

ANALYZING DOMESTIC TERRORISM AS A THREAT TO PAKISTAN'S SECURITY AND THE POLICY RESPONSE

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Abstract

Pakistan was not unfamiliar to terrorist activities even prior to 9/11, but its decision to participate in the "Global War on Terror" (GWOT) as a state policy exposed it to renewed and heightened activity of terrorist outfits which caused a serious blow to its domestic security. Pakistan's domestic instability is also linked to a number of different causes which are "home grown" as well as foreign sponsored. The dominance of the military in national politics for prolonged periods and the wide network of electronic media have also not done any great service to the country. Issues like poverty, unemployment, health and literacy are also important contributing factors. The real threat to the country's security stems from "within". Externally, Pakistan finds itself geographically placed in a volatile environment. Peace can be achieved and maintained through strength. Pakistan Army that has been assigned the role of dealing with both domestic as well as external security challenges seems comfortable with some limitations. However, the responsibility to tackle the various domestic security threats lies with the second line forces (SLFs) which are not fully prepared and need extensive training to cater for all kinds of domestic crises; Army should be utilized sparingly as a last option. In order to deal with the above referred challenges effectively, a three tier approach comprising an international dimension, regional cooperation and national level measures is suggested.

Preamble

Terrorism *per se* has been a significant challenge to Pakistan even before the events of 11 September 2001. Since the start of "Global War on Terrorism (GWOT)", Pakistan's Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) have been assigned to play their role in support of the U.S. agenda by conducting costly military operations in its Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) involving over 200,000 security personnel including around 120,000 army troops. In comparison,

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the 38-country force under North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) along with the U.S.-led force and the additional 17,000 troops that President Obama promised on 27 March 2009 to deal with terrorism in Afghanistan and Pakistan, all put together is still far less.¹ Pakistan's decision to participate in GWOT as a state policy brought renewed terrorist violence in its wake which continues to threaten Pakistan's security/stability.²

The cumulative effect of happenings in the Middle East and the sledge hammer approach of the coalition forces in contiguous Pakhtun areas of Afghanistan have created a perception that GWOT is directed at Muslims.³ As a sequel to the U.S. policies, many conservative Pakhtuns believe that the fighting in Swat and FATA is a war of liberation against the U.S. occupation of Afghanistan.⁴ Brig (Retd) Ajmal Khan a former Deputy Inspector General (DIG), Frontier Corps (FC), North West Frontier Province (NWFP), pointed out that the earlier Army operations in Waziristan created disaffection and helped the Taliban cause in the wake of collateral damage among civilians.⁵ Whatever might have been the reason initially for the opinion that Pakistan was fighting the U.S. war on terror does not hold ground any more. Up to the recent past, this threat was limited to NWFP only, however the militants expanded activities to other parts of Pakistan and have created a general alert which warrants immediate response to the challenge. Pakistan's domestic insecurity/instability also springs from other factors which are foreign-

¹ Pakistan has committed more than one lac army troops that exclude paramilitary forces and the U.S. led forces are just 70000 in number, Zaheerul Hassan, "Pakistan security forces war against Terrorism," Pakistan Defence Forum, <http://www.defence.pk/forums/pakistans-war/13933-pakistan-security-forces-war-against-terror.html>, 2 September 2008. Obama announces New Afghanistan, Pakistan Strategies, Transcript: *The Washington Post*, Khalid Aziz, "Need for a counterinsurgency strategy," *The News International* (Islamabad), 15 June 2008, "Security personnel include army, frontier corps, frontier constabulary and police," *The News International* (Islamabad), 19 April 2008.

² Ibid.

³ Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCSC) General Tariq Majid address to 7th Shangri-La Dialogue at Singapore organized by IISS, London, 2 June 2008, <http://www.iiss.org/whats-new/iiss-in-the-press/press-coverage-2008/june-2008/cjsc-addresses-dialogue-forum-in-singapore/>

⁴ Khalid Aziz, "Can peace be won in NWFP?" *The News International* (Islamabad), 20 April 2008, http://www.thenews.com.pk/arc_news.asp?id=9

⁵ Brig (Retd) Ajmal Khan, Managing Director FC NWFP Welfare Foundation,

sponsored as well as “home grown”. Pakistan’s participation in GWOT has opened new opportunities for Non State Actors (NSAs) and other foreign sponsored elements to harm Pakistan and project it as a failed state.

