

PAKISTAN-U.S. STRATEGIC DIALOGUE
FOURTH ROUND

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PREFACE

Since 9/11, Pakistan has suffered the most in its fight against terrorism due to its ethnic closeness and the largest common border¹ with Afghanistan. In terms of casualties alone, so far the death toll of Pakistanis in the war is around 27,756 including 3065 security personnel.² Pakistan, in 2004, was designated as a non-NATO ally³. The process of the strategic dialogue between the U.S. and Pakistan was initiated in 2006 when U.S. President George W. Bush visited Pakistan. The third round of talks was held in December 2007. In January 2010, there was the London Conference where the military chiefs from NATO, Russia and Pakistan met. This was followed by the fourth round of the dialogue convened on March 24-25 in Washington in the backdrop of the shift in U.S. policy for mediation and reconciliation with the Taliban.

This dialogue was quite different from the three earlier rounds. For the first time it was raised to ministerial level co-chaired by the Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi. Secondly, Pakistan's Chief of the Army Staff, General Ashfaq Pervez Kayani, was a significant participant. This reflected the American desire to talk to Pakistan's civilian and military leadership together, because, as Clinton said, "success requires a fully integrated civilian and military effort, one in which security gains are followed immediately by economic and political gains".

It was also agreed to continue the dialogue process. A Policy Steering Group was established to "intensify and expand the sectoral dialogue process in the fields of economy and trade; energy; defense; security; strategic stability and non-proliferation; law enforcement and

¹ Pakistan has the largest common border with Afghanistan (1500 miles), followed by Tajikistan (750 miles), Iran (580 miles), Turkmenistan (460 miles), Uzbekistan (85 miles), and China (47 miles).

² Shahzad Chaudhry, "The Clinton Statement", *Daily Times* (Lahore), May 17, 2010.

³ Argentina, Australia, Bahrain, Egypt, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, South Korea, Saudi Arabia and Thailand are non-NATO allies of the U.S.

counter-terrorism; science and technology; education; agriculture; water; health; and communications and public diplomacy”.

After the talks, Qureshi said we have moved from “a relationship to a partnership”. Clinton described it as a “new day” after years of uncertain relationship. U.S. efforts in Pakistan are “vital to success in Afghanistan” but also to “American security”. U.S. has made a “strategic priority” to strengthen “partnership with the Pakistani people”, said Clinton. The objectives of the U.S. Government, as explained by Richard Halbrooke on March 19, are: destroying al-Qaeda; helping Afghans become self-reliant to take care of their security; and strengthening Pakistan’s ability to deal with its own security, development and stabilizing democratic institutions. There is also a perception that since Pakistan can play a major role in negotiations between the Afghan Taliban and the Kabul government, it may just be a transactional relationship to facilitate NATO’s withdrawal from Afghanistan; and, until then, the U.S. focus would remain on security issues and Pakistan’s on both security and managing its economy.

This volume of *IPRI Factfile* includes the text of the joint statement issued after the fourth round of the Pakistan-U.S. dialogue as well as a few comments and articles which appeared in the media from March 24 till May 16, 2010.

May 20, 2010.

Dr. Noor ul Haq

PROGRESS IN PAKISTAN

The fourth round of a strategic dialogue between the United States and Pakistan takes place in Washington this week at a time when the Obama administration's policy approach to Pakistan has begun to pay dividends—we're taking terrorist leaders off the battlefield and arresting Taliban leaders. Dangerous global security threats persist in Pakistan, but the Obama administration has put U.S. national security on more solid footing in Pakistan through an assertive and integrated national security approach to meeting multiple threats there.

Three years ago in 2007 Pakistan was descending into chaos in part due to neglect and the Bush administration's misguided approach, which was distracted in the trenches of Iraq. But the Obama administration has embarked on a comprehensive approach to Pakistan that has shifted dynamics to make America safer in a strategy centered on three main pillars:

1. **A more aggressive counter-terrorism strategy.** The Obama administration has taken a more aggressive and proactive approach than the Bush administration in going after terrorist and militant groups in Pakistan. The Obama administration has taken out three times as many terror suspects in Pakistan during the last 14 months than the Bush administration did in its last five years in office.
2. **A more effective aid programme.** The Obama administration has embarked on a strategy of reaching out to a wide range of Pakistani leaders and citizens, implementing a public engagement strategy aimed at countering militancy, and offering an aid programme with incentives for reform in Pakistan. The Bush administration squandered U.S. taxpayer money, sending it disproportionately to the Pakistani military and getting little to no tangible results for U.S. national security.
3. **A more comprehensive regional strategy.** The Obama administration pragmatically recognizes that what happens in Pakistan directly affects efforts to complete the mission next door in Afghanistan. Pakistan and Afghanistan suffered from an inattention and neglect under the Bush administration, in large part due to the distraction and diversion of resources to Iraq.

It is far too soon to proclaim “mission accomplished” in Pakistan, but the Obama administration has started to turn the tide with an integrated and pragmatic strategy aimed at strengthening the bilateral alliance. This week’s meetings in Washington are designed to further deepen ties between the United States and Pakistan and achieve more progress in the coming months.

Overcoming a misguided policy and years of neglect

Pakistan, a nuclear-armed country with more people than Iraq, Iran, and Afghanistan combined, is home to some of the most dangerous terror networks. U.S. policy in Pakistan suffered from neglect and missteps for years under the Bush administration. The Obama administration is overcoming this by making important strategic shifts in its approach to Pakistan in three areas: counter-terrorism, development aid, and a regional strategy.

Counter-terrorism

Descent into chaos under Bush. Under the Bush administration, Osama bin Laden escaped into Pakistan in 2001. And al-Qaeda and Taliban militants regrouped on both sides of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border when the Bush administration turned its attention and resources to Iraq before the job was finished. Pakistan ceded territory to dangerous terror networks and militant groups from 2001 to 2008, and the country started to slip into greater internal political and economic turmoil.

- Afghan Taliban militants used Pakistani territory without restraint as a staging ground to mount a rising insurgency in Afghanistan from 2001 until recent days.
- The Bush administration placed a bad \$11 billion bet on the Pakistani government led by former president Pervez Musharraf from 2001 until 2008 in a misguided attempt to buy the allegiance of this leader.
- The Musharraf government ceded territory to militant groups, signing deals with tribal groups in South Waziristan (2004) and North Waziristan (2006), areas along Pakistan’s western border with Afghanistan.

Progress under Obama. The Obama administration has put intense pressure on al-Qaeda and Taliban leaders in Pakistan through the use of

drone strikes and counter-insurgency support to the Pakistani military and police.

The Obama administration has taken out nearly 700 terrorist suspects in Pakistan, three times as many during its first year in office than the last five years of the Bush administration (2004-2008). At least 20 senior terrorist leaders are no longer threats to global security, including:

- Baitullah Mehsud, a Pakistani Taliban leader suspected in the killing of Benazir Bhutto.
- Mohammad Qari Zafar, a Lashkar-e-Jhangvi commander wanted in connection to the 2006 bombing of the U.S. Karachi consulate.
- Abdul Haq al-Turkistani, leader of Uighur Turkistani Islamic Party linked to al-Qaeda.
- Jamal Saeed Abdul Rahim, wanted in connection to 1986 Pan Am Karachi hijacking.
- Sheikh Mansoor, an Egyptian al-Qaeda leader.

The Obama administration has continued to provide support to the Pakistani military, but with stricter conditions on how this money is used. High-level engagement between U.S. and Pakistani military and intelligence agencies has paid dividends, with the Pakistani security agencies taking a more aggressive stance against militants.

- The Pakistani military has begun to more aggressively target militant and terrorist groups in key areas in the north and west (Swat, Malakand, South Waziristan, and Bajaur) in an attempt to wrest control from militants and “reverse their momentum.”
- The military has shifted some troops from its eastern border with India, and Pakistan now has approximately 150,000 Pakistani troops within the North-West Frontier Province and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas.
- The Pakistanis have captured and killed key Taliban and al-Qaeda leaders. The most significant was the capture of Mullah Baradar, the second in command of the Afghan Taliban.

Development aid

Waste and corruption under Bush. The Bush administration squandered U.S. taxpayer money, sending it disproportionately to the

Pakistani military and getting little or no tangible results for U.S. national security.

- The Bush administration spent billions in Coalition Support Funds designed to bolster the Pakistani military effort against al-Qaeda and the Taliban, but the money was often wasted and diverted because of a lack of oversight on Pakistan's actions.
- Despite its rhetorical support for advancing democracy, the Bush administration spent a paltry sum to advance reform in Pakistan. It spent the same amount on democratic reform efforts in 2006 as it did on jet engine and helicopter spare parts in the country.

Resetting the bilateral relationship under Obama. The Obama administration is implementing the bipartisan Kerry-Lugar-Berman bill, which triples nonmilitary assistance and sets conditions demanding more responsible action by Pakistan's government on counter-terrorism and nuclear proliferation.

- Congress approved new assistance last year, and the United States is now the largest foreign donor to Pakistan. Its aid is providing incentives for reform in the country and moving beyond previous policies that provided a blank check to Pakistan's military.
- The Obama administration has embarked on a strategy of reaching out to a wide range of Pakistani leaders and citizens—exemplified by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's visit to Pakistan last fall — and is implementing a public engagement strategy aimed at countering militancy.

A comprehensive South Asia regional strategy

The forgotten front under Bush. Mired in Iraq's conflict, the Bush administration was distracted by a growing Afghan Taliban insurgency that benefited from a safe haven in Pakistan.

- Eastern Afghanistan slipped into greater instability by 2008 due to the Bush administration's inattention and neglect.
- Supply convoys for U.S. and NATO troops in Afghanistan were suffering from a series of attacks in Pakistan by the end of 2008.

An integrated regional strategy. The Obama administration pragmatically recognized that what happens in Pakistan directly affects efforts to complete the mission next door in Afghanistan.

- The Obama administration initiated several comprehensive reviews during its first year in office and developed an integrated regional strategy addressing instability in both Afghanistan and Pakistan.
- It continued to engage India as a strategic partner, hosting India's leader for the Obama administration's first state dinner in November 2009.
- It has built a broad global coalition to support U.S. efforts in Afghanistan and Pakistan by reinvigorating bilateral relations with key countries in the region and establishing a contact group of special representatives from numerous countries and international organizations to coordinate political and financial support to Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Brian Katulis, & Caroline Wadhams, *Center for American Progress*, March 24, 2010, http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2010/03/pakistan_progress.html

FACTBOX: KEY FACTS IN U.S.-PAKISTAN RELATIONS

Top U.S. and Pakistani officials meet on Wednesday as part of joint efforts to bolster what has often been a fractious relationship.

Here are some facts about the importance and problem areas of the relationship, what aid has been given, what the Pakistanis want and what is to come:

Strategic Importance

Pakistan is of huge strategic importance and a main ally for the United States as it seeks to defeat al-Qaeda and cripple the Taliban in neighboring Afghanistan. Osama bin Laden, the mastermind of the September 2001 attacks on the United States, is believed to be hiding somewhere along the lawless border with Afghanistan.

The Afghan Taliban's leaders also have sought refuge in Pakistan and Washington has been pressing Islamabad for months to do more to reel them in. Washington has praised the recent arrest of the Afghan Taliban's military commander in Karachi in a joint U.S.-Pakistan raid. Some access has been granted to him but Washington would like more.

Washington needs Pakistan as it seeks to stabilize Afghanistan as U.S. President Barack Obama sends in an extra 30,000 troops in the coming months.

Pakistan is a transit point to get supplies for the U.S. military into landlocked Afghanistan, with a big volume of goods being trucked from the port in Karachi.

Pakistan shares a border with Iran, with whom Washington has tense relations, particularly over Tehran's nuclear plans. The United States is nervously watching whether energy-starved Pakistan will follow through on an agreement with Iran for a natural gas pipeline. U.S. officials are reluctant to talk publicly about this, hoping the deal will fall apart.

Security Cooperation

Security cooperation is a key between the two countries and much of this week's meetings will focus on how to improve that, from intelligence-sharing to more equipment given by the United States to its ally.

Pakistan sent a 56-page wish list ahead of the talks, asking for more helicopters and pilotless drones. The United States has provided F-16 fighter jets to Islamabad and Pakistan's navy chief was in Washington last week to discuss the handover in August of a refurbished U.S. frigate, the USS *McInerney*.

Earlier this month, Washington said it would deliver 1,000 laser-guided bomb kits to Pakistan within weeks and is considering more weapons sales to help the Pakistani air force crack down on insurgents in the Afghanistan border region.

Key Irritants

There is mistrust on a range of issues, from security cooperation to how aid is delivered. Many Pakistanis feel the United States is only a reliable partner when its own strategic interests are at stake, citing previous cases of abandonment, particularly after the Soviets left Afghanistan.

Most opinion polls show a majority of Pakistanis hold an unfavorable view of the U.S. government and are suspicious of its intentions. Pakistan's government bristles when Washington complains it has not done enough to tackle militants, countering it has "already done too much" in a war that has killed more than 2,000 soldiers and weighed on the economy.

There is also public anger because of civilian deaths from U.S. pilotless drone attacks in northwest Pakistan. Pakistan's government privately allows the attacks but this support is not voiced publicly because of a feared voter backlash.

A recent source of U.S. irritation has been delays in granting visas for U.S. officials wanting to audit how aid is spent. Pakistan complains about increased security checks for its citizens visiting the United States. A group of Pakistani parliamentarians from the tribal areas cut short a trip to the United States this month after refusing to have full-body scans at an airport serving Washington, D.C.

Aid Programme

The United States is Pakistan's biggest aid donor and has given about \$15 billion in direct aid and military reimbursements since 2002, about two-thirds of it security related.

While Pakistan is being propped up by an \$11.3 billion International Monetary Fund loan, a new U.S. aid package triples non-military assistance to Pakistan to \$1.5 billion a year over the next five years.

The spending plan is still being worked out but the flow of money is being held up as the Obama administration changes how it distributes that aid. Instead of largely using U.S. contractors and non-governmental organizations, it wants to funnel much of the aid via the Pakistani government and domestic NGOs in the hope this will bolster local capacity.

India

Pakistan wants the United States to do more to help resolve tensions with India and is concerned about the increasing role of its rival in Afghanistan. Islamabad also wants the United States to press India to resolve the core dispute between the nuclear-armed South Asian rivals -- the divided region of Kashmir. India is opposed to outside involvement.

Nuclear Cooperation

Pakistan would like a civilian nuclear cooperation deal with the United States, similar to the one Washington has with India, and plans to raise this during the talks.

But the U.S. response has been lukewarm to this proposal, amid fears over how it would affect Washington's ties with India. In addition, such a move would require consensus approval from the 46-nation Nuclear Suppliers Group as well as U.S. congressional backing, which was a lengthy process with the Indian deal.

Reuters, March 24, 2010,
<http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE62N0UL20100324>

JOINT STATEMENT ON U.S.-PAKISTAN STRATEGIC DIALOGUE IN WASHINGTON

Begin text:

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, accompanied by high level delegations, met in Washington on 24-25 March 2010 for the U.S.-Pakistan Strategic Dialogue.

In conformity with the importance that both the United States and Pakistan attach to taking further steps to broaden and deepen their comprehensive cooperation and to further fortify the friendship between the two peoples, the Strategic Dialogue was elevated to the Ministerial level.

A Policy Steering Group was established to intensify and expand the sectoral dialogue process in the fields of economy and trade; energy; defense; security, strategic stability; and non-proliferation; law enforcement and counter-terrorism; science and technology; education; agriculture; water; health; and communications and public diplomacy. Sectoral meetings will be held in Islamabad soon.

Both sides exchanged views on the status of bilateral cooperation and decided to continually provide strategic guidance for strengthening U.S.-Pakistan partnership in the 21st Century for realizing the aspirations of their people.

They reiterated that the core foundations of this partnership are shared democratic values, mutual trust and mutual respect. A stable, enduring and broad-based cooperative partnership is in the fundamental interest of both countries. Both the United States and Pakistan are determined to foster goodwill and friendship between their people and engage in mutually beneficial cooperation.

Secretary Clinton paid tribute to the courage and resolve of the people of Pakistan to eliminate terrorism and militancy. Both sides acknowledged the common threat that terrorism and extremism posed to global, regional and local security. Pakistan expressed its appreciation for U.S. security assistance. Both governments committed to redouble their efforts to deal effectively with terrorism and to protect the common ideals and shared values of democracy, tolerance, openness and respect for fundamental freedoms and human rights.

Both sides exchanged views on measures to enhance Pakistan's inherent capacities to realize the vision of a democratic, progressive state, committed to socio-economic advancement and to effectively address political, economic, development and security challenges.

The United States re-affirmed its resolve to assist Pakistan to overcome socio-economic challenges by providing technical and economic assistance and to enable Pakistan to build its strengths by optimal utilization of its considerable human and natural resources and entrepreneurial skills.

The United States committed to work towards enhanced market access for Pakistani products as well as towards the early finalization of Reconstruction Opportunity Zones legislation. The two governments decided to discuss issues related to the Bilateral Investment Treaty in order to stimulate investment in Pakistan.

The United States and Pakistan discussed creating an investment fund to support increased foreign direct investment and development in Pakistan. Such a fund could provide much needed additional support for Pakistan's energy sector and other high priority areas.

The United States recognized the importance of assisting Pakistan to overcome its energy deficit and committed to further intensify and expand comprehensive cooperation in the energy sector, including through the Signature Energy Programme.

Recognizing the crucial importance of water for human survival and development, both sides decided to add a separate sectoral track in the Strategic Dialogue to focus on water conservation, watershed management and U.S. assistance in water projects.

Pakistan expressed its appreciation for U.S. assistance for socio-economic development that would contribute towards improving the lives of the people of Pakistan.

The two sides comprehensively shared perspectives on regional and global issues. Both reaffirmed the importance of advancing peace and stability in Afghanistan and the region.

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi reaffirmed their commitment to a wide-ranging, long-term and substantive strategic partnership between the United States and Pakistan.

To carry forward this process, the next meeting of the Strategic Dialogue will be held in Islamabad co-chaired by Secretary Clinton and Foreign Minister Qureshi.

March 25, 2010,
http://www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2010/March/20100325145715_eaifas0.2140619.html

U.S. AND PAKISTAN AGREE TO REINFORCE STRATEGIC TIES

Pakistan and the United States wrapped up two days of high-level talks on Thursday, with a raft of economic development initiatives, an agreement to hasten deliveries of military hardware and a promise to put their often mistrustful relationship on a new footing.

In a communiqué issued after the talks, the countries said they would “redouble their efforts to deal effectively with terrorism” and would work together for “peace and stability in Afghanistan.”

Administration officials said Pakistan was likely to get swifter delivery of F-16 fighter jets, naval frigates and helicopter gunships, as well as new remotely piloted aircraft for surveillance missions. But the United States was silent about Pakistan’s most heavily advertised proposal: a civil nuclear agreement similar to the one the Bush administration signed with Pakistan’s archrival, India.

Given Pakistan’s history of selling nuclear technology to Iran, Libya and North Korea, such an agreement would realistically be 10 or 15 years away, a senior administration official said Thursday. Still, the administration was careful not to dismiss the idea out of hand.

“This is a new day,” Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said in greeting Pakistan’s foreign minister, Shah Mahmood Qureshi. “For the past year, the Obama administration has shown in our words and our deeds a different approach and a different attitude toward Pakistan.”

The “strategic dialogue” was by itself meant to send a message: The administration used the term reserved for the substantive, wide-ranging exchanges it carries on with important countries like China and India. Pakistan and the United States held three such dialogues during the Bush administration.

But last year, Mr. Qureshi asked Mrs. Clinton to upgrade the exchange to the level of foreign minister. On Wednesday, he said he hoped the two days of higher-level talks would help Pakistan and the United States overcome a history that “did not always enjoy a sunny side.”

Mr. Qureshi said the United States had agreed to put on a fast track some longstanding Pakistani requests for military hardware.

Although Mrs. Clinton deflected a question about civil nuclear cooperation, she said, “We’re committed to helping Pakistan meet its real energy needs.”

Among specific announcements was an agreement for the United States Agency for International Development to help Pakistan upgrade three thermal power plants. The administration said it would try to push through legislation creating so-called reconstruction opportunity zones in Pakistan. And it hopes to set up a fund to stimulate direct foreign investment.

Pakistan’s military campaign against Taliban insurgents in the Swat Valley and South Waziristan has improved the tenor of its relationship with Washington. But success on the battlefield cuts both ways for Pakistan, analysts said. It gives the country’s government in Islamabad a more credible argument for increased military aid. But it also imposes greater expectations from the United States about Pakistan’s counter-insurgency efforts and military cooperation.

“Yes, you get a pat on the back,” said Bruce O. Riedel, an expert on Pakistan at the Brookings Institution. “But now that you’ve shown you can do something, you’ve got to do more.”

Pakistan’s role in Afghanistan also remains a subject of intense scrutiny in the United States. The Pakistani authorities cooperated with the Central Intelligence Agency to capture the Taliban’s military chief, Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar. But some analysts question whether the Pakistanis are rounding up other Taliban leaders, including shadow Afghan governors, simply to make sure that Pakistan has leverage in any future political bargaining in Kabul.

Mr. Qureshi insisted that Pakistan wanted Afghanistan to lead this process. "If they feel we can contribute, if we can help, we'll be more than willing to help," he said. "But we leave it to them."

On this subject, however, administration officials are more interested in hearing from Pakistan's chief of army staff, Gen. Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, who was part of the delegation. General Kayani recently held talks in Islamabad with Afghanistan's president, Hamid Karzai, and the general is viewed as critical to determining the role Pakistan will play.

Of all the raw nerves in the relationship, Pakistan's nuclear ambitions may be the most sensitive. Islamabad yearns for an agreement with the United States because it would confer legitimacy on Pakistan's existing programme.

But Washington does not formally recognize Pakistan as a nuclear power. The selling of nuclear secrets by the father of its nuclear programme, Abdul Qadeer Khan, and the country's refusal to allow American investigators to have access to him ensures that this recognition may be a long way off.

"The question is, can you move somewhere toward giving legitimacy to a Pakistani nuclear programme?" said Daniel S. Markey, senior fellow for India, Pakistan and South Asia at the Council on Foreign Relations. "Is there space between a civil nuclear deal and just saying 'no'?"

Mark Landler, *New York Times*, March 25, 2010,
<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/26/world/asia/26policy.html?scp=3&sq=U s-Pakistan%20Strategic%20Dialogue&st=Search>

PAKISTAN'S SHREWD SHIFT IN DIALOGUE

There are many ways to deal with unpleasant problems. Changing the subject is one.

This week, a Pakistani delegation arrived in Washington to kick off its new "strategic dialogue" with the Obama administration. In recent memory, all visiting Pakistani leaders have been subjected to extensive American lectures about how Islamabad must do more to kill, capture, and prosecute terrorists. As a consequence, news coverage from those visits has focused on thorny challenges in the relationship between Washington and Islamabad, such as Predator drone strikes, Pakistan's frustrating pace of prosecutions against extremist ideologues and terrorist

organizers, or the murky legal status of the world's most successful nuclear proliferator, Dr. A.Q. Khan.

This time around, Pakistan's delegation, led by army chief General Pervez Ashfaq Kayani, cleverly changed the subject. He came armed with a fifty-six page book on ways the United States should do more to help Pakistan. Kayani also left his chief spymaster at home, practically eliminating the potential for in-depth counter-terrorism debates.

Let there be no mistake, the Pakistani delegation came ready to do business, but not the business that normally sits at the top of the U.S. agenda. Many of the items on Kayani's wish list serve a longstanding Pakistani goal: to resolve strategic challenges posed by India. This diplomatic dance is far from novel. Throughout the Cold War, the U.S.-Pakistan relationship was also founded on an imperfect coincidence of national interest. Washington used Islamabad to help resist Soviet expansion in the region, while Islamabad used Washington as an external balance against its Indian nemesis.

