of Benazir Bhutto on 27 December 2007; the bombing of the Marriott hotel in Islamabad on 20 September 2008, and the attack on the Sri Lankan Cricket Team in Lahore on 3 March 2009. Further manifestations of internal tensions include permission of the practice of Shari’a law in the Malakand region of the Swat Valley as per the ceasefire agreement of 16 February 2009 and subsequent revocation of the agreement in April 2009.

The immediate future of Pakistan’s security environment is linked to its success in the Swat valley. It is a promising sign that it now appears that the operation has the approval of most members of Pakistan’s civil society and political establishment. Indeed, the reason for the delay in commencing such an action was partly to hold consultations to allow for a consensus to be reached by all parties on this course of action. The overwhelming support of the actions taken by the state to eliminate Taliban forces should help ensure that the operation will be able to continue until it achieves its strategic objectives. Nevertheless, the costs of the operation are high, as it has dislocated millions of internally displaced persons (IDPs) who need to be sheltered and eventually return to their homes. Indeed, the onus on the Pakistani state is to conduct its operations against the Taliban in such a manner that does not exacerbate the already precarious living situations of its
marginalised communities, thus pushing more frustrated men and women towards extremist violence.

The ongoing US military surge in Afghanistan will also have a dramatic effect on Pakistan’s security. Will this action succeed, or will it serve only to push more militants into the country? Pakistan already faces a tough battle against the Taliban in its tribal areas, and greater numbers of insurgents would make the task significantly tougher. Questions also remain as to whether the Government will be able to retrieve land that is currently controlled by the insurgents, as well as whether it has the capacity to build the institutions needed in these areas to snuff out the influence of extremist ideology over the local population.

Some panellists argued that the prevalence of extremism in Pakistan was linked to the challenges that face the Pakistani state. Widespread poverty and lack of opportunities for education and work means that a large segment of individuals may turn to extremism as a means to add some sort of purpose to their lives. Pakistan’s own social and economic development is therefore a crucial strategic objective to alleviate its current security challenges.

The Future Geo-Strategic Environment of South Asia

While Pakistan’s economic and social development is the only long-term solution for its security challenges, many panellists agreed that sustainable development will be difficult to achieve within the future geo-strategic environment of South Asia. On the one hand, the major global trends in the world in the 21st century indicate that a significant shift of economic and political power from the West to the East has already begun to take place. This is a slow process that is expected to become clearer in the coming decades. Yet already during the recent financial crisis, brought about primarily by the actions of Western financial advisors, three Asian countries – China, India and Indonesia – have all continued to grow at a stable rate. While at the moment these economies
alone are not large enough to pull the world out of the recession, their continued growth will aid global recovery, and serve as an indication of the shift of economic power. According to some panellists, China and India are two significantly important countries within the ‘greater’ South Asian region which will certainly grow in stature and power in the coming decades.

While these signs bode well for South Asian development, a number of other factors, both internal and external to the region, present significant challenges to the future South Asian geo-strategic environment. First, the rise of Eastern economies means that there will be growing competition for increasingly scarce resources, such as fossil fuels and commodities. This is already becoming apparent in the East, as countries like China and India are moving into new areas to find resources to fuel their growing economies. In the worst-case scenario, some panellists envisioned that scarcity and competition could lead to future confrontation. Additionally, the projected enormous increase in global population in the relatively near future will bear particularly on the countries of South Asia. Over the next fifteen years, it is projected that 1.2 billion people will be added to the global population, and 97 percent of these are expected to be added to the populations of developing countries. A large number of these people will be in South Asia, and this will likely contribute, at least in the short term, to the already endemic poverty that these countries face. Approximately 75 percent of the population of South Asia already live on less than USD 2 a day. Projected population increases will exacerbate resource scarcity, water stress and land shortages. Much of the outcome depends on how technological innovations and policy changes can help alleviate the situation. However, until large-scale and affordable solutions are found, some panellists believed that the outlook was not positive.

As states struggle to provide services to a growing population, a vicious cycle is created as access to education grows more competitive, thus increasing the number of unskilled men and women who in turn produce
more children. Limited access to education in the developing world, coupled with an aging population in the developed countries, means that for skilled workers, migration from the developing to the developed world is an attractive option for boosting their own income and quality of life. The risk is a “brain drain” leaving behind the less-skilled and -qualified to run the countries.

Globally, the increased strain on energy resources caused by an expanding population will require the development of new alternative sources. On the one hand, Pakistan seems to be well-placed to deal with the imminent energy crisis, as it holds the third largest deposits of coal in the world. However, these have yet to be exploited and it will be expensive to do so.

Another global trend that will significantly affect South Asia is climate change. The projected future rise in sea levels may mean that a significant number of people residing in coastal areas in the Maldives and in Bangladesh will be forced to move inland, increasing the possibility of confrontation between these migrants and the local population over land and resources. With respect to Pakistan, a major problem for the future is the current melting of its glaciers, all of which could disappear within the next 30 years. For a country that is already water-stressed, this presents a major problem. Large-scale melting will result in immediate flooding, soil erosion and wasted drinking water. It will also result in a permanent water shortage and significant desertification. This process will only add to Pakistan’s burgeoning land shortage. Already only eight percent of Pakistan is permanently cropped, and what little arable land exists is being taken over by the growing population’s need for additional housing.

There will also be important regional challenges. One involves South Asia’s interaction with states and groups within the region’s periphery. Indeed, how ‘greater’ South Asia - including states like Iran and China - interacts, is a major question that will shape the future geo-strategic environment of South Asia. Another long-term trend to watch for is
whether or not the region can speak with one voice in international settings on issues such as global economics and trade, health, energy and the environment. Furthermore, some participants questioned whether the region as a whole and South Asian states in general have the ability to develop a ‘soft’ power influence on international affairs.

B. Possible International Responses

Panellists made the following policy recommendations on how to reconsider international relations with Pakistan and the regional South Asian security nexus.

United States

Some of the panellists voiced their concerns that the United States had acted uncharitably towards Pakistan on a number of issues. This was especially true with regard to negative rhetoric about Pakistan’s participation in the conflict in Afghanistan. Panellists encouraged the United States to give more credit to Pakistan for carrying out a determined campaign against literally its own people in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP). In their opinion, the United States needed to take into account the sensitive nature of conducting such operations and the amount of time it would take to build consensus in the country to prepare for the fight against the Taliban forces. As a result, they argued that the United States should instead be more constructive in its support of Pakistan’s efforts.

Some panellists further believed that the United States would be wise to consider re-evaluation of some of its strategies within the Afghanistan conflict. In particular, these critiques cited the continuation of drone attacks, as they have an acknowledged success rate of no more than six percent, and as a result, are more effective in turning public opinion
against the conflict than actually achieving their strategic objectives.\footnote{Mir, Amir, “60 drone hits kill 14 al-Qaeda men, 687 civilians,” The News International (10 Apr. 2009), \url{http://www.thenews.com.pk/top_story_detail.asp?id=21440}.} In addition, others believed that the current US and NATO campaign in Afghanistan needed to be revised to function more effectively. Currently, no coordinated strategic command has been put in place to supervise the work of the Allied forces. Furthermore, the training provided for the Afghan army has been inadequate to meet its challenges. On the political level, the focus of the Allies has been skewed too far in the direction of promoting good governance, rather than attempting to rebuild Afghanistan’s infrastructure and revive its economy. There is a need for deep and strategic change in US conduct of the conflict in Afghanistan if there is to be a successful conclusion.

Finally, with the new Obama Administration indicating a willingness to engage more actively around the world, calls have been made for greater American involvement on the issue of Kashmir. For many years now, it has been the policy of the United States to consider Kashmir a bilateral dispute between India and Pakistan. However, and especially in the light of President Obama’s speech in Cairo on 4 June 2009, in which he supported the creation of a Palestinian state, Kashmir might equally be considered of international relevance. For the first time since 1947, the United States has equal influence on the Governments in Kabul, Islamabad and New Delhi, and some panellists raised the point that perhaps it should consider deepening its engagement in the area to help bring about political solutions to long-standing disputes.

