

## PAKISTAN'S KASHMIR POLICY IN NEW STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

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### Abstract

*Kashmir has been an important factor in Pakistan's security policy vis-à-vis India and Pakistan has always directed its efforts to find a settlement of this long standing issue in South Asia. This Article looks into the changes Pakistan had to make in its Kashmir policy in order to adjust it to post 9/11 security environment. The questions this study tries to address can be divided into thematic issues and more specific research questions. In the light of President Musharraf's statement that Pakistan joined the US launched global War on Terror to safeguard its Kashmir cause,<sup>1</sup> the present study tries to understand the way the new international environment has affected Pakistan's approach towards Kashmir; secondly, what measures were taken to salvage Pakistan's claim on Kashmir and what was General Musharraf's new thinking on Kashmir; thirdly, how the new civilian government installed in office after the 2008 elections look towards the solution of Kashmir issue; and finally, what impact did the 'war on terror' have on the most concerned party, the Kashmiris?*

**Key Words:** Kashmir, Pakistan, India, Strategic Environment.

The international security paradigm underwent a fundamental change as a result of the terrorist act of September 11, 2001. The new international security environment caused many states to bring change in their security policies. The immediate US response to the 9/11 terrorist attack came in the form of what was termed as the war on terror, in which Pakistan soon found itself engulfed and its foreign policy towards its two important neighbours, India and Afghanistan, underwent a strategic change. The decision to join the war on terror caused Pakistan to alter its core security policies in the region. As a result it had to abandon its support to the Taliban regime in Afghanistan which was earlier nurtured by Pakistan to attain some

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<sup>1</sup> "Musharraf's speech on September 19 2001," *News*, September 20, 2001.

security goals in the region.<sup>2</sup> The Taliban government had served a number of Pakistan's interests, from securing its long porous western border to providing the controversial "strategic depth" and safe corridor for future energy transportation from Central Asia. Pakistan was faced with a dilemma when it was asked to join the US in its war on terror. The Taliban were of so much importance to Pakistan's interests in the region that it was not prepared to abandon them in Afghanistan.<sup>3</sup> On the one hand it had its Afghan policy at risk and on the other its policy on Kashmir was at stake. The changed international environment could not have approved Pakistan's backing of freedom fighters in Kashmir and there was the likelihood that US might now buy the Indian line on Kashmir and view the freedom struggle as terrorism.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, Pakistan had to sacrifice its Afghan policy in order to salvage its Kashmir policy from international pressure. In an effort to redirect international attention away from the freedom struggle in Kashmir, Pakistan had to undertake some diplomatic measures. It focused its attention on al Qaeda and foreign terrorists who had taken shelter in its northwestern border along Afghanistan.

The immediate post 9/11 policy adjustment did initially help Pakistan to salvage its Kashmir policy but it did not last for long. The attack on the Indian parliament on 12 December, 2001, made things more complicated for Pakistan. The attack came in the wake of 9/11 and it was widely painted by Indian propagandists as the "Indian 9/11." Reacting to the attack India mobilized its troops along the Indo-Pak border and pressurized Pakistan to halt its support to the freedom movement. The US also put two Pakistani based *jihadi* groups, Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM), in its designated terrorist list and thus acknowledged the element of terror in Kashmir's freedom struggle. The post 9/11 international environment coupled with the developments in the South Asian region presented Pakistan's Kashmir policy with both challenges and opportunities. The challenge was to save Pakistan's stand on Kashmir and the legitimacy of the freedom struggle; the opportunity was to review Pakistan's decades' old strategy of aiding the freedom movement that had failed to yield any considerable results.

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<sup>2</sup> For a detailed account of Pakistan's strategic interest in Afghanistan and its reluctance to join US War on Terror, see, Vikram Jagdish, "Reconsidering American Strategy in South Asia: Destroying Terrorist Sanctuaries in Pakistan's Tribal Areas," *Small Wars and Insurgencies* vol. 20, no.1 (March 2009): 37-40.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Read leading Indian newspapers from September 12 to September 25 to get an idea of the Indian attempts to exploit the post 9/11 situation to link up Kashmir with Afghanistan, especially Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpai's statement in which he categorically linked Pakistan with al Qaeda which, according to him, was running training camps in Afghanistan for Kashmiri insurgents. See *Hindu*, September 13, 2001, 1.

Musharraf, then at the helm of affairs, availed this opportunity and took certain diplomatic measures. Through the peace process with India resumed in 2004, Pakistan tried to adjust to the new strategic environment. President Musharraf also generated a debate on Kashmir by suggesting different proposals. This has definitely helped Pakistan in softening its image.

### **Understanding Pakistan's Kashmir Policy and Strategy**

In order to fully comprehend Pakistan's Kashmir policy, the distinction between policy and strategy must be kept in mind. Policy is defined as a stated objective or goal, whereas strategy is the technique developed to achieve the stated policy. This study deals with Pakistan's Kashmir policy and strategy separately. Broadly speaking, the objective of Pakistan's Kashmir policy since 1947 has been and, still is, to seek Kashmir's accession to Pakistan. Whatever political, military or diplomatic options, tactics and strategies Pakistan employs are to seek that accession which constitutes its Kashmir policy. During the past six decades, Pakistan has used different strategies to achieve the goals of its policy. The study shows that Pakistan's Kashmir policy is static and has not changed since 1947, whereas, the strategy has undergone considerable fluctuations. The official language Pakistan uses to support its policy is that Kashmir is indivisible and the Kashmiri people's right to self-determination should be fulfilled in accordance with the 1948 United Nations Security Council Resolutions. In pursuance of this policy, Pakistan has used different strategies from time to time. It has used negotiations and diplomacy with India in the 1950s and 1980s; it has gone to full scale war with India in 1948 and 1965, and a limited war in 1999; and it has aided the freedom struggle in Kashmir in late 1980s and 1990s.

It must be noted here that historically, the external factor has played a critical role in the changing pattern of Pakistan's Kashmir strategy.<sup>5</sup> Apart from the first war on Kashmir in 1947-48, all the successive strategies that Pakistan employed were in some way linked to the influence of that external factor in the shape of the large footprint of US policies in the region and in relation to its close ties with Pakistan particularly. Pakistan's decision to go to war in 1965 was heavily influenced by its perception that the United States had shifted its allegiance to India in the 1960s.<sup>6</sup> This shift, Pakistan believed, would strengthen India thus allowing it to disregard Pakistan's claims on Kashmir. Additionally, the 1950s and the 1980s are the periods of time when the US-Pakistan relations were the most cooperative and were the same periods that

<sup>5</sup> For a detailed account of the evolution of Pakistan's Kashmir policy see, Matthew P. Taylor, "Pakistan's Kashmir Policy and Strategy Since 1947," (Master's Diss., Naval Post Graduate School, California, 2004), 17-90.