A good number of the items on Pakistan's agenda are basically non-starters. Chief among them is the request for a civil-nuclear deal like the one President Bush signed with New Delhi. Leaving aside President Obama's commitment to global non-proliferation regimes that bar nuclear trade with Pakistan, it is nearly impossible to imagine a Pakistani deal getting past the U.S. Congress, much less through the consensus-based Nuclear Suppliers Group.

Yet senior Obama administration officials have gamely entertained this and other Pakistani requests, avoiding "no" when "let's keep talking" might do. Their approach has merit, even if Washington misses one opportunity to exert diplomatic pressure on Islamabad. There will be other times for pressure, and the United States also needs to turn a page as part of its broader, long-term effort to cultivate better relations with the people of Pakistan. Washington should show a capacity for listening to requests, not just making them. As long as no untenable U.S. promises were made, no illusions of nuclear deals or American-brokered Kashmir solutions fostered, the cost of listening will have been minimal.

Daniel Markey, *Council on Foreign Relations*, March 25, 2010,
http://www.cfr.org/publication/21733/pakistans_shrewd_shift_in_dialogue.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+cfr_main+%28CFR.org+-+Main+Site+Feed%29

THE U.S. AND PAKISTAN STILL HAVE SOME TRUST ISSUES

The top U.S. and Pakistani officials who gathered in Washington this week for a grand "strategic dialogue" took turns patting each other on the back and with good reason. They have made gains in nearly every dimension of a relationship that has been plagued by public suspicion on both sides.

But it would be a mistake to read this display as an indication that the trust issues have been resolved. Indeed, top officials of two U.S. intelligence agencies said essentially the same thing in separate communications: For all the important tactical changes the Pakistanis have made mobilizing their sometimes chaotic government to combat the Taliban insurgency, this won't be a truly strategic partnership until the army takes decisive action against its key long-time ally in Afghanistan, the Haqqani network, and closes down the safe haven from which it operates in Pakistan's tribal areas.

This is the "trust but verify" detail of the U.S.-Pakistan rapprochement, reminiscent of the U.S.-Soviet detente. American officials say that with their advanced intelligence-collections systems, they are in a position to monitor Pakistani contacts with Haqqani operatives. When there is a decisive move to cut them off, the U.S. will see and verify it. At that point, in the minds of the U.S. intelligence chiefs, the strategic shift will truly have taken place and the real celebration can begin.

Much of the discussion during this week's U.S.-Pakistan festival was devoted to the future framework of a post-war Afghanistan. The Pakistanis articulately shared their analysis that Afghanistan's geography, culture and history make a strong central government in Kabul unlikely. So what would a weaker government look like, and how would it avoid sliding back into the war-lordism of recent decades? Those are questions officials on both sides will be mulling in coming weeks.

My guess is that part of the reason the Pakistanis have resisted American pleas for a total crackdown on the Haqqani network is that they believe peace negotiations will fail in Afghanistan unless they include all parties to the conflict -- including elements of the fearsome Haqqani group.

But here's an encouraging note: The Pakistanis also seem to believe there's a U.S.-powered peace train chugging toward Kabul, and it was clear this week that nobody wants to be the last on board the train, once

it begins to gather momentum.

David Ignatius, *Washington Post*, March 26, 2010,
http://voices.washingtonpost.com/postpartisan/2010/03/the_us_and_pakistan_still_have.html

POLICY GROUP SET UP FOR PAK-U.S. STRATEGIC ISSUES

The United States and Pakistan have established a policy steering group for further talks on strategic stability and non-proliferation, says a joint statement issued on Thursday.

Unpublicised talks on the nuclear issue have been taking place since 2002 and have included strategic stability and non-proliferation as well.

But members of the Pakistani delegation to the strategic dialogue, which ended in Washington on Thursday, say that this time the inclusion of these two subjects has a different perspective as it follows Islamabad's demand for a nuclear deal.

Also on top of the agenda for this "sectoral dialogue process" are economy and trade, energy, defence, security, law enforcement and counter-terrorism.

The process will also cover science and technology, education, agriculture, water, health, communications and public diplomacy.

The document, issued after the two-day strategic dialogue in Washington, does not give a date for the next round of talks. Although it did say that these "sectoral meetings" will be held in Islamabad soon.

Diplomatic observers in Washington say that the inclusion of "strategic stability and non-proliferation" in the joint statement shows that the nuclear issue came up for discussion during the strategic dialogue as well, although the Americans are unwilling to acknowledge it publicly.

Pakistan is pressing for a nuclear cooperation arrangement similar to one the U.S. has with India, but it would not have agreed to discuss the issue of non-proliferation without an indication from Washington that it no longer seeks to undo its atomic programme.

Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi told the Reuters news agency earlier Thursday his delegation had "very satisfactory" talks with the Americans on civilian nuclear cooperation and that the A. Q. Khan issue was "behind us."

Washington has so far been reluctant to offer a nuclear deal to Islamabad but U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton told Pakistani

journalists earlier this week that America's deal with India happened after years of negotiations.

Pakistani officials say that the inclusion of "strategic stability and non-proliferation" in the agenda for future talks indicates that the United States has already started the process with Pakistan as well.

Mr Qureshi, in his interview to Reuters, said that meetings with U.S. officials on nuclear cooperation, non-proliferation and export controls had gone well.

"I am quite satisfied with the discussions we had," Mr Qureshi said when asked about the nuclear cooperation issue. "I would not like to expand on it at this stage."

He added that "the talks were very satisfactory" but declined to specify the kind of cooperation Pakistan sought.

The news agency noted that Washington had been dubious about talks on sharing nuclear technology, partly because of fears it would upset India but also due to concerns over the Khan network.

"I think that is behind us," Mr Qureshi said when asked about the Khan case. "I think they understand the new command-control structures we have in place. I think they are pretty satisfied with security and safety systems in place in Pakistan and there is recognition of that."

The joint statement issued after the strategic dialogue noted that the desire to continue these talks was "in conformity with the importance" that both the United States and Pakistan attached to each other.

Both sides were taking further steps to broaden and deepen their comprehensive cooperation and to further fortify the friendship between the two peoples, the statement added.

A policy steering group was established to "intensify and expand the sectoral dialogue process" in the fields identified in the joint statement.

During the strategic dialogue, the United States re-affirmed its resolve to assist Pakistan to overcome socio-economic challenges by providing technical and economic assistance and to enable Pakistan to build its strengths by optimal utilisation of its considerable human and natural resources and entrepreneurial skills.

The United States committed to work towards enhanced market access for Pakistani products as well as towards early finalisation of the Reconstruction Opportunity Zones legislation.

Investment Fund

The two governments decided to discuss issues related to the Bilateral Investment Treaty in order to stimulate investment in Pakistan.

The United States and Pakistan discussed creating an investment fund to support increased foreign direct investment and development in Pakistan. Such a fund could provide much needed additional support for Pakistan's energy sector and other high priority areas.

The United States recognised the importance of assisting Pakistan to overcome its energy deficit and committed to further intensify and expand comprehensive cooperation in the energy sector, including through the Signature Energy Programme.

Recognising the crucial importance of water for human survival and development, both sides decided to add a separate sectoral track in the strategic dialogue to focus on water conservation, watershed management and U.S. assistance in water projects.

Pakistan expressed its appreciation for U.S. assistance for socio-economic development that would contribute towards improving the lives of the people of Pakistan.

The two sides comprehensively shared perspectives on regional and global issues. Both reaffirmed the importance of advancing peace and stability in Afghanistan and the region.

Both sides exchanged views on the status of bilateral cooperation and decided to "continually provide strategic guidance" for strengthening U.S.-Pakistan partnership, the document said.

The core foundations of the U.S.-Pakistan partnership, the document noted, were shared democratic values, mutual trust and mutual respect.

"A stable, enduring and broad-based cooperative partnership is in the fundamental interest of both countries."

The document also noted that both the United States and Pakistan were determined to foster goodwill and friendship between their people and engage in mutually beneficial cooperation.

Common Threat

According to the joint statement, Secretary Clinton paid tribute to the courage and resolve of the people of Pakistan to eliminate terrorism and militancy.

Both sides acknowledged the common threat that terrorism and extremism posed to global, regional and local security. Pakistan expressed its appreciation for U.S. security assistance.

Both governments committed to redouble their efforts to deal effectively with terrorism and to protect the common ideals and shared values of democracy, tolerance, openness and respect for fundamental freedoms and human rights.

Both sides exchanged views on measures to enhance Pakistan's inherent capacities to realise the vision of a democratic, progressive state, committed to socio-economic advancement and to effectively address political, economic, development and security challenges.

Secretary Clinton and Foreign Minister Qureshi reaffirmed their commitment to a wide-ranging, long-term and substantive strategic partnership between the United States and Pakistan.

To carry forward this process, the next meeting of the strategic dialogue will be held in Islamabad co-chaired by Secretary Clinton and Foreign Minister Qureshi.

Anwar Iqbal & Masood Haider, *Dawn* (Islamabad), March 26, 2010,
<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/front-page/policy-group-set-up-for-further-talks-on-pakus-strategic-issues-630>

IS IT NEW BEGINNING IN PAKISTAN-U.S. TIES?

Good news are emanating from Washington in the backdrop of the ongoing process of strategic dialogue between Pakistan and the United States. Apart from the encouraging hints dropped by different American officials, the statement of the U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton at the conclusion of the first day of talks conveys the impression of something positive emerging out of the dialogue.

According to reports by American media, Pakistan has presented a list of its demands and concerns, which would be considered during discussions by the two sides and remarks of Mrs. Clinton show that the U.S. was willing to address at least some of them. These include realization of the country's energy crisis and readiness to provide assistance for establishment of three thermal power plants; allowing access to Pakistani products to U.S. markets and speeding up military equipment transfers. Presently, there is no clarity as to the fuller implications of these announcements — whether thermal power plants would be financed out of the already announced assistance or means

additional financial assistance and when and what kind of access Pakistani products would get. Similarly, the intention is to transfer military equipment quickly but there is so far no commitment as to the demand of Pakistan for supply of much needed equipment and weapons system like drone technology. And above all, there are no indications whether the United States was ready to address strategic concerns of Pakistan with regard to security, nuclear programme, Kashmir dispute and Afghanistan. Some quarters in Pakistan are jubilant and terming it a beginning of a new chapter in relations between the two countries. However, we would warn the countrymen not to have an over-optimistic view of the situation and attach many expectations from the latest engagement. In the past too, there came similar moments of apparent joy but they proved to be just illusion at the end. Americans have their own long term objectives and goals in this region and only time would tell how much and how far their objectives could be aligned with that of Pakistan.

Editorial, *Pakistan Observer* (Islamabad), March 26, 2010,
<http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=22260>

WASHINGTON DIALOGUE

Years of mutual mistrust cannot be overcome overnight. The ever-wavering relationship between Islamabad and Washington has been so riddled with inconsistency that official proclamations of being on the same page don't always fly. But there are now signs that the trust deficit may be narrowing. It was becoming apparent even in the build-up to the recently concluded 'strategic dialogue' in the U.S. capital that the 'do more' refrain had been shelved in favour of an effort to hear Pakistan's side of the story. The dialogue itself, about as high-powered a meeting as it could get, also hinted at a growing consensus and steered clear of fresh charges about who may or may not be meeting their commitments.

Much of this new conviction on the U.S. side stems from the Pakistan Army's efforts in the last 10 months or so to put boots on the ground and engage the local Taliban head-on. High-ranking Afghan Taliban have also been rounded up from various Pakistani cities. It seems that the message has been received: unlike the double-game played during the Musharraf era, the Pakistan government and its security forces are serious about fighting militancy, irrespective of the backlash. The public too is committed. No other nation has suffered more at the hands of Taliban-inspired terrorists but there has been no weakening of resolve. If

anything, hatred for the Taliban has only increased with every new attack. They may still be feared but they are also generally despised.

Equally importantly, both sides seem to have realised that the war against militancy cannot be won on the battlefield alone. To retain faith in democracy, the Pakistani public must be pulled out of the mess in which it is currently mired. Power outages are enraging domestic consumers and hurting industrial production, which is in turn causing job losses at a time of skyrocketing food inflation. Our agricultural sector, meanwhile, is being choked by India's illegal construction of dams. Of late Pakistan has given its all to counter the forces of extremism. Its people, even more than the army, now need something substantial in return.

Editorial, *Dawn* (Islamabad), March 27, 2010,
<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/editorial/washington-dialogue-730>

FOCUS SHOULD HAVE BEEN ON PAK LOSSES

In the joint statement issued at the conclusion of the much-talked-about and attention grabbing strategic dialogue, Pakistan and the United States have expressed their resolve to foster broad-based and enduring partnership, signifying a qualitative improvement in bilateral engagement. It talks about, among other things, greater market access and realization of the long-delayed plan of establishing Reconstruction Opportunity Zones (ROZs).

One can say with certainty that the dialogue this time was quite different from the three rounds held in the past and the two countries have moved further in cementing their ties in different fields. It is also gratifying that Pakistan's demand for sectoral focus has been accepted and a Policy Steering Group established to identify and expand the dialogue process in the fields of economy, trade, energy, defence, security, strategic stability and non-proliferation. Though there is no mention of the Pakistan's desire and demand for civilian cooperation in nuclear energy, one hopes that during discussions on energy issues, this would also be taken up and considered in the backdrop of ground realities. The United States has apparently accepted Pakistan's oft-repeated demand that it should have greater market access but strangely enough the joint statement mentions the need to work towards the goal, which clearly means that something substantial, is still far off. But it is also a fact that in

the present circumstances, Pakistan was unlikely to get any meaningful advantage of the market access even if immediately provided as the economy is in total shambles because of the absolute war on terror and the resultant security and law and order breakdown. There is no worthwhile investment and the already established industries are closing down either because of the security concerns or rising cost of production. Under these circumstances, the immediate focus should have been on Pakistan's losses in the war on terror and the increased assistance to compensate these damages. Though the Government circles calculate these losses at about \$35 billion yet our estimates, based on feedback from different stakeholders, run beyond \$60 billion. And one cannot quantify the losses that Pakistan is suffering because of brutalization of the society and weakening of the social fabric. We hope that during his forthcoming visit, the Prime Minister would hammer out this point during his interaction with American leaders and meetings with other world leaders on the sidelines of the nuclear summit.

Editorial, *Pakistan Observer* (Islamabad), March 27, 2010,
<http://www.pakobserver.net/201003/27/>

STRATEGIC DIALOGUE TO FINALISE AFPAK STRATEGY

Obama's first and second Afpak Strategy failed and now the third strategy "to extricate from Afghanistan", is to be finalized in Washington. Giving the details of the new strategy, David Miliband said: "The objective is to build a self-governing, self-policing, but heavily subsidized Afghanistan." Richard Hallbrooke stressed the importance of neighbouring countries and a "non-centralized Afghan State, because, the way forward is to work more with the tribes in a more de-centralized Afghanistan." Pakistan apparently endorsed this strategy and hopes to gain "strategic advantages."

Unfortunately, Pakistan, since independence has failed to evolve a pragmatic Afghan policy. Particularly for the last thirty years, it followed a policy, subordinated to American interests. General Ziaul Haq supported the American war against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan but was abandoned by the Americans, to experience the painful fall-out of Afghan quagmire. General Musharraf, without a second thought, accepted all the conditionalities forced on him and decided to join the American war on Afghanistan, with no moral or legal justification. As a result Pakistan has continued to suffer the consequences of such jerky

decisions and has been forced to fight the war on reversed fronts. As if this was not enough, the Pakistan government now has decided to support the Afpak exit strategy, worked out by Karzai and approved by the Americans at the Maldives meeting held last month. It envisages a government comprising Karzai supporters, the Northern Alliance and some Taliban dissidents, under the leadership of Mustafa Zahir Shah. Karzai hoping to gain the approval of this set-up, through a loe-jirga, he will be calling next month.

Surprisingly, the ground work has already been laid, to implement the Maldives Plan. On all counts, Pakistan has already started “delivering brick-by-brick demolition of Jehadi infrastructure.” Washington has given its endorsement of Pakistan’s “genuine interests” in Afghanistan and the assurances that America will “not walk away from Pakistan, and would guarantee Pakistan’s political and economic interests in the region.” In order to allow Pakistan, to disengage its forces from the eastern borders and move them to the north western borders, America is helping to defuse tension with India by inducing ‘composite dialogue’ and would also telling India to curtail activities in Afghanistan, which are causing concern to Pakistan. The stage therefore is set to prop-up a coalition government in Afghanistan, minus the Taliban, who control 33 provinces, out of 35 in Afghanistan, because Hallbrooke calls it a “non centralized Afghanistan”, denying the reality of control by the Taliban, who are the real arbiters of the destiny of the people of Afghanistan. Thus the America will be repeating the mistake of 1989-90, of abandoning the Mujahideen, which created a mess in Afghanistan and continues to afflict the entire region. It is interesting to see that the American policy makers having found the shift in Pakistan’s policy, visited Pakistan and Kabul; Karzai to Islamabad; ex DGISI to Saudi Arabia and the Foreign Minister and the COAS to Washington. There is an urgency to actualize the Maldives Plan, whereas the Taliban are discreetly watching this game and appear so calm, cool and collected, in their scheme of things, waiting for the occupation forces to leave Afghanistan and the Taliban to demolish the Maldives Plan, bit by bit and establish their rule. Once again Afghanistan will be plunged into turmoil and a second front will be opened, with no guarantee for Pakistan. The Washington conference therefore is not a peace conference either. In fact, it is a search for an “easier and less expensive American war and to extricate ourselves from our burden.”

Pakistan appears willing to implement the Maldives Plan, without any understanding with the Afghan Taliban. The Taliban are the real arbiters of the destiny of the people of Afghanistan and must not be kept out of the plan for peace. No doubt, Pakistan Army has been able to establish the writ of the government along the entire border region, including the FATA areas, and for the first time, our borders with Afghanistan have acquired strategic significance. The integrity of our borders therefore must be maintained, only when we are at peace with the future government in Kabul, which will be none else than the government by the Taliban, who control 90% of Afghanistan. Therefore Pakistan has a clear choice to have a friendly Afghanistan, and peaceful borders or a hostile Afghanistan and a situation of two front war. There exists a serious “Trust Deficit” between Afghan Taliban and USA, Pakistan Government, Pakistan Army and its intelligence agencies, who betrayed the Taliban in 1988-90. Pakistan later on joined the American war against Afghanistan in 2001.

Majority of the Taliban therefore consider Pakistan as their enemy. Whereas the Pakistani Taliban narrate the story of betrayal by the Musharraf government, not once, but several times. Their minds are also being polluted by Indian tirade of brutalities of the Pakistani Army of rape and arson in Swat, Bajaur and Waziristan areas. They have no trust in the present government either. The question therefore arises: who has the courage and the ability to break the Trust Deficit, and engage in dialogue with the Taliban, on both sides of the border and negotiate peace. This is the dilemma, facing all the stake holders in Afghanistan. “Without triggering bigger chaotic conditions, and to avoid terrifying prospects of defeat,” it must be understood that “neither extra troops, not extra aid, not more hugs – not slugs counter – insurgency nonsense, is the answer.” - (Ralf Peters).

The geo-political and geo-strategic environment of Afghanistan of the next decade will be determined by the converging interests of its neighbours, i.e., Russia, China, Iran, the Central Asian States and the United States of America. If we are looking for peace in Afghanistan, we have to accommodate the interests of others. And therefore, Pakistan needs to “recalibrate its position on Afghan. It means harmonizing Pakistan’s geo-strategic interests with Afghanistan and regional neighbours and real accommodation of some US & NATO interests.”

Gen Mirza Aslam Beg, *Pakistan Observer* (Islamabad), March 27, 2010,
<http://www.pakobserver.net/201003/27/detailnews.asp?id=22432>

PAKISTAN NOW A STRATEGIC PRIORITY: CLINTON

The United States has made a “strategic priority” to strengthen its partnership with Pakistan, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has said.

In a testimony before the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee, she also noted that US efforts in Pakistan were vital for America’s success in Afghanistan.

Thursday’s hearing helps set the stage for the upcoming debate this spring over the White House requests for \$33 billion in new war funding coupled with \$4.5 billion in foreign assistance, chiefly for Afghanistan and Pakistan.

“In Pakistan, our efforts are vital to success in Afghanistan, but also to our own American security,” she said. “We’ve made it a strategic priority to strengthen our partnership with the Pakistani people.”

She also warned the American people not expect a quick victory against the extremists in the Pak-Afghan region.

“I’m under no illusion that success in this arena will come quickly or easily,” she said, noting that only a year ago the extremists were less than 100 miles from Islamabad and they met little resistance in launching attacks on American troops from border areas.

Noting that the situation had changed drastically since last year, she credited the Pakistani military for this success. “Since then, the Pakistani government has launched important offences in Swat, South Waziristan and throughout the country,” she said.

Secretary Clinton said the supplement, which went beyond the White House’s original funding request, would help the United States achieve its goals in all of what she called “frontline states”.

“Our request addresses urgent demands that will advance our efforts to bring stability to Afghanistan and Pakistan and ensure a smooth transition to a civilian-led effort in Iraq,” she said.

“Success requires a fully integrated civilian and military effort, one in which security gains are followed immediately by economic and political gain,” she said. Across the border in Pakistan, where the United States pressed the government itself to be more aggressive against Taliban forces, the wreckage left has “created new humanitarian needs that, if not addressed immediately,” Clinton said, “could make these areas ripe for extremism”.

Appearing before the same panel, U.S. Secretary of Defence Robert Gates expressed “guarded optimism” about U.S. progress in Afghanistan

but predicted “many tough and long days ahead” as evidenced by the sheer number of ticklish questions he faced on everything from police training contracts to the Afghan opium crop and alleged human rights abuses by Pakistan military units.

Anwar Iqbal, *Dawn* (Islamabad), March 27, 2010,
<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/front-page/pakistan-now-a-strategic-priority-us-730>

PAKISTAN-AMERICAN RELATIONS-TURNING THE CORNER

Only if the world had understood then, so much of mayhem and blood could have been avoided and so much money diverted to this impoverished region.

For the past two years, Pakistan’s gains have been eclipsed by more visible and pressing issues. There is national consensus on anti terrorism operations. Swat is fast returning to normalcy, lawless areas of Waziristan controlled and the strategic strip of Malkand, Bajaur and Mohmmand brought under civil administration. NFC award is a consensus document while the country is quietly reforming towards a parliamentary constitutional democracy.

However, economic management is far from effective. Pockets of poverty are broadening and steep. Consensus on upstream dams critical for future is still elusive. India’s overbearing control of rivers has resulted in water and power shortages tantamount to guillotine. All indicators are dangerously close to an implosion, but for the character of Pakistani people who unlike some elites realise that the country is at war.

After much suspicion, Pakistan-American-UK relations are undergoing a thaw on the contours presented by Pakistan as far back as 1990. Pakistan has played its role better than any other country and it is time that this great sacrifice of human lives and material losses is recognised and compensated by those who stand to benefit from peace. Only if the world had understood then, so much of mayhem and blood could have been avoided and so much money diverted to this impoverished region. At the helm of this change are the new vanguard of Pakistani leaders with self belief and mental resilience. They have turned cynic American and Indian think tanks on their heads.

At long last Pakistan’s policy makers are speaking and the world is listening. Slowly, the morphing of Shock and Awe to Mutual Trust and Cooperation is becoming visible and beyond circumspect diplomacy.

Future rounds of dialogue supplemented with incremental cooperation will go a long way in resettling Afghan people and turning the tide on Pakistan's economic recession.

Pakistan that housed Afghan refugees for more than 30 years must now play a crucial role in bringing peace, moderation and national consensus to a region torn with strife for two generations. It goes to the credit of Pakistan's military leadership to have worked tenuously under guidelines from a civilian establishment from a point where hope was forlorn. As I had written in my grass series of articles for NEWS and NATION, "In politics, nothing is bleak forever and opportunities can be created from within the most hopeless cases. On the wide spectrum of U.S. policy beginning with the strategy of cooperation and ending in the extremes of military intervention, Pakistan still lies in the zone between persuasions to coercion". Pakistan has broken through that catchment.