India

The conflicts between Pakistan and India remain unresolved, even though a series of proposed solutions are currently on the negotiating table. Regarding Kashmir, some seminar attendees saw the four-point plan by Pervez Musharraf as a significant concession on the part of Pakistan, and India’s
refusal was a major blow towards completing an agreement. On the other hand, the 1964 agreements between the two states on working towards providing some sort of autonomy for the region seems today to be quite sensible and could be a possible starting point for further negotiations, if the necessary political will exists on both sides to resolve the issue in the near future. Other border disputes concerning Siachen seem to be less complex, and could be a good starting point for the more difficult questions.

Some panellists also hinted at more hidden motives on the part of India within the South Asian security environment. On the one hand, they argued, Indian authorities have been quick to look towards Pakistan as the main cause of India’s internal security issues, such as the attack in Mumbai in November 2008. On the other hand, Pakistani forces have recovered weapons of Indian origin in operations conducted against non-state actors in Balochistan and the Swat Valley, suggesting that there has been a conscious attempt on the part of India to destabilise Pakistan’s internal security. In short, it is high time for both sides to stop placing blame on each other and to accept that cooperation is the only way to ease the security concerns of both states. The policy of isolation and disengagement after security breaches was criticised by some conference participants as counterproductive, as it hindered the construction of a security architecture that would serve the interests of both states. Therefore, despite the long-held grudges between Pakistan and India, the only sustainable way towards solving the deep-set security concerns in South Asia is to maintain engagement and to foster dialogue with one another.

The Greater South Asian Region

Partially as a result of disputes between India and Pakistan, greater regional political and economic integration within South Asia has not developed to the extent that would allow the states of South Asia to be viewed as a single bloc, as is the case with other regional organisations. Other reasons for this are the demographic and power imbalances in
the region, which includes a country like India with over one billion inhabitants as well as the Maldives, with a population under 400,000. As a result, the current South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), which represents the region’s greater economic interests, has not been an effective global negotiator. Greater regional cooperation will be essential if the region as a whole is to exert influence commensurate with its demographic significance. Either the necessary political will is required to strengthen SAARC, or different structures that are more appealing to the governments of South Asia need to be put in place so as to facilitate this cooperation.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)
The current global financial and economic crisis has left NATO governments wary of overextending their already strained budgets through greater financial investment into the conflict in Afghanistan. Yet a deepening of their engagement in the region was seen by some participants as crucial to the success of driving out the Taliban from the region. For many South Asian commentators the current NATO approach to the conflict is troubling. Some are concerned that NATO views the conflict as a training exercise for procuring and testing new military equipment. Others feel that the current focus on developing a liberal democracy in the region, rather than strengthening its infrastructure and economic capacity, is a mistake. Finally, Pakistani forces fighting in Swat have discovered Taliban fighters armed with NATO-made weapons, further complicating the already tense relationship between Pakistan and the West over the conflict in Afghanistan.
Pakistan’s Political Scenarios: Transition to Democracy?

The history of democracy in Pakistan has been chequered by lapses into authoritarian rule, a surprising turn of events for a country that owes its existence to a democratic exercise of self-determination. When comparing the establishment of democracy in Pakistan with that in India, one of the most telling factors is that while India was able to enjoy 17 years of rule under Jawaharlal Nehru after independence, Pakistan’s founder Muhammad Ali Jinnah died a little over a year after the birth of the new state. In addition, the Muslim elites that founded Pakistan were sizably smaller than the Indian Hindu and Muslim elites, and were slower to educate themselves in comparison. While the Indian National Congress proved to be a tightly organised party capable of instilling democratic principles at the grass-roots level, Pakistani civil society was less strong and structured, as voters in the state were mainly immigrant minorities.

Given the weak democratic foundations of the state, there has been significant progress in democratisation in Pakistan since independence. Certainly the legacy of the freedom struggle remains, in the form of the modern Pakistani ethos. Jinnah’s own professional background as a lawyer and constitutionalist, as well as the colonial inheritance from British rule of respect for the rule of law have contributed to making the
Pakistan has an incredibly resilient state and citizenry, which has helped the country overcome the numerous challenges it has faced since independence. Over the past 30 years, Pakistan has been at the centre of an ongoing storm of conflict within the region. This time period has seen three Afghan wars (the Afghan Civil War beginning in 1978 and continuing to present day, the Soviet invasion of 1979, and the War in Afghanistan following the attacks of 11 September 2001), three Gulf Wars (the Iran-Iraq War and the First and Second Gulf Wars), three near wars with India – averted through American intervention and the nuclear deterrent. Some participants also referred to an undeclared proxy war between Iran and Saudi Arabia in the province of Balochistan as well as Indian involvement in that province.

Recent developments are heartening for the future of democracy in Pakistan and the region as a whole. The past few years have demonstrated the power of public opinion, which was perhaps best encapsulated by the Pakistani judiciary movement against the State of Emergency declared by General Pervez Musharraf on 3 November 2007. Through public agitation and demonstrations, the public was able to force the hand of the authorities to restore the democratic electoral process, and internationally observed elections were held in February 2008. Other similar popular democratic movements have occurred elsewhere in the region as well. In Nepal, events in 2008 led to the legal abolition of the monarchy and to the peaceful transformation of the country into a federal republic. In Bangladesh and in the Maldives, fair elections were held in both states in late 2008. Thus, for the first time in independent history, all the states within the entire South Asian landscape are gov-
erned by democracies that have held transparent, fair and free elections. This includes Afghanistan, which held its first election in 2004, in which refugees residing in Pakistan were allowed to vote, although the outcome of the 2009 election in Afghanistan remains unclear.

A. Recent Changes within Pakistan’s Socio-Political Environment

Within Pakistan, the past few years have seen a significant transformation of society and changes within its own internal power structure. In bringing about this change, two events have done more than others in injecting a sense of national self-confidence in the people of Pakistan. The first was the 1998 nuclearisation of South Asia, a defining moment in Indo-Pakistan relations. Though condemned by many in the international community, this event was viewed by both sides as a great step forward in many ways, as they both now possessed the same kind of destructive capability. Rather than trigger a catastrophic nuclear conflict, these weapons have acted so far as a deterrent, and have ensured a level of stability within the relations of both states. For Pakistan, this meant no longer perceiving itself as a victim of aggression from a bigger and stronger neighbour, and paved the way for normalised relations and a more relaxed rapport with India.

The second major force in transforming the Pakistani state from within has been the media revolution that has occurred during the past few years. Under the rule of General Musharraf, over 50 independent news and entertainment television channels emerged in the space of just three years, broadcasted in a variety of different languages and not subject to censorship. Discussion of political events on television and within the press is frank and open, and no subjects are censored. This freedom has in turn given a significant amount of confidence to the people, and has had an impact in shaping the discourse of events both at home and abroad.
This openness within the public sphere has contributed to the development of a free-thinking and strong civil society amongst the middle class, the size of which has also increased in the past few years due to strong economic growth. Indeed, to an extent General Musharraf became a victim of his own success, as his presidency came to an end as a result of the middle class asserting itself and supporting the removed members of Pakistan’s judiciary. The movement, which lasted for two years (from 9 March 2007 to 15 March 2009) was led by middle-class lawyers and backed by the media, and was not backed by any political party.