<sup>6</sup> See "With Democrats," *Pakistani Spectator*, January 28, 2009, <http://www.pakspectator.com/with-democrats> (accessed December 21, 2009).

Pakistan's leaders most actively used diplomatically to seek a resolution of the Kashmir dispute. The US sanctions against Pakistan in the 1990s in the shape of the Pressler Amendment prompted Pakistan to shift its strategy from diplomacy to aiding the freedom movement in Kashmir. Another external factor that significantly contributed towards the shift in strategy was the indigenous Kashmir rebellion that swept the valley in the wake of the 1987 rigged state elections. It provided Pakistan the chance to provide support to the freedom fighters. The US sanctions against Pakistan after its May 1998 nuclear tests further strengthened the Pakistani perception that the cause of Kashmir could not be served by dependence on external factors and Pakistan would have to redesign its strategy to achieve its policy goals. The Kargil operation of 1999 can be seen from this perspective. The US war on terror once again changed the scenario in which Pakistan once again found itself on the crossroads requiring its policy towards Kashmir to undergo another change.

### **The Impact of 9/11 on Kashmir Policy**

The 9/11 attack proved to be a watershed event in international politics and it completely changed the context of Pakistan's foreign policy formulation. Time had come for Pakistan to rethink its Kashmir policy.<sup>7</sup> It was possible the US would make no distinction between freedom fighters and terrorists in the environment of the war on terror. Pakistan which had been supporting the Taliban regime in Afghanistan for more than 5 years was confronted with the dilemma of taking a U-turn on that policy to join the war on terror. But this was necessary to save its Kashmir policy and save the Kashmiri freedom fighters from being dubbed as terrorists. Some of these groups had training camps in Afghanistan and the connection between the Afghan Jihadists and Kashmir freedom fighters was no secret.<sup>8</sup> Nonetheless, Musharraf took some immediate measures to obscure that link. Other than just speculating whether Kashmir could become a safe haven for the Taliban and al Qaeda, Washington did not see any rationale for engaging on another frontier. "We did not treat it as part of the war on terror"<sup>9</sup> commented one US embassy source at Delhi.

Pakistan's decision to join the coalition was by no means easy. Less than two weeks after the terrorist attacks on the US, General Musharraf, appeared on national television to announce his decision and to take the public in

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<sup>7</sup> For a detailed discussion of the impact of war on terror on Pakistan's Kashmir policy see Smruti S. Pattanaik, "War on Terror and its Impact on Pakistan's Foreign policy," *Strategic Analysis* vol.32, no.3 (May 2008): 389-412.

<sup>8</sup> Owen Bennett-Jones, "Musharraf's Kashmir Policy," *Asian Affairs* 38:3 (November 2007): 307.

<sup>9</sup> Steve Coll, "The Stand Off. A Reporter at Large," *New Yorker*, February 13, 2006, also cited in Jones, "Musharraf's Kashmir Policy."

confidence. General Musharraf made it clear that he had decided to join the coalition largely to defend Pakistan's stand on Kashmir.<sup>10</sup> He argued that had Pakistan not joined the coalition there was a real possibility that Pakistan would have been declared a terrorist state. President Bush had earlier made it clear that any state that would not support the US would be considered as a hostile state.<sup>11</sup> Another thing that motivated Pakistan to join the war on terror was India's efforts to link the freedom struggle in Kashmir with terrorism. Musharraf's apprehensions about India's possible role in war on terror were perceptible. He knew that had India joined the war on terror, it would have tried to work with the US to harm Pakistan's interests in the region, particularly in Kashmir.<sup>12</sup>

Pakistan decided to join the war on terror to safeguard its Kashmir policy from international pressure in the backdrop of the changed international outlook towards any movement that achieved its goals (no matter how legitimate) through violence. The freedom struggle in Kashmir was one of such movements that could have come under severe scrutiny in the larger picture of worldwide opposition to terrorism inspired by such international stateless groups as the al Qaeda. In an effort to direct international attention away from the freedom movement in Kashmir, Pakistan showed its commitment to the war on terror by focusing on al Qaeda. On the one hand, Pakistan tried to save its Kashmir policy by sacrificing its interests and its friendly ties with the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, while on the other hand it tried to make a distinction between terrorism and freedom struggle in an effort to seek legitimacy for the latter in the eyes of the world. Pakistan's concern was the result of its principled stance and its support to the freedom struggle in Kashmir. Speaking at the UN General Assembly session in 2002, President Musharraf stated that "the just struggles of a people for self-determination and liberation from colonial or foreign occupation cannot be outlawed in the name of terrorism."<sup>13</sup> Pakistan also made it clear that India was carrying out "state terrorism" in Indian-held Kashmir (IHK).<sup>14</sup> Pakistan showed its commitment to the war on terror and tried to convince the international community that it was not sponsoring any kind of terrorism in Kashmir.

<sup>10</sup> "Musharraf's speech on September 19, 2001."

<sup>11</sup> "President Bush Address to a Joint Session of Congress and American People," September 20, 2001, [http://articles.cnn.com/2001-09-20/us/gen.bush.transcript\\_1\\_joint-session-national-anthem-citizens?\\_s=PM:US](http://articles.cnn.com/2001-09-20/us/gen.bush.transcript_1_joint-session-national-anthem-citizens?_s=PM:US) (accessed April 10, 2010).

<sup>12</sup> General Musharraf, *In the Line of Fire* (New York: Free Press, 2006), 202.

<sup>13</sup> *Dawn*, September 13, 2002.

<sup>14</sup> Dr. Shaheen Akahtar, "War on Terrorism & Kashmir Issue," *Institute of Regional Studies* (IRS), Islamabad, <http://www.pu.edu.pk/polsc/jops/Currentissue-pdf/SHAHEEN%20AKHTAR.pdf> (accessed May 10, 2010).