Few agreed that this turnaround was ever possible. The young foreign minister has come of age as has the foreign secretary. The COAS commissioned in 1971 belong to a generation who were youngsters when Pakistan broke due to praetorian mindsets and exclusive politics. His Corps commanders and staff are all post 1971 and a breed far apart from the military dictators of the past.

As a subordinate, I had the privilege of candid discussions with General Kayani when he was the Director General Military Operations. In the context of the 9/11 crises, attack on the Indian Parliament and brainstorming on Pakistan's Future War, one point came out loud and clear. He seemed convinced that if Pakistan could over ride its notional and internal contradictions, there would be no threat to security. It appears that at the fag end of his career, he is achieving this with his laid back approach, patience and deep thought. I see the article, 'General in the Hood' by Times of India as a tribute to a soldier, who despite tremendous odds has played his shots with precision, guile and effectiveness. Slowly and surely, he has created a space for consensus from where all routes lead to a prosperous Pakistan. His sure footed approach has helped him win the confidence of politicians in Pakistan and world over. Even more, he has restored the pride and prestige of the armed forces once seen waning.

But the road ahead for this new generation of politicians, generals and bureaucrats is laced with impediments and false starts. They have successfully turned the corner and must ensure that this engagement for peace is not derailed by narrow and short term agendas of the allies and

the mindset of 1935 (Nation, 10 January 2010). Most importantly, India which feels excluded from the new initiative must never get a chance to disrupt the process through incidents like the attack on the Parliament and Taj Mahal Hotel.

For Pakistan, the massive military operations against militants are over. What remains are sting intelligence operations and limited surgical actions to target militants and their leadership. The nation can now concentrate on revival of the economy that includes energy, power, free trade [and] transfer of technology, investments and most, a workable plan for fast track socio economic development. The COAS has rightly offered to forego military assistance in lieu of economic revival.

Though nuclear cooperation will remain high on the agenda, Pakistan has to peg its negotiations with India. Pakistan must convince USA and its allies that henceforth Pakistan stands committed to non proliferation and counter proliferation efforts. Pakistan must remain cognisant of the fissile material protocols in which India's Thorium Route (another fissile material) is always kept in focus.

Pakistan also needs to set up a panel of international lawyers for all international treaties and agreements, Indus Basin Water Treaty and Indian constitutional provisions relating to Kashmir. Once too often, Pakistan's civil and military bureaucracy have been caught napping on these issues while the Indians have craftily played their cards and succeeded.

Commenting on U.S. policy options in 2007, this seems an assessment almost prophetic. I had written this for a renowned daily that unfortunately refused to publish, deeming it unfit. This seems the blue print of the present U.S.-Pakistan dialogue:

U.S. Must Shift from a Coercive Military Posture to a Cooperative Strategy.

Given the extremes of divide between the South Asian neighbours, Pakistan cannot be expected to make a unilateral policy shift. USA has to do enough to satisfy the Pakistani perceptions in this respect. To ensure that USA gets a whole hearted and valuable support from Pakistan, it must: -

- Dissuade India from any policies and actions that impinge Pakistan's security concerns.

- Persuade India to exercise the principals of liberty, equality and freedom symbolised by the American Civil War on the people of Kashmir.
- Equip the armed forces of Pakistan with high tech reconnaissance and imaging equipment to monitor the lawless regions of FATA with the ability to engage in real time.
- Sharing of all intelligence with Pakistan related to operations on both sides of the international boundary and targets inside Pakistan.
- Formulate a joint and well enunciated strategy for fighting terrorism with the government of Pakistan at the highest level with the Pentagon and Joint Chief of Staff Headquarters/GHQ working within the political objectives.

Shift from a Predominantly Military to a Social Dimension of Strategy.

The larger canvas will have to be built around the societal element. It is important that USA shifts its focus from military dominance to the forgotten social dimension of strategy (Michel Howard).

- Rather than individuals; establishment and strengthening of institutions, with a long term objective even if a short term gain has to be sacrificed. In this regard, strengthening of a performance driven democratic culture is most important.
- Modern education both at technical and higher levels.
- Fast track socio economic development in the deprived areas of Pakistan.
- Agriculture development and water management.
- Waiver of import barriers on value added goods from Pakistan particularly textiles.
- Foreign direct investments in the energy and water sectors.

Brig Samson Sharaf, March 27, 2010,
<http://www.opinion-maker.org/navigation.do?mode=showArticles&id=1432>

DIALOGUE WITH THE U.S.

The fourth round in an ongoing 'strategic dialogue' between Pakistan and America recently took place. More such meetings will presumably be held in the months ahead. The Pakistani foreign minister has handed over

to his American counterpart a 56-page document listing his government's concerns.

Special envoy Richard Holbrooke recently observed that beyond strategic concerns, the United States wanted to enable Pakistan to strengthen democratic institutions, improve its system of education, alleviate poverty, overcome water and energy crises and eradicate terrorism. We may assume that these matters also received attention.

Let us see what the strategic part of the dialogue may have included. America wants to eradicate the Taliban in Afghanistan and it is helping Pakistan to do the same in its northwestern tribal regions. The protracted conflict has tired it out and it now wants to leave the country to President Hamid Karzai to manage as best as he can. President Barack Obama would like to begin withdrawing American forces from next year. He will continue to help Pakistan to keep up its fight against the Taliban on its side of the border. There are indications that he may want the Pakistan Army to take a hand in fighting the Taliban in Afghanistan after the American forces have left that country.

Also, it may be mentioned that Pakistan would like to have nuclear power plants and a deal, like the one the United States made with India some time ago, whereby the United States will share with Pakistan nuclear technology for civilian uses.

It is understood that Pakistan wants a dominant role in Afghanistan and that to the exclusion of Indian influence in that country. This objective is problematic. The government in Kabul has demonstrated its rejection of the idea of Pakistani dominance and regards friendly relations with India as a counter to Pakistani pressure. The United States, on its part, has no interest in excluding Indian influence from Afghanistan. In fact it envisages an important role for India in maintaining peace and good order in the region.

Some other facets of Pakistan's transactions with the United States should be noted. The head of the American CIA has recently stated that a degree of mistrust plagues relations between the two countries. Numerous other American as well as Pakistani spokesmen say the same thing. What kind of mistrust are they talking about? Pakistanis feel that America has been treating their country as an instrument for attaining its own objectives in this region, and that it is not much concerned with Pakistan's vital interests. American interest in Pakistan is thought to be transient, which will virtually disappear when its goals have been achieved or given up.

American officials and other commentators suspect that the government is not entirely firm in its fight against Islamic extremists and militants, and that certain elements in its intelligence and security agencies are actually sympathetic to their cause. The Americans suspect also that the funds which Pakistani officials receive for fighting the militants are partly misappropriated or diverted to other uses.

It is my understanding that Pakistan is getting reimbursed for some of the expenses it incurs in fighting the Taliban. It is being said in certain quarters that Pakistan should also receive compensation for the missed opportunities and losses that businessmen in the tribal areas have suffered as a result of the war. This takes us to the question of whose war it is that Pakistan has been fighting.

Pro-Taliban elements alleged that it was America's, but government spokesmen and many other observers contended that, no, it was Pakistan's own war in as much as the Taliban had declared war against Pakistan and it was fighting back. If it is Pakistan's own war, it must bear the costs and sustain the losses that go with war. In that case it cannot claim compensation from the United States. Pakistan will receive some American assistance to mitigate its economic hardship but not as compensation that is owed.

In the civilian sector, American assistance can help improve the delivery of education and healthcare and in meeting the energy crisis. Assistance can take the form of cash subsidies placed in the hands of Pakistani officials. This option is open to misuse as mentioned above. This danger can be avoided if assistance is given for specific projects and administered by America's own functionaries or designees. The problem with this procedure is that a substantial part of the allocated funds will go to pay the compensation of these agents.

It seems to me that there is not much that America can do by way of strengthening democratic institutions in Pakistan. Parliament and political parties are the foremost among them, and they can be as strong as the relevant stakeholders want them to be. Political commentators often say that parliament should do this or that. They misunderstand the way parliaments work. Parliament considers and settles the business that is brought to it, and the agency that brings it is mostly the government of the day.

Constant insistence on the parliament's supremacy notwithstanding, the executive in Pakistan has traditionally ignored it as much as possible. Instead of regulating societal interaction by laws, it

often prefers to govern with the aid of presidential ordinances. The opposition parties in parliament can play a corrective role in this connection. They should insist that the government bring issues to the floor for discussion and resolution. Parliament in Pakistan will be strengthened only if its members take themselves and their function seriously.

Anwar Syed, *Dawn* (Islamabad), March 28, 2010,
<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/editorial/dialogue-with-the-us-830>

YET NOTHING STRATEGIC ABOUT IT!

While talking to Senators John Kerry and Richard Lugar, the Chief of Army Staff, General Parvez Kayani, conveyed Pakistan's strategic priorities in unequivocal terms. The general told the senators that if they make sure that Pakistan's economic and energy needs will be met, "we are willing to forgo [forego] the military equipment that we have asked for." Certainly, the most important concerns of Pakistan today are the economy and energy. So these concerns were appropriately conveyed to the American administration during the course of strategic dialogue that they are the vital requirements that need to be met. The urgency was amply elaborated when a general in the thick of war opted to forego his lifeline, the vital combat kit, in the favour of his county's economic and energy needs.

Apparently in the conceptual context, Pak-U.S. relations have been put on correct track, at least on a medium - to long-term basis. Presumably, the policy steering group and other structural support committees would be able to reshape the relations and prevent ruptures which have been the signature tune of Pak-U.S. relations. However, in the context of immediate relief to problems of mammoth dimensions, encountering Pakistan, the recently concluded strategic dialogue has further weakened the constituency of the well wishers of robust and durable Pak-U.S. relations.

Unluckily, the rhetoric that preceded the talks had raised the expectations to an unrealistic height; hence the fall is proportionately hurting. A common Pakistani is utterly perplexed, at least in the context of immediate gains. In fact, the talks have not been able to get out of the orbit of mundane routine matters and enter the higher orbit of strategic stature.

Indeed, the word "strategic" is being perceived to have been belittled. It was expected that at least in one or two domains, measures of strategic significance would be announced to demonstrate American solidarity with the suffering people of this terror ravaged country; such measures could have gone a long way to pacify the prevailing anti-America public opinion.

Unfortunately, most of the issues which Pakistan perceives as of strategic importance remained a virtual non-starters, especially the nuclear energy generation capacity enhancement and resolution of Kashmir, and as corollary, the water issue. The injection of \$125 million into the power sector is the only breeze of fresh air, which could radiate its effect. However, it is too little too late, as its impact would be inconsequential. It would only re-operationalise three dysfunctional thermal power stations having net capacity of around 400 MW, whereas in real terms the electricity shortfall has exceeded the dreadful mark of 5 GW.

Rest of the issues has been put on slow track via policy steering group, committees and working groups. Nevertheless, the whole fanfare could not fully grasp the gravity and urgency of the problems being faced by the people of Pakistan as a consequence of power outages, water shortage and economic tightness. Leaving aside the nuclear power issue, prompt and cheap funding of even one mega hydro-electric power project could have generated strategic level goodwill.

Despite the fact that both sides realise that their bilateral relations, as well as associated multilateral interactions, are mutually beneficial, the approach on the American part is being seen by the Pakistani public as lacklustre - devoid of empathy. This has indeed further disarmed the interest groups that were wishing for sustainable relations between the two countries.

Interestingly, it is not the gap of perception which is creating problems. When high-ranking American secretaries, generals and the like testify before congressional committees, their perception of the problems being faced by Pakistan is remarkably accurate. They virtually sound as if they were hired lobbyists for Pakistan. Despite such wonderful clarity on the issues of vital concern to Pakistan, the solutions that emerge are often disappointing. Similar results emerge, yet once again by the hazy conclusions of strategic dialogue, especially with respect to the timeframe. Once again, rhetoric is in and substance is out.

Onus of such an impasse surely rests on American legislative and policymaking processes, as indeed on its statesmanship that readily gets mired in the bureaucratic interpretations of the otherwise clear cut issues.

While American policy peddlers will continue to repeat the rotten script that they made a grave mistake to abandon Pakistan in the eighties, and that such mistake would not be repeated, a common Pakistani feels that at least in material sense, the USA has almost abandoned Pakistan amidst multi-dimensional crises.

It will further reinforce the growing public perception that Pakistan's overly simplistic and symbiotic association with America's GWOT/OCO-related objectives is not compatible with Pakistan's overall national security concerns, and thus is not sustainable. In this context, the difference of perspicacity on some of the vital issues is precariously high. Cost benefit analysis alone by the people radiate the impression that Americans are not ready to chip in even a fraction of the losses borne by Pakistan in some of purposeless and rudderless American military pursuits in our area. Hence, the hardship brought upon the people of Pakistan is not likely to be mitigated in a comforting timeframe.

Moreover, America has once again decided to go along with its role of a text book neutral, and has opted not to influence India with respect to the resolution of vital issues. Despite President Barack Obama's campaign days' promise, Kashmir issue continues to be dormant. At the same time, another related issue of water diversion from rivers flowing into Pakistan through Kashmir has acquired a serious dimension. It was expected that the Obama administration would show similar resilience and perseverance on this issue, as it displayed in the context of health care legislation. Notwithstanding this, hopefully, America will continue with its backchannel diplomacy to bring India on the negotiation table for a purposeful and comprehensive dialogue.

Strategic dialogue provided yet another chance for the Americans to repair the psychological damage done during the notorious episode of the Kerry-Lugar legislation. However, the opportunity has been missed, strengthening the opinion that the Americans want to keep Pakistan's economy on life-saving equipment; and retain the option of arm-twisting, on as required basis.

Unfortunately, the people of Pakistan today stand emotionally more detached from the American point of view than they were before

the strategic dialogue. They were looking for immediate relief pertaining issues of urgent concern and discomfort, whereas what they got are long haul promises which they have seen evaporating in American legislative alleys, so many times and on trivial grounds.

Sustained economic revival of our economy is dependent on the U.S. and European market access for our selected textile products on preferential tariff basis. Nothing concrete is forthcoming on this. Though, the joint communiqué revives the hope of access to American market, the process is expected to take a long time. Likewise, the much-awaited setting up of ROZs in our tribal areas also continues to be mired in the circuitous procedural wonderland.

The allies must work in an atmosphere of trust and harmony for a win-win finale. If visible response to economic and power generation issues is not generated in the immediate timeframe, anti-America sentiment would continue to rise exponentially. The Americans need to be more responsive towards the sensitivities of Pakistan and materially demonstrate as carrying it along as a trusted ally. Only strategic measures would transform our relationship to a strategic level. The primary interest of America is certainly the goodwill of the people of Pakistan. This needs a paradigm shift in American approach.

Khalid Iqbal, *Nation* (Rawalpindi), March 29, 2010,
<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Opinions/Columns/29-Mar-2010/Yet-nothing-strategic-about-it>

PAK-U.S. STRATEGIC DIALOGUE

Washington recently hosted the U.S.-Pakistan strategic dialogue. The focus was on building mutual trust and strengthening Pakistan's socio-economic sector — not to forget the multibillion-dollar military aid to Pakistan, now expected by April end. A joint declaration at the end of the meet underlined the need to elevate the dialogue to the ministerial level. The discussion on political aspects, in the main, addressed the trust deficit—a point perceived equally by the two allies. The trust issue is especially problematic for the intelligence organisations. Embedded in their counter terrorism relations it has only created bigger impediments. Pakistan's chief economic concern is its energy and investment sector. With the U.S. pledging to help Pakistan meet its needs through its Signature Energy Programme, there has been a rise in optimism in Islamabad. The country is facing a severe energy crisis at the moment.

Most of its power projects are energy driven and, as a result, there have been power outages for many hours on a daily basis. In addition, by furthering investment opportunities as part of the Bilateral Investment Treaty agenda, Pakistan hopes to gain enhanced U.S. market access for its products. The U.S. has also promised to speed efforts for the Reconstruction Opportunity Zones legislation. No wonder, Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi expressed happiness at the outcome of the meeting. The intense two-day discussions led by Qureshi and U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton also saw the establishment of a Policy Steering Group to address political, security and economic specifics of mutual concern.

Pakistan's grievances over what it perceives as continuous criticism, non-acknowledgement and lack of appreciation from the U.S. of its efforts were finally addressed. By omitting the usual reprimands, Clinton instead praised Islamabad for its efforts to check militancy and acknowledged the need to move beyond past misunderstandings and disagreements. Pakistan's military requirements from the U.S. also seem to be moving in a direction that has appeased Rawalpindi. Gaining the ear of Pentagon has come after a long struggle by Pakistan's military headquarters. Not only is financial military aid indispensable for continuing the operations against extremists in the tribal agencies bordering Afghanistan, Pakistan also needs vital counter-insurgency equipment. The fact that Pakistan has also displayed a change in its Afghan policy has also been appreciated. This includes netting key Afghan Taleban leaders within the country, offering security training to Afghan forces and political support to Kabul for negotiations with insurgents. How this new phase in Pakistan-U.S. relations develops remains to be seen, but for now it is positive and encouraging.

Editorial, *Daily Mail*, March 29, 2010,
http://dailymailnews.com/0310/29/Editorial_Column/DMEditorial.php#1

PAK-AMERICAN STRATEGIC TALKS

The Shiromani Akali Dal (Amritsar) analyses with depth the American-Pak strategic talks that have taken place in Washington lately. Our party is of the view that any power, whether a pseudo democracy or a democracy, which does not practice the rule of law and the principles of natural justice, degenerates into a tyrannical power to which its subjects owe no loyalty or patriotism. Since 1947 THIS's (Theocratic Hindu

Indian State's) states slide into a tyrannical power has been definite and it only has the overt dressing of a democracy. Though its constitution declares it as a secular country and has a list of fundamental rights saying – no person will be deprived of his life and liberty without the procedure laid down by law, it has become a theocratic state. Unfortunately these constitutional pledges have turned into hollow slogans as the Hindu state practices the worst sort of tyranny against its minorities and dalit and aboriginal populations. Against the minorities extra judicial murders are the order of the day and THIS (Theocratic Hindu Indian State) has resorted to the commission of the crime of genocide against the Sikh's, Muslim's and Christian's. Against its dalit population it practices the crime of apartheid. As such the Hindu state has not signed or ratified the following UN treaties, conventions and protocols:

1. 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.
2. 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees.
3. 1954 Convention relating to Status of Stateless Persons.
4. 1960 Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.
5. 1965 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.
6. 1966 Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.
7. 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees. It is because there are still 30,000 Sikh Stateless refugees in Kashmir since 1947.
8. 1972 Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile System. 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage. If this Convention had been followed, neither the Darbar Sahib, the Golden Temple would not have been reduced to rubble nor the Babri Masjid in 1992.
10. 1984 Convention against Torture and other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.
11. 1984 Safeguard and guaranteeing protection of the Rights of those facing the death penalty.
12. 1995 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.
13. 1996 Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.
14. 1997 Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of anti-Personnel Mines and their

Destruction (the Ottawa Convention on the abolition of landmines).

15. 2001 Rome Statute, by virtue of which the International Criminal Court has been set up at The Hague.

Lord Palmerston, the British statesman said – “Nations have interests, not friends”. The Sikh’s are a separate nation, at this juncture of history having all the attributes of a nation but sans sovereignty. Therefore, we have to see the present U.S.-Pak strategic talks in this light. The Sikh’s by deceit and chicanery in 1947 were deprived of a separate sovereign Sikh state by the British, Hindu’s and Muslim’s, whereas a Sikh buffer state between the historic implacable foes Hindu’s who got India and Muslim’s Pakistan could have served as a state which would have guaranteed peace and stability in South Asia for all times to come.

Therefore, we look at the U.S.-Pak talks positively because strong states on THIS’s (Theocratic Hindu Indian State’s) borders would hinder the Hindu state in committing horrendous crimes against its minorities and other under-privileged peoples and would stop it from exercising political hegemony on Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Burma, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

How does THIS (Theocratic Hindu Indian State) exercise its hegemony over its neighbours? A small example would explain how this great bully goes about its business. On 26/11 2008 some militants infiltrated into Bombay and killed some people. THIS (Theocratic Hindu Indian State) blames this carnage in Bombay on the Pakistani’s. As such, it wants all the perpetrators of this crime, now said to be in Pakistan to be handed over to the Indian state. THIS (Theocratic Hindu Indian State) does not have a legal extradition treaty with Pakistan. Nevertheless the Hindu state wants the criminals on its wanted list. We Sikh’s argue that before the 26/11 carnage of Bombay thousands of Sikh’s have become the victims of the genocide committed by the Hindu state but none whatsoever has been brought before the law amongst a long list of criminals the Sikh’s have identified.

We further argue that THIS (Theocratic Hindu Indian State) should first deal with the criminals that committed the genocide of the Sikh peoples as how can Pakistan legitimately give the offenders of THIS’s (Theocratic Hindu Indian State’s) list as there is no extradition treaty between these two eternal foes? We do also make an appeal to Islamic Pakistan to keep the Hindu state’s demand in abeyance till THIS (Theocratic Hindu Indian State) signs the Rome Statute whereby the

International Criminal Court came into being at the Hague and immediately hand over the perpetrators of the Sikh genocide to the Court at the Hague. We want to tell the Hindu state that sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander.

Therefore, America to keep the balance of power in South Asia must make Pakistan an equally strong military state to counter the growing military strength of THIS (Theocratic Hindu Indian State). This is so because two swords can only be kept within their respective sheaths if they are both equally sharp. Moreover, both the Islamic and Hindu states are armed with deadly nuclear weapons and any war between THIS (Theocratic Hindu Indian State) and Islamic Pakistan would totally annihilate the Sikh race, which is wedged between these two inimical powers.

Pakistan needs the 123 Nuclear Agreement as much as THIS (Theocratic Hindu Indian State) for its energy needs, but the military nuclear reactors under this agreement, of both THIS (Theocratic Hindu Indian State) and Islamic Pakistan must be placed under the inspection purview of the IAEA. Secondly Pakistan does need more F-16's fighter planes to match THIS's (Theocratic Hindu Indian State's) growing strength in air power which was recently exercised and demonstrated at Pokhran in the Sikh territory and on the border of Islamic Pakistan. THIS (Theocratic Hindu Indian State) states that the Islamic country does not require such lethal planes to fight terrorism. We know that advanced fighter planes can't be used against terrorism and helicopter gun ships would be better bets. However, we are not so gullible or naïve. Pakistan needs these advanced jets to keep the growing air power of THIS (Theocratic Hindu Indian State) in check so that it does not have to look perennially over its shoulder what THIS's (Theocratic Hindu Indian State's) is up to on its Eastern border? If Pakistan is assured of a matching naval and air power with THIS (Theocratic Hindu Indian State), then only can it deploy its army totally against insurgency and can also play an active role in Afghanistan.

However, the Islamic country does not believe that the American's will always keep a presence in South Asia to keep peace. After throwing the Soviet's out of Afghanistan, the American's left this region to fend for itself, leading to total anarchy in Afghanistan and Northern Pakistan. Since the 1990's the American's have also put the Sikh's in total neglect and out of mind, leading to grave hard feelings amongst us for not having addressed our political question and the crime of genocide that was

perpetrated against us by the Hindu state, which continues to this day and the Black List's are a terrible reminder that THIS (Theocratic Hindu Indian State) does not believe in the rule of law and principles of natural justice.