This event signified the coming of age for Pakistan’s civil society, and challenged the traditional power structure that had previously included only elements of the military-bureaucratic security establishment and political forces. Now, the political system in Pakistan is more egalitarian, and in addition to these latter two institutions the media, civil society and the independent judiciary under the restored justices all have found a voice. Traditionally marginalised groups within Pakistan’s civil society are also finding a space for themselves in the public sphere. For example, the political role of women increased during the rule of General Musharraf, and now women make up 30 percent of Pakistan’s Members of Parliament (MPs). Democratic principles are becoming ingrained at the grass-roots level, and this bodes well for the future legitimacy of democratic institutions in Pakistan.

The entrenchment of democratic institutions has been sternly tested by the challenges Pakistan has faced from 2007 to 2009, perhaps the period of greatest upheaval in Pakistan’s history since its partition in 1971 into Pakistan and Bangladesh. First, on 29 November 2007, President Musharraf resigned as leader of the Pakistani army, and peacefully transferred power to General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani. After the Pakistani elections on 7 March 2008, General Kayani reaffirmed that the army
would fulfil its constitutional role and pledged to stay out of politics and support the new Government. It appears that General Kayani is committed to maintaining the traditional role of the Pakistani army as the guardian of the state without overextending its reach and entering the political arena. President Musharraf’s exit from politics came next, and on 18 August 2008 he resigned amicably as President of Pakistan, for the post to then be filled by President Asif Ali Zardari.

Tragedy struck on 27 December 2007, when former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto was assassinated in a suicide bombing while at a rally for the Pakistani People’s Party (PPP) during the election campaign. The widespread shock and dismay that was disseminated through worldwide media coverage portrayed Pakistan’s security situation in a negative light, and gave credence to radical conspiracy theories that sought to disparage the democratic nature of the Pakistani state. Yet the election results of February 2008 went a long way to silencing these critics, as elections deemed fair by international observers resulted in the defeat of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League (Q) (PML-Q) and the victory of a coalition government formed by the PPP and the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N). Much as within the army, the transition of power from the PML-Q to the victorious coalition was smooth, and the election results were respected by all elements of Pakistan’s power structure. In addition, the exit of President Musharraf was dignified, the former leader even receiving a guard of honour. Such a denouement to the turbulent events of the past few years signalled a coming of age of Pakistan’s political system, and demonstrated a greater sense of maturity within political affairs. That Pakistan has been able to overcome these recent challenges bodes well for its ability to maintain a strong democratic tradition in the future.

B. Current and Future Challenges to Pakistan’s Democracy

Current operations by the Pakistani army against Taliban forces have created a difficult situation for the state, and the threat of the continued radicalisation of disaffected Pakistanis remains for many observers a major concern to the future of democracy in Pakistan. While endemic poverty and a lack of opportunities within Pakistan have generated a large cohort of young people who could potentially be radicalised, Pakistan’s ongoing war against the Taliban is not entirely of its own making.

The issue that has contributed most to Pakistan’s current challenge has been the handling of the war in Afghanistan since 2001 by the United States and its allies. Indeed, especially from the period 2005 to 2009, Pakistan has been bearing the brunt of some of the policies enacted in Afghanistan. Rather than focusing on rebuilding Afghanistan’s comparatively well-developed infrastructure from the 1970s, the Allies have sought to inculcate models of “good governance” within Afghan politics. While Afghanistan needed roads, electricity, fertilizer and tractors, the Allies focused on fair elections, minority rights and framing a constitution. Most troubling was the willingness of the United States to take on further commitments in Iraq in 2003, only two years after the commencement of the war on 7 October 2001, which stretched American resources across two conflicts. By the beginning of 2008, new challenges in Afghanistan grew and the Taliban regrouped, leading most panellists during this seminar in mid-2009 to believe a future resolution to the conflict in Afghanistan to be some years away.

It is difficult to see how the United States and its allies can find a way out of the Afghanistan conflict. All countries in the region as well as the US wish to keep Afghanistan a unified state, and all now realise that their own security is compromised by the ongoing conflict as these problems spill over into other states. It therefore seems that more could be done to strengthen regional cooperation in an attempt to achieve the
first and immediate objective of eliminating the Taliban or reducing their influence through economic development. As Afghanistan, Pakistan and India could all be threatened by extremism, the rational idea would be to join hands against it instead of fighting each other. This expedient alliance could also serve to heal some old wounds of history that still fester between the different countries.

Many panellists suggested that the attitude of the United States could also be more understanding of the limitations of both what is possible in the Afghan conflict, as well as of the Pakistani efforts to uphold its engagement. Criticism has been levelled upon Pakistan for receiving USD 10.5 billion worth of aid in return for what is perceived to be little action in fighting extremists in the area. Yet the United States alone has spent more than USD 300 billion on both conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq, at the current rate of some USD 4 billion a week on both wars. These figures put the aid received by Pakistan into perspective, especially when considering the economic losses suffered by the state in terms of foregone revenue due to its current security situation, as well as the many Pakistani victims of terrorist attacks within the country. Criticism of Pakistan has resulted in a considerable degree of anti-American sentiment within the country, and this poses a significant challenge to a relationship that must be maintained in order for both sides to achieve their respective security goals.

Furthermore, panellists emphasised that the United States needs to remind itself that it cannot rely solely on a military resolution to end the conflict. Although the United States’ objectives have grown more limited in scope, acknowledging the nation-building failures of the past, there still remains a perceived confidence in military might, and generals with vested interests still hold a disproportionately large amount of policy-formulating power. This is seen in the current exercise of focusing primarily on maintaining peace in the region, rather than working towards a final settlement that the United States will ultimately need to
remove itself from the country once it becomes clear that the conflict is no longer crucial to its own core interests. While the US has lowered its ambitions and set more realistic targets, panellists noted that it still needs to find a viable exit strategy that will not leave Afghanistan susceptible to further extremism.

In addition to these external actors, there are steps that Pakistan can take within its own security apparatus to cope with the challenges of having to face a conflict on two fronts. With regard to its actions in FATA, some panellists believed that there are lessons to be learned from past errors. First, more attention should have been paid to the region prior to the outbreak of conflict in 2001. According to some participants, the region was previously understood to be simply a no-man’s land and a smuggling route; it should have been realised earlier that this impression was outdated, and that the region was being used to house training camps for extremist groups. The influx of money from abroad to provide for these groups and extremist jihadi mentality changed the dynamics of the region, and perhaps the Pakistani state could have acted more decisively before conflict erupted.

As such, there is now a plan in place to re-integrate the region. Already there are 20 MPs from FATA within the central Government. There is a drive to change the outdated Frontier Crimes Regulations laws that were brought into existence under the British Empire in 1901-02 and continued by the Pakistani state, which prescribed draconian punishment and alienated local communities. In addition, better access to education in FATA will challenge the influence of extremist groups on frustrated and disenfranchised minds. Finally, an additional means of bringing FATA into the normal democratic electoral process would be to extend the Political Parties Act into the region.

It is important to remember that despite the long list of troubles facing Pakistan, the majority of the country continues to live a normal life. The Pakistani ethos of resilience is still serving the people well. This was
exemplified in the recent IDP crisis in the NWFP and Swat, where 80 percent of the displaced have been housed in private homes, or moved in with friends and relatives. This example is but a reminder of the dichotomy in Pakistan, a soft state that is buttressed by a strong civil society of individuals who take initiative and are self-starters. Though there are problems in leadership and governance issues, the state is nevertheless progressing in a direction where objectives can be achieved.
Prospects for economic integration within South Asia rely on sound domestic economies within the region. In the past two decades, as Pakistan has moved away from the socialist model of development it had adhered to for the majority of the late twentieth century after independence, the ongoing liberalisation of Pakistan’s economy has accelerated the pace of economic integration within the country. On the one hand, liberalisation has expanded Pakistan’s burgeoning middle class and has made the country an attractive option for foreign investment. On the other hand, Pakistan has been adversely affected by the global financial crisis of 2007-2009, and the state faces the challenge of attempting to ease the effects of the recession while at the same time dealing with a precarious balance of payments deficit.