Fortunately for Pakistan, the central focus of the war on terror has been al Qaeda and extremism. Kashmir freedom struggle apparently had no connection with any of the al Qaeda operatives in Afghanistan. However, the *madrassas* in Pakistan attracted attention because of accusations they were nurseries of extremism.<sup>15</sup> These *madrassas* were suspected to be misused by some self-proclaimed champions of Islam who were spreading hatred and preaching an extremist version of the religion. They were being used to project a radical ideology among the simple followers of Islam. The international community and particularly the US pressurized Pakistan to address the issue of *madrassas*. It was decided to bring reforms in the *madrassas* but this annoyed the religious political parties which were part of the Musharraf government. They said President Musharraf was only trying to please the Americans. Nevertheless it showed Pakistan's commitment to fight against terrorism and extremism which at the same time provided a safeguard for its policy on Kashmir.

Before Musharraf could fully secure Pakistan's Kashmir policy by delinking the Kashmir freedom struggle from any connection with the Taliban, the attack on the Indian parliament made things more complicated for him. On 13 December 2001, five armed men attacked the Indian parliament. The incident took place within a few months of the 9/11 attack on the US and it was obvious that it was perceived as a terrorist attack. Although no *jibadi* organization took responsibility for the attack, the Indian authorities, however, were quick to blame Pakistan. Indian allegations against Pakistan were not something new. Even prior to 9/11, India had always blamed Pakistan for crossborder terrorism and had several times put pressure on Pakistan to shut down the alleged *jibadi* camps in Azad Kashmir.<sup>16</sup> India accused the ISI and two Pakistan-based organizations, LeT and JeM for the attacks on the Indian parliament. While in the midst of its own war against terror, the US could not have approved of such an operation and consequently put these two groups on the State Department's list of designated terrorist organizations, thus acknowledging the element of terrorism in Kashmir struggle.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> For a detailed study of the extremist orientation of *madrassas*, see the work of the Muhammad Shaban Rafi, "Reforming Pakistani *Madrassas* Education System," <http://www.aku.edu/ied/conference2008/doc/Papers/REFORMING%20PAKISTANI%20MADARIS%20EDUCATION%20SYSTEM%20Muhammad%20Shaban%20Rafi-%20Paper.pdf> (accessed July 10, 2010).

<sup>16</sup> Maj. Gen. Ashok Krishna (ret'd), "Pakistan's Cross Border Terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir," *Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies* (IPCS), New Delhi, September 1, 2001, <http://www.ipcs.org/article/terrorism-in-jammu-kashmir/pakistans-cross-border-terrorism-in-jammu-and-kashmir-566.html> (accessed on March 2010).

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

The parliament attack led many Indians to believe that India had just experienced its own 9/11.<sup>18</sup> The Indian government was quick to respond to popular sentiments. The Indian PM went on TV to proclaim: “Our fight is now entering the last phase and a decisive battle [will] have to take place.”<sup>19</sup> The speech was followed by diplomatic and military actions. The Indian High Commissioner was recalled from Islamabad and Indian troops in full force were deployed along the Indo-Pak border. Pakistan’s decades’ old policy of aiding the freedom movement in Kashmir was now under great international pressure. Islamabad was pressurized to address the issue of “terrorism” in Kashmir. On January 12, 2002, President Musharraf delivered a landmark speech in which he banned both JeM and LeT. He assured that no group will be allowed to wage jihad in the name of Kashmir. This speech marked the beginning of the new course on Pakistan’s approach towards Kashmir. However Musharraf made it clear that the move did not mean Pakistan was going to abandon its principled stand on Kashmir:

Kashmir runs in our blood. No Pakistani can afford to sever links with Kashmir. The entire Pakistan and the whole world know this. We will continue to extend our moral, political and diplomatic support to Kashmiris. We will never budge an inch from our principled stance on Kashmir.<sup>20</sup>

The changed dynamics of the regional and international environment forced Pakistan to take some calculated actions to divert global attention away from its policy of aiding freedom movement in Kashmir. As a result, Pakistan resumed its peace dialogue with India in 2004 which was in continuation of the earlier peace efforts of 1999 made by the then civilian heads of the two states and the Agra summit of 2001. In this way Pakistan tried to adjust its approach towards Kashmir in the new parameters of the changed regional and international setting. This diplomatic manoeuvring helped Pakistan in softening its image in the eyes of the world.<sup>21</sup> Pakistan assured India and the world that its territory would not be used to support terrorism anywhere. As a result one sees a shift in Pakistan’s approach towards India on the whole and Kashmir in particular. The Kashmir issue shifted from its nucleus position and the strategy changed from aiding the freedom movement to holding peace dialogues with India. India kept Pakistan under pressure by maintaining its troops on the Pakistani border. As an ally in the war on terror, Pakistan had to accommodate both the Indian and international concerns.

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<sup>18</sup> Jones, “Musharraf’s Kashmir Policy,” 308.

<sup>19</sup> *Hindu*, December 14, 2001.

<sup>20</sup> General Musharraf address to the nation, January 12, 2002.

<sup>21</sup> Pattanaik, “War on Terror and its Impact on Pakistan’s Foreign Policy,” 393.

### Initiatives on Kashmir: The New Kashmir Policy

In order to discuss any change in Pakistan's Kashmir policy, one should keep a basic fact in mind. Kashmir would always be a key issue for Pakistan because of its roots in its ideology and society and its implications for Pakistan politics. Kashmir would be the guiding factor for any effort to promote peace and stability in the region. During the past 60 years, Pakistan's strategy on Kashmir remained dynamic while its policy remained the same. The official policy of Pakistan has not changed and probably will not ever change. The new strategic environment may have caused Pakistan to change its strategy on Kashmir but it has failed to stop Pakistan from pursuing its stand on Kashmir which is reflected in its official language and policy.

In the backdrop of the war on terror, the attack on the Indian Parliament, the *madrassa* reforms, curbing militancy at home and growing international pressure, Pakistan realized it was high time it chose a new course on its Kashmir policy. The new course that Pakistan chose was based on dialogue and negotiations with India. In 2004, Musharraf initiated peace dialogue with India. But the lack of trust between India and Pakistan came in the way. India was skeptical about Pakistan's efforts as it believed that Pakistan was doing it only under changed international environment.<sup>22</sup> On the other hand people in Pakistan and Kashmir were not convinced that India would be serious in its efforts to find a solution to the problem through negotiations. It was also improbable for Pakistan to completely sacrifice its decades' old policy of aiding the freedom movement in Kashmir. However, in 2004, during the SAARC Summit, General Musharraf assured Prime Minister Vajpayee that Pakistan would not allow any organization to operate from its territory.<sup>23</sup> He also generated a debate on enlightened moderation to present Pakistan in a liberal light.