Because of the Islamic Pakistan's fears that once the al-Qaeda and Taliban job is done, the American's would disappear from this region they want a greater strategic depth in Afghanistan. To our minds that the American's can't stick on forever, a mere strategic depth in Afghanistan can't guarantee total and complete security for the Islamists. Therefore, if the American's are to leave this sector and build a feeling of security in the minds of the Pakistani's, then a strategic frontier for Pakistan is also a political necessity. This strategic frontier can only be brought about if the Sikh territories in Rajasthan, Haryana, UT Chandigarh, Himachal Pardesh, Jammu Kashmir and Punjab become a buffer state between these two deadly nuclear powers i.e. THIS (Theocratic Hindu Indian State) and Islamic Pakistan. A Sikh buffer state will also meet a long standing demand of the Sikh's who are a separate nationality and became the victims of the greatest ethnic cleansing in history in 1947 and today are the victims of the crime of genocide, perpetrated by the Hindu state. The Sikh's got an autonomous parliament in 1925, which is known as the Shiromani Gurudwara Parbandhak Committee. Elections to this House are due every five years like any other democratic legislative chamber. But through a period of time the Hindu state which is responsible for conducting the elections keeps postponing the elections to this Chamber on one pretext or the other, the main reason being that it wants to keep its Sikh puppet and toady members in power. The elections to this House have been due since September 2009 but there is not a whiff when they will be held. Moreover, the Sikh's as per THIS (Theocratic Hindu Indian State) Constitution's Article 25 are nomenclatured as being a part and parcel of the Hindu religion, which is very insulting and the future is very clear to the Sikh's that it is the intent of the Hindu state to devour Sikhism into the omnivorous belly of Hinduism. Further, during the British India period in 1909 the Anand Marriage Act was legislated but today after 1947 under the present THIS (Theocratic Hindu Indian State) Constitution the Sikh's can only get their marriage certificate under the Hindu Marriage Act. As such these are attempts at our complete genocide.

In the end, our party would appreciate if the American's during their current deployment in South Asia would address the question of security

of not only the Sikh peoples but also THIS's (Theocratic Hindu Indian State's) neighbours, as this region is at a point where tensions could lead to a nuclear war and the best and honest policy would be to create a Sikh sovereign buffer state between these two nuclear powers. It would take care of Islamic Pakistan's security requirements; make THIS (Theocratic Hindu Indian State) more homogenous so that it does not pose a threat to its neighbours. It would fulfill the Sikh's desire for a long-standing demand of a legitimate separate sovereign Sikh buffer state. That's the only road to peace we see once the American's leave this sector.

Simranjit Singh Mann, *Daily Mail*, March 29, 2010,
http://dailymailnews.com/0310/29/Editorial_Column/DMColumn.php#1

COURTING PAKISTAN: FORGING A STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

The United States and Pakistan is the world's oddest couple, with an on-again, off-again friendship that has survived since the 1950s. Last week both sides completed a "strategic dialogue" in Washington amid fears that they were headed for another break-up. Those fears can only be countered if both the U.S. and Pakistan keep the larger goal in mind: the development of a stable, secure and prosperous Pakistan.

Last week's dialogue reiterated common goals on some key issues, including energy, infrastructure, agriculture and trade. But the hard issues — the Afghan Taliban operating inside Pakistani space, the Pakistan-India conflict over Kashmir, and Islamabad's wish for a civil nuclear deal similar to the one given to India — were politely avoided in public commentary.

Part of the problem is Pakistan's wariness of U.S. intentions. As the late Pakistani dictator General Zia ul Haq [Zia ul Haq] once explained to his ambassador in Washington, Jamsheed Marker, "Being friends with the United States is like living on the banks of a great river. Every four years it changes course, and leaves you either flooded, or high and dry!" The U.S. showers aid and attention on Pakistan when it suits its strategic interests in the region and then leaves. Pakistan meanwhile seeks security against a larger and potentially hostile neighbor to the east: India. Each pretends to meet the other's needs while papering over differences.

The U.S., on its part, sees a deceptive ally in Pakistan; one which seeks aid to use it for defense against India while pretending to meet U.S. regional aims. The Obama administration is attempting to craft a new, longer-term relationship with Pakistan, and American officials travel

frequently to the country and return praising the relationship effusively. But it is hard to distinguish their attempts to proclaim success for their individual missions from the reality on the ground.

The passage of the Kerry-Lugar Bill that promises at least \$7 billion of aid to Pakistan over five years should have been a good omen, but Pakistani military and public opposition to the bill has put a crimp in the relationship, adding to the public perception of the U.S. as an intrusive and overbearing friend. The army high command, confident after its recent successes against its internal militancy and buoyed by public approval of its actions, recently revived the dialogue with the U.S. on its terms. Army Chief General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani chose to focus on high visibility, high impact projects that would meet the country's urgent energy and infrastructure needs, rather than dissipating its effect on a wide range of softer social sector projects with longer gestation periods.

To a large extent, Kayani's actions appeared to be in accord with some of the targets set by Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan Richard Holbrooke. However, the real test will be in Pakistan's ability to set up an effective governance framework to implement the projects rapidly and without leakage of benefits to the traditional elites that suck up assistance for their own benefit. If most of the aid begins to reach average Pakistanis, then the U.S. and Pakistan could build on this new structure. If not, then the U.S. Congress likely will call in its auditors and cut off the flow.

One piece of good news has been the rapid provision of aid for key road-building projects in South Waziristan that have been undertaken via the FATA Development Authority by the Pakistan army's Frontier Works Organization. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton is reported to have helped push this aid through after her exchanges with Kayani, who came up with this idea. If this project model succeeds, much more could be done in the frontier areas by bringing the locals on board to help identify and implement necessary projects.

Kayani is clearly trying to build bridges with the U.S. as a necessary ally. But the officer corps still harbors residual mistrust. To remove it, Pakistan must improve its civil governance by taking ownership of its project plans, setting targets and achieving them. The U.S. must deliver what Pakistan needs rapidly, and without too much intrusive monitoring that many Pakistanis fear is secretly designed to identify the location of Pakistan's strategic nuclear assets. The U.S. must also give the Pakistan military more usable weapons to fight its militancy. And it must use its

influence on India to give Pakistan breathing room, so it can concentrate on the war within rather than stay ready for action on two fronts, one against India and the other on the Afghan border. Opening U.S. markets to Pakistani textiles and other goods will also help in the near term.

In the longer run, Pakistan needs help to move up the economic value chain and into manufacturing goods. With its growing population, it needs GDP growth of 6% or more each year to keep improving the lives of its 175 million inhabitants, half of whom are below 18 years of age. That growth depends on foreign investment, which is critically dependent on security and good governance, both of which have been in short supply in recent years. But Pakistan must also avoid becoming dependent on aid or ceding its sovereignty in the process of acquiring aid. As its first military dictator, Mohammad Ayub Khan, put it bluntly, Pakistan needs "friends not masters." What happens after the strategic dialogue in Washington will help prove the truth of that statement.

Shuja Nawaz, *Atlantic Council*, March 29, 2020,
[http://www.acus.org/new_atlanticist/courting-pakistan-forging-strategic-partnership?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed:+new_atlanticist+\(New+Atlanticist\)](http://www.acus.org/new_atlanticist/courting-pakistan-forging-strategic-partnership?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed:+new_atlanticist+(New+Atlanticist))

PROSPECTS FOR PAK-U.S. TIES

Few inter-state relations have been as tumultuous as those between Pakistan and the United States.

The pendulum has swung between passionate embraces, when we prided on calling ourselves the 'most allied ally', to acrimonious and bitter break-ups that led to Pakistan becoming the 'most sanctioned ally'.

American largesse has been most generously bestowed on us when we have had military regimes in power, while elected ones have been at the receiving end of U.S. displeasure. So much for America's commitment to the promotion of democracy and human rights!

This then is the legacy that the two have to overcome as they engage in an attempt to go beyond their cooperation on the single-item agenda of terrorism and enhancing it to a "strategic level". Since the Washington talks had not started when this piece was written, it would be inappropriate to speculate on the basis of hearsay. The portents, however, appeared favourable, though the challenges are enormous. The Americans lined up their 'stars', while stressing their desire to see the relationship "go far beyond security". Pakistan, too, reiterated that it

sought "stable, long-term relations based on mutual respect, mutual interest and shared values". In fact, our foreign minister went on record saying that Pakistan had already done a lot and that it was now America's turn to start delivering.

What accounts for Pakistan's confidence? For one, the credibility that arises from a democratic dispensation, however inefficient and ineffective, has been reinforced by the remarkable success of our military operations. This has been a revelation to the Americans. Both Adm Mullen and Gen Petraeus have acknowledged that the Pakistan Army's resolve and determination have dispelled much of the mistrust. More recently, the arrest of several major Taliban leaders in Pakistan led U.S. special envoy Richard Holbrooke to see "a positive shift".

What may also have encouraged the Pakistanis was Gen Petraeus's recent remark that Pakistan's "security forces have put a lot of short sticks into a lot of hornets' nests in the last 10 months" and more significantly, that Pakistan "has an interest that is somewhat different than ours and that is their strategic depth and always has been for a country that is very narrow and has its historic enemy to its east". He also brushed aside talk of differences between them by pointing out that "this is not unique just to Afghanistan and Pakistan, but throughout the world. We have interests, they have interests. What we want to do is to ... understand where they are divergent and try to make progress together".

These remarks have had a calming effect on Islamabad's position on two important issues, namely that Pakistan has genuine strategic interests in Afghanistan and that Pakistan would not be able to devote the desired resources to the western front until its concerns on the eastern frontier are not recognised. It is, however, developments in Washington that have been the primary catalyst in bringing the two countries together. Obama has focused on Afghanistan with clarity and detachment. The trajectory of Obama's learning curve is evident in his Afghan strategy speeches in March and December last year and in January this year. There is no longer any ambiguity in his position.

It is now left to determine the tactics to achieve this objective, so that al-Qaeda is not able to resurrect itself, and the country can be left in the hands of a broad-based coalition, inclusive of the Taliban. If these objectives can be achieved, the administration can derive valuable domestic political mileage.

The U.S. has, however, realised that even this reduced 'objective' cannot be achieved without Pakistan's active support and assistance. It is this newly crafted scenario which explains why Pakistan appears, once again, on the U.S. radar screens, both for the objective of an 'honourable' extrication from the Afghan quagmire, and the consolidation of its influence in the region.

In the achievement of this objective, the U.S. will be counting primarily on the Pakistan Army, not only for its 'battle' against the militants, but for keeping Pakistani politicians on the 'straight and narrow'. For Pakistan, the task would be for sustaining American interest in the country, above and beyond Afghanistan, making it genuinely strategic.

This is not going to be simple; many impediments and uncertainties could thwart the pursuit of this objective. For a start, strategic relations can only be sought by a democratic political dispensation, which not only pursues moderate and progressive policies, but has the conviction to 'sell' this to a sceptical electorate.

This certainly is a challenging agenda, because a people-to-people relationship with the U.S. is not possible, unless it is seen as promoting policies that can be 'seen and felt' by the people of Pakistan. There is another, far greater, challenge for our leadership. Strategic relations with the U.S. may well impinge on other vital linkages. Two are critical. With the U.S. determined to engineer a 'regime change' in Iran, what would its expectations be from Pakistan? Finally, can we contemplate cooperating with the U.S. in any initiative that could trouble our relations with China?

There could be reservations on the U.S. front as well, once its interest in Afghanistan begins to wane. New and powerful lobbies have emerged in the U.S. that are convinced of an inevitable clash of civilisation with Islam. While Obama has strongly repudiated such notions, its adherents see an affinity with the rapidly emerging Indian lobby in the U.S., which is acquiring an influence second only to Israel's. Apart from legitimate promotion of Indian interests, New Delhi's favourite pastime is to malign Pakistan. It has no hesitation in turning up the heat on the Obama administration for any favour extended to Pakistan, as evident from its recent refrain that the Obama administration is not as sympathetic to India as was its predecessor. In such a scenario, the challenge for Pakistan is to ensure that in its calculus of interests, the

U.S. remains committed to Pakistan's security and well-being, long after American troops have left Afghanistan.

Tariq Fatemi, *Bangladesh Today*, March 30, 2010,
<http://www.thebangladeshtoday.com/analysis.htm>

HOW STRATEGIC WAS THE WASHINGTON DIALOGUE?

Aimed at setting a new strategic direction for Pakistan-U.S. relations and overcoming mutual mistrust, the recent talks in Washington were more significant for their atmospherics than any tangible outcome. Dialogue, of course, is a process, not an event. But the expectations raised by both sides about the fourth round had exceeded what was achieved in the two-day talks.

What emerged from the Washington encounter was already committed assistance for some development projects and a pledge to fast-track delivery of military hardware for Pakistan. Important, however, were the assurances conveyed to the Pakistani delegation that America's long-term strategic interests were consistent with Pakistan's security, and that these lay east of Afghanistan.

But despite the well-orchestrated pageantry, the strategic dialogue made little, if any visible progress on the big-ticket issues that topped Pakistan's priorities: preferential trade, addressing the troubled Pakistan-India equation and securing access to civilian nuclear technology. While the U.S. didn't want to say no to Pakistan's requests, it didn't say yes either.

The high-powered engagement was driven principally by U.S. compulsions to secure Pakistan's cooperation as the Afghan endgame approaches and for the continuing fight against al-Qaeda. While the effort in the dialogue was to accord primacy to bilateral relations, Afghanistan remained the most pressing concern.

The dialogue nevertheless sought to broaden the relationship beyond a focus on security. But the agenda's expansion to ten "sectoral tracks" raised doubts about the wisdom of adding to a "strategic" dialogue multiple issues that are already the subject of ongoing discussions. This risks scattering the focus and detracting from pivotal matters.

The anodyne joint statement issued at the end of the talks was more important for what it did not say than for what it did. Absent, despite Islamabad's efforts, was any reference to U.S. support for the resumption

of formal peace talks, or composite dialogue, between Pakistan and India or the need to resolve disputes – Kashmir and water among them.

There was silence on further engagement on civilian nuclear energy. American officials told the Pakistani delegation that this was not the time to press the issue. Pakistan's minimum expectation to secure in the communiqué some kind of formal recognition of its status as a nuclear-weapons power did not materialise.

As for trade, the vague U.S. assurance to "work towards enhanced market access" fell short of a firm commitment on trade concessions, much less hold out any prospect of a future free-trade agreement. Considering Washington has for years been unable to deliver the modest trade access under the Reconstruction Opportunity Zones initiative, Pakistani expectations of preferential trade access will have to be squared with this reality.

Nevertheless, the Pakistani delegation saw a marked change in the mood in Washington. Even though the foreign minister overstated the point by describing this as a "180-degree turn" the environment for the talks was no doubt very positive. Pakistan's army chief Gen Ashfaq Kayani read this as acknowledgement of the fact that "Pakistan had as a nation stood up to terrorism."

Certainly Washington made a special effort to roll out its top national security team for the dialogue and shower praise on Pakistan for its anti-militancy efforts. This improvement in tenor helped to restore a semblance of normalcy to a relationship that has recently been under much strain.

A new willingness to listen to Pakistan's concerns and priorities was evident. These had been earlier conveyed in a 56-page document handed over to U.S. national security adviser Gen James Jones during his February visit to Islamabad. This had, according to American officials, been carefully read in Washington.

The really substantive – and strategic – exchanges took place outside the formal dialogue process in unpublicised meetings. They included a dinner hosted by the chairman of the joint staff, Admiral Mike Mullen, and attended by Gen Kayani, as well as the unannounced meeting between the top members of the Pakistani delegation and Vice President Joseph Biden. Pakistan's economic needs, India and Afghanistan apparently figured in these meetings.

Although the content of these parleys and earlier meetings at the Pentagon and Centcom headquarters have not been revealed, it is believed

they focused on an immediate priority: how to manage the Afghan endgame. Views were also reportedly exchanged on how a post-war Afghanistan could be stabilised. The two sides are believed to have attained a better understanding of each other's perspectives so as to align their policy on the next steps forward.

For President Obama, whose re-election prospects hinge considerably on "success" in Afghanistan, it is critical to secure Pakistan's cooperation – militarily in implementing his surge strategy, and politically, once the ground shifts to negotiations with the Taliban. The exchanges on the sidelines of the strategic dialogue sought to determine the parameters of such cooperation.

Washington has not yet come around to seek a political settlement in Afghanistan. For now it wants to weaken, not talk to Taliban leaders. Efforts are being ratcheted up for a full-scale military offensive in Kandahar in coming weeks. The U.S. has adopted a public posture of distancing itself from President Hamid Karzai's reconciliation efforts but has pointedly not signalled disapproval.

In congressional testimony last week Defence Secretary Robert Gates described the present U.S. position in this way: "The shift of momentum is not yet strong enough to convince Taliban leaders they are going to lose.... It's when they have doubts whether they can be successful that they may be willing to make a deal.... I don't think we're there yet."

Washington's shoot-first-to-talk-later strategy is therefore predicated on the assumption that its military campaign will be able to weaken the Taliban. The specifics of a reconciliation strategy would then be fashioned as the situation changes on the ground.

In the light of this strategy it is unlikely that the Pakistani delegation would have heard any specifics about the timing and modalities of talks with the Afghan insurgents, even though it is apparent that they will eventually be pursued. The discussions left little doubt in the minds of Pakistani officials that Washington was looking for a way to "exit" from the Afghan war.

As for Pakistan's stance, Gen Kayani reiterated this at various forums: once a political framework for political reconciliation had been fashioned in what must be an Afghan-led initiative, Pakistan was willing to play a role. Without such a framework peace efforts would not succeed. He also reaffirmed Pakistan's interest in seeing a stable, peaceful and friendly Afghanistan.

While the talks helped both sides better understand each other's thinking, the delicate dance that lies ahead will pose many challenges. How far the Washington talks have paved the way for closer coordination will only emerge later. Islamabad will certainly expect Washington to deliver on specific assurances given to its delegation about addressing its concerns over India's military role in Afghanistan.

The future of Pakistan-U.S. relations will hinge as much on how the Afghan endgame is played out as on other strategic issues. On the other security issues, Washington has listened to Pakistan's case but chosen to be noncommittal, even as it has tried to show more "understanding". These issues will not disappear just because Washington is unable to help address them: the unstable Pakistan-India relationship, the strategic challenges posed by the destabilising effects of the Indo-U.S. civilian nuclear deal, the festering Kashmir dispute, and the complexities of the water issue. Public views of the U.S. in Pakistan will also be determined by what didn't figure in the strategic dialogue: U.S. policies towards the Muslim world.

Pakistan's decision-makers should draw an important lesson from the talks. Given the limits on Washington's capacity to address Pakistan's concerns – just as there are constraints on Pakistan's ability to support all of America's geo-strategic interests – Islamabad needs to change its U.S.-centric mindset, learn to mobilise its own resources, rather than look to Washington to solve all its problems and fashion a foreign policy that is in sync with the multi-polar world we live in.

Dr Maleeha Lodhi, *News International* (Rawalpindi), March 30, 2010,
http://www.thenews.com.pk/daily_detail.asp?id=231523

A PLEA FOR PAKISTAN

Last week's visit of a very high level Pakistani delegation to Washington to meet with their opposite American numbers was at best a first step in a very long, testing and crucial journey essential to bringing a measure of peace, stability and even some prosperity to a volatile and dangerous region. To be blunt, the Americans did not deliver on a "game changer," that is a response of sufficient magnitude to demonstrate to the Pakistanis serious intent to provide the support vital to success in keeping Pakistan safe and secure. And to be equally blunt, outside the military briefings, the Pakistani side did not provide a vision and plan of action with specific steps for both sides to be agreed on and then implemented.

Of course the rhetoric and public relations press releases were very positive. Many kind words were spoken on and by both sides. And harmony and signs of friendship were in obvious attendance. That said, what are the next steps beyond meetings?

If there is to be an effective strategic partnership, there needs to be a comprehensive plan of action that covers not merely the military and security components but the appropriate economic, financial, business, political and even social sectors as well. From my perspective, Pakistan has four critical needs:

- first, it must prevail in the existential battle against internal and external insurgents and religious radicals and zealots who are attempting to overthrow the government. This battle includes the war of ideas that currently is not being fought by our side against these forces of evil.
- second, it must raise the standard of living of its people and provide a vision of hope for the future by improving its economy, infrastructure and institutions.
- third, it must make its system of governance more functional and effective driving out corruption and cronyism and replacing both with greater competence and respect for the rule of law.
- fourth, Pakistan must be part of a regional solution for bringing greater and permanent measures of peace and stability among its neighbors.

In my mind, the greatest ticking time bomb is the some 70 or 80 million youth, 18 and under, with little, no or madrassas education, without jobs and no future prospects moving in greater numbers into urban areas where radicalization is omnipresent. At some stage that bomb will explode. It must be defused now.

With these four pillars of a comprehensive strategy, designing the specific actions and steps is not difficult. What is difficult is gaining agreement by the American and Pakistani governments and then implementing these steps giving all of the obstacles on both sides currently hampering effective joint action.

For example, it is well known what the Pakistanis need to improve the standard of living of its citizens--probably measured in terms of an additional \$8-10 billion a year in trade and financial assistance. Much of that can come from the lifting of textile tariffs by the U.S. (done by changing the quotas for China and India in favor of Pakistan that by the

way could be smart leverage for the U.S. in dealing with China and India and not affecting U.S. jobs in the slightest) and granting GSP-plus by the EU. Also, Kerry-Lugar funding could be focused on a small number of very high impact projects such as power generation and infrastructure creation.

The needs of the Pakistan military are also well known. Helicopters and other lift in addition to greater numbers of electronic equipment for cell phone detection and location and similar capacity for monitoring the Internet have been requested for too long without success. Yet the U.S. has literally thousands of helicopters in its National Guard and Reserve. If Pakistan is so vital to success in Afghanistan why some of these aircraft cannot be made available on a lend-lease sort of arrangement as was the case in fighting the drug war in Columbia? In other words, specific needs must be matched with the means for implementation.

My advice is for Pakistan to draw up a specific and comprehensive Plan of Action that can be delivered by the Prime Minister in person in his next visit here in April for the nuclear and non-proliferation talks.

Finally, Pakistan needs an effective public relations and strategic communications plan to serve two purposes. First, despite the efforts of a very effective embassy in Washington, little to no money is being spent to inform the U.S. leadership and public of the realities in Pakistan. Too many Americans in and out of government see Pakistan as it was and not as it is. This absence of accurate information or misinformation must be overcome and done so now before it is too late.

Second, Pakistan needs to fight and win the war of ideas at home against the radicals and extremists who seek to overthrow democracy and replace it with a harsh and unjust regime based on a perverted view of Islam. That cannot happen.

But to win, there must be a real plan. If Pakistan can craft one, it will be well on its way to prevailing in this existential war for its survival as a state, democracy and people.

Harlan Ullman, *Spearhead Research*, March 30, 2010,
<http://www.spearheadresearch.org/phpBB2/viewtopic.php?t=3073>

PAKISTAN ARMY BACK ON TOP — BUT IN A NEW WAY

It was Pakistan's week in Washington with much talk of a new, deeper geopolitical understanding between the United States and a "major non-

NATO ally." The star was Pakistan's army chief, Gen. Ashfaq Kayani, and the country's de facto politico-military power.

The Pakistani army has taken over from ineffectual, corrupt civilian governments four times since independence. This time, the civilians haven't been ousted but outed as incompetent and irrelevant. President Asif Zardari, widower of Benazir Bhutto, is slowly ceding his frequently ignored powers and turning them over to Wazir-e-Azam (Grand Minister, or Prime Minister in Western governments) Yousuf Raza Gilani and his civilian government. But they can't seem to keep major cities in around-the-clock electric power, let alone basic foodstuffs. Water shortages also plague Pakistan's 175 million people.

Bottom line is that the Kerry-Lugar aid package of \$7 billion over five years is yet to make a difference. Chances are it never will. As Kayani told his American interlocutors, the new aid package has created a battalion of administrators — i.e., much red tape — and is being allocated here, there and everywhere in relatively small amounts that cover key needy sectors, insufficient to produce tangible results.