In response to the current financial crisis, Pakistan has received a loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) coupled with strong conditions for reorganising its domestic economy. In an attempt to correct its balance of payments deficit, Pakistan has been forced to adopt anti-inflationary policies and implement monetary constraint, acting in a manner completely contrary to the expansionary recovery policies implemented by other states during the current recession. Pakistan has
also pledged to end its subsidies on petrol, gas and electricity, and while this should help the state’s current account balance, there is concern about the effect these price increases will have on the daily lives of the Pakistani people, many of whom are already struggling.

Focusing on the regional and global levels, there appear to be numerous opportunities within the greater South Asian region for increased economic cooperation among states. Yet for all these opportunities, South Asia still remains one of the most poorly integrated economic regions in the world. The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) has failed to build the strong institutional mechanisms necessary to deepen cooperation between South Asian countries, and as a result South Asia as a region has little impact at the global bargaining tables at the World Trade Organization (WTO) and with other regional bodies. It is clear that South Asian countries have a stake in bringing about a positive outcome to the current Doha round of WTO negotiations, but can anything be done to either strengthen South Asia’s bargaining power as a region or to increase Pakistan’s own ability to bring about a settlement?

A. Recent Changes in Pakistan’s Economy

The rapid rise in commodity prices that occurred from 2006 to the commencement of the global financial crisis in 2008 triggered decisions within the Pakistani state that had negative consequences for the economy. The high price of crude oil during this period led the ruling PML-Q party artificially to subsidise the price of oil for Pakistani consumers, but this policy proved disastrous for the state’s balance sheet, especially as oil prices continued to rise throughout the period. Pakistan’s current account balance rose to an all-time high deficit of USD 20 billion, which was USD 3 billion more than the gross amount of Pakistani exports per year. Indeed, there was no way that the Government could meet this
shortfall, despite receiving increasing remittances from the Pakistani diaspora. This situation was exacerbated with the onset of the financial crisis, which saw the stock market crash from 14,000 to 4,000 points in a matter of a few months. The result was that Pakistan's foreign exchange holdings went down rapidly, to the point where at one stage, the state could not pay for more than one month's worth of imports.

After the election of February 2008, the new PML-N and PPP coalition sought the support of international allies to alleviate the effects of the crisis. However, with most wealthy nations going through their own troubles at the time, it was not easy for these countries to provide support for Pakistan's economy. Thus it became necessary for Pakistan to appeal to the IMF for a state loan in order to meet its balance of payments shortfall. This loan came with strict conditions that Pakistan has worked to implement since 2008. They include the floating of the Pakistani rupee, with has led to a 30 percent depreciation of its market value. The IMF has also stipulated that Pakistan raise interest rates, which means that as of summer 2009 lenders have set rates anywhere between 18 and 24 percent for borrowing money.

While these policies have reduced Pakistan's fiscal deficits, they have also meant that the state no longer has the ability to serve as a buffer between its citizens and the wild fluctuations of the commodity market. As a result, Pakistan has seen substantial electricity shortages throughout 2009, and its industry has not been able to operate at full capacity. Nevertheless, the Pakistani economy is forecast to grow in 2009 by 2.5 percent.

Another commodity subsidy that has had negative consequences for the balance sheet of the Pakistani state has been that imposed on wheat. From 2007 to 2008, the purchase price for wheat was extremely low, and most wheat produced in Pakistan was smuggled outside the country. Therefore, despite having a good crop of wheat for the year, Pakistan suffered from wheat shortages and was forced to import extra quantities of the good. Thus, while on the one hand Pakistan was subsidizing the
price of wheat for consumers, it could not raise prices to compensate for the higher prices it paid for imported wheat, and was caught in a financial squeeze. When the new Government came to power in 2008, it sought to reverse these policies by fixing the price of wheat at a higher level, but this too had negative consequences, as private importers hoarded wheat to sell to Government authorities at a higher price. All this meant that the previous negative flows of taking cheap wheat outside the country to be sold at a higher price were reversed with similar adverse affects, as now cheap wheat was smuggled into the country to be sold to the Government at its own stipulated high price.

The combined effect of oil and wheat subsidies meant that by mid-2009, Pakistan’s foreign and local debt combined was over USD 100 billion, or about 60 percent of Pakistan’s annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Moreover, the service payments Pakistan is required to pay for this debt takes a large amount out of its annual budget. For 2010, Pakistan will pay USD 10 billion in debt servicing, which represents one quarter of the money allocated for the entire state budget. This diversion of resources to servicing Pakistan’s state debt means that there is less money available for development and investment, a fact that further complicates Pakistan’s internal security situation. Already, the internal displacement of Pakistan’s people as a result of army operations totals over 2.5 million people, and the responsibility of providing for these people has exacerbated Pakistan’s economic troubles. In addition, during this time of economic crisis, there has been a slow response from the international community to help Pakistan with this responsibility. The pledges received by the United Nations (UN) amount to only USD 137 million, and even this amount has yet to be given to Pakistan.
B. Regional Economic Integration in South Asia

Though the Greater South Asian region is home to over 22 percent of the world’s population, it is one of the least economically integrated regions of the globe. A large proportion of South Asians remain illiterate, and there remains a paucity of resources, in part due to the huge sums spent on defence by South Asian states, especially India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Thus this region, which comprises almost one quarter of the global population, by contrast accounts for only 2 percent of global GDP.

Current Regional Economic Architecture in South Asia

At the moment, the only regional organisation that includes all member states of the South Asian region is SAARC, established in 1985. Article I of SAARC’s founding charter outlines the following objectives for the organisation:

1. “To promote the welfare of the peoples of South Asia and to improve their quality of life;
2. To accelerate economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region and to provide all individuals the opportunity to live in dignity and to realise their full potential;
3. To promote and strengthen collective self-reliance among the countries of South Asia
4. To contribute to mutual trust, understanding and appreciation of one another’s problems;
5. To promote active collaboration and mutual assistance in the economic, social, cultural, technical and scientific fields;
6. To strengthen cooperation with other developing countries;
7. To strengthen cooperation among themselves in international forums on matters of common interest; and
8. To cooperate with international and regional organisations with similar aims and purposes”.

Though SAARC set itself the challenging goal of aiding in the collective development of all South Asian nations, the past 24 years of its existence have been marked by structural and political hurdles that have stalled the organisation from achieving meaningful status within the region. Rather than showing evidence of a desire for partnership in economic cooperation, SAARC member states have largely demonstrated instances of mutual suspicion and hostility. Indeed SAARC’s goal of enhancing cooperation between member states has been undermined largely by the numerous disputes and internal problems arising in member states. SAARC's ability to transcend these and work towards greater integration has also been hampered by Article X within its Charter, which states that “bilateral and contentious issues shall be excluded from the deliberations”. Thus, its own inability to steer South Asian political disputes towards amicable conclusions has truncated its influence on the region’s economic development.

In addition to SAARC’s inability to intervene in South Asia’s numerous political disputes, the organisation also suffers from a severe problem of asymmetry. The organisation’s members vary widely in terms of size, power and influence. At the extremes, the organisation represents both India, an emerging global player with over one billion people, and the Maldives, with less than 400,000 inhabitants. This disparity between the member states also breeds a sense of mutual hesitancy. Smaller nations feel apprehensive about what they perceive as India’s desire for hegemony in the region, and India feels that these smaller nations may seek to curtail its own economic freedom within the region.