Consequently, the changed political and geostrategic environment presented Pakistan's Kashmir policy with both challenges and opportunities. Likewise, India's position on Kashmir also witnessed certain changes. India has always denied the All Parties Hurriyat Conference's (APHC)<sup>24</sup> involvement

<sup>22</sup> For a good discussion of Indian perception and reaction to the Musharraf's peace efforts see, B. Muralidhar Reddy, "The Musharraf's Formula," *Frontline* vol. 21, issue no. 23 (November 2004), <http://www.hinduonnet.com/thehindu/thscrip/pgemail.pl?date=f12123/&prd=flin e&> (accessed, January 15, 2010).

<sup>23</sup> Qudssia Akhlaque, "Dialogue to Start Next Month: Joint Statement on Musharraf-Vajpayee Meeting," *Dawn*, July 1, 2004.

<sup>24</sup> The All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) was formed as an alliance of 26 political, social and religious organizations in Kashmir. The aim of the organization was to peacefully struggle to secure the right to self determination of the people of Kashmir. See APHC profile, <http://www.kashmirherald.com/profiles/hurriyat.html> (accessed April 12, 2010).

in the Indo-Pak talks on Kashmir, while Pakistan has always projected it as a trilateral issue and stated that the Kashmiris must have a role in any negotiations on the fate of their homeland. In 2007, the Indian stance saw a major change as it allowed the APHC leadership to visit Pakistan.<sup>25</sup> This certainly helped in reducing the trust deficit between the two countries. On the other hand, the Hurriyat's visit aroused hopes in Kashmiris on both sides of the border as it was an unprecedented event. The Kashmiris welcomed the development and extended their support to the peace process. Both India and Pakistan have so far made some cautious but positive moves. A series of confidence building measures were initiated by both countries to help diffuse tension and reduce the trust deficit between them. As a result the Indian government agreed to open the Line of Control (LOC)<sup>26</sup> at a few places to allow people to people contact between Kashmiris residing on both sides of the LOC. A Muzaffarabad-Srinagar bus service was launched and both countries agreed to open trade across LOC.

### **General Musharraf's New Thinking**

Pakistan is not in favour of prolonged negotiations' strategy on Kashmir as that is not regarded in its best interest. Pakistan's concerns are perceptible as its politico-strategic environment does not favour a long-term policy on Kashmir. As a result, Pakistan proposed a number of formulas to resolve the Kashmir dispute without abandoning its old and official stance. The reason for this was twofold. On the one hand it helped Pakistan moderate its image as a state serious in resolving the Kashmir dispute through peaceful means and by showing flexibility on its old stance while, on the other hand it helped in generating a debate on Kashmir which revived international interest in an issue which has lingered for decades without solution. In the words of Smruti Pattanaik:

The various statements of General Musharraf indicate that on the one hand Pakistan wants to signal to India and to the international community that Pakistan is flexible on the issue of Kashmir and on the other hand he highlights the UN resolution to guarantee the domestic stakeholders that Pakistan is still committed to the Kashmir cause.

General Musharraf gave different proposals on Kashmir. These proposals caught international attention as it was the first time that Pakistan

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<sup>25</sup> *PakTribune*, January 20, 2007.

<sup>26</sup> Originally known as the "Cease-fire Line," it was redesignated as the "Line of Control" following the Simla Agreement of 1972. It refers to the military control line between Indian and Pakistani held Kashmir.

had publicly moved away from its old stance and come up with something different. It would be pertinent to examine these proposals.

The first proposal regarding Kashmir came from Musharraf when he spoke of four stages: 1) the recognition of Kashmir as a disputed territory, 2) the introduction of dialogues, 3) dropping unrealistic solutions and, 4) moving towards a win-win situation.<sup>27</sup> Later, Musharraf worked towards the attainment of his proposal and the first two stages were a success as Pakistan and India decided to move forward on all issues including Kashmir through dialogue. After preparing the ground for the dialogue and moving forward on the issue of Kashmir, Musharraf proposed another formula which became known as the "seven region formula."<sup>28</sup> He proposed to divide Jammu and Kashmir into seven regions, two of which were in Pakistan and five in India. The regions were: the plains including Jammu, Pir Panjal, the valley, the Great Himalayan zone, the Northern Areas, upper Indus valley and the parts that are with China. The proposal spoke of identification of the regions, then introduce gradual demilitarization in the identified regions, and finally after the first two steps were completed, a change in the status of the regions was sought.<sup>29</sup> Musharraf elaborated on his proposal by suggesting that the identification of the regions could be carried out keeping either of the following factors in mind: ethnicity, religion or geographic proximity.

General Musharraf proposed the next formula in January 2006, in an interview with the Indian TV channel. His four-point proposal had the following aspects:<sup>30</sup> 1) gradual withdrawal of troops, 2) local self governance, 3) no redrawing of boundaries and 4) mutual administration by India and Pakistan. However, General Musharraf's principal stance on the Kashmir problem did not change as he once again cleared the Pakistani point of view on the freedom struggle in Kashmir.<sup>31</sup> It also affirmed the fact that Kashmir issue was not just the question of dealing with militancy but a matter of genuine freedom struggle, and therefore it must be addressed in that perspective.

Irrespective of the fact whether these proposals were genuinely aimed at solving the problem or were merely a tactic (as claimed by some Indians) to portray to the international community that Pakistan wanted a peaceful and political solution to the dispute and therefore to this end it was willing to show flexibility. The proposals suggested by General Musharraf did generate a debate on Kashmir. Given the regional and international geopolitical environment at that time, these proposals were a diplomatic victory for

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<sup>27</sup> Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema, *News*, October 31, 2004.

<sup>28</sup> Lavoy, "Pakistan's Kashmir Policy," 2.

<sup>29</sup> Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema.

<sup>30</sup> Lavoy, "Pakistan's Kashmir Policy," 2.

<sup>31</sup> Musharraf's interview with Karan Thapar in the *CNN-IBN*, January 13, 2006.

Pakistan. The official language of Pakistan had not changed all those years. The foreign office continued to issue statements that freedom struggle is going on in Kashmir and it should be resolved according to the wishes of the Kashmiris in the light of the UN resolutions. In the past, India had always tried to evade the mention of the UN resolutions whenever Pakistan had made a reference to them. The major concession that India got in Simla Agreement was that the disputes between the two states would be resolved bilaterally.<sup>32</sup> India thus managed to exclude any third party involvement in Kashmir dispute. Realistically speaking, the UN in the last six decades has not been successful in enforcing its resolutions on Kashmir. The then UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, also confirmed that during his visit to Pakistan he had stated that these resolutions were not 'self-enforcing' and the only way to enforce them was through cooperation and partnership between India and Pakistan.<sup>33</sup> Not that Pakistan was not aware of the status of the UN resolutions under Chapter 6 but since their mention in support of Kashmiris' right to self determination piqued India they came handy in debates over the issue and weakened the Indian position.