In this backdrop, this paper highlights the following: One, the need to critically examine the modern concept of terrorism in its relation to the security of Pakistan; two, identify factors which promote domestic terrorism; and three, assess the present capability of LEAs and suggest what role the Pakistan Army could play; and finally suggest the way forward to cope with the internal security threat spectrum. The paper primarily focuses on domestic terrorism while taking into account its international dimensions which have direct relevance to our internal security.

Terrorism: A Concept

There is a problem in analyzing the term “terrorism” which is extremely complex because one community's terrorists can often be "martyrs" or "freedom fighters" for a rival sect, group or government. This is exactly what helps nurture terrorism.⁶ As indicated by Rafiuddin Ahmed, despite its growth as a multi-faceted political concept, terrorism is neither well understood nor well portrayed particularly by the western media. Merriam Webster Dictionary defines terrorism as, “it is the systematic use of terror, especially as a means of coercion.” Terror includes deliberate, indiscriminate killing of innocent civilians. Its strong psychological impact to cause fear and insecurity and to intimidate and demoralize people was first pointed out by the ancient Greek historian Xenophon (.430-349 B.C) which has been faithfully applied through the ages by the imperial powers to attain their desired objectives.⁷

Terrorism does not have a tangible character. Three decades ago terrorism analyst Brian Jenkins articulated the conventional wisdom that “Terrorists want a lot of people watching ... not a lot of people dead.” Mass casualty incidents began to increase in the 1980s, but 9/11 took lethality to a whole new level. So, now we have “a lot of people watching

discussion with author, 7 June 2008.

⁶ Paul Leventhal and Brahma Chellaney, “Nuclear terrorism: Threat, perception, and response in South Asia” *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 11, no. 6 (1988): 447-470.

⁷ *The New Encyclopedia Britannica* 11, Chicago (1992):650-51.

and a lot of people dead.”⁸ Michael Darnell asserts that the 9/11 attacks amounted to a ‘paradigm shift’ that demonstrated the new power and capabilities that information technology has given to NSAs such as terrorists.⁹ What has changed in the past decade is the willingness of the terrorist to inflict heavy casualties.¹⁰ Terrorism is war by proxy; war by stealth.¹¹ “Terrorism is undefined and indefinable. It is the weapon of the weak. Terrorism remains an elusive concept in the unipolar world.”¹²

The modern concept of terrorism has since swung like a pendulum between two ends -- the traditional repressive, fearsome and intimidating mould and the revolutionary as the champion of national liberation, self-determination etc having political legitimacy of some kind and which has expanded to include sub-nationalist and ethnic or religious separatist groups. It is this new face of terrorism which has become the subject of public debate and negative criticism.¹³

It is difficult to achieve consensus for a mutually agreed definition. Walter Laquer has counted over 100 definitions. Emphasis on dictums like “today's terrorist is tomorrow's freedom fighter”, “terrorism to some is heroism to others” etc., has further complicated the task of defining terrorism. Linked with it, is the problem of who acts and who defines.¹⁴ A generally accepted definition of a “terrorist” may include “a person who uses or favours a violent and intimidating method of

⁸ Michael Darnell, “Electronic ‘Hearts and Minds’: Web Activism and Global Security,” (Paper presented at “Terrorism, Asymmetric Warfare and Homeland Security,” Centre for Conflict Studies annual conference, 4 October 2002).

⁹ Jeffrey D. Brake, “Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division Terrorism and The Military’s Role in Domestic Crisis Management: Background and Issues for Congress,” *CRS Report for Congress*, 27 January 2003, <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/crs/rl30938.pdf>

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ BBC Breakfast with Frost Interview: Benjamin Netanyahu, Hanan Ashwari, BBC News, 16 September 2001, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/breakfast_with_frost/1547267.stm

¹² Professor Khurshid Ahmed, “System of Values, Beliefs, Convictions and Attitudes – Impact on National Security,” Lecture National Defence Course, 18 December 2002.