These political and structural problems between SAARC member countries have manifested themselves in ways that have directly worked

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3 Charter of the South Asian Association for Cooperation, Article I.
4 Charter of the South Asian Association for Cooperation, Article X.
against the cohesive objectives of the organisation. Political troubles have hindered implementation of the South Asian Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA), which came into force in 2006. Due to heightened tensions there are few crossing points between India and Pakistan (two rail connections) and India and Bangladesh, which restricts the mobility of goods between these countries. Air travel is also restricted, especially between India and Pakistan, as no Indian private air company can land in Pakistan, and visas are only available through the embassies in New Delhi and Islamabad. Furthermore, Indian goods which are sent to countries like Iran and Afghanistan cannot be transited through Pakistan, although a memorandum of understanding between Afghanistan and Pakistan signed in May 2009 advocated that the two countries be allowed access to each other’s neighbouring countries. India has also turned to Iran to develop a cooperative framework to use Iranian ports to transport goods to Afghanistan. Nevertheless, the lack of open political relations between these states has proved to be a large, and thus far insurmountable, stumbling block towards achieving greater economic integration within the region.

Even when considering current bilateral economic agreements, it is clear that South Asian states do not have significant trading relationships. The only two bilateral free-trade agreements to have been signed prior to SAFTA were between India and Sri Lanka in 1999, and Pakistan and Sri Lanka in 2005. No such trade agreement exists between India and Pakistan, and official statistics show that the value of goods traded per year is only USD 1 billion. In addition, SAFTA itself has been undermined due to the large lists of goods that are exempt from the tariff restrictions put in place by the agreement. It is remarkable that SAARC has survived and that a free trade agreement has nevertheless been implemented in some form or the other.

Another reason for a lack of regional integration may be that South Asian economies are not complementary. Instead, countries such as Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka compete directly in many of their largest economic sectors, the clearest example being in textiles. These rather similar economic profiles may help to explain why intra-SAARC trade accounts for less than 5 percent of the total trading portfolios of all member states.

Unless the political situation in South Asia improves, and more specifically the relationship between Pakistan and India, it is unlikely that SAARC will be strengthened in the near future. This would be a major blow for the region’s economic integration as a whole, as SAARC remains the only organisation in which all South Asian states are members. At the same time future prospects for regional cooperation in other forums look more promising, although these are selective and therefore do not benefit all members of the region as a whole. For example, bilateral relations between China and Bangladesh, and India and Myanmar look promising. Currently, China is exploring the possibility of building a deep-sea port in Bangladesh, much to the consternation of India. China has also developed closer relations with Pakistan, as the two states have signed a free-trade agreement. China remains a dynamic partner within the region, and has sought to increase trade ties with many South Asian states.

On the other hand, some panellists hypothesised that China’s increasing influence in the region has been perceived by India as a direct threat to its own interests. To that end, India is seeking to increase its influence in the region through the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), which was created in 1997 and includes India as well as Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and two states outside of South Asia - Myanmar and Thailand. For India, the absence of China and Pakistan is a clear reason why this organisation is more appealing than SAARC, and BIMSTEC states are
about to sign a free-trade agreement, which may extend to investments and services in the future. While BIMSTEC cannot substitute for SAARC in the region, it could serve to extend and deepen integration in certain states within the region.

Future Prospects for Energy Cooperation in South Asia
The growing demand for energy in South Asia, especially in India, could also prove to be a future integrating factor for enhanced cooperation in the region. To continue developing, it is clear that almost all South Asian states will have to look beyond their own national energy resources and find alternative supply sources and solutions. Perhaps the stark reality of energy scarcity could force a political breakthrough between India and Pakistan.

Currently a multitude of oil and gas pipelines have been proposed to connect India to the energy-rich Middle Eastern states. Geography determines that any such proposal will have to include Pakistan. At the moment, the two main proposals are the Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) pipeline and the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipeline, though the latter is far less feasible given the current security situation. Though the IPI remains more realistic, the proposal also contains a number of points that have yet to be agreed upon by the different nations. One of these is the pricing scale of the pipeline, and more specifically the question of transit fees. Pakistan has requested transit fees in accordance with international formulae from India, a proposal with which it is hesitant to agree. Given the tumultuous past history between the two nations, there is also the feeling that in a time of future crisis, Pakistan could use its strategic position to “turn the tap off” and leave India in an energy bind.

In addition, the proposed route of the pipeline would pass through unstable areas, leaving open the possibility of sabotage. This would involve additional costs for Pakistan to provide for the security of the
pipeline in these areas, and for which it has no intention of paying if it is not to receive any compensation in return. Finally, the recently concluded India-US deal for nuclear energy is another signal that India is willing to fall in line with American foreign policy, which at the moment is focused on isolating Iran from the global economy. Such a policy means that India cannot afford to invest heavily in Iran without risking a backlash in its relations with the United States, upon which it has pinned great hopes in its attempt to rise to the position of a global power. Thus, though the IPI would be useful in solving the energy needs of both India and Pakistan, the current pricing and political issues that still need to be addressed will mean that the process is likely to be a protracted affair.

C. The Impact of South Asia on Global Economic Integration

South Asia as a regional entity has very little influence at the negotiating table of the WTO or with other regional entities across the globe. For example, although the EU is an observer of SAARC and maintains a delegation accredited to the organization’s secretariat in Kathmandu, real economic cooperation between the EU and South Asian countries has mainly taken place at the bilateral level. India has held annual summits with the EU since 2000, and is currently discussing a free trade agreement. Pakistan will host its first summit with the EU in 2009, and has also shown interest in a similar free trade arrangement. Elsewhere, India has been proactive in formulating “look West” and “look East” policies to strengthen bilateral ties across the globe. It has succeeded in concluding free-trade agreements with Thailand and with ASEAN.

With states like India and Pakistan attempting to find their own independent voice in global trade matters, South Asia in general and SAARC in particular have very little say at the WTO, and have remained mar-
ginal entities in WTO negotiations throughout the different rounds. In the current Doha round, which is expected to bring about a settlement to the fractious issue of agricultural subsidies, India has been able to find a voice at the negotiating table for its own interests. In contrast, the collective voices of not only SAARC but developing countries in general have been peripheral. Many states have sought to circumnavigate the problems and delays of concluding the Doha round by concluding bilateral treaties with other countries. Yet this practice further deteriorates the bargaining position of vulnerable economies, as they cannot negotiate on equal terms and do not have the strength of numbers to compensate for their individual weaknesses. It is hoped that the realities of the future geo-strategic environment can lead to the resolution of political differences between the large countries in the region in order to strengthen SAARC and give the region a better position at the global bargaining table.
The Future of the India-Pakistan Peace Process

At the heart of South Asia’s political quagmire is the turbulent relationship between its two largest states, India and Pakistan, since their independence in 1947. From a historical perspective, the past 62 years of bilateral relations can be broken into roughly three distinct phases of engagement. From 1947 until 1974, the two states seemed bent on a policy of active confrontation. During this period, India and Pakistan fought three large-scale wars – in 1948, 1965 and finally 1971, which led to the creation of Bangladesh – as well as introduced the beginning of nuclear weapons programmes in both states, and the first successful nuclear test by India in 1974. The second phase, from 1974 to either 1998 or 2004 (depending on interpretation of the Kargil Conflict), saw the continuation of major crises on both sides but the avoidance of war, and at the same time the continued development of the nuclear dimension. The nuclearisation of the subcontinent was made explicit to the global public in May 1998. Then in 1999, the 2-month Kargil War in Kashmir attracted great anxiety globally, as it was the first time that an active conflict had occurred between two nuclear neighbours. The conflict terminated relatively quickly, albeit with more than 3,000 casualties.
Nevertheless, after the nuclear tests and Kargil a freeze descended upon the relations between the two states until the resumption of talks in 2004, an event which marked the commencement of the third and present phase of the bilateral relationship. One of the major features of the current phase is the realisation from the nuclearisation of the subcontinent that military solutions are no longer viable for the current problems within India and Pakistan's bilateral relationship. Furthermore, the military stalemate arising from the Kargil War around the Line of Control (LOC) has led to a basic understanding on both sides of the limitations of conventional war in Kashmir.