However, India showed no enthusiasm and responded coolly to Musharraf's proposals. The Indian press projected the proposals as a PR tactic of Musharraf's, and made no effort to sell them to the Indian public or arouse any interest in them as viable options. In an analysis of the proposals an Indian paper remarked that the phased withdrawal of troops means nothing for Pakistan as its forces are not engaged in fighting any insurgency in Kashmir. For India the withdrawal of troops would amount to creating a security hole which could later be filled by Pakistani troops disguised as freedom fighters.<sup>34</sup> A few Indian analysts like C. Rajamohan did regard them as reasonable and closest to India's position on Kashmir.<sup>35</sup> Indian government's messages in response to the proposals were meant to keep Pakistan engaged while keeping the Kashmir issue at the back burner. India indicated its willingness to pull out its military from those parts where violence had subsided.<sup>36</sup> In other words India wanted the freedom movement in Kashmir to completely die down before it could do anything about the conflict's resolution. That was something that was not entirely in Pakistan's control. Pakistan demonstrated flexibility in its approach when Musharraf

<sup>32</sup> Simla Agreement, July 2, 1972. Available in Sumit Ganguly, *Conflict Unending: India-Pakistan Tensions since 1947* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 168.

<sup>33</sup> *Pakistan Times*, March 5, 2005.

<sup>34</sup> "Musharraf Kashmir Proposal, Off stumped Analysis," Off Stumped-Commentary on Indian Politics, comment posted December, 5, 2009, <http://blog.offstumped.in/2006/12/05/musharrafs-kashmir-proposals-offstumped-analysis/> (accessed on July 17, 2010).

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Pattanaik, "War on Terror and its Impact on Pakistan's Foreign policy," 404.

indicated Pakistan's readiness to drop the UN resolutions if India reciprocated by moving away from its adamant stand on Kashmir. But India was not ready to give up its stand whether in respect of its assumed "legal" position or the de facto stand on the LoC. India continued to see Kashmir as a legitimate and integral part of India whereas Musharraf's proposals did suggest a change in Pakistan's strategy.

### **Analyzing Pakistan's Kashmir Policy under Musharraf**

It needs to be examined if Pakistan's Kashmir policy under Musharraf had undergone any notable shift in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the subsequent developments in the South Asian region. Musharraf's shift in strategy on Kashmir was a tactical response to the changed US foreign policy outlook after 9/11 and India's showing of its military muscle after the terrorist attack on the Indian parliament. But before discussing any shift in Kashmir policy under Musharraf it needs to be underlined that though the new strategic environment had definitely subdued the intensity of the freedom movement in Kashmir but it had not in any way weakened the commitment of the Kashmiris or Pakistan to the just cause of the former's right to self-determination. Pakistan knows that the indigenous struggle of the Kashmiris alone could keep the issue alive and draw international attention to Kashmir. It was unlikely therefore Pakistan could ever desert the freedom movement in Kashmir. But in the present international environment and as a front line state in the war on terror, Pakistan's limitations in this regard can be very well appreciated.

It must also be noted here that even prior to 9/11, many circles in Pakistan civil society had been discussing the suitability of Pakistan's strategy on Kashmir. There was talk indeed about the need for a rethink on Pakistan's approach towards Kashmir as early as 1999. The return of the military regime in Pakistan had raised the possibility of a more adventurous policy on Kashmir as the planner of Kargil was now in power. In the words of Samina Yasmeen, "the orthodox-Islamist nexus was expected to determine the future course of Pakistan's policy on Kashmir."<sup>37</sup> Another significant change in Pakistan's strategic thinking and its policy towards Kashmir came in the wake of the Kargil conflict. The international community clearly disapproved of Pakistan's engagement in the conflict. Even some Pakistani analysts at that time questioned the suitability of Pakistan's strategy on Kashmir when it was linked to its domestic security.<sup>38</sup> Despite all the criticism, the Kargil issue did manage to bring Kashmir issue once again in the lime light. As an Indian author puts it

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<sup>37</sup> Samina Yasmeen, "Pakistan's Kashmir Policy: Voices of Moderation," *Contemporary South Asia* vol. 12, no. 2 (2003): 195.

<sup>38</sup> Khaled Ahmed, "Is Sectarianism the only Terrorism in Pakistan?," *Friday Times*, June 7-13, 2002.

that “the Kashmir issue has now become internationalized...and the Kargil conflict has emphasized the need to resolve it.”<sup>39</sup> However these moderate voices were challenged by the Islamist segments in Pakistan. The Islamist elements were concerned that the growing relationship between India and the US had weakened Pakistan’s stance and the only way Pakistan could get Kashmir was through force.<sup>40</sup> The moderate voices in Pakistan in turn argued that the country’s fragile economy could not afford a permanent aggressive front against India. They argued that in order to establish peaceful relations with India the Kashmir issue should be de-linked from the broader spectrum of Indo-Pak relations as otherwise the Kashmir dispute could lead to a nuclear war between two states. They argued that hostility against India would not help Pakistan in securing any foreign support and would further damage its image as a “failed” or belligerent state.<sup>41</sup>

One can argue that besides 9/11, the moderate voices also compelled Pakistan to bring a strategy shift in its approach on Kashmir. Therefore, Pakistan under President Musharraf demonstrated a measure of flexibility in its policy. This new strategy exposed India’s uncompromising and rigid behaviour to world view. Many circles in Pakistan began to question India’s intentions and its sincerity about resolving the Kashmir dispute.<sup>42</sup> Holding on to its rigid position all India wanted was the recognition of the LoC as the international border, a demand Pakistan could never accept. The bottom line is that the Indian stand leaves no room for any kind of negotiations on Kashmir.

Pakistan’s post 9/11 Kashmir policy reflected some eminent changes. The proposals that General Musharraf suggested were unique for two reasons. First, these proposals were put forward by the head of the army who also happened to be the President of Pakistan at that time. Secondly, when Musharraf talked about these proposals, he proposed a solution for the whole princely state including Azad Kashmir and the Northern Areas. Previously, almost all the statesmen of Pakistan had envisaged a solution that primarily focused on the IHK. Another significant factor of the recent exchanges between them was that both states had restrained from making any heated comments over Kashmir. What is more, Pakistan’s shift in strategy did not substantially alter its core position. The official language of Pakistan had not changed. It continued to consider the resistance in Kashmir as a genuine freedom struggle and argued that India’s occupation of Kashmir was illegitimate. It repeatedly made reference to the UN resolutions for a just solution, and regarded Kashmir as the unfinished agenda of partition. On the

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<sup>39</sup> Shubha Singh, “Kargil is Wake-up Call for Kashmir,” *PIO Agenda*, August 8, 1999.