¹³ Rafiuddin Ahmed, Fasahat H. Syed, Zafar N. Jaspal Ahmed I Malik, Faisal S.Cheema & Huma A Shah, *Terrorism, IPRI Paper* no. 1 (2002) <http://ipripak.org/papers/terrorism.shtml>

¹⁴ Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema, “Global War on Terror: Pakistan’s Contributions,” http://www.sassu.org.uk/pdfs/Dr_Pervaiz_Cheema_Paper.pdf

coercion". There are those who consider premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by sub-national or clandestine agents as terrorism, whereas there are others who define terrorism as a process of deliberate employment of psychological intimidation and physical violence in breach of law by sovereign states and sub-national groups to attain strategic and political goals.¹⁵

In brief, terrorism may not be easily defined, but it can be qualified by its distinct features. It cannot be equated with guerrilla warfare, though terrorism has been employed as a covert action for a legitimate cause. Nonetheless, hostility towards and opposition to commonly believed terrorist violence has increased world wide affecting the cause of the oppressed people today whose ability to fight back has been systematically restrained and limited.¹⁶

As pointed out by Dr Cheema, no definition would be universally acceptable unless it satisfies all the claimants. A satisfactory definition would entail identification of unwarranted violence against the civilians, excessive use of force by the government authorities to suppress dissent, and the legitimate difference between freedom struggles and militancy/terrorism and excesses committed by what has often been referred to as state terrorism.¹⁷

However, in the Declaration of 11th SAARC Summit held at Khatmandu between 4-6 January 2002, the Heads of State were convinced that terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations, is a challenge to all states and to all mankind, and cannot be justified on ideological, political, religious or on any other ground. The leaders agreed that terrorism violates the fundamental values of the United Nations and the SAARC Charter and constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security in the twenty-first century.

Terrorism: Causes and Threats Specific to Pakistan

Termed as a legacy of the Afghan war and the policies of late President Zia-ul-Haq that he employed to marginalize mainstream national parties by promoting ethnic/sectarian divisions, terrorism can certainly be

¹⁵ Ghosh S.K. *Terrorism: World under Siege* (New Delhi, Ashish Publishing House), 4; See also Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema, "Need for Broad Strategy to Combat Terror," *The Post*, 17 September 2006.

¹⁶ Rafiuddin, Fasahat, Jaspal, Ahmed, Faisal, Huma, *Terrorism*.

¹⁷ Cheema, "Global War on Terror."

described as a "home grown" reality where dozens of groups despite occasional crackdown on their activities by the state are still capable of undermining the writ of the government. Terrorism has taken deep roots in Pakistani society due to varying reasons including easy access to arms and ammunition and non-availability of justice. Thus sectarian/ethnic differences and extremist elements have thrived and law and order situation deteriorated, leading to increase in crime rate.

The dominance of the military in national politics and failure of democratic institutions through which regional and ethnic aspirations could be articulated have fostered alienation and unrest among masses. The military-led bureaucracy has failed to respond to national aspirations.¹⁸ The presence of military rulers on the political front for a prolonged period has been very damaging to the democratic process. It weakened institutions and increased corruption. In my considered opinion, frequent suspension of the democratic process prevented the growth of national level leaders; consequently today we stand at a cross-roads looking for a visionary leader who could take out this nation from ensuing crises.

If terrorism is propaganda by deed, the success of a terrorist campaign depends decisively on the extent of publicity it receives. Seen in this perspective, the journalists and TV cameras are the terrorists' best friend.¹⁹ The media can provide the potential terrorist with all the help he needs to make violence more effective and fruitful to his purpose. Unfortunately, in the absence of a clearly defined code of conduct, the media has encouraged terrorism to thrive in this country. Till recent past, most of the private TV channels were competing to be seen as the most thrilling channels by dramatizing issues related to terrorism, providing terrorists an opportunity to argue their case to the wider public causing serious harm to Pakistan's supreme interests.

The issues like poverty, unemployment, health, illiteracy and justice have been amongst the major destabilizing factors in Pakistan. As indicated by Senator Haji Adeel, education and health are the most neglected sectors as Pakistan spends only 1.5 per cent of its GDP on education.²⁰ In Pakistan, 22.3 per cent population lives on or below the poverty line while the figure goes up to 45 per cent in under-developed

¹⁸ Leventhal and Chellaney, "Nuclear Terrorism."