Kayani impressed U.S. officials, think tankers and journalists with the extent of the military's campaign against extremists. Since 9/11, the Pakistani army has sustained 30,810 killed and wounded, 10,000 in 2009 alone, or 10 soldiers a day. Terrorists arrested or killed: 17,742. Those who believe the army is reluctant to leave the Indian front to fight in Pakistan's tribal areas were reminded Pakistan now has 147,000 troops on the western front. That compares favorably with the 101,500 from 43 nations on the other side of the border in Afghanistan against the same enemy — Taliban.

Out of all the nations with troops in Afghanistan, only the British and Canadians are authorized to fight under the NATO flag alongside U.S. units. But Pakistan has 88 infantry and 58 Frontier Corps battalions and 80 percent of army aviation assets involved in the same fight on the other side of the mythical border, known as the Durand line, a hangover from the British raj.

Pakistan also has 821 army border posts all along the 1,400-mile border versus 112 for coalition forces. Last week, a Pakistani colonel was killed in action in Orakzai, which brought the total number of officers KIA against Taliban and their foreign friends (mostly Uzbeks) to 82, including one three-star general, two two-stars and six one-stars. Those who say the Pakistanis are reluctant to fight their own nationals who are terrorists now have a different picture.

Pakistani regulars had never fought in South Waziristan, forbidding mountainous terrain favored by Taliban. It's one of the seven "Federally Administered Tribal Areas," and Kayani told his American friends "is now completely cleared."

As the scenic Swat valley was taken over by Taliban in 2007, some 2.3 million people abandoned their homes for the safety of government refugee camps. Hedged by mountains up to 20,000 feet high, the valley was liberated by the army last year and most of the refugees are now back, Kayani told his American audiences.

North Waziristan is where both al-Qaeda and the Afghan wing of Taliban are holed up in networks of tunnels and caves. Anxious to avoid another exodus of an estimated 400,000 refugees, the army operates there with a low profile; usually Special Forces acting on U.S. drone-supplied intelligence.

Pakistan's military surge launched 138 operations in 2009 and 82 so far this year. There was, inevitably, a Taliban blow back. They launched almost 2,000 terrorist incidents throughout Pakistan. Yet U.S. and NATO supply lines from the port of Karachi into Afghanistan via the Khyber Pass and through Baluchistan to Kandahar have been secured after much sabotage and Taliban attacks. Kayani said Pakistan is still handling 84 percent of cargo container traffic to Afghan cities, 40 percent of fuel needs, or 120,000 gallons a day. Out of 58,700 container trucks that ply the two routes, Kayani said the loss was 0.1 percent in nine years.

Optimistic statistics aside, Pakistani public opinion is arguably the world's most anti-American. A prominent Pakistani retired intelligence chief told the world, three weeks after 9/11, that the Twin Towers and the Pentagon had been part of an elaborate U.S.-Mossad conspiracy to deceive the world. Gen. Hamid Gul's preposterous anti-U.S. yarn was swallowed hole by most Pakistanis — to this very day.

The purpose of the conspiracy, according to retired Pakistani intelligence operatives, was to provide a pretext for the United States to invade Afghanistan, the first stage, they explain, to moving into Pakistan to neutralize its nuclear arsenal. Even retired senior officers have told this reporter they tend to believe Gul. As do most Pakistani media.

There is also widespread paranoia about a nonsensical secret U.S.-Indian deal that would turn the part of Kashmir controlled by Pakistan over to India. So public opinion support for U.S.-Pakistan military cooperation is fragile. Anything that goes wrong will automatically be blamed on the "pro-Indian" Obama administration.

There is also a shallow political consensus on the home front against non-state actors, such as Taliban. This, in turn, means strategic constraints. The Pakistani army's military budget sharply curtails cutting-edge military technologies.

The army has turned the tide against extremists and terrorists. Public opinion, for the time being, backs what the army is now doing. But the support is a mile wide and an inch deep. Pakistanis, for the most part, are anti-war and anti-U.S. Kayani has convinced them, at least for a while, to back a comprehensive approach in the way forward. Deny spaces to the terrorists by occupying their bases. "Like in baseball," he says, "four civilian bases" have to be loaded — religion, social justice, faster civil justice, law and order — to deny them to the enemy, along with four military bases — clear, hold, build and transfer.

The way forward, for Kayani, is to turn the tide by keeping up the momentum and "optimizing the enabling environment provided by the military." The key to success is a sound economy which is tantamount to strategic stability.

With one out of three Pakistanis below the local poverty line and half a million young men brainwashed to hate America/India/Israel graduating yearly from 12,500 madrassas, it's an awesomely tall order.

Arnaud de Borchgrave, *Atlantic Council*, March, 30, 2010,
http://www.acus.org/new_atlanticist/pakistan-army-back-top-%E2%80%94-new-way

U.S.-PAKISTAN STRATEGIC DIALOGUE: A PERSPECTIVE

The present times are watching the intense international spotlight on our region evident through various seminars, conferences and inter actions between the Afghan government and the Taliban in Afghanistan. To highlight a few, a trilateral and regional summit was held in Istanbul, the SCO meeting in Moscow and most importantly, the London Conference on Afghanistan that adopted the theme of reconciliation with the Taliban besides the latest meeting of Afghan Taliban faction of Gulbadin Hekmatyar with Afghan government officials in Kabul.

The greatest turn around in the London Conference that came to fore was the overwhelming acceptance of Pakistan's indispensability if peace were to be brought to Afghanistan. Besides, a series of seminars on various aspects affecting the stability in Afghanistan is being regularly held at various Centers of Excellence in Europe and the United States are

supporting the talks process with the Taliban to stabilize Afghanistan and enable U.S. and allies to exit with heads high.

Accordingly, the Afghan government is making hectic efforts to engage various other Taliban factions also in a reconciliation bid to bring the dissidents in political mainstream of Afghan politics. The other developments include the swift capture of Marjah by the U.S. and Nato forces and the U.S. efforts to rebuild Helmand and install Afghan governance with placement of government servants from Kabul to take over the administration initially at Marjah and then slowly moving out to rest of the province. For those Afghans who would opt to serve there will be paid up to \$300 per month as an incentive.

The awaited launch of major operation to overcome the main base of Taliban in the south at Kandahar and its spill-over not only for the U.S. and Nato forces but also for Pakistan would also be closely watched.

The year 2010 had brought a major policy shift in the U.S. administration as regards to the acceptance of volatile situation created by India's intransigence towards friendly relationship with Pakistan and its campaign to destabilize the latter through the use of paid violence and death using Afghanistan as a base. Though at the persuasion of the United States, India did stage foreign secretary's level talks in New Delhi but without any significant impact on the stalemate that has been a frequent phenomenon between the two nuclear states. So panicky was India observed over the strategic dialogue between Pakistan and the United States through its print and electronic media that pathetically raised an unbelievable hullabaloo over the dialogue as if the world was nearing its end.

A flurry of hi-fi visits by the U.S. administration officials to Pakistan prior the dialogue indicated the acceptance of the United States and the international community of Pakistan's centrality to Afghan conflict which incidentally Pakistan had already been airing since ages.

Robert Gates visit took place from 21 to 22 January 2010 after having visited India where he gave a bizarre statement to appease Indians on future terrorism acts in India. The same was given a strong rebuttal when Pakistan said that the country itself faced Mumbai like attacks almost every day and in no position to comment on any or no future attacks either in India or elsewhere as Pakistan was not involved in such attacks and it cannot speak on behalf of non-state actors of any country. Then we saw General James Jones, the U.S. National Security Advisor visiting Pakistan on 11 February to be followed by Richard Holbrooke's

visit on 18th of the same month. He while being in Pakistan acknowledged that Pakistan had legitimate interests in Afghanistan when Pakistan had underscored its principal position of sovereignty, unity, territorial integrity of Afghanistan as well as non-intervention and non-interference.

The fact that the latest strategic talks between the two countries will provide the trust deficit relationship some respite and may act as harbinger for cementing the relationship that is free of strains, is yet to be determined. The forthcoming attitude of the U.S. administration to help resurrect Pakistan's ailing economy, its dire need for energy, water that is essentially its share being stolen by the Indians and the basic but essential military needs to enable Pakistan take on the Taliban with impunity, reflects the change in American perceptions towards Pakistan. The most important change that has been observed is their attitude towards Pakistan's nuclear programme. The foreign minister of Pakistan Shah Mahmood Qureshi appeared to be more than satisfied when he told Reuters that the meetings with the U.S. officials on nuclear cooperation, non-proliferation and nuclear export controls had gone well. It is difficult for the United States to openly declare their willingness to enter into a dialogue for provision of nuclear technology primarily because of its fears that it would up-set India. There still prevails weariness amongst the Pakistanis that this is not a short change in the U.S. policy six months before the Congress elections and Obama's surge policy review, the strategic dialogue is not reflective of a tactical gimmickry.

The joint communiqué at the end of the strategic dialogue with United States has given hopes for relatively greener pastures in the future bilateral relationship. The formation of Policy Steering Group established to intensify the interaction on sectoral dialogue on economy, trade, energy, defence and security is a good omen. The U.S. promises to upgrade its energy generation sector through various means, including nuclear at some future point of time, would certainly bring the U.S. administration closer to the Pakistanis' hearts and minds. Thinking of the track record of nuclear safeties, Pakistan has proved its expertise being second to none.

Meanwhile, Indians continue to speculate that the U.S. and Pakistan might have reached a secret understanding out of the dialogue on the provision of nuclear technology to Pakistan and minimizing the Indian role in Afghanistan. Lalit Mansingh, a former Indian Foreign Secretary accordingly has advised his government to remain vigilant over

the overt declaration of the U.S. that it is not interested in signing a nuclear deal with Pakistan at this point of time.

India is also skeptical of any secret understanding on Afghanistan between the United States and Pakistan that would marginalize its presence in Afghanistan. In a related development Indian political party BJP has asked the U.S. if it was a party to the anti-India terror activities allegedly emanating from Pakistan after U.S. Secretary's remarks that "Pakistan struggles are my struggles". Interestingly, India appears to have lost its sleep over the prospects of Pakistan becoming the sole caretaker for Afghanistan's stability. Pakistan's foreign ministry has rejected the jittery Indian reaction over the strategic dialogue so conspicuous in all the facets of Indian hierarchy.

Nevertheless, it is an established fact that both America and Pakistan need each other. How the process agreed upon in Washington would churn out, it is difficult to predict. The turf henceforth will surely be tough for confronting the upcoming challenges that the age old marred relationship would abundantly. It will be challenging for the United States to don its image of a fair weather and a usurper whose traditional walk-a-ways from scenarios involving the state of Pakistan left the latter tottering each time resurrect its institutions, governance, economy and security.

The other aspect is that how far and fast America would go to follow the words with deeds for helping Pakistan rebuild its economy, energy, infrastructure and security. It will be equally challenging for Pakistan as it has to continue to fight the extremists and terrorists with associated heavy costs, work towards softening the anti-Americanism so abundantly found in the middle-class and down below and resist efforts to disburse Kerry-Lugar aid through NGOs by surgical cleansing of its related institutions to win trust of aid providers.

This recently concluded dialogue has given hopes and offered a potential opportunity to both the countries to cease the moment and change things around in the context of long term U.S.-Pakistan relationship.

Bassam Javed, *News International* (Rawalpindi), March 31, 2010,
http://www.thenews.com.pk/daily_detail.asp?id=231844

PAKISTAN IS NOT A 'PRIORITY'

The Pak-U.S. strategic dialogues held in the last week of March, 2010 could have been more fruitful if the U.S. Secretary of State Hillary

Clinton had not bestowed upon Pakistan the status of being a ‘priority’ in U.S. strategic plan. In her preface to the dialogues she lauded the role of Pakistan towards establishment of peace in South Asia and termed the security and stability of Pakistan as a ‘top priority’. The Pak-U.S. strategic dialogues were supposed to shorten the widening distances between the two countries but apparently the only thing Pakistan could get out of these talks is the status of being ‘Priority’ in the U.S. strategic plan. The people of Pakistan are happy that the leaders of Pakistan including the army Chief General Kiyani pleaded the case of Pakistan in the most forceful and successful manner but they are disappointed at the U.S. approach towards Pakistan. They know that priorities keep on changing from time to time but partnership is something more deep-rooted and long lasting. Truly speaking, Pakistan never needed the status of being called a ‘priority’, it deserved to be taken care as a partner.

As pointed out by Hillary Clinton, ‘the two nations have had misunderstandings and disagreements in the past and there are sure to be more disagreements in the future but the Obama administration has shown in words and deeds a different approach and attitude toward Pakistan’. Unfortunately the U.S. administration has never tried sincerely to find out the root causes of these misunderstandings and disagreements. In spite of such a long companionship with Pakistan, the USA never succeeded in winning the hearts of the people of Pakistan. The so-called Pak-U.S. relationship has never been very popular with the people of Pakistan. They are of the opinion that America has always been exploiting this self-styled relationship for its own specified purposes. If America were sincere with the people of Pakistan, it could have done a lot for them in shape of economic and social reforms; it could have strengthened the armed forces of Pakistan so that they might be able to fight more enthusiastically against the menace of terrorism. Instead of showering drones and missiles on innocent citizens of Pakistan, it could have provided them with new opportunities for earning their bread but it never happened so. As a result of it, there came nothing but hatred and disliking for America on the part of the Pakistani people. The recent sugar-coated statement of Hillary Clinton has added more fuel to the already blazing passions of the Pakistani nation. If the people of Pakistan are given two options; either to accept the supremacy of the Islamic extremists or to believe the American crocodile story of love and affection, they would surely opt for the first one, taking it as the lesser evil. Most of the Pakistanis think that USA is responsible for all

economic destabilization, energy crisis and the worst situation of law and order in Pakistan. They rank the USA as the most distrusted and the most doubtful force which is continuously undermining the very foundations of Pakistan. The most important thing is the need of a very honest analysis in this regard.

There are so many elements which are widening the breach between Pakistan and the USA; one of them is the extra-ordinary inclination of America towards India. Its civil nuclear pact with India, its assistance in providing new weapon technology and setting up stronger trade relations with India are some of the examples in this respect. USA has been intentionally ignoring the role of Pakistan which is vitally helpful for a long lasting peace in the South Asia. There is a very strong Indian lobby in the American society which is continuously disfiguring the U.S.-Pak relationship in a secret manner. Whenever Obama administration plans to do something better for the people of Pakistan, this lobby starts manipulating the situation. Some of the American media-men are also playing in the hands of this lobby in collaboration with the Indian media. We see that before the commencement of the Strategic dialogues, the Indian newspapers started raising hue and cry that these dialogues would prove useless and futile. Some of the newspapers pleaded that the USA must not go for dialogues with a country which supports terrorism and extremism. Let us cast a look at the 'breaking news' which was brought to light by the Indian newspapers on the 25th of March, just at the time when the strategic dialogues were in process. The title given to this news was, 'ISI pressing Indian terror suspects to launch attacks.' According to the concocted details published under this title, "many terrorists who have been given protection for quite a number of years have been asked to prove their worth or face consequences by ISI. This was revealed during investigations into the alleged plans of Sikh militant group Babbar Khalsa International men to plant a bomb in the national capital and Himachal Pradesh. The men were being provided directions by Pakistan-based Wadhwa Singh and Parminder Singh, who figure in dossier of wanted terrorists passed to Pakistan recently. The men have been provided cover for so long and they were asked to show their worth to enjoy the shelter of the ISI." Another point to be noted is that this breaking news was warmly welcomed and spread more wildly by those American newspapers which gave no coverage to the Pak-U.S. strategic dialogues. This situation is simply the result of a very well planned conspiracy against Pakistan.

Fruitful or fruitless, these dialogues must have a very important strategic value from the U.S. and Pakistan's point of view but they seem a pain in the neck for the countries like India. It is very much difficult to understand why India is so much worried about the strengthening relationship between Pakistan and the USA. Whenever there is any attempt of bringing these two countries closer, either on the part of Pakistan or USA, India starts crying like an innocent stubborn child who is not ready to share his love for his mother with any one, even with his father. Feeling India's restlessness over these dialogues the special U.S. envoy for Afghanistan and Pakistan Richard Holbrooke had already stated that the U.S.-Pakistan strategic dialogues are not at India's expense. Talking to the media men a few days before the commencement of the dialogues he said, "We have an important strategic dialogue with India and with other countries, including China. It makes it all the more important we have one with Pakistan. But this is a bilateral dialogue and it would be different from the one with India." He further said, "Let me put this very clearly, this strategic dialogue with Pakistan is not at the expense of any other country in the region." But in spite of all these affirmations India could not pacify its restlessness over these dialogues. The people of Pakistan are expecting another Raw-manuevered episode like that of the Mumbai attacks in India and as usual the blame would be fixed upon the ISI and Pakistan army. They know very well that India would surely try to sabotage the next meeting of the strategic dialogue to be held in Islamabad co-chaired by Secretary Clinton and Foreign Minister Qureshi. All such Indian attempts would be an effort to make America realise that its inclination towards a 'terrorist country' like Pakistan is unwisely.

Indian restlessness over the Pak-U.S. relationship seems quite out of place and illogical because these two countries, India and Pakistan, have altogether different nature of relationship with the USA. Pakistan is a necessity and India is a tool. Necessities could never be avoided and ignored whereas tools keep on changing. Sometimes they become outdated and sometimes out of order. So the value and importance of India and Pakistan could never be measured with the same yard stick.

Ali Sukhanver, *Pakistan Observer* (Islamabad), March 31, 2010,
<http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=23161>

PAK-U.S. STRATEGIC DIALOGUE: AN ANALYSIS

At the conclusion of Pak-U.S. strategic dialogue, held from 24-25 March 2010, at Washington, a joint statement was issued. The statement highlights the salient [stages] of the dialogue process between Pakistani delegation headed by Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi and U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. Overall, this was the fourth phase of the strategic dialogue process. Considering the constantly changing regional and global situation and steps needed to further fortify the bilateral relationship, the dialogue was elevated to the Ministerial level for the first time. The next round of the dialogue would be held in Islamabad. It was also agreed upon by both sides that through the establishment of a “Policy Steering Group”, sectoral dialogue process would be held between the two friendly countries. This process would encompass dialogue process in the fields of “economy and trade; energy; defense; security; strategic stability and non-proliferation; law enforcement and counter-terrorism; science and technology; education; agriculture; water; health; and communications and public diplomacy.”

The positive aspect of this dialogue process has been that, it was all encompassing and aspirations of the people of both countries were given a central position. In spite of the upheavals in the history of Pak-U.S. relationship, either side felt that Pak-U.S. strategic relationship has the potential to be carried forward in the 21st century. This indeed is in the fundamental interest of both countries and can be ensured through mutual trust and mutual respect. In the wordings of the joint statement, “Both the United States and Pakistan are determined to foster goodwill and friendship between their people and engage in mutually beneficial cooperation”. Both sides stressed Restoration of peace and stability in Afghanistan. U.S. desires restoration of peace and stability in Afghanistan before the beginning of its scheduled pulling out from that country in the mid 2011. Pakistan, however, considers that peace and stability in Afghanistan is must for the internal stability in Pakistan, as history proved.

With the mutual acceptability of each other’s role in the global war on terror, the host Secretary of State, boldly advocated the determination and valour with which Pakistani nation fought out the menace of terrorism in FATA and adjoining areas. Both countries decided to double their efforts in order to effectively deal with the “terrorism and to protect the common ideals and shared values of democracy, tolerance,

openness and respect for fundamental freedoms and human rights”. Since the dialogue took an overview of all issues, therefore, U.S. made a commitment for assisting Pakistan in its socio-economic uplift through the utilization of human and natural resources and entrepreneurial skills. In spite of the apprehensions from certain quarters, about the likely U.S. involvement in FATA affairs, Pakistan emphasized the host, for the early establishment of the Reconstruction Opportunity Zones (ROZs). This aspect is considered to be the most essential for the creation of employment opportunities to the people of the tribal belt. The opportunity would enable all those engaged in the militancy under any ploy to extricate, get an employment and start playing positive role. It is worth mentioning that most of the people have been attracted to work with militants, as they had no jobs. On the other hand, the militants have been offering them quite lucrative packages to kill the innocent people and the personnel of security forces of Pakistan.

From the Pakistani side the emphasis remained on the market access for its manufactured goods, rather asking for financial aid. However, both sides decided to discuss the Bilateral Investment Treaty, and possibility of creating an investment fund for boosting the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Pakistan. Through the “Signature Energy Programme”, US promised to help Pakistan in overcoming its ongoing worst energy crises. For that purpose, U.S. has already announced \$125 million as the first instalment. This financial aid will be aimed at “repairing generation facilities, improving the overall effectiveness of local utilities providers, replacing inefficient tube well pumps and promoting energy efficiency”. Since Pakistan is seriously facing the water shortages, mainly caused due to the unlawful Indian water manipulation of the water of three Pakistani rivers flowing from Indian occupied portion of Kashmir, therefore, U.S. has promised to facilitate Indo-Pak talks on the issue. Even a separate sectoral track has been added in the strategic dialogue, which will focus on the conservation and management of water through U.S. help.

Most of the analysts consider that this round of the strategic dialogue was conducted in a smooth manner with a complete unanimity of thoughts from both sides. Some quarters even see this as a strategic shift in the U.S. approach towards Pakistan, quite converse to the infamous AfPak Policy. Indeed, the Obama Administration while rationally visualizing the situation in Afghanistan and along Pak-Afghan border has decided to revisit its earlier policy, and failed strategy of

neoconservatives for invading Afghanistan. This long drawn-out counter-productive war has priced heavily to U.S. in term of finances and casualties to its combat soldiers apart from damaging its image. With the passage of time, it is taking the shape of Vietnam War. For the U.S., it may not be possible to support the war for a longer duration, owing to its rapidly falling economy.

Beside, U.S. also realized the significance of Pakistan, which it has been ignoring for quite some time. It has also realized the negative role played by India to destabilize the situation along the Pak-Afghan border and in some parts of Pakistan by promoting the terrorism and sub nationalistic sentiments. Indeed, Indian role in Afghanistan has discredited the U.S. and its quick success to stabilize Afghanistan went into doldrums. It was also identified to President Obama by General MacCrystal, the U.S. Force Commander in Afghanistan in his detailed assessment report, which perhaps became a cause for the change of hearts in the Whitehouse. Though belated, but it is a correct visualization of the new developments in Afghanistan. This change in perception was much needed. There is no second opinion that for a durable peace and an honourable exit, U.S. will have to work in the close harmony with Pakistan and Afghan people. In this regard, the reiteration by Hillary Clinton, the U.S. Secretary of State that, this is a new beginning in the Pak-U.S. relationship and this partnership would go a long way is a positive step.

Pakistan considers that prolonging the Afghan conflict is neither in its interest nor would benefit the United States. Afghan people have otherwise suffered a lot since 1979 and particularly during the U.S. invasion. The conflict has severely damaged the social set up of Pakistan and threatened its internal security and stability. The sooner we are over with it; the better would be for all stake holders. Since the wisdom has prevailed, therefore, let us join hands for bringing peace and stability in Afghanistan with sincerity. However, for a durable peace, the Pashtun people forming bulk of Afghanistan, but have been ignored over the years needs to be given their equitable share in all fields. Moreover, all foreign involvements in the Afghan affairs should be ceased. Let Afghan people to decide their future themselves. In the longer run, this would be a win win situation for Pakistan, U.S., Afghanistan and all its neighbours.

Dr. Raja Muhammad Khan, April 1, 2010,
<http://www.opinion-maker.org/navigation.do?mode=showArticles&cid=1440>

U.S.-PAKISTAN DIALOGUE WITH A DIFFERENCE

Guest columnist Ahmed Rashid explains why last week's "strategic dialogue" between the U.S. and Pakistan was a significant break with the two countries' troubled past.

When Pakistan's powerful army chief, Gen Ashfaq Kayani, and Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi got off the plane in Washington to conduct what was called the "strategic dialogue" with the U.S. last week, they carried a 56-page shopping list asking for money, arms... and more money.