<sup>40</sup> Samina Yasmeen, “Pakistan’s Kashmir Policy: Voices of Moderation,” 195.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> See Editorial, *News*, November 28, 2006, *Dawn*, December 7, 2007.

other hand, the opening of LOC at five places indicated an achievement of Pakistan and a victory of the Kashmiri people.

Thus, on the whole, Pakistan's Kashmir policy under Musharraf had seen some tactical shifts. Pakistan dropped its insistence on incorporating the Hurriyat in bilateral talks; it allowed fencing alongside the LOC and continued the dialogue process with India.<sup>43</sup> These shifts were important for some reasons. First it made clear to the international community that Pakistan was no longer supporting any "terror" in Kashmir and had shifted its strategy to a peaceful one. Secondly, it helped Pakistan improve its image as a responsible nuclear state which is interested in solving the dispute through dialogue. Thirdly, Musharraf's flexibility on resolving Kashmir issue and India's adamant clinging to its hard position revealed its hypocrisy. Lastly, these diplomatic manoeuvres had greatly helped Pakistan in benefiting from the new strategic environment and salvaging the logic of its position on Kashmir. Moreover the flexibility shown by the new strategy had not in any way compromised Pakistan's principled stand which remains at the core of the dispute between the two countries.

### **Impact on Kashmiris**

Kashmiris have been deeply affected by the post 9/11 security environment and the subsequent shift in Pakistan's approach towards Kashmir.<sup>44</sup> The political and militant leaders have found themselves on a crossroads, one path leading to war and the other to talks. It has widened the rift between the moderates and the hardliners. This rift came to the surface in APHC meetings where the two groups stated their positions. While the moderate APHC-M (Mirwaiz Umar Farooq) favoured a political solution to the Kashmir dispute, the hardliner APHC-G (Syed Ali Shah Geelani) preferred a continuation of the armed struggle. The APHC-M had extended its support to President Musharraf's proposal within the framework of a joint control mechanism making the Mirwaiz faction more acceptable to the political struggle camp isolating the hardliner Geelani. The militant leadership also found them marginalized. The APHC leadership visited Pakistan and AJK in January 2007, and held talks with the United Jihad Council (UJC) leadership. As a result, Mirwaiz signaled a change in the strategy. He said that the armed struggle should be stopped as the course of dialogue and negotiation was the need of time.<sup>45</sup> It was a bold move on the part of the Mirwaiz but it was criticised and

<sup>43</sup> Pattanaik, "War on Terror and its Impact on Pakistan's Foreign Policy," 408.

<sup>44</sup> For details, see Dr. Shaheen Akahtar, "War on Terrorisn & Kashmir Issue."

<sup>45</sup> "Time to End Armed Struggle," *Kashmir Media*, January 21, 2007, <http://kashmirmedia.wordpress.com/category/azad-kashmir/> (accessed May 10, 2010).

there was reaction against it in Srinagar. The Hizb-ul-Mujahdeen (HzM)<sup>46</sup> supreme commander, Syed Salahuddin, and Syed Ali Geelani, the head of the APHC-G faction, contested Mirwaiz's decision. Geelani even called for a wheel jam in Srinagar in protest against the Mirwaiz. The schism inside the Hurriyat and among Hurriyat and Kashmiri freedom fighters has greatly undermined the credibility of APHC and the freedom struggle.

In Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK),<sup>47</sup> the ruling party, Muslim Conference (MC) was also divided on the issue of future Kashmir policy. The MC-Q faction headed by Sardar Abdul Qayoom Khan, former President and Prime Minister of AJK, favoured Musharraf's proposals on Kashmir and declared that jihad in Kashmir was useless and should be abandoned. He declared that: "Jihad was terrorism and the *mujahedeen* were saboteurs of peace in the region."<sup>48</sup> The then Prime Minister of AJK, Sardar Attique Khan who happens to be the son of Sardar Abdul Qayoom Khan, also joined General Musharraf in his new Kashmir policy. Sardar Attique Khan on August 23, 2007 stated that "General Musharraf should remain the President of Pakistan as long as he was physically fit" adding "the role of military in the civilian affairs in Pakistan was unavoidable."<sup>49</sup> This provoked the AJK opposition to claim Musharraf had used intelligence agencies in 2006 general elections to install Attique Khan in power.<sup>50</sup>

The local Kashmiris, on the other hand, were initially very much enthusiastic about the prospects of Kashmir resolution during the initial phase of the military regime but as the events progressed their apprehensions came to the fore. Although they had supported the peace process yet they were not formally included in the dialogue. They had also demanded Kashmir-specific CBMs such as ceasefire by the Indian forces, withdrawal of troops, release of political prisoners and an end to human rights violations, to improve the prospects in Kashmir.<sup>51</sup> The softening of the Line of Control, establishment of five check points, Muzaffarabad-Srinagar bus service and trade across the LoC might have provided them with the opportunity to get together with their relatives from the other side of the border, but this reunion only strengthened their belief and commitment to the ultimate solution of Kashmir that would end their separation permanently.

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<sup>46</sup> The Hizb-ul-Mujahdeen (HzM) is an indigenous Kashmiri freedom group operating in Kashmir.

<sup>47</sup> Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK) refers to the Pakistani part of the former state of Jammu & Kashmir. It has its own government and legislative body.

<sup>48</sup> "Jihad in Kashmir is Terrorism, says Sardar Qayyum," *Daily Times*, Pakistan, 25 September 2005.

<sup>49</sup> *Rising Kashmir*, Srinagar, February 22, 2008.

<sup>50</sup> Murtaza Shibli, "Real Democracy: Pakistan's Post-Musharraf Kashmir Policy," *Kashmir Affairs*, April 2008, [www.kashmiraffairs.org](http://www.kashmiraffairs.org) (accessed April 10, 2010).

<sup>51</sup> Dr. Shaheen Akahtar, "War on Terrorisn & Kashmir Issue."