A. Status of the India-Pakistan Peace Process since 1998

In June 2004 India and Pakistan resumed talks over their outstanding issues that had last been addressed in Islamabad in October 1998. These talks were to be held within the framework that both sides had agreed to in Male in 1997 on the following eight issues:

1. The future of Jammu and Kashmir
2. The Siachen border dispute
3. The Wullar Barrage/Tulbul Navigation Project
4. The Sir Creek border dispute
5. Terrorism and Drug Trafficking
6. Economic and Commercial Cooperation
7. Peace and Security; and
8. Promotion of Friendly Exchanges.

The 2004 talks were preceded by a gradual thaw in the relationship between the two states after the nuclear tests in 1998. This includes the commencement of the symbolic bus service between Delhi and Lahore, which then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee of India was one of the

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first passengers to take in 1998. Then in February 1999, two months before the events in Kargil began, both sides signed the Lahore Declaration, in which they committed themselves to finding peaceful solutions to their outstanding disputes.\footnote{7 “Lahore Declaration between India and Pakistan signed February 21, 1999,” http://www.indianembassy.org/South_Asia/Pakistan/lahoredeclaration.html.} The peace process of late 1999 also benefited from the presence of heads of state in both India and Pakistan who were willing to work towards achieving a settlement.

The 2004 negotiations were significant for their commitments towards establishing nuclear confidence-building measures (CBMs) between the two states. Already in 1988, the two sides concluded an agreement on the prohibition of attacks against nuclear installations and facilities, which has been consistently renewed each year since 1990. In 2004, additional CBMs included upgrading lines of communication by establishing three separate secure hotlines between the two Governments, and improving the agreement “on the parameters on pre-notification of flight-testing of missiles with more relevant information”\footnote{8 Ibid., p. 348.}. Other CBMs included the reaffirmation of the ‘unilateral moratorium’ on further nuclear tests and a call for “working level meetings to be held among all the nuclear powers to discuss issues of common concern”.\footnote{9 Ibid., p. 349.} In addition, the two sides agreed to work towards the implementation of the Lahore Declaration, a significant event given that the Government in Pakistan had changed since its signing, with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif deposed in favour of General Musharraf, who then became President.

On the issue of Jammu and Kashmir, both sides in 2004 began to take preliminary steps towards agreeing upon CBMs, such as releasing fishermen detained on both sides and reopening consulates in Mumbai and Karachi.\footnote{10 Ibid., p. 350.} Yet the most prescient breakthrough on the Kashmir issue occurred in 2006, when President Musharraf announced a four-point plan
for obtaining a settlement for the dispute. In return for renouncing Paki-
stan’s claims over the region, he proposed the following compromise:
1. Autonomy and self-governance for the entire area of disputed Kashmir
2. Open borders between India, Pakistan and Kashmir
3. The creation of a supervisory mechanism with representatives from
   India, Pakistan and Kashmir
4. The progressive demilitarisation of the entire region

Though the contents of the Musharraf plan had been seen elsewhere
in different proposed agreements, the document was significant because
it offered a pragmatic solution for all stakeholders. The Musharraf plan
entailed a large concession on the part of Pakistan in the willingness
to sacrifice its claims to Kashmir in exchange for the region’s autono-
my. However, the response from New Delhi was less than enthusiastic,
as Minister of State for External Affairs Anand Sharma replied that the
proposal “did not fit in the Indian parameters for a solution”. India’s
resistance to the proposal would eventually take the plan off the table
later in 2006 and 2007. It remains to be seen whether any proposal as
mutually amicable as the Musharraf plan will be brought forth again in
the future.

Although bilateral political negotiations between India and Pakistan
have been conducted more openly since 2004, most issues nevertheless
remain unresolved. While on the one hand both states have developed
a significant back channel and an understanding on the nuclear element
of their relations, other political issues have been either non-starters or
have seen little progress.

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html.
B. Perspectives for India-Pakistan Dispute Resolutions

The eight ‘baskets of disputes’ between India and Pakistan identified in 1997 include a wide range of issues, some of which are easier to solve than others. It would perhaps be best, therefore, for both states to see whether they could try to solve the less controversial disputes first, thereby building some good will and mutual trust that could be beneficial later when discussing the more difficult disputes.

One place to start might be the dispute over the Siachen Glacier. The conflict began in 1984 and has cost between 3,000-5,000 lives, but recent events have shown that both sides may be ready to sue for peace.\(^{13}\) In 2003 both sides agreed to a ceasefire that has continued to be respected to this day, though troops are still amassed on both sides of the Actual Ground Position Line which divides the glacier. In addition, high profile trips have been made by the heads of state of both Pakistan and India in the past, with the most recent by Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, who claimed that he was interested in turning the area from a battlefield into a “mountain of peace”.\(^{14}\) While the continued presence of troops on either side of the glacier means that the situation has the possibility of heating up again, there seems to be an adequate amount of political will on both sides to find a near-term amicable solution.

Another dispute that could also potentially be resolved near-term is the border disagreement over Sir Creek, a small inlet in the Rann of Kutch region of the state of Gujarat, which was the site of a war between the two states in 1965. The Creek’s significance stems largely from the region’s energy-rich seabed, as well as the possibility of using it to add territory for any declared Exclusive Economic Zone under the United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea. The significance of

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\(^{14}\) Ibid.
the territory is nevertheless much less in comparison to other disputes. Currently, both sides have exchanged maps which demarcate their own interpretations of the international border, with Pakistan claiming the entirety of the creek and India dividing it into two parts in the middle.

Other disputes are far more complex and will most likely remain unresolved in the near term. On the issue of Kashmir, both sides remain far from achieving an agreement; however, the dynamics of the conflict have now shifted considerably. In addition to the nuclear deterrent possessed by both countries, the establishment of international norms regarding the non-use of military force in changing borders means that both sides will certainly have to find a political solution to the dispute.

Given the increased focus in India on economic development and the growing influence of major global players such as the United States and other Group of Eight (G-8) states within the region, the option of third-party facilitation of an agreement has been considered in some circles. Though at the moment the Obama Administration and US Special Representative to Afghanistan and Pakistan, Richard Holbrooke, have made it clear that the United States does not intend to interfere in the Kashmir dispute, some panellists argued that American influence might actually bring about a settlement. A third-party arbiter like the United States, which possesses significant authority both in Islamabad and New Delhi, could possibly be able to maintain discussions over an extended period of time, and not let the actions of non-state actors derail the peace process, as was witnessed after the Mumbai terrorist attacks in November 2008. There may also be opportunities for members of civil society within India and Pakistan, such as the media or academics, to try to influence the debate, or even coordinated efforts amongst members of the Indian and Pakistani diaspora abroad, although the effectiveness of these latter groups and their ability to influence the course of high-level politics remains uncertain.
Perhaps even more complex than Kashmir are the water disputes issues between India and Pakistan. Currently, India is attempting to build hydroelectric dams to produce electricity on the Jhelum and Chenab rivers. Under the Indus water treaty of 1960, these tributaries of the Indus were allocated for the exclusive use of Pakistan. However, India has sought to exploit its advantageous upstream position on these two tributaries. Pakistan appealed the Indian plan to build the Baghlihar dam to the World Bank, but in 2007 the Bank ruled that India was permitted to go through with its project with the imposition of some modifications. It is likely that these water issues will continue to be a source of tension between the two states, especially with the accelerated melting of glaciers.

One participant also mentioned the impact of ‘soft power’ such as Bollywood movies depicting Muslims in negative shade.