¹⁹ Walter Laqueur, *The Age of Terrorism* (London: Transaction Publishers, 2001), 121.

²⁰ *The News International* (Islamabad), 4 June 2008.

regions especially FATA.²¹ According to a World Food Programme study, around 89 of Pakistan's 112 districts are facing many problems including food insecurity and diseases.²² The liberal economic development model followed in Pakistan since the 1980s and diminishing public expenditures on education and health have forced a sizable population to seek the services of Islamic charities for their basic needs.²³

The volatile geopolitical situation of Pakistan makes it vulnerable to all kinds of terrorist threats. Internally, Pakistan's complex socio-cultural makeup presents a potentially teeming environment for ethnic and religious/sectarian polarization greatly eroding cohesion, where each group enjoys trans-national affiliations to flex its muscle at home. During the last over two decades, following religious/sectarian polarization, over 4000 people have been killed according to one estimate.²⁴ Despite occasional reverses, the sectarian groups do exist though their influence remained relatively low during 2007/2008. However, the terrorists may indeed have achieved greater sophistication and resilience due to their external linkages.²⁵

Terrorists' activities in the form of suicide bombings throughout Pakistan over the past few years have been the main concern as the government has failed to devise a workable strategy. The shocking technique adopted by terrorist groups has taken the lives of over 10,267 innocent people over the past five years, according to an estimate. During 2008, Pakistan was at the top of the list of the countries in the number of suicide bombing deaths.²⁶ According to official figures as many as 1,059 persons were killed while over 2700 wounded in terrorist incidents which included 37 suicide attacks in the NWFP alone from the beginning of

²¹ "Govt to endorse poverty figures of Shaukat regime," *The News International* (Islamabad), 11 June 2008, See also "Economic Survey," *The News International* (Islamabad), 11 June 2008.

²² Max G. Manwaring, "Strategic Opportunities: Charting New Approaches To Defense and Security Challenges in the Western Hemisphere," U.S. Army College, and the Latin American and Caribbean Center, Florida International University.

²³ Khalid Aziz, "Can peace be won in NWFP".

²⁴ "Pakistan's "extremist leader" held," <http://news.bbc.co.uk>.

²⁵ Manwaring, "Strategic Opportunities".

²⁶ Peracha, "Pakistan tops list of countries in number of suicide killing death," <http://awearnessblog.com>, 16 September 2008; *The News International* (Islamabad), 23 September 2008; *The News International* (Islamabad), 22 September 2008; *The Long War Journal*, 5 February 2009; *The News International* (Islamabad) Tuesday, 19 May 2009.

2008 till 25 March 2009. Leniency by the government towards those who took up arms against the state and due to the slow moving judicial system, anti state forces felt encouraged to undermine the writ of the government.²⁷

Pakistan inherited a weak political structure. The problem was further compounded as Pakistan's founding father died before a political structure could get some maturity. In the absence of mature/visionary leadership after the Quaid's death, the country encountered a number of crises which led to the breaking up of Pakistan into two halves. Pakistani nation did not learn from the 1971 debacle. Thus inefficient and highly corrupt successive administrations ruined the basic foundations of the country. All these factors have led to polarization of the society and consequent deterioration of state's institutions which created the vacuum in which terrorism flourishes. In the absence of national cohesion, anti state elements in connivance with foreign hands continue to encourage and promote separatist movements. Thus the real threat to our security primarily comes from "within."

The banned organizations like Tahreek-e-Taliban and Lashker-e-Jhangvi etc., have the means to create instability in Pakistan.²⁸ The communal/regional cards like Sindhi, Balochi, Saraike and Mohajir etc., seem to be dominating over the concept of nationalism which could be the essence of our strength. Lashkar-i-Islam led by Mangal Bagh, based in Khyber Agency, who claims to have 120,000 armed men under him, and has occasionally threatened Peshawar by challenging the writ of the government.²⁹ It was because of this urgency that NWFP Government launched operations more than once since last year against Mangal Bagh which did not create any worth-mentioning impact.³⁰ The road to Kabul through Khyber