## The Democratic Government and Kashmir Policy

The APHC-G welcomed the results of the 2008 elections in Pakistan. They had been anticipating a change and predicted that the elections would overthrow the Musharraf regime, which, according to them was responsible for the mess in Pakistan and Kashmir.<sup>52</sup> The anti-Musharraf camps in Pakistan and Kashmir were happy over the defeat of Musharraf's loyalists. APHC-G leader Syed Ali Geelani termed the election results as a good indicator for the future course of Pakistan and for the freedom struggle in Kashmir. He once again blamed Musharraf for compromising on Pakistan's principled stance on Kashmir.<sup>53</sup> He called the results as the victory of Kashmiris and defeat of Musharraf and his Kashmir policy and hoped that the new civilian government would work towards the solution of Kashmir in the light of its traditional stance on Kashmir.<sup>54</sup> The APHC-M that favoured Musharraf was clearly disappointed by the results. A prominent leader of APHC-M, Shabir Shah expressed the hope that Pakistan would continue to support Kashmir cause regardless of the change in the government.<sup>55</sup>

The Kashmiri people who thought that Musharraf had damaged the Kashmir cause hoped that the elected civilian government in Pakistan would reverse his Kashmir policy. However, the very first statement of Asif Ali Zardari, aroused suspicions in the minds of the people when he stressed that the normalization of relations between India and Pakistan should not become hostage to the Kashmir cause.<sup>56</sup> In his interview with an Indian TV channel, he said that "Kashmir issue should be left aside for future generations to solve and right now India and Pakistan should focus on improving the bilateral relations by strengthening trade and economic ties."<sup>57</sup>

This statement attracted a strong and unprecedented reaction from all circles in Pakistan and Kashmir. As a result of the immense pressure and criticism from religious political parties and Kashmiri groups, Asif Zardari had to go on the defensive. He later clarified his statement and explained the significance of Kashmir for Pakistan. He said that PPP would not betray the

<sup>52</sup> *Rising Kashmir*, Srinagar, February 19, 2008, [www.risingkashmir.com/19feb08.php](http://www.risingkashmir.com/19feb08.php) (accessed July 23, 2010).

<sup>53</sup> *Etela'at*, Srinagar, February 20, 2008, <http://etalaat.com/english/viewpoint/readers-speak/83.html> (accessed July 23, 2010).

<sup>54</sup> *Rising Kashmir*, Srinagar, February 20, 2008, [www.risingkashmir.com/20feb08.php](http://www.risingkashmir.com/20feb08.php) (accessed July 23, 2010).

<sup>55</sup> *Etala'at*, Srinagar, Srinagar, February 20, 2008.

<sup>56</sup> *Hindu*, India, March 10, 2008, [www.thehindu.com/mp/2008/03/10/chenindx.htm](http://www.thehindu.com/mp/2008/03/10/chenindx.htm) (accessed July 23, 2010).

<sup>57</sup> *Rising Kashmir*, Srinagar, March 3, 2008, [www.risingkashmir.com/index.php](http://www.risingkashmir.com/index.php) (accessed July 23, 2010).

trust of 90,000 martyrs who had lost their lives in Kashmir.<sup>58</sup> The PPP's immediate clarification of the statement shows the complexity of the Kashmir dispute. Additionally, given the strong position of the army on Kashmir, the fragile nature of the federal coalition government, and the presence of the religious political parties and the opposition, it would have been very difficult for President Zardari to maintain his views with regard to the policy on Kashmir. An important development occurred later that year when the newly elected civilian government was busy installing itself in office. The Indian city of Mumbai suffered multiple terrorist attacks on November 26, 2008. The issues of terrorism and Kashmir once again came into sharp focus of international attention. Although no Pakistani group claimed the responsibility for the attacks, the Indian authorities were quick to link the attack to Pakistan. The Mumbai attack not only thwarted the ongoing peace process between the two countries but also brought the issue of Kashmir to the forefront.

The post-Musharraf government is currently occupied with numerous internal problems that leave her no time to attend to the Kashmir problem. There is little it can do towards the issue of Kashmir. The new government cannot move away from the peace process that was initiated by the Musharraf government. The old policy of aiding the freedom movement, however, is not viable in the current political and geostrategic environment. The international environment is averse to violence and makes no distinction between terrorism and freedom struggles. Additionally, the new democratic government cannot afford to be seen negotiating with India without any progress on the issue of Kashmir. In the absence of any new concrete strategy on Kashmir, diplomacy and negotiations is the only available option left to Pakistan. The peace process, however, has failed to get any notable concessions from India on the issue of Kashmir. The failure to extract any positive response from India could lead to the gradual demise of the peace process. That could once again refuel extremist forces.. The best Pakistan government can offer at this time is the continuation of the old rhetoric on Kashmir. The foreign office would continue to issue statements affirming its commitment to the Kashmir cause and condemning the violations of human rights in Kashmir. The nuclear deterrent checks adventurism of any kind on both sides spelling the continuance of the present stalemate.

### **2010 Kashmir Uprising: Inspiring the Political Movements in Muslim World**

After hibernating for almost a decade, the Indian occupied state of Jammu and Kashmir once again in the lime light following the protests and

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<sup>58</sup> Nirupama Subramanian, 'Kashmir an 'Integral Part' of Pakistan: Zardari,' *Hindu*, March 9, 2008, <http://www.thehindu.com/2008/03/09/stories/2008030955000900> (accessed July 23, 2010).

demonstrations that swept all across the valley in the summer of 2010. These spontaneous and indigenous protests are being blamed by India on Pakistan and Laskhar-e-Taiba (LeT).<sup>59</sup> However, many analysts are of the view that these protests stem in part from frustration among the youth over the failure of the government to create jobs and root out corruption.<sup>60</sup> Whatever the cause of the uprising might be, this fresh unrest has given a strong message to New Delhi that the people of Jammu and Kashmir would continue to fight for their fundamental political and civil rights.

The state (IHK) government imposed an indefinite curfew in the capital Srinagar and many other parts of the state.<sup>61</sup> Most of the Hurriat leadership was arrested including the APHC-G leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani. The rest of the leaders were put under house arrest. Still the state government could not calm the situation. The striking feature in this fresh unrest is the involvement of Kashmiri youth. Though the Indian officials blame Pakistan for fomenting the violence but they have no answer to the stone-throwing young people in the streets who have no connection with militancy. These young people call it the Kashmir intifada, just like the Palestinian intifada. Another unprecedented feature of this fresh unrest is the imposition of curfew in the villages and in parts of Punch and Jammu which are non-Muslim majority areas. This shows that the people of Jammu and Kashmir, regardless of their ethnic and religious identity, are against the policies of New Delhi.