That has been the norm for U.S.-Pakistan dialogues in the past 50 years of an on-off relationship. Meanwhile, the U.S. has always urged Pakistan to fit into its own strategic plans, such as doing more to combat terrorism. However, this time there was a difference.

The Pakistanis also carried a brief which frankly addressed Pakistan's strategic interests and security needs with regard to India, Afghanistan and sensitive issues like nuclear weapons and terrorism.

Transactional Relationship

The U.S., rather than lecturing, wanted to listen, even if it could not comply with many of Pakistan's demands.

For the Americans this was a welcome change from the subterfuge, lack of clarity and covert support for militant groups that Pakistan has engaged in the past.

For the Pakistanis it was a chance to air all their pent-up grievances against Washington and demand to be given the same treatment as arch-rival India.

After 11 September, former Presidents George Bush and Pervez Musharraf carried out a largely transactional relationship. "I will give you an al-Qaeda operative in exchange for two F16 fighter bombers" - was what that boiled down to.

While Mr Musharraf hosted the Afghan Taliban and other extremist groups, as a hedge against Indian influence in Kashmir and Afghanistan, Mr Bush pretended to look the other way. Mr Bush conducted crisis management rather than real engagement.

President Barack Obama promised to put Pakistan on the top of his agenda. Now after 15 months of intense engagement, dozens of visits to

Islamabad by American officials and unrelenting pressure, the Obama administration has finally got the Pakistanis to open up.

Now, said officials from both sides, everything was on the table. That is important right now.

Even though Pakistan may be a crumbling state unable to provide its people with electricity, water, security or jobs, the army's bargaining power with the U.S. has increased dramatically.

That is due to increases in its nuclear arsenal, its stepped-up fight against the Pakistani Taliban after years of dithering and its influence over the Afghan Taliban as the U.S. and Nato prepare to start pulling out of Afghanistan next year.

At the end of two days of talks, Mr Qureshi said he was satisfied as both sides “move from a relationship to a partnership”. U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton shared his optimism.

However, the real dialogue was with Gen Kayani and the army which had prepared Pakistan's briefs, with no objections from Mr Qureshi or the civilian government.

The army tried and failed to make U.S. acceptance of its major demands as pre-conditions for the success of the talks. The U.S. insisted on discussing every issue and conceded little.

The U.S. offered nothing new, but the most concrete results were reflected in a sector-by-sector dialogue by relevant ministries on each side, as to how the U.S. can help rally Pakistan's faltering economy, lack of energy and improve its agriculture and infrastructure.

Key Demand

The U.S. is providing an annual \$1.5bn aid package to Pakistan's civil sector for the next five years.

However, Pakistan will still not get improved U.S. trade access for its textile exports - a key demand to revive its moribund industry and something that would be clearly more effective than just aid.

The military will quickly receive some \$1bn in outstanding dues for fighting the war against militants, assured future funding and faster delivery of new weapons including helicopters, F16s and naval frigates.

The Americans rejected Pakistan's plea for a civil nuclear deal like the U.S. concluded with India, partly because of Pakistan's past nuclear proliferation record, but also because Mr Obama could never sell such a deal to the U.S. Congress.

However, this dialogue will continue under a newly formed Policy Steering Group.

The U.S. heaped praise on the army's recent campaign against the Pakistani Taliban, but it was equally tough on the need for the army to abandon its 30-year-long reliance on extremist groups to carry out foreign policy objectives and covert operations against India in Kashmir and Afghanistan.

Pakistan has said it will not act against Lashkar-e-Toiba, the militant group accused of carrying out the Mumbai (Bombay) attacks in 2008 until relations with India markedly improve.

Lashkar was set up and managed by the army's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and India has refused to deal with Pakistan until it curbs the group.

Both the U.S. and Nato now view the Lashkar as a global terrorist group, with cells in Europe and the U.S. supporting the Taliban and al-Qaeda.

Major Role

The group is accused of carrying out the February suicide attack in Kabul that killed nine Indians. David Headley, a U.S. citizen, has admitted planning the Mumbai attacks and training at Lashkar bases in Pakistan.

To India's chagrin, the U.S. has acknowledged that Pakistan has a major role to play in peace talks between Kabul and the Afghan Taliban and that India and Pakistan need to come to an understanding over their mutual competition in Afghanistan.

When Afghan President Hamid Karzai visited Islamabad in early March, he was bluntly told by the army that he would have to remove two Indian consulates in Afghanistan near the Pakistan border, before the army offered him help to talk to the Pakistan-based Afghan Taliban leaders.

For Pakistan, one measure of success of the talks is the degree to which they have rattled India.

India feels snubbed by the U.S. because its officials have not been given access to David Headley. Delhi is opposed to any dominant Pakistani role in Afghanistan and is nervous about any U.S.-Pakistan nuclear talks.

The U.S. will now have to do some fence-mending with India.

However the complex triangular relationship between the U.S., Pakistan and India depends for success on the U.S. getting the two enemies to talk turkey about their conflicts.

It also depends on getting the Pakistani army to undertake a real rather than an imagined strategic U-turn, because backing extremists of any hue to carry out foreign policy goals is no longer internationally acceptable.

BBC News, April 2, 2010,
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/8592472.stm

'MAN ON HORSEBACK'

Naturally, the recently concluded Pakistan-U.S. strategic dialogue in Washington has been termed as a great success by Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi, the person nominally leading the Pakistani delegation. The strategic dialogue being upgraded from foreign secretaries' to the foreign ministers' level is an implicit recognition of Pakistan's growing importance in the eyes of the U.S. policymakers.

However, what made these parleys different from numerous rounds of transactional talks between Islamabad and Washington in the past was the inclusion for the first time of a chief of the army staff in the delegation. General Ahfaq Parvez Kayani, by virtue of his sheer presence, played more than a life-size role as a member of the Pakistani team.

As in Brussels on the occasion of the NATO summit earlier this year, substantive discussions took place with Gen Kayani in structured talks and on its sidelines. He was hosted by the top brass of the U.S. defence establishment, including Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen, CENTCOM chief Gen Petraeus and national security advisor James Jones.

Mr Qureshi is quite right in saying that this time the U.S. did not repeat the mantra of "do more" during the strategic dialogue. But this does not mean that Islamabad is now off the hook so far as Washington's strategic goals in the region are concerned.

On the contrary, Pakistan is now viewed as pivotal in President Obama's exit strategy from the Af-Pak theatre. With the elections of the US Congress due this year, the Obama administration has to reassure the American people that the war in Afghanistan will not continue indefinitely. Actually, in the backdrop of the so-called surge the U.S.

presence will begin to ramp down by the July 2011 deadline, barely a year after it ramps up.

There is a sense of *déjà vu* on the lukewarm response by Washington on the 56-page wish list that Islamabad had handed to the U.S. as early as February. If Pakistan was expecting any U.S. role on facilitating talks on Kashmir or resolving the contentious water dispute with India, it was sadly disappointed. Washington refused to be drawn in on India-Pakistan issues at the very outset of the talks.

Similarly, Pakistan was snubbed on its demand for access to technology for the peaceful use of nuclear energy similar to the deal India already has with the U.S. Our delegation was politely told that Islamabad was still considered to be on Washington's watch list so far as its nuclear proliferation credentials were concerned. As if adding insult to injury, Washington has just reached an agreement potentially worth billions of dollars with New Delhi to reprocess used nuclear fuel. Is it merely coincidental that the deal was timed with U.S. Pakistan strategic talks?

U.S. assistant secretary of state Robert O Blake Jr. was touring the subcontinent at the same time as the strategic talks were taking place in Washington. While briefing a group of media persons in Lahore the other day, he stressed that cross-border infiltration into India should be stopped and Pakistan should clamp down on Punjab-based militant groups, including the LeT. He was all praise for Indian prime minister Manmohan Singh and advised Islamabad that it should make the most of Mr Singh's "statesman-like qualities" and concentrate on boosting economic and trade ties with India.

U.S. civilian and security assistance to Pakistan has totalled over \$4 billion in the last three years. This includes 14 F-16 fighters, and other military hardware as well as economic assistance in the field of education reconstruction and food distribution. Apart from this, since 2001 Islamabad has received \$6.3 billion as reimbursement under the coalition support programme. In addition, Washington is committed to \$1.5 billion a year for the next five years.

In this sense, Islamabad is the largest recipient of U.S. assistance. According to Foreign Minister Qureshi, as an outcome of the strategic dialogue U.S. delegations will start visiting Islamabad from this month to discuss matters related to various sectors of the economy, and energy and agriculture. However, the longstanding demand of the powerful textile sector of Pakistan to have market access remained unfulfilled owing to the persistent pressure of the United States' own textile lobby.

Despite the bonhomie created by the visit, the focal point of Washington's policy towards Islamabad remains its anxiety to extricate itself from the Afghan imbroglio. Admittedly, the advent of President Obama in Washington and the exit of Gen Musharraf have been a boon for Pakistan. Musharraf's double game of using the Taliban threat to secure his stranglehold on power by wooing then-U.S. president George W Bush and his neocon cohorts was a policy with disastrous consequences for Pakistan.

It is only under a civilian government and the farsighted professional approach of the army's present leadership that the tide has turned, with Islamabad no longer being viewed by the West as a pariah state sponsoring international terrorism. Pakistan's ambassador to Washington, Hussain Haqqani, till recently was eyed with suspicion by the military top brass. However, the qualitative improvement in U.S.-Pakistan relations has markedly improved his standing.

As is evident from the strategic dialogue, Washington and Islamabad are not on the same page on vital strategic and tactical issues confronting the region. The U.S. still wants that the Pakistani army concentrate all its energies and resources on its western borders to eliminate not only the Pakistani Taliban but the Afghan Taliban and al-Qaeda as well.

Islamabad's top priority remains resolution of its disputes with India, which it considers an existential threat. However, India's size, its growing economic power and its strategic importance for the U.S. in relation to China militates against any arm-twisting by Washington to make New Delhi come to terms with Islamabad.

The recently concluded strategic dialogue is another manifestation of U.S. interest in directly engaging the Pakistani army, rather than the civilian leadership. Washington is well aware of the power realities in Pakistan. The army's success against the Taliban in Swat and South Waziristan during the past year and the arrest of some of the top Taliban commanders have transformed its image in the West. The perception that the military does not see the Afghan Taliban as a threat but an asset and a form of insurance against the cost of the U.S. again abandoning Afghanistan is changing.

The army has earned kudos for the arrest of top Taliban commander Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar and some members of the so-called Quetta Shura, much to the chagrin of Afghan president Hamid Karzai. These arrests have disrupted secret peace talks between the

Taliban and Karzai brokered by Saudi Arabia. During the strategic dialogue General Kayani has shown Pakistan's willingness to play a role in such talks when they take place, provided India is kept out of the equation and Karzai is willing to reduce Indian influence in Afghanistan.

So far as the U.S. is concerned it only will be willing to talk to the Taliban from a position of strength. And for that to happen it would want substantive military victories by its forces in Afghanistan against the Taliban. As a follow-up to President Obama's surprise visit to Kabul last week the U.S. military has already started an initial phase of a political and military offensive in Kandahar, Afghanistan's second-largest province and a Taliban bastion.

The major outcome of the strategic dialogue is the carving out of a role for Pakistan's military and intelligence agency, the ISI, in any future talks with the Taliban, facilitating the exit strategy of NATO forces from Afghanistan. For that to happen, a possible extension in General Kayani's tenure, which is due to end in November, is very much on the cards. It will, however, be a first, in the sense that no other COAS has been given an extension by a civilian government. Another "man on horseback" to finish the job?

Arif Nizami, *News International* (Rawalpindi), April 3, 2010,
http://www.thenews.com.pk/daily_detail.asp?id=232341

PAK-U.S. DIALOGUE: CONVERGENCE & DIVERGENCE

United States established its diplomatic relations with Pakistan in early in 1948, once Paul Alling, a career diplomat arrived Karachi, then capital of Pakistan. Later on Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, the first Prime Minister of Pakistan, visited U.S. in May 1950. This visit marked the formal beginning of the Pak-U.S. relationship. In the subsequent history, Pakistan's relations with United States have "careened between intimate partnership and enormous friction-reflecting the ups and downs of global and regional geopolitics and disparate national interests." While maintaining a balance relationship with India, U.S. relations with Pakistan have been "intense and extraordinary volatile."

It is viewed that Eisenhower, Nixon and Reagan maintained good relations with Pakistan whereas, in the periods of; Kennedy, Johnson, Carter, Bush senior, and Clinton, there remained chill in the bilateral relationship of both countries. The two tenures of President George W. Bush, from 2001 to early 2009, have mostly been a period of dubiousness, mainly owing to the so-called global war on terror. Because of Pakistan's

alliance with U.S. and Western world throughout during the cold war, its relations with the former Soviet Union and other countries of Communist bloc remained at the lowest ebb. Sequel to Soviet invasion in Afghanistan, Pakistan provided all out assistance to U.S. and West once they promoted global Jihad against the invasion of former USSR in Afghanistan. This assistance indeed, left deep rooted effects on the Pakistani society in the form of extremism, proliferation of weapons and drug culture and many other social ills. Pakistan is anguishing [languishing], following the incident of 9/11. As rightly pointed out by Dr. Henry Kissinger, the former U.S. Secretary of State, that; in the international politics, “there are neither permanent friends nor permanent foes of a state”. These are indeed, the convergences and divergences of national interests of states that make them friends or enemies to each other. National interests of states are not constant, but continue changing depending upon the emerging realities from time to time. National strategies are made on the principals of national interests’ not on emotions or on personnel liking or disliking of leadership or a particular factor. In the history of Pak-U.S relationship, there have been more frequent convergences and divergences. The convergences have mostly been on the operational and tactical level, whereas, the divergences existed at the strategic level. “This strategic divergence made relations perpetually vulnerable to accusations and counter-accusations.” However, in the post 9/11 scenario, the Pak-U.S. “bilateral engagement has changed the historical pattern of tactical convergence versus strategic divergence. In this tenure, owing to the commonality of fighting the global war on terror, there appear to be “shared threat perceptions and common national and global objectives that the two partners seek”.

Pakistan was confronted with the threat to its security, integrity and existence emanated from the aggressive Indian designs right from its inception in 1947. Indian aggression on Kashmir, in October 1947, induced Pakistan to opt for a partnership with U.S. and West. This angst of insecurity led her to become part of Western sponsored military alliances like SEATO and CENTO, thus making her the most allied ally of the U.S. In its subsequent history, this alignment became the strategic necessity for the entire period of the Cold War. Apart from having the security guarantees’ through these pacts, Pakistan perhaps thought that this Western alliance would help her in the resolution of the Kashmir issue. A number of Western backed resolutions, passed by United Nations Security Council (UNSC), all warranting Kashmiris their right

of self determination provided enough logic that Pakistan should keep itself an ally of West and the U.S. This Pakistani compulsion and its geo-political location was well exploited by U.S. for its own strategic needs. U.S. otherwise needed a partner in South Asia, which could act as a counter weight against the spread of Communism. Indian refusal to become U.S. ally in 1949, left U.S. with no option, but to make Pakistan as its partner and Pakistan needed it for its security assurances as well as its own fears against the Communism. The reality was more than this. Indeed, India has become a strategic partner of the Soviet Union through the conclusion of a number economic and defence agreements. However, apparently India upheld the status of neutrality from the forum of Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). Although diverging at the bilateral level, except containment of Communism, there became a convergence of strategic interests of Pakistan and U.S. at the regional and global level to some extent. Unfortunately, this strategic convergence of interests mostly benefitted the United States. U.S. got enough space for spying and limiting the activities of its ideological opponent, throughout during the period of cold war. Pakistan, however, was not supported by U.S. at its trying moments like; 1965 and 1971 wars. As a result of 1971 war, Pakistan was even disintegrated, whereas U.S. stopped its military assistance to Pakistan. Thus, “this Cold War relationship was in many ways a subset of the two countries’ other strategic concerns. Pakistan’s being India, while for the Americans it was the containment of communism. The Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in 1979 however, brought a convergence of Pakistan and U.S. interests and concerns”.

Because of its geographic contiguity with Afghanistan, Pakistan was the only country in the region, which could help U.S. and the West to operate against the former Soviet Union, the moment they waited for a long. Besides, Pakistan too was threatened by the Communist regime. This convergence remained effective throughout the period of 1980s. The Soviet disintegration brought the cold war to an end, thus positioning U.S. at the status of sole super power.

Pakistan was worst affected by the fallouts of this ideological confrontation of the two camps of the cold war. After attaining the desired results, U.S. left the region in hast, leaving Pakistan alone to clear the debris of this polar conflict. As after effects, this convergence left for Pakistan; “over 3.5 million Afghan refugees, proliferation of sophisticated weapons and the profusion of narcotics which spread from the uncontrolled areas of Afghanistan to parts of Pakistan”. This was not the

end. The strategic convergence of 1980s turned into a chill and brought divergence in the Pak-U.S. relationship once in October 1990, United States, clamped economic and military sanctions on Pakistan. Imposed through the infamous Pressler Amendment, these sanctions were discriminatory and only Pakistan oriented, aimed to limit its nuclear programme. So much so that the military hardware for which Pakistan has already paid \$1.2 billion, prior to 1990, were also not provided to it. Divergences in the relations touched the lowest ebb in 1993, once U.S. threatened to declare Pakistan as a state sponsoring terrorism and imposed additional sanctions on Pakistan through Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) for receiving the so-called missile technology from China. After the nuclear explosion of 1998, U.S. imposed additional economic and military sanctions on Pakistan, which remained valid until 2002. It is worth mentioning that India exploded its first nuclear device in 1974 and no action was taken against it. Each time the, “impetus for proliferation at every step came from India, but it was Pakistan, and not India, that was subjected to penalties, embargoes and sanctions”.

In the current phase of Pak-U.S. relationship which indeed started after the incident of 9/11, U.S. needed Pakistan for active cooperation in its military operations against Taliban in Afghanistan. The militancy in FATA and other areas of Pakistan indeed is the fallout of this cooperation. Even during this phase there has been vicissitudes’ at the bilateral level and Pakistan was not fully trusted. Against the ground realities, it was equated with Afghanistan through the infamous AfPak policy. It is also true that Pak-U.S. relationship is indeed a history of turbulent connections, and there is no harm in admitting that Islamabad’s ties with Washington were dictated by specific politico-military interests with no deep-rooted historical and ideological union. It was the national interest of U.S. which dictated its relations with Pakistan.

During the entire duration of this partnership, the gains for Pakistan however, were less as compared to its sufferance. Now, once as a twist of history, there is a convergence of interests of both countries once again, let there be a realistic Pak-U.S. partnership on the longer terms? This is only possible once both sides will respect each other’s interests on the basis of mutuality. The major partner will have to play the major role, as Secretary of State Hillary Clinton assured that, this time U.S. would not abandon Pakistan.

Dr Raja Muhammad Khan, *Pakistan Observer* (Islamabad), April 5, 2010,
<http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=24025>

PAK-U.S. TIES LOOKING UP

The U.S. and Pakistan finally seem to be moving in the right direction. This was a clear indication at the end of their recent "strategic dialogue" in Washington.

For Pakistan, a realistic expectation from this dialogue had been its transformation into a wider "strategic partnership" with clearly defined sectoral goalposts and priorities. This is exactly what happened.

A joint statement issued at the end of the talks said the two sides had agreed to expand the scope of their dialogue and established a joint Policy Steering Group to intensify and expand the "strategic dialogue" process which will be conducted at three tiers on an expanded list of sectoral tracks.

The joint statement noted that the desire to continue these talks at a higher plane was "in conformity with the importance" that both countries now attach to each other. They agreed to take further steps "to broaden and deepen their comprehensive cooperation and to further fortify the friendship between the two peoples." They will create an investment fund to support increased foreign direct investment and development in Pakistan which would provide much-needed additional support for Pakistan's energy sector and other high-priority areas.

Sectoral preparatory meetings are expected soon to evolve a mutually agreed time-bound and goal-specific cooperative framework before their next ministerial-level meeting in October, if not earlier. More focused talks will be held in Islamabad, perhaps this month, on "strategic stability and non-proliferation," an area in which Pakistan has special interest given its genuine demand from Washington for a "criteria-based" approach in its civilian nuclear cooperation policies.

While the joint statement made no mention of any discussion on this question, those privy to the talks confirm that the Pakistani side did voice its serious concern on America's country-specific preferential treatment to India and pressed its own case for a similar deal.

According to diplomatic observers in Washington, the very inclusion of "strategic stability and non-proliferation" in the sectoral dialogue with special focus in the joint statement is the beginning of serious business on a possible U.S. nuclear arrangement with Pakistan at par with India. In fact, according to some reports, unpublicised talks on the nuclear issue have already been taking place between the two sides for sometime, and are now getting more focused in the context of "strategic

stability and non-proliferation" as a formal agenda item of their ongoing sectoral dialogue.

At a meeting of the National Command Authority (NCA) on Monday, chaired by the prime minister, Pakistan staked its legitimate claim "for equal participation in civil nuclear cooperation at the international level" and called for a non-discriminatory approach in international cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Pakistan deserves treatment at par with India on the question of nuclear cooperation. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton implicitly acknowledged this reality when she said, "We are committed to helping Pakistan meet its real energy needs."

The NCA, which is the apex civil-military body responsible for custodial controls and safety and security of Pakistan's strategic assets, underscored the fact that Pakistan's socio-economic development was dependent on the country's ability to meet its rapidly expanding energy requirements. "There was a need to explore all options to ensure a reliable energy mix. The civil nuclear power generation was, therefore, an essential part of the national energy security strategy," said the NCA announcement.

That Pakistan is a nuclear-weapons state is a globally recognised fact. The U.S. itself recognised this status immediately after our nuclear tests on May 28 and 30, 1998, following India's on May 11 and 13. This recognition was manifest in the eight-round dialogue the U.S. conducted with India and Pakistan on equal terms to seek their cooperation on certain security benchmarks. At the end of this dialogue, a clear nuclear parity was established between the two countries in the form of an implicit "strategic linkage" for eligibility to "equal of treatment" in terms of future concessions, including access to technology.

For whatever reason that linkage was scrubbed, Pakistan has established its credentials as a responsible nuclear power by putting in place proper legislative controls and effective administrative mechanisms on export controls. The nuclear safety, security and non-proliferation measures are also supported by extensive legislative, regulatory and administrative framework guaranteeing the safety and security of nuclear materials and facilities. There is no threat to our nuclear assets from within or without.

Concerns and fears about the effectiveness and safety of our nuclear assets are no longer valid. The A Q Khan chapter is closed now. Pakistan has a command-and-control system that is based on international

guidelines, including those of the IAEA. Pakistan is already operating nuclear-power plants, and has highly trained manpower and a well-established safety and security culture. Therefore, it fully qualifies for equal participation in civil nuclear cooperation at the international level.

Pakistan is now pressing Washington for a nuclear cooperation arrangement similar to the one the U.S. has with India. The Obama administration, while stressing the importance of the safety of Pakistan's nuclear assets, is apparently also seeking to dispel Pakistani fears that the United States was secretly plotting to seize the country's nuclear assets. There are now reliable signals from Washington that the Obama administration was seriously engaged in "steps to address Pakistani security concerns."

According to a Wall Street Journal report, the U.S. is now actively lobbying for "more pressure" on New Delhi to ease tensions between India and Pakistan and to address Pakistan's legitimate security concerns in the context of India's role in Afghanistan. It has been revealed that President Obama had issued a "secret directive" for intensification of diplomacy for this purpose. According to some reports, President Obama also spoke to President Karzai in the same connection.

It is heartening that the U.S. is now beginning to show practical sensitivity to Pakistan's legitimate India-specific concerns and security interests in Afghanistan. Another remedial step required from Washington is the removal of strategic imbalances in the region that have fuelled an arms race between the two neighbours with an escalatory effect on their military budgets and arsenals. What we need in this region is mutual arrangements between India and Pakistan for maintenance of military balance and non-induction of destabilising weapon systems.