Thus, even if a resolution can be found to the Kashmir issue, there is no guarantee that the relationship between India and Pakistan will normalise.
Since the commencement of hostilities in Afghanistan in 2001, Pakistan has been greatly affected by the economic and human costs of the ‘global war on terror’, perhaps more so than any other state besides Afghanistan and Iraq. The gradual undermining of the Pakistani state’s authority in its frontier regions near Afghanistan, and the costly campaign against essentially the state’s own people, have left internal ruptures in the fabric of society that Pakistan will have to address. Within the South Asian region, terrorism is a common threat for nearly all states, and will remain a potent security issue as long as violent armed groups continue to operate in the region.

A. Conceptual Problems in the Framing of the ‘Global War on Terror’

In the post 9/11 world under the Bush Administration, a fundamental shift occurred in how the ideas of ‘terrorism’ and ‘terrorists’ were conceived and operationalised within American foreign policy. Terrorism was reified in a way that made it possible to declare ‘war’ against another state in a conventional sense. Given the backlash and negative international reaction to the American handling of the wars in Iraq and
Afghanistan since 2001, some participants argued that the use of these phrases and their unstated moral equivalencies were counter-productive measures to achieving American goals, as they discouraged many countries which were initially sympathetic to the American cause after 9/11 and at first supportive of the initiatives taken against al-Qaida. Not only was frustration directed towards the American cause, but some states also showed a more dangerous tendency to discount the threat of terrorism altogether, as it was presented from the American ideological point of view. As the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq progressed, the United States found it more difficult to use this ideological conception of fighting terrorism to convince other states of the soundness of its policies. Indeed, the use of pre-emptive unilateral attacks on other sovereign nations under the guise of combating terrorist acts which are committed largely by non-state actors, led to considerable criticism of America’s actions in countries across the globe.

In reality, terrorism is more of a means to an end rather than an end in itself. It is a tactic employed by a number of different groups in order to achieve their diverse goals. It is therefore more accurate to call the actual physical fighting on the ground level as countering an ‘insurgency’ rather than fighting terrorism. By re-framing the conflict as one against both domestic and international insurgents in Iraq and Afghanistan, there was a strategic shift both in tactics used to counter insurgents on the ground as well as in how the conflict was presented in international discourse. Re-framing also re-categorises the actual threat faced in these two conflicts, moving away from the tenuous claim of fighting ‘terrorists’ (actually insurgents) in remote corners of the globe as a way to prevent further terrorist attacks from occurring domestically, towards the more plausible reason of fighting groups intent on usurping legitimately-elected governments and promoting unstable environments in states that are of strategic interest to international security.
Fighting against insurgents involves not only a coordinated military effort against guerrilla tactics but also a strong domestic presence in order to win back the ‘hearts and minds’ of the civilian population. Indeed, by winning the support of the people against the insurgents, it may be possible to convince the insurgents that their cause is futile, and to make sure that the campaign is conducted in a manner in which the insurgents are perceived by the local population to be criminals, and therefore that moral superiority rests with the state. An important way to achieve this is by minimising civilian casualties in conflict zones.

The ongoing conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq are far more complex and multi-faceted operations than the ‘global war on terror’ concept originally implied. Though global terrorism is still one of the primary security concerns of all states, countering this threat will take the implementation of more comprehensive structures across the security spectrum, both domestically and internationally.

B. Theorising Elements of Terrorism and Comprehensive Solutions

Instead of looking at the fight against terrorism as a ‘war’, implying the primary use of physical force, it may be more useful to look at counterterrorism as a multifaceted campaign in which the use of force is just one critical element. Given the continued prevalence of acts of terrorism across the globe, it is clear that the traditional paradigm of stopping terrorism through the three Gs – guns, guards and gates – has not been fully effective.

A new paradigm is needed; one that understands the strategic logic that drives extremist and terrorist violence. The starting point is to comprehend when, why and how people become radicalised to the point of being willing to use or to directly support the use of terrorist violence against fellow humans, and what can be done to break this cycle. Re-
regarding violence, one panellist theorised that there were five different logics at work in terrorist campaigns:
1. Attrition: the ability to impose costs on a target unless its own behaviour changes
2. Intimidation: to convince local populations that a certain terrorist group is strong
3. Provocation: to induce an adversary to engage in indiscriminate retaliatory violence
4. Spoiling: convincing the adversary that moderates on the terrorist side are weak
5. Outbidding: convincing a public that terrorists possess a greater resolve to fight than other groups and are thereby worthy of support

These strategies of violence can then be deployed to achieve a number of different goals, five of which include regime change, territorial change, policy change, social control, or the maintenance of the status quo. However, it is much more difficult to try to define the true nature of terrorism, and a host of binary questions can be asked regarding the nature of the term.
1. Ideology or religion?
2. Tactic or mindset?
3. Symptom or root cause?
4. Malleable state of mind or permanent condition?
5. Search for remedial response or a social engineering project?

In reality the nature of terrorism varies considerably between situations and individuals.

The identification of all of these various detailed elements provides a foundation upon which a sound state counterterrorist policy can be based. However, constructing such a profile requires very detailed mapping of the modus operandi of extremist forces and the mindsets underpinning their violent behaviour. State policy could send the right message towards discouraging terrorism by being firm and consistent in
order to be effective. Hence, threats of punitive action should be backed
by adequate coercive power in order to enforce the rule of law. To en-
hance coordination, both military and law enforcement agencies should
work in unison to produce the desired results.

Specifically, one panellist argued that there are a number of policy
decisions the state can take to reassert its position of authority over ex-
tremist groups. First, it should have clear routes to access and reach out
to moderate members of civil society, including influential locals, com-
community leaders and teachers. By engaging with local communities along
these lines, the state can attempt to isolate extremists from the larger
society, and become the visible defenders of moderate interests. The
state can also offer to guard and protect those who are willing to speak
against extremist groups, and thus encourage the reporting of informa-
tion by reducing the fear of repercussions. In the long term, the state
can also try to work towards more ambitious goals that can reduce the
demographic problems that contribute to the development of terrorism.
This includes investing in education and development, defusing sources
of hatred and violence, improving intelligence and law enforcement
entities, combating sources of Jihadist funding and recruitment and re-
kindling hopes of a non-Jihadi future for the nation’s youth. Though
these goals will all take time and extensive resources to achieve, it is
only by moving in this direction that states like Pakistan can hope to
permanently defeat the forces of terrorism.

C. Combating Terrorism in Pakistan since 2001

Due to its geographical proximity to Afghanistan and its close links with
the Taliban regime in Kabul, Pakistan became an integral state in the
fight against terror after the events of 9/11, and its support was, and still
is, considered critical to the success of the war on terror. Indeed, US
demands arrived in Islamabad not long after the attacks, which included
stopping all al-Qaida operatives at the border, allowing the US military access to Pakistani’s air and naval bases, the sharing of intelligence information and the cut-off of all logistical shipments to the Taliban government in Afghanistan. These demands were accepted by President Musharraf on 19 September 2001, citing as reasons for acceding to the American requests the need to secure Pakistan’s strategic assets, the safeguarding of the cause of Kashmir, and to ensure that Pakistan was not declared a terrorist state.

As a result, Pakistan initiated several policies after September 2001 to help counter the influence of terrorist groups in the region. It began sharing intelligence information with the US and its allies, banned Jihadi organisations which operated in the country, and froze their financial assets. In addition it strengthened its own anti-terrorism laws and set up anti-terrorist courts with military participation. Since 2001, Pakistan has been active in hunting down and arresting the remnants of the al-Qaida network in the state, and has captured 689 Al-Qaeda operatives, 369 of whom have been handed over to the United States, including many high level figures such as Abu Zubayda (in 2002), Khalid Sheikh Mohammad (2003) and Abu Faraj al-Libbi (2005).15

The last few years however have been the most challenging time in Pakistan, as it has engaged in active conflicts in many of its border regions. In particular, the areas of Waziristan, the Swat Valley and Balochistan have seen concentrated fighting and presented significant challenges to the Pakistani state. Since 2002, over 2,000 soldiers have died in the line of duty in these areas, along with significantly more civilians. In the limited period from 2007 to 2009, over 1,900 people were confirmed dead in attacks masterminded by Baitullah Mehsud, who himself was reported to be killed in August 2009.