The Indian PM, Mr Manmohan Singh, called an all parties conference on Kashmir on September 15, 2010. But it ended without producing any result. The Hurriat leaders in IHK had already agreed on a formula which demands:<sup>62</sup>

1. Immediate cessation of military, para-military and militant action.
2. Withdrawal of the military from towns and villages, and dismantling of bunkers, watch towers and barricades.
3. Release of political prisoners.
4. Cessation of human rights violations.
5. Annulment of repressive laws.
6. Restoration of the rights to peaceful association, assembly and demonstration.

<sup>59</sup> "Unrest in Srinagar: Capital Of Indian-Administered Kashmir," *Kathmandu Metro News*, July 11, 2010, <http://66.7.193.115:8080/kathmandumetro/news/unrest-in-srinagar-capital-of-indian-administered> (accessed August 14, 2010).

<sup>60</sup> "Politicians Meet over Indian Kashmir Unrest," *Reuters*, July 12, 2010, <http://uk.reuters.com/article/idUKTRE66B1P120100712> (accessed August 14, 2010).

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>62</sup> *Kashmir Watch*, [www.kashmirwatch.com](http://www.kashmirwatch.com) (accessed August 14, 2010).

7. Allowing the Kashmiri leadership, which favours a negotiated resolution, to travel abroad.
8. Issuing visas to the Kashmiri diaspora to visit the state.
9. Creating the necessary conditions for an intra-Kashmiri dialogue embracing both sides of the ceasefire line.
10. Allowing a transitional phase before the decisive elements of the peace package are put into effect.

The following conclusions can be drawn in the light of fresh unrest in Kashmir. Firstly, the 2010 uprising is completely indigenous in character. It is neither a terrorist campaign nor is being fomented by Pakistan. The only realistic explanation of this uprising is the maladministration of the affairs by the state government of Jammu and Kashmir and people's disapproval of the rule of New Delhi. The Indian delegation sent to Srinagar to hold talks with the Hurriyat leaders, led by the Indian Home Minister, P. Chidambaram, also accepted the fact that this uprising is different in nature compared to the previous ones. The home minister admitted that, "it is clear that what we are seeing now in Kashmir is qualitatively different kind of protest. We do need to recognize this. The protests are certainly more widespread and there is significant alienation."<sup>63</sup> Secondly, this mass movement in Kashmir has had far reaching effects in other parts of the world, especially in the Arab world. The peaceful protest movement that initiated in Kashmir against the repressive policies of New Delhi's government soon transferred to the other parts of the Muslim world. People living under the repressive regimes in Middle East took inspiration from the Kashmir intifada and started to stage peaceful demonstrations against their tyrant rulers and their policies.<sup>64</sup> The mass movements in Egypt, Tunisia and other Middle Eastern countries for establishing real democracies and freedom of expression, got their essence from Kashmir movement. According to the JKLF chairman Yasin Malik "Kashmiri non-violent struggle has inspired the movements in Egypt, Tunisia and other countries."<sup>65</sup>

Thirdly, Pakistan seems to have no control over the momentum of this uprising. The massive involvement of the Kashmiri youth in the struggle indicates that Pakistan would not be able to influence the movement as it had in the past. In the past Pakistan tried to keep the course of events in Kashmir under control with the help of Pakistani-based *jihadi* groups. Fourthly, it can be

<sup>63</sup> Dr. Ishtiaq Ahmad, "Kashmir: Moment of Truth," *Weekly PULSE*, September 24-30, 2010, 16.

<sup>64</sup> The mass movement in Tunisia started in December 2010, which was soon followed by a people's movement in Egypt in January, 2011.

<sup>65</sup> Wasim Khalid, "Kashmir Inspired Mideast Revolution," *Greater Kashmir*, February 26, 2011, <http://greaterkashmir.com/news/2011/Feb/27/kashmir-inspired-mideast-revolution-yasin-malik-49.asp> (accessed March 22, 2011).

argued here that if the demands of these angry youth are not heard by the government in Srinagar and New Delhi, this stone-throwing movement can transform into a violent one. As one Pakistani analyst notes that, "the entire region of Central and South Asia is already beset by al-Qaida-inspired extremist terrorist violence. It is, therefore, only a matter of time before the growing public uprising in Kashmir, led currently by stone-pelting youth, is hijacked by religiously-inspired extremist-terrorist groups, including al Qaeda."<sup>66</sup> Finally, the moderate groups in Kashmir- APHC-M, JKLF- may become irrelevant as a result of the growing public pressure. Consequently the hardliner APHC-G can benefit from the current turmoil. The ongoing peace process between India and Pakistan since 2004, has failed to address the grievances of Kashmiri people. The people have become discontented with the peace process. The involvement and advocacy of these moderate groups for the peace process may have undermined their credibility in the eyes of the people. The current unrest in Kashmir can also be understood in the backdrop of the snail-paced peace process between India and Pakistan that has failed to address the issue.

In the backdrop of popular political uprising in Middle East and North Africa, it was high time that Pakistan and the international community realized their responsibility. Pakistan should capitalize on this fresh unrest in Kashmir and draw international attention towards the gravity of the issue. It is very unfortunate that Pakistan has failed to draw maximum international attention to this issue largely because of the absence of any concrete strategy on Kashmir under the new civilian government. As a result, the international community has not yet realized the seriousness of the situation in Jammu and Kashmir. Mainly due to its internal crises, Pakistan has been a bit late in understanding the situation. It was only in September 2010, that the Senate adopted the resolution urging the international community to take notice of "Indian repression in occupied Kashmir."<sup>67</sup> The people of Jammu and Kashmir had long been forgotten since the change in the international security paradigm in the wake of the 9/11 attacks. They were considered terrorists in the new security environment. The people of Kashmir have now provided Pakistan with an opportunity to present their case before the international community. The 2010 intifada and its non-militancy nature testifies to the fact that Kashmiris are not terrorists. They are fighting for their fundamental political and civil rights and the international community should seriously consider solving this dispute. Additionally, much depends on India whether it positively addresses the grievances in Kashmir or continues to follow its rigid colonial approach. The current uprising has made it clear that India cannot run away from the reality in Kashmir. Though the 2010 intifada has been crushed

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

by the state authorities with the help of the army and state police, it's not the permanent solution to the problem. This spontaneous upsurge in Kashmir is the expression of the resentment of the Kashmiri people over the indifference of the world powers to secure their rights.■