We are opposed to a nuclear and conventional arms race in South Asia, and in pursuit of this objective we have been pursuing an initiative for a Strategic Restraint Regime with India involving three interlocking elements: conflict resolution, nuclear and missile restraint, and conventional balance. In the context of the composite dialogue, Pakistan has also finalised a number of nuclear and conventional confidence-building measures with India.

The U.S. could best serve the cause of peace in South Asia by encouraging the resumption of the stalled composite dialogue between the two neighbours. But peace in this region would remain incomplete without Pakistan-India issues being addressed, which are not without direct impact on the overall situation in the Afghan theatre. The risk of a

Pakistan-India proxy war in Afghanistan is fraught with perilous implications for regional and global peace, and must be averted at all cost. This is what Washington must ensure before it is too late.

Shamshad Ahmad, *News International* (Rawalpindi), April 7, 2010,
http://www.thenews.com.pk/daily_detail.asp?id=232866

A SKEPTIC'S VIEW OF U.S.–PAKISTAN 'STRATEGIC DIALOGUE'

Before we take another strategic U-turn on Afghanistan, Pakistan's Policymakers must read this:

- Pakistan is conceptualized as a theater of war in American operational plans as the term Af-Pak suggests so strategic dialogue under the presence of such perception is nothing more than an illusion
- One option for Pakistan is to work on isolating the extra-regional powers [countries not bordering Afghanistan] and then pitch the extra-regional powers against one another by manipulating the rifts between major EU countries (which are already wary of prolonged Afghan mission) and the U.S.
- This strategic dialogue is an important component of an overall military strategy led by Gen. Petraeus in which enhancing U.S. image and closing the trust deficit both in COIN operations at tactical level in Afghanistan and at strategic level in Pakistan.
- The idea of offering Pakistan the carrot of a prolonged negotiations for a civilian nuclear deal was floated as far back as April 2009 with the aim of aligning U.S. and Pakistani interests

An Assessment

Summary

Recent days have seen a deceptive shift in U.S. policy towards Pakistan. In a stated aim to 'redefine' its relationship with Pakistan a process of strategic dialogue has been orchestrated by the United States creating much buzz in Pakistan over the issue. This brief essay will examine the real purpose of this strategic dialogue, American plans for the region, strategic implications for Pakistan's continued

alliance with the U.S., and the formulation of alternative policy options for Pakistan.

Main Arguments

- Strategic dialogue is a futile exercise because United States cannot be trusted as a reliable partner due to its track record and asymmetry in bilateral relationship.
- Pakistan is conceptualized as a theatre of war in American operational plans as the term Af-Pak suggests so strategic dialogue under the presence of such perception is nothing more than an illusion.
- Pakistan will continue to receive ‘aid’ through Kerry-Lugar act which completely encapsulates U.S. influence over all non military sectors of Pakistan.
- The construction of so called Reconstruction Opportunity Zones [ROZs] in war torn regions in Pakistan will increase the influence of the U.S. manifold in tribal areas and would be used as leverage against Pakistan any time in future.
- Strategic dialogue and specifically civil nuclear deal negotiations will meet the same fate as the ‘Friends of Democratic Pakistan’ summits, being merely nice photo opportunities. And even if the U.S. seriously considers negotiations over a civil nuclear agreement with Pakistan, the quid pro quo would be a non-starter, which could include asking Pakistan to compromise its position over Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty [FMCT] negotiations, nuclear safety and security issues and possibly ratify Non Proliferation Treaty [NPT]. The orchestrated hints of a possible offer of a civil nuclear deal are meant to give credibility to the so called strategic dialogue process.
- The fundamental aim of this strategic dialogue is to win the battle of perception in the Af-Pak Theater.
- The discussion on Afghanistan will remain the centerpiece of this dialogue process which means more cooperation (political and military) by Pakistan against what is by all counts a legitimate Afghan resistance.

Policy Options

- Formulation of an independent strategic framework by Pakistan for the region after a thorough review of the regional environment rather than looking towards Washington to protect Pakistan's interests in the region.
- Pakistan needs to open new venues for cooperation as an alternative. This could facilitate achieving peace and security for the entire region. One strategy to achieve this objective can be isolating the extra-regional powers [countries not bordering Afghanistan] and then pitch extra regional powers against one another by manipulating the rifts between major EU countries (which are already wary of prolonged Afghan mission) and the U.S.
- The solution to the war in Afghanistan does not lie within the national boundaries of that country due to proxy wars on Afghan soil. So a transnational setup comprising of Afghanistan and its immediate neighbors [minus extra-regional powers that do not border Afghanistan] can bring a revolutionary change in economic development of the region. Strategic dialogue with the U.S. should be shunned.
- Pakistan should explore and develop on war footing its immense natural resources to break the shackles of foreign demands and fulfill the energy requirement for short- and long-term industrialization.
- No relaxation of any sort should be given by Pakistan on its stance regarding FMCT and NPT as a quid pro quo for a civil nuclear deal offer.

Strategic Dialogue and the Battle of Perceptions

United States President Barack Obama in his speech at West Point Military Academy in December 2009 linked the success of coalition mission in Afghanistan with Pakistan's cooperation which effectively meant that Pakistan has to rein in its principle allies the Afghan Taliban both politically and militarily. However there was a realization among policy makers in Washington that with the prevailing strong anti-Americanism both within the population and the wider ruling establishment it is near to impossible to move Pakistan against Afghan Taliban in the FATA region. So a cosmetic

change on Washington's behavior was necessary in order to win the battle of perception in the Af-Pak battle field. So this strategic dialogue is an important component of an overall military strategy led by Gen. Petraeus in which enhancing U.S. image and closing the trust deficit both in COIN operations at tactical level in Afghanistan and at strategic level in Pakistan.

C. Christine Fair, a senior political scientist with the RAND Corporation and an expert on security relations between India and Pakistan, U.S. strategic interests in South Asia and Pakistan's internal security in her policy paper published in *Washington Quarterly* in April 2009 said in plain terms:

“Pakistan watchers generally agree that the United States will fail to secure greater alignment between Pakistani and U.S. interests unless and until it can mitigate the “trust deficit (...) For its part, Islamabad has numerous complaints against Washington which also span decades. Washington's ‘original sins’ include providing arms to India during its war with China in 1962 and cutting off arms to India and Pakistan during their wars in 1965 and 1971. As Pakistan was reliant on U.S. weapons systems, arms cutoffs hurt Pakistan considerably more than it did India, which was more reliant on Soviet systems (...) Pakistan's security elite and citizenry therefore consider the United States an unreliable partner and believe that the United States will abandon Pakistan again when Washington's security interests change”

Ironically, Christine Fair was the one who floated the idea of offering Pakistan a civilian nuclear deal so as to build ‘credibility’ in the future of U.S.-Pakistan partnership.

Daniel Markey a senior fellow for India, Pakistan and South Asia at the Council of Foreign Relations in his policy paper at NBR analysis center in November 2009 also focused on improving U.S. image inside Pakistan to achieve American strategic objectives in the region. In his conclusion he writes:

“U.S. can pursue a variety of alternative strategies to meet its counter terror and counter insurgency objectives in South Asia, ranging from unilateral U.S. military and intelligence operations to coercive diplomacy to containment. All of these approaches have significant shortcomings and cultivating strong and effective allies within Pakistan's political, military, and civic communities may be

the best way to secure U.S. strategic objectives over the short, medium and long term. Improving Pakistan's image of United States is a long term and complex endeavor that would require high profile efforts, including humanitarian relief and non military assistance."

So it is abundantly clear that U.S.-Pakistan strategic dialogue is overrated. It may not be more than a photo-op ending, a lot of listening and then a declaration of that contains no commitments whose only objective appears to be to mislead Pakistan's policymakers, the strategic community and the masses at large in Pakistan and push the country in taking a yet another disastrous U-turn on Afghanistan.

Anatomy of Civil Nuclear Deal

Much fuss has been created within Pakistani intelligentsia about the proposed civil nuclear deal by U.S. to Pakistan on the pattern of the Indo-U.S. nuclear deal. Before going into the question of relevance of civil nuclear deal and the seriousness of U.S. intentions it must be understood that the notion of civil nuclear deal is added just to make the strategic dialogue appear credible or in other words create a deliberate deception and illusion for 'image building' inside Pakistan and secondly to extract flexibility from Pakistan's rightful stance on FMCT, possibly NPT and more intrusion into Pakistan's nuclear programme.

As far as American intentions are concerned U.S. will not make a civil nuclear deal with Pakistan primarily because it does not want to damage its global image which is already tarnished due to unilateralism of Bush regime specifically related to civil nuclear deal with countries outside the nuclear non proliferation treaty (NPT). Quite the contrary officially United States considers Pakistan's nuclear arsenal unsafe and different tactics are used to rein in Pakistan's nuclear programme and one such latest tactics was the Kerry-Lugar act. Secondly, materializing the civil nuclear deal would mean more indigenously produced fissile material available for Pakistan which would significantly turn the strategic balance in favor of Pakistan which would jeopardize U.S.-India strategic relationship. It would be fair to say that such a result is the last thing U.S. would want to happen. Thirdly, it would take the air out of Obama's global image and U.S. 'moral standing' in the upcoming NPT review conference next month.

In her latest article in the influential Foreign policy magazine, Christine Fair confirmed the above analysis when she wrote that;

“Any civilian nuclear deal for Pakistan would have to be conditions-based. It would not be equivalent to India's deal, which recognizes India's nonproliferation commitments and enables India to compete strategically with China globally. A civilian nuclear deal with Pakistan has a different logic: to reset bilateral relations that are bedeviled with layers of mistrust on both sides (...) This deal should therefore be conditioned upon access to nuclear scientist A.Q. Khan and direct information about his nuclear black markets, as well as verifiable evidence that Pakistan is reversing its support for militant groups and taking active steps to dismantle the architecture for terrorism.”

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in her TV interview with Pakistani English Channel Express news responded to a question posed by the anchor on a possible civil nuclear deal by saying the following:

“The civil nuclear deal with India was a result of years of negotiations which is symbolic of strategic partnership between two states but Pakistan would continue to receive aid through Kerry-Lugar act”.

Pakistan's Leaders Need an Alternative Model and not America

The record of nuclear energy globally and its relevance for Pakistan is a matter worth observing. Globally the quest for nuclear energy shows a fluctuating graph and on the contrary fossil fuel has been the prime source of energy for developing countries. The U.S. generates twenty percent of its electricity from nuclear energy and since 1996 no new commercial reactors have come online, in 2002 Germany enacted legislation to phase out nuclear power plants until 2020 citing the unacceptable risks posed by potential accidents and nuclear waste. In Europe alone collectively there has been no “nuclear renaissance” even after mounting tensions when, after Georgia conflict, Russia blocked gas supplies to Europe. However, examples of the other side of the story exist, e.g. ambitious plans in China and India to produce energy through nuclear power. The point is that the unreliable trend towards achieving power through nuclear energy exists globally. Secondly, Pakistan has immense natural resources to not only overcome the existing manufactured energy crisis and future massive industrialization but can export surplus energy to Afghanistan, India and Central Asia. The only thing needed is an alternative economic model to ensure optimum utilization of more than enough energy resources and its fair distribution.

So civil nuclear deal offer by the U.S. is a 'strategic setup' and Pakistan's policymakers should not fall for it.

Implication for Nurturing Partnership with U.S.

Despite much fuss Pakistan's cooperation with the U.S. against a legitimate popular resistance in Afghanistan is the real agenda in the U.S.-Pakistan Strategic Dialogue. U.S. will be reassured by representatives of Pakistani government that they will mount a full scale offensive operation against all seasoned allies of Pakistan in North Waziristan so as to facilitate U.S. to negotiate with Taliban from a position of strength. Aligning with U.S. in these past nine years has devastated Pakistan economically, strategically and militarily. Recent economic reports indicate that Pakistan has incurred a loss of more than U.S. \$ 45 billion and this terror crunch has uniformly and severely affected all sectors of economy. Furthermore, as if this were not enough the 'development budget' of the country has also been consumed in Pakistan's so-called war against terrorism which is actually an American war inside Pakistan.

A country that engages itself in a protracted conflict is doomed to collapse under its own weight and in Pakistan U.S. drone strikes and punitive military operations have set the scene for Pakistan for at least another decade of conflict within its borders. India has emerged as a powerful entity in the region because of U.S. presence in Afghanistan which has made Pakistan economically and strategically weak. Moreover Pakistan is a nuclear weapon state and presence of hostile western troops under American leadership on its western borders should ring alarm bells in Islamabad rather than taking measures to strengthen the foreign presence. The arguments against Indian military and intelligence presence in Afghanistan and their destabilizing affect are also valid in the case if U.S. military and intelligence operations in Afghanistan and their destabilizing effect on Pakistan and the region.

Conclusion

The strategic dialogue aims to create an illusion amongst Pakistan's policy makers in order to facilitate their U-turn on Afghanistan. The 'change' in U.S. attitude in other words can be summarized as a strategic bribe for Pakistan to facilitate U.S. interests in the region. Establishing two or three power plants inside Pakistan and donating substandard military hardware

will not and should not be the price for compromising on the strategic interests of the Pakistani nation.

Majid Mahmood, April 8, 2010,
<http://pakistankakhudahafiz.wordpress.com/2010/04/08/a-skeptics-view-of-us%E2%80%93pakistan-strategic-dialogue/>

STRATEGIC DIALOGUE WITH AMERICA

America and Pakistan have been striving to develop through strategic dialogue, the trust required to fight terrorism in Afghanistan, tribal areas on the borders of Afghanistan and its spread deep inside Pakistan. Pakistanis are keenly watching its outcome to a new plan of action to deal with the situation. As expected, many more such dialogues would be planned in future till some final settlement is reached.

We have been fighting this war along with the U.S. and NATO allies for the last eight years. Ever since General (ret'd) Pervez Musharraf surrendered to Bush's telephone call and accepted his dictation, we have been going from bad to worse in this war. The U.S. has been spending a huge amount of money every year, while Pakistan has been battling on multiple fronts in Swat, South Waziristan and suicidal attacks deep inside its cities. The incumbent U.S. administration must realise that the philosophy of "friends not masters" is the only lasting relationship. If authoritative doctrine had not been applied and war not forced down the throat of Pakistan, an amicable plan could have been formulated with mutual consent. We could have saved the eight years of war, loss of precious lives, and tremendous amount of money that could have been used for reviving the economy of Afghanistan and Pakistan. Both, people of Pakistan and America, would be sitting at open restaurants and enjoying their meals discussing mutual interests. Remember, big or small, friends have an equal status and deal with each other in the same spirit. The secret dialogue was the fourth strategic dialogue between the two countries, but it had a special significance because of the level at which it was being discussed. Both sides had come prepared with various proposals, to leave some and accept some in order to demonstrate visible achievements to their respective countries. Unfortunately, the U.S. administration always attaches Indian involvement necessary for every solution in this region.

The question here is, where does India stand in the strategic dialogue between Pakistan and America? It is widely known and, thus, an

open secret that the Indian foreign and interior ministers were specially called to the U.S., just a week before the meeting, by the incumbent administration for an advice on the dialogue with Pakistan. Are U.S. officials totally naive that a 'friend's enemy' is no forum which can honestly deliberate about their problems. The fact of the matter remains that India is being deliberately involved by the U.S. in Afghanistan to neutralise Pakistan in the region. But this will never happen. Firstly, India is in no position to perform this task because of its location. Secondly, Pakistan shall never allow it to do that. Both Afghanistan and Pakistan can mutually sort out their problems with the American help in the long run.

The Americans must recall the 1979 War and appreciate Pakistan's efforts to fight against the foreign invasion in Afghanistan. Moreover, Muslims from all over the world rushed to Afghanistan to face the Soviet onslaught and it were only because of the jihadis that Soviet Union was defeated. All the other elements, including America and Europe, only chipped in terms of equipment and money. Moreover, as India was a close friend of the Soviet Union, it played that role with all its resources and used its influence in the region without any hesitation; however, the Indian administration completely failed to create any dent in the victory of Muslims. India is, therefore, in no position to change anything in Afghanistan even today. This is a point to ponder for the American think tanks that wars are fought and won standing with friends only. We, in Pakistan, are interested in the USA's 'exit' strategy from Afghanistan and as friends will ensure their safe and pleasant departure. However, modalities may be one of the points to be discussed in the strategic dialogues. India has no role to play in this scenario and I hope that the U.S. think tanks for once will have a rational perception. India and Pakistan are not friends and shall remain so as long as the Kashmir problem is not solved. Unfortunately, American behaviour in the past had been encouraging Indian supremacy over Pakistan, which dragged Pakistan to match Indian nuclear capability. This issue should be a logical entry in any future dialogue.

Pakistan's political and economic stability is the guarantee to settle the Afghan situation. A prosperous Pakistan is vital for a stable Afghanistan in future. Pakistan is the frontline ally and has been the strongest partner against war on terror. It has suffered the most in this war and that also because of the U.S., as a friend or through intimidation. However, things have changed and now our relationship rests in

friendship only. We need to be compensated for the loss we have suffered: 1.5 billion dollars per year is no compensation. It is only a day-to-day ration. We really need to get away with our debts to start afresh, reconstitute our energy shortage and reconstruct our industry, which is totally ruined because of the American war.

Whosoever has initiated these strategic dialogues might be able to clarify some issues and straighten a few futuristic plans between friends. Let us hope the new dialogues would help us work together to end this operation and any future conflict in the best interest of American, Pakistan, and Afghanistan.

Rab Nawaz Choudhry, *Nation* (Islamabad), April 11, 2010,
<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Opinions/Columns/11-Apr-2010/Strategic-dialogue-with-America>

CONNECTING WITH THE U.S.

Strategic dialogue with the United States marks a new stage in the upturn in our bilateral relationship, the first milestone being Pakistan's designation as a non-Nato ally in 2004, followed by the Kerry-Lugar enactment last year.

During this process of reconnecting, we cannot help but recall that our relations with the U.S. have always oscillated between friendship and alienation, and between the convergence of views and the divergence of perceptions. This time round, we should examine what causes the volatility in our relationship.

It is first necessary to understand the nature of our relationship, which is asymmetric. The U.S. is one of the richest countries in the world, endowed with high industrial and commercial productivity. Most importantly, it is the world's preponderant military power with all the attributes of a global power. Such global powers have global interests.

Pakistan, meanwhile, is much smaller, poorer, socially backward and economically underdeveloped. It is weaker militarily (despite our nuclear capability) and is a regionally oriented power (our concerns vis-à-vis India, Afghanistan and on occasion Iran). Then there is our perennial political instability, marked by the lack of continuity and consistency in policies and the consequent lack of direction. There is thus a glaring asymmetry in our respective positions. It is all very well to say that we are two sovereign and independent nations which deal with each other as equals, but the reality is very different.

Due to our poverty and backwardness, we look towards the U.S. for many of our needs. We need investment in all areas of economic and social development, trade concessions, technology for our industries, and higher education and training for our students. We also need military equipment and hardware for our defence needs. Then we look to the U.S. for political support on major international issues where our national interest is involved.

Unfortunately for us, a hundred countries or so around the world also need the same kind of things from the U.S. This situation is not fully comprehended in Pakistan's public opinion.

Fortunately, however, the United States also needs us — at least from time to time. The U.S. has needed us for pursuing its global objectives at various times in the past, and is currently in need of us again. Otherwise, we would rank amongst a long queue of states soliciting U.S. help. We are relevant to the U.S. because of our geographical location, which gives us strategic importance that few states have. Earlier, America needed Pakistan for its encirclement of the communist regimes in Russia and China. In the 80s, the U.S. needed Pakistan to push the then Soviet forces out of Afghanistan, partly because it feared Soviet ingress into the warm waters of the Middle East. It also needed to defeat communism as an ideology.

Then, after the terrorist attacks on U.S. territory on Sept 11, 2001, the U.S. vowed to eliminate al-Qaeda and Islamic extremists. It felt that the evidence that was available plus its own intelligence showed that the masterminds of global terrorism, particularly Osama bin Laden, were based in the lawless regions of Afghanistan and Pakistan. They had to be rooted out and eliminated, and Pakistan's cooperation was essential. Once again the U.S. needed Pakistan, and badly so.

Pakistan's relevance is the reason behind this new phase of U.S. attention which began in 2002-03 and continues. In return, the U.S. expects Pakistan to focus on the terrorism problem by diverting its military deployment in the east and toning down its political stance of confronting India, to dealing with al-Qaeda and Taliban presence in its territory. Additionally, Pakistan is expected to help the U.S. defeat these elements in Afghanistan. While there seems to be broad convergence on this approach between the two countries, Pakistan wants the U.S. to put pressure on India to resolve the Kashmir dispute as well as other bilateral problems, so that it does not have to worry about its eastern border.

The U.S. balks at becoming Pakistan's advocate with India, yet also insists that Pakistan must go all out to combat al-Qaeda and the Taliban on its territory. These respective demands and expectations are the source of the tension in the Pakistan-U.S. interaction, despite the upturn.

Due to the asymmetry between our two states and the cross-purposes involved, this upturn will not last forever. U.S. interest in Pakistan is currently strong, but it does not consider this as vital to its national interests as it does, for example, the security of Israel. It is determined to combat al-Qaeda and the Taliban but could conceivably find other ways of dealing with them if Pakistan does not play ball. Thus the Pakistan connection, though convenient, is not entirely indispensable. Secondly, as in the past, the U.S. will move on to other issues/areas once the terror threat subsides. In such a situation, Pakistan will be back at the end of the queue for receiving American favours.

We must therefore take the renewed U.S. interest in Pakistan for what it is worth. We can avail of U.S. favours for as long as they are forthcoming, but we should be prepared for fending for ourselves when they cease. By avoiding dependency, we should make use of the U.S. as is best for us and avoid unrealistic expectations. The U.S. will give us economic and military assistance but it does not currently seem prepared to give us civilian nuclear technology. One important reason is that the Washington non-proliferation community and more importantly, Congress, are not ready to approve. Much lobbying will have to be done before this becomes possible. Even more unlikely is American help in solving our disputes with India, if India is unwilling.

Our relationship with the U.S. cannot be one of permanence and consistency, as it is not based on a vital or abiding interest of the U.S. Further, it is subject to U.S. priorities, which continue to change. We should realise that this is the nature of our relationship, and not sulk when America turns away again.

Sarwar Naqvi, *Dawn* (Islamabad), April 12, 2010,
<http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/editorial/connecting-with-the-us-240>

GILANI-OBAMA TALKS

True to form, the Pakistani leadership has once again demonstrated its degrading tendency to lean against the U.S., asking it for favours that it is disinclined to grant. Prime Minister Gilani chose to request for a civilian nuclear deal, the like of which the Bush Administration had struck with

India, when he met President Obama on Sunday. This demand has come yet again, even though American officials, right from top to bottom, have already categorically told us off on the issue. Taking up the repeatedly rejected demand, knowing full well that it would not be accepted again, makes Mr Gilani's pleas all the more humiliating, both for him and the nation as a whole. Reportedly, Mr Obama also expressed disappointment over our principled stand on the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty, while assuring us that the U.S. had no sinister designs against our nuclear assets. Under the circumstances, it was idle to expect that Mr Obama would accept our request for help in the nuclear context to get over the crippling power shortages we have been facing for more than two years. It must be realised that though Mr Obama's honest and straightforward image had initially symbolised hope for the Muslim world, it now represents a mixture of compromises and biases, which have dissipated that hope. The U.S. made a strategic decision to strengthen India to serve as a watchdog of its interests in the region, before coming forward to offering it the so-called civilian nuclear assistance; the emerging clout of China in the world rankled in its flesh like a thorn, and the challenge needed to be met at the regional level. New Delhi was quick to make its services available. Thus, the blatant disregard of the provisions of the NPT that the U.S., ironically, asks weaker nations to strictly adhere to. Since Pakistan is not expected to serve that purpose, it is not likely to get the same facility. If the Obama-Gilani meeting reached the conclusion that the U.S.-Pakistan bilateral relations have to be raised to new heights, as Foreign Minister Qureshi has said, it should be clear to Pakistan that the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan and visible reduction of the terrorist threat would see the ties losing those heights. By then, Islamabad would have served the U.S. purpose. The strategic relationship that it claims to be developing with Pakistan cannot exclude our dire need of energy security; while the U.S.-favoured pipeline from Turkmenistan to meet our power needs is virtually a non-starter in the present disturbed conditions.