Other external, non-military elements further aggravate Pakistan’s security situation. The presence of 20 million small arms in Pakistan\textsuperscript{16} means that a number of non-state actors have access to weapons that can threaten the local population. The continued cultivation of opium and narcotics in Afghanistan remains a problem, and the financial benefit of these drugs goes largely into the pockets of warlords and other non-state actors. The situation is seen to be further complicated by the presence of extra-regional forces, and the interventions of India. India stands accused by some commentators, along with Afghanistan, of actively providing support for Balochistan fighters, accompanying them to discuss arms deals and providing shelters for their families, as well as monthly stipends.

Overall, Pakistan faces many challenges as it attempts to engage militarily with insurgents in its frontier areas. First, within Pakistani society, the state’s participation in the US-led conflict in Afghanistan has lacked legitimacy, in part due to the American handling of the conflict. Public criticism of Pakistan’s contribution to the conflict as well as the continued drone attacks have inflamed anti-American sentiment in the country and turned many Pakistanis against the war. Being associated with American policies has also turned Pakistan itself into a target for terrorist attacks, as demonstrated by high-profile incidents such as the assassination of Benazir Bhutto, the Marriott Hotel bombing and the attack on the Sri Lankan Cricket Team. Overall, Pakistan needs Western help to overcome these challenges, but such aid is not available unconditionally.

Pakistan may have to develop most of its solutions on its own in order to combat the extremist challenge, and an integrated approach is required. Pakistan would do well to develop a comprehensive counter-

\textsuperscript{16} Malik, Salma. A Situation Analysis of SALW in Pakistan and its Impact on Security, Community Appraisal and Motivation Program (CAMP), 2005, p. 15 (“According to the 1998 census, Pakistanis owned around 2 million licensed firearms. In addition, officials of the Ministry of Interior believe that there are roughly 18 million more illegally held.”). Available at: www.iansa.org/regions/scasia/documents/SALWPakistan.pdf.
insurgency security strategy to deal with the rising menace of terrorism. To meet this threat, and knowing that Western aid is not necessarily readily forthcoming, Pakistan could perhaps turn inward and focus on the rising threat of armed militancy within the country. This military operation could be accompanied by active efforts to reverse the country's drift into extremism by strengthening liberal and progressive forces within the state's civil society. Pakistan would send the right message to its people and abroad by standing firm in its policies, and be ready to pay the necessary price for establishing the writ of the Pakistani state. This could be aided by concurrently resolving the crisis of governance afflicting the country, and clamping down on corruption and political privilege by making the process more inclusive. Most importantly, if all of these policies are to be successful, they would require an additional concerted effort to win back the hearts and minds of the people and rebuild and develop frontier areas long after the extremists have been defeated. Thus, even if Pakistan succeeds in eliminating the extremist presence from its border areas in the near future, it faces a long road towards eradicating the conditions on the ground that allowed such terrorist cells to grow in the first place.
Conclusion

While Pakistan has succeeded in expanding the legitimacy of its democratic traditions, it has also faced numerous concerns regarding its economic health and security environment. In an effort to synthesise the different aspects discussed in this report, a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis is presented in this Conclusion.

Strengths

Clearly Pakistan has a number of advantages in different areas, some of which have yet to be exploited for the benefit of the state. Pakistan’s strong military can be seen as an advantage, as it gives the state the ability to maintain internal order and meet the challenge of armed insurgency. Geographically Pakistan is located in a critical strategic location, which means that the continued existence of a strong Pakistani state is in the interest of all other states within the region and globally. With the sixth largest population in the world, Pakistan has a large untapped advantage in human capital, although this must be managed effectively.

Pakistan’s nuclear status is also arguably an advantage to its security, as its deterrence has changed the dynamics of the relationship with India
and has moved both sides away from considering war as a solution to their ongoing disputes. And despite Pakistan’s economic troubles, its economy and stock market have shown signs of potential growth for the future. Finally, Pakistan possesses a large amount of international goodwill, even though this has yet to be translated into concrete pledges of assistance.

Weaknesses

The most challenging problem for the Pakistani state after the commencement of fighting in Swat is its ongoing humanitarian crisis, with more than 3 million IDPs (many of whom have now been resettled). Displacement can play a significant role in undermining peace and democracy, and it is vitally important that Pakistan address the issue of re-integrating all of these people back into society. Pakistan could do more to address the widespread poverty that still plagues the state, but will have a hard time doing so with its current crippling debt of more than USD 50 billion, as well as its rising population. Pakistan is still hampered by a negative international image, caused largely by its unstable history of democracy and legacy of conflict. Pakistan’s border with Afghanistan has thus far proved to be porous and unmanageable, with trafficking rampant in remote areas. Finally, Pakistan and South Asia’s weak regional economic integration means that Pakistan and other South Asian states lack influence at the global economic negotiating table.

Opportunities

Certainly Pakistan’s stature as an Islamic democracy and as a ‘frontline’ state gives it certain geopolitical advantages that could be exploited in the near future within the global community. The current Obama
Administration has placed Afghanistan and Pakistan at the core of its foreign policy agenda, which should be to Pakistan's advantage. In addition, Pakistan's strong civil society, boosted by a growing middle class, open media and independent judiciary, should help spur along its development, along with contributions by the Pakistani diaspora. Finally, Pakistan still possesses a number of economic opportunities in terms of energy (by exploiting its enormous coal reserves), agriculture and the growth of trade corridors both with its neighbours and in terms of increasing its maritime connections.

Threats

Pakistan faces a range of threats. Its current democratically elected Government could be challenged by other elements of the Pakistani state, especially the army, if it cannot meet the challenges of the future. Pakistan still has yet to resolve its outstanding issues with India, and must also deal with the threat of Indian sponsorship of non-state actors working within Pakistan's borders to undermine the power of the state. Such actors are also responsible for the spread of extremism and increase in terrorist attacks. Economically, Pakistan has been hit hard by the global financial crisis, and the free-trade agreement signed with China could also be a threat to the country's own domestic economic production. Pakistan must also cope with the effects of a 'brain drain', and must try to extend access to education in order to compensate for the departure of some of its brightest talents. In addition, the effects of climate change will certainly negatively impact Pakistan's already water-stressed situation.

Finally, Pakistan needs to be able to cope with the displacement of the Taliban away from Afghanistan to parts of Pakistan by the expected surge in Allied forces. Effective response to this will be made more dif-
difficult by the lack of international support the country currently receives, despite the presence of good will. Overall, these threats mean that Pakistan faces a stern test to its security in the near future, and will need to find new ways to cope simultaneously with a diverse array of problems.
Programme

Tuesday, 9 June 2009

09h00 – 09h30 Introduction
09h30 – 10h30 The Future of the Geo-strategic Environment of South Asia
10h30 – 10h45 Discussion
10h45 – 11h00 Coffee Break
11h00 – 12h00 Pakistan’s Political Scenarios: Transition to Democracy?
12h00 – 12h15 Discussion
12h15 – 13h30 Lunch
13h30 – 14h30 The Prospects of South Asia’s Regional and Global Economic Integration
14h30 – 15h00 Discussion
15h00 –16h00 The Future of the India-Pakistan Peace Process
16h00 – 16h15  Discussion
16h15 – 16h30  Coffee Break
16h30 – 17h30  The ‘Global War on Terror’ in South Asia: Can It Be Won?
17h30 – 17h45  Discussion
17h45 – 18h15  Conclusions
18h15 – 20h00  Reception
### Participant List

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