Islamabad must get out of its fascination of the U.S. and the West and see where the country's interests lie. Nor should the power crisis, that is worsening an already grave socio-economic turmoil be made to fester when, fortunately, friendly nations, like Iran, China and Turkey are ready to extend their help. We should not dillydally.

Editorial, *Nation* (Islamabad), April 14, 2010,
<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Opinions/Editorials/14-Apr-2010/GilaniObama-talks>

**CLINTON MEETS GILANI:
PAK-U.S. STRATEGIC DIALOGUE; BILATERAL TIES
DISCUSSED**

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Chairman U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee John Kerry called on Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani prior to his departure for Pakistan on Wednesday.

They discussed with him Pak-U.S. bilateral ties, the role of the country in the war against terror and the recently held round of the strategic dialogue.

The Prime Minister in his meeting with Secretary Clinton expressed satisfaction over the last round of Pak U.S. strategic dialogue and hoped that the follow-up action on the progress made through sectoral meetings would take place.

He termed the improving defence and intelligence cooperation between the two countries as a sign of bridging the trust deficit and underscored the need for promoting it even further to counter the common threat of terrorism.

The Prime Minister urged the U.S. government to fast-track the funding process for undertaking the up-gradation of existing power generation and transmission infrastructure to help overcome power shortages in Pakistan.

He said addressing the energy crisis in the country was the foremost priority of his government and the U.S. should encourage its corporate sector to invest in this sector in Pakistan.

On the combined impact of world recession and war on terrorism on Pakistan's economy the Prime Minister sought U.S. help in negotiations with the IMF to soften its conditionalities thus enabling the government to provide much needed relief to the people.

He also hoped the U.S. would use its influence with other donor countries to honour their pledges made at the Tokyo conference. The Prime Minister said improvement in economic life of people of Pakistan was intrinsically linked to political stability in the country.

The parliamentary democracy was strengthened with the unanimous passage of the constitutional reforms package in the National Assembly. The Prime Minister reiterated his government's firm resolve to maintain cordial neighbourly ties with India and Afghanistan. He apprised the U.S. Secretary of State of his initiatives to mend ties with both the countries in the interest of peace and security of the region.

He regretted that Pak-India relations had been made hostage to unfortunate act of terror. While Pakistan remained committed to prosecute and bring to justice the perpetrators of Mumbai incident, India must return to Composite Dialogue to sincerely address bilateral core issues.

Secretary Clinton profoundly praised Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani for his leadership and “consensus-making ability” and vision for fostering friendly relations with Pakistan’s neighbours.

Gilani said Pakistan would welcome the U.S. facilitation of this process. He said Pakistan stands by its offer of assistance to Afghanistan for the capacity building of its army, police and civilian institutions. Afghanistan’s peace and stability was vital for Pakistan and the country would continue to support Afghan government’s efforts in this regard.

Secretary Clinton agreed with the Prime Minister’s assessment on the prospects of Pak-US relations and informed him that she would try to visit Pakistan in July rather than October to lead the next round of strategic dialogue.

Clinton assured the Prime Minister that USA would stand by Pakistan in its endeavours to overcome its pressing economic difficulties, particularly in addressing the energy crisis.

In his meeting with Senator Kerry, Gilani termed his meeting with Obama as very productive and useful in determining the direction of the strategic partnership between Pakistan and USA. He expressed his satisfaction over efforts made by the two countries in last two years in strengthening cooperation in multifaceted fields.

He appreciated the role of U.S. Congressional leadership, particularly John Kerry, in promoting economic and security ties through the passage of Kerry Lugar bill and Defence Appropriations legislation. Kerry commended Pakistan’s pivotal role and assured the Prime Minister for complete support of Congressional leadership for providing Pakistan with greater U.S. market access, meeting its urgent defence requirements and accommodating request for nuclear power generation.

Meanwhile, a report from London says; Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani left for Pakistan after a brief technical stopover here. The Prime Minister is flying back to Pakistan after attending a two-day summit on Nuclear Safety in Washington.

An earlier report said; Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani left Washington for Pakistan at the end of a three-day visit during which he

attended a major nuclear security summit and discussed bolstering Pakistan-U.S. relations with President Barack Obama.

Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi and Pakistan chief negotiator for the nuclear summit and ambassador to China Masood Khan accompanied the prime minister.

The prime minister also held bilateral meetings with several world leaders on the sidelines of the Nuclear Security Summit, which was attended by some 47 countries.

Pakistan Times (Islamabad), April 15, 2010,
<http://www.pakistantimes.net/pt/detail.php?newsId=10286>

PAK-U.S. PERCEPTIONAL MISMATCH

Conceded, the Pak-U.S. relationship is gradually acquiring a pronounced strategic dimension and the two sides are working together in a variety of ways towards long-term co-operative engagements. Also, of late a series of productive contacts have materialised between them including Prime Minister Gilani's summit with President Barack Obama, and there is noticeable improvement in American take on Pakistan's nuclear programme. So we are not surprised if the State Department's spokesman P J Crowley is "encouraged by the recent trends in Pakistani public opinion that recognises the value of the ongoing strategic dialogue and ever-improving co-operation between the United States and Pakistan". But here in Pakistan the people are not on the same page; there is a wide chasm of perceptual mismatch between the official and public positions on relationship with the United States. For example, early this week when a national debate erupted over the UN report on Benazir Bhutto's assassination the so-called 'American hand' came in for good amount of rubbing in the media discourse - so much so that the U.S. embassy had to step in with a stiff warning against mixing hearsay with reality. But if the APP report on Spokesman Crowley's positive spin on the prevailing public opinion in Pakistan is any indicator the State Department appears to be quite concerned about the "suggestions that the U.S. was somehow responsible for recent terrorist attack on a rally in Pakistan". In fact, he was referring to Jammāt-i-Islami's charge that its anti-power outages demonstration in Peshawar was bombed by the American agents and that the movement of Americans be banned 'for peace across the country'. This is not the first time that finger has been raised in that direction, as earlier also similar charges were made against the United States. To what

extent Crowley is right in asserting that the people of Pakistan recognize the “positive tone and substance” in the merging relationship one would not like to pass a judgement but his broaching this subject at a media briefing is broadly indicative of the fact that image and perception still beset the Pak-U.S. bilateral relationship. That is perhaps the ironic legacy of ‘Ugly American’ which American governments should have learnt by now to live with.

Quintessentially, the Pak-U.S. relationship is not seen by the people of Pakistan in isolation, detached from two important factors: Indian role in the region and the turmoil in Afghanistan. Since the United States has its own strategic positions, independent of Pakistani concerns, in both the areas it is just natural that divergence of perceptions keeps coming up negatively impacting the Pak-U.S. bilateral relations. For one, it is beyond an average Pakistani’s comprehension why the Obama administration should not weigh in with India on the issue of river waters when it is keen to help Pakistan overcome its power shortages. And, how come Washington believes that while India tightens its repressive grip on Muslim-majority Kashmir there would be no reaction in Pakistan which in turn would breed extremism. As historical rivals Pakistan and India have two clearly conflicting worldviews that directly affect their publics’ perceptions. Whenever the people of Pakistan would find the U.S. leaning towards India - for instance, presently in the case of civil nuclear power co-operation - there would be a cry for equivalence. The other factor that impinges upon Pak-U.S. relationship is their anti-terrorism alliance, as it tends to work on both sides of the Pak-Afghan border. Even when Pakistan is fighting single-handedly the menace of militancy and extremism - which is far bigger and potentially dangerous than what the entire might of the West is pitted against in neighbouring Afghanistan - its contribution in terms of sacrifices and dislocations is acknowledged rather grudgingly. In fact, at times it seems Pakistan is left alone to contend with terrorists as Coalition forces vacate border posts facilitating insurgents’ free movement crises-crossing the border, prompting Ambassador Hussain Haqqani to note that “hammer and anvil don’t seem to be working both ways”. Good if the State Department spokesman is encouraged by the positive note of the Pakistani public tone but conceding plurality of public opinion U.S. has no choice but to tolerate dissent howsoever opinionated.

Editorial, *Daily Times* (Lahore), April 27, 2010,
http://dailymailnews.com/0410/27/Editorial_Column/DMEditorial.php#1

U.S. OPTIONS LIMITED IN PAKISTAN

The arrest of Pakistani-American Faisal Shahzad in connection to the failed car bombing in Times Square has led to more U.S. drone attacks in the tribal area of North Waziristan as well as pressure on Pakistan to intensify anti-militants efforts. U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has warned of "severe consequences" (CBS) for Pakistan in the event of a successful Pakistan-based terrorist attack in the United States. Bruce Riedel, who chaired a special interagency committee last year to develop President Barack Obama's policy for Pakistan and Afghanistan, says there is "a very serious possibility that the next mass casualty terrorist attack on the United States will be postmarked 'Pakistan.'" In which case, he says, "a stiff diplomatic demarche is not going to satisfy anyone." But U.S. options to act against Pakistan are "severely limited," he argues. The best option is "to get Pakistan to do more now" in its fight against extremism, he says, by providing more weapons and technological aid.

What kind of consequences do you think Secretary Clinton was talking about in her warning?

The secretary is right, that there is a very serious possibility that the next mass casualty terrorist attack on the United States will be postmarked "Pakistan." We narrowly averted that in Times Square just a week ago. A stiff diplomatic demarche is not going to satisfy anyone should that happen. This administration and its predecessor have been pressuring Pakistan for years to shut down completely the jihadist Frankenstein that was created over three decades in Pakistan. This includes al-Qaeda, the Afghan Taliban, the Pakistani Taliban, Lashkar-e-Taiba, and a host of other groups. No Pakistani government has yet been willing to take on the entire network of terrorist groups. Secretary Clinton has raised questions about some in the Pakistani government still retaining links to these groups.

But the devil's in the details here. Pakistan is a country twice the size of California with the fastest growing nuclear arsenal in the world. Our options to do anything against Pakistan are severely limited. Military options are unattractive; this is a country with nuclear weapons and which is determined to defend itself. Economic sanctions are very limited as well, and one needs to bear in mind that more than three-quarters of the supplies that go to American and NATO forces in Afghanistan come

via the port of Karachi in Pakistan. So Pakistan has a lot of leverage on the United States. Clinton is trying to signal to the Pakistanis, let's not put ourselves into this shoe, take action now so we don't face this conundrum of problems later on.

But if there is another terrorist attack that is traced to Pakistan, what kind of options would the United States feel pressed to take?

The first option will be to press the Pakistanis to move into those parts of the country like North Waziristan, where these terrorists are still operating very freely and very openly. If the Pakistanis won't do that, then there will be serious consideration about whether the United States needs to take unilateral action. But that's very difficult to do; that would be infringing on Pakistani sovereignty; that would risk a conflict with Pakistan with all the difficulties I already described. And it would be a further strain on our already limited resources in Afghanistan and the region if we had to expand the area where our own boots were on the ground. There are no attractive options for dealing with this. The best option is to get Pakistan to do more now.

Since the Times Square attempt, there have already been three drone attacks in North Waziristan where Faisal Shahzad is said to have trained. Is this merely an indication of a more aggressive U.S. policy?

President Obama ordered, just a few days after he came into office in 2009, a stepped-up use of drones to go after al-Qaeda and other terrorists in the border regions, and I expect we'll continue to see that. This year we'll probably see over a hundred drone attacks. The drones are very effective technology; they have killed or wounded some senior terrorists. But they're just a tactic, they're not a strategy. You're not going to close down Pakistan's jihadist Frankenstein simply from 30,000 feet in the air. They can be a very good way to disrupt and sometimes dismantle terrorist activities, but they're never going to defeat it by themselves. That requires Pakistani cooperation. That's always been at the heart of why this is such a difficulty problem. We can't eliminate the terrorist problem in Pakistan without Pakistan's help. And yet, we've tried for decades now to get the Pakistanis to give us that help, and we've not yet found the cure to make that happen.

There seems to be a disconnect between what we're hearing from the White House and the Pentagon. Attorney General Eric Holder says Pakistan was "intimately involved" in the Times Square plot, while U.S. Central Command Chief General David Petraeus says Faisal Shahzad was inspired by militants in Pakistan but didn't necessarily have contact with them. Why is this?

I don't know what explains the disconnect. Certainly, the attorney general is much closer to the investigation; he knows what's going on in the interrogation of the suspect Shahzad. I think that it's clear that the Pakistani Taliban provided at least inspirational support; the Pakistani Taliban claimed credit for the idea of attacking the United States and has promised more such attacks.

What we're seeing going on in Pakistan now is a very dangerous phenomenon. The ideology of al-Qaeda, the ideology of global Islamic jihad that all jihadists should focus on the United States as the ultimate enemy, is gaining ground with groups beyond al-Qaeda. We saw this in 2008 in Mumbai, when Lashkar-e-Taiba attacked Mumbai and attacked American and Israeli targets. Those are the targets of al-Qaeda and the global Islamic jihad. We've now seen the Pakistani Taliban try to launch an attack on the United States of America for the first time. This spreading of the idea of global Islamic jihad is very dangerous and as it gets deeper and deeper into the extremist groups in Pakistan it means we can expect more attacks like the one we saw at Times Square, and we can expect them to become increasingly sophisticated and more capable.

Is the Pentagon downplaying the Pakistani Taliban connection because of the recognition that the United States has limited resources and they prefer not to put boots on the ground in Pakistan?

I don't want to try to assess the Pentagon's motives, but I think the Pentagon understands that Pakistan is crucially important to the logistics to our war in Afghanistan; more than three-quarters of everything that we shoot, drink, and eat in Afghanistan arrives via Karachi. And second, that Pakistani cooperation against the Taliban, against al-Qaeda is absolutely essential. We cannot win this struggle without Pakistani

support. So it's bringing the Pakistanis onto our side 100 percent and that is the ultimate challenge here.

In February, three U.S. soldiers from the U.S. special operations forces were killed in northwest Pakistan. They were involved in counter-insurgency training as well as development assistance. What is the extent of U.S. military presence on the ground in Pakistan that's kept quiet, and is there any possibility that we'll see an increase in this?

I don't think we'll see a substantial increase. The Pakistanis don't want American boots on the ground. The Pakistani army is a very proud institution; it believes that it should do the job. What it wants from the United States is the weapons and the technology to do the job. And here there is a lot that the United States should do. The Pakistanis need air mobility to fight the insurgency and militants in their country. That means helicopters. They need dozens and dozens of more helicopters in order to be able to rapidly respond to militant attacks and to be able to move forces around quickly to deal with the militants. In that scenario, the Pentagon should be trying to do a lot more to give the Pakistanis the kind of air mobility that would allow them to deal with this problem effectively.

Is there anything the United States is doing to help Pakistan develop a more efficient counter-insurgency strategy? What more could it be doing?

There's a lot we're doing and there's a lot more we can do. We've given the Pakistanis the benefit of our experience in counter-insurgency; we've traded tactics with them, we're trying to encourage more of their officers to spend more time in our training schools in order to benefit from our experience. We've also provided them with some very sophisticated avionics for their aircraft so they're better capable to target military sanctuaries and hideouts. But there's a tremendous amount we can still do. The one place we can do more is air mobility. As well as to be able to medevac soldiers who are wounded on the battlefield quickly back to hospitals in Pakistan.

Is the Times Square event going to restart a debate in the administration and a rejiggering of policy of how it should respond to Pakistan's safe havens for terrorism?

The Times Square event is a graphic reminder that Pakistan remains the epicenter of the global Islamic jihad, [which] this administration has understood from the day it came into office. Changing the strategic direction of Pakistan from being a long-time patron state support of jihadism to being a fighter against the jihadist menace is difficult to do. It's not going to come overnight. It's going to take time, it's going to take working with Pakistanis, especially those who understand the danger this poses to their own county. We're on a long path. If there is a successful terrorist attack in the United States that is postmarked "Pakistan," we're going to have to see that path move at lightning speed against the jihadists or the United States and Pakistan could be on the road to a very difficult confrontation.

Bruce O. Riedel's interview to *Council on Foreign Relation*, May 11, 2010, [http://www.cfr.org/publication/22099/us_options_limited_in_pakistan.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed:+cfr_main+\(CFR.org+-+Main+Site+Feed\)](http://www.cfr.org/publication/22099/us_options_limited_in_pakistan.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed:+cfr_main+(CFR.org+-+Main+Site+Feed))

CHANGE OF TONE

Pakistan has been sleeping with the enemy for far too long now. The message emanating from Washington is getting decidedly more aggressive and unrelenting with fresh revelations about the U.S.'s belief that some Pakistani officials know of the whereabouts of Osama bin Laden and Mullah Omer. This public accusation, voiced by U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, has brought into the open Pakistan's perceived central role in not just harbouring jihadis but supporting them. Secretary of State Clinton has, until recently, been the spokesperson for improved Pak-U.S. relations. However, this change in tone and tenor coming from the most powerful voice in Washington — second only to that of the President — is one that ought to nudge our establishment into waking up from its dual policy stupor to freshly reassess the ground realities.

The past two years of army offensives in Swat and FATA helped overcome the massive trust deficit between Pakistan and the U.S. This has arguably now been thrust into reverse gear after Faisal Shahzad's amateur attempt to bomb Times Square, New York. It is this episode that has made glaringly obvious Pakistan's dual policy, where Pakistani

Taliban are targeted for their challenge to the Pakistani state, but the Afghan Taliban are allowed safe havens in, amongst other places, the heartlands of North Waziristan because of the perceived political leverage they may help achieve for the Pakistani establishment in post-U.S. Afghanistan. It is just such a policy that has morphed North Waziristan into terrorism central where a deluge of militant factions are on the rise, extending from the notorious Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and Haqqani's Afghan Taliban network to militants from Southern Punjab who are visibly more brutal and remorseless than their counterparts.

Now is the time to weigh all the odds: is such a waiting game for imagined future strategic aims worth immediate U.S. wrath? Even Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi has cited Faisal Shahzad as the straw that may break the camel's back of Pak-U.S. relations. It is vital therefore that the escalating anger that is the subtext of the U.S. charges be addressed. At stake could arguably be our economy, defence, security, and even lives. There are already calls in Congress for cutting down the Kerry-Lugar aid.

The war on terror is now about to enter a new, more complex phase where the military and government must revisit the policy vis-à-vis the Afghan Taliban and our vested interests in Afghanistan. General Sardar Mahmood Ali Khan, the deputy chairman of the Joints Chiefs of Staff is right to say that an offensive in North Waziristan will require extensive planning and preparation. Be that as it may, the military needs to do the needful. The 'successes' in Swat and South Waziristan are already turning into ugly reversals as target killings and Taliban renewal are being witnessed once again in these regions. Displacing thousands of people and the death of many army men should not be in vain as the militants simply scurried off to North Waziristan to re-emerge with even more cunning and gusto.

The U.S. is now beginning to perceive Pakistan's policy for what it has been for the past nine years: a double-edged sword, slaying a dragon that only sprouts more heads.

Editorial, *Daily Times* (Lahore), May 12, 2010,
http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010\05\12\story_12-5-2010_pg3_1

BELATED EXPLANATION OF CLINTON'S STATEMENT

The United States has come out with belated explanations of the highly provocative and dangerous remarks made by Secretary of State Clinton threatening Pakistan of serious consequences if any successful attack was carried out in America in future having links with terrorist organisations in Pakistan. U.S. Special Representative Richard Holbrooke and Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs PJ Crowley have maintained that the remarks were not taken in the right context and that Clinton spoke in general and did not single out Pakistan.

The explanations themselves are nothing but window dressing as both the gentlemen did not deny that the Secretary of State did hurl threats. Even if the intention was otherwise, the explanation has come very late as the damage has already been done. It is quite understandable that the threatening statement has seriously hurt the feelings and sensitivities of people of Pakistan. We may point out that there are serious questions about genuineness of the New York drama, as many believe it has been engineered by the U.S. agencies to pressurise and malign Pakistan. Secondly, even if it was the handiwork of someone directly or indirectly linked to any militant group in Pakistan then the question arises as to what the country is required to do. It has already done more than the United States and its allies in the war against terror and large-scale operations have been carried out successfully breaking back of the terrorists but despite all this the country itself becomes frequent target of terrorist attacks. Why the onus of preventing attacks on the United States should be on Pakistan? If the United States with unimaginable resources and capabilities cannot prevent such incidents then why it is expecting of a Third World country with meagre resources to do so. It is all the more regrettable that Hillary threatened Pakistan at a time when a perception was developing that the two countries were getting closer putting irritants behind. The statement has caused serious damage to the process of normalisation, sending clear and unambiguous message to people of Pakistan that the United States is not expected to be a sincere and reliable friend or partner. We believe that the remarks of Clinton were part of a well-calculated plan under which the United States keeps on its relationship with Pakistan switching off and on. It is no secret that the policy is aimed at keeping Pakistan Army engaged in domestic turmoil

and destabilise Pakistan.

Editorial, *Pakistan Observer* (Islamabad), May 13, 2010,
<http://www.pakobserver.net/201005/13/detailnews.asp?id=30643>

INSATIABLE DEMAND

The familiar ‘do more’ demand, which, for obvious reasons, is anathema to Pakistanis, was once again on the lips of Secretary of State Hillary Clinton when she interacted with the audience at the U.S. Institute of Peace in Washington on Thursday. Her utterance looks bizarre when read with other American officials’ views expressed on various occasions, including her own. The most recent was of U.S. Representative to Afghanistan and Pakistan Richard Hollbrooke in conversation with Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi on Friday; he stated that the U.S. was satisfied with Islamabad’s cooperation in the war on terror. If an abortive incident like the Times Square bombing that clearly was the handiwork of an uninitiated person, could drive her to think in terms of “severe consequences” for Pakistan, in case, as she said, another attempt that was successful and was linked to Pakistani Taliban were to occur, one could only assume that she was desperately looking for an excuse to hurl that threat.

Again, Hollbrooke also told Qureshi that acts of an individual could not possibly spoil relations between the two states and that both would continue to work together to eliminate terrorism.

Powerful states, harbouring ulterior motives for a smaller state whose support is crucial to achieving their important strategic goals, are given to speaking with different tongues from the mouths of different high officials, some praising it for following the right policies, others picking holes in the same and threatening it with serious consequences. The ambiguity is designed to confuse the smaller state and create the fear that if it does not toe their line it is up for trouble.

Sadly, in our case, there is enough justification to feel that at least the political leadership would be ready to sign on the dotted line, even if that were to ultimately turn out to be its death warrant. Islamabad should make a strong demarche with Washington about Clinton’s threat, without mincing words.

Currently, the U.S. wants Pakistan to extend its military campaign to North Waziristan. The gaping holes in the American investigation of Faisal Shahzad would not, thus, rule out the assumption that the attempt

at Times Square was a stage-managed affair, just to give the U.S. a handle on Pakistan.

It is time the Pakistan government woke up and realised the adverse implications of launching a campaign in North Waziristan; already it has made enough enemies by its earlier actions. Under no circumstances should our own citizens be targeted; rather, serious efforts must be made to engage, in talks, the groups which have become hostile - thanks to our participation in the U.S.-sponsored war on so-called terror. In fact, the U.S. and its protégé Karzai have already come to the conclusion that eliminating what they call terrorism through force is a mirage. Talks alone are the remedy.

Editorial, *Nation* (Islamabad), May 16, 2010,
<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Opinions/Editorials/16-May-2010/Insatiable-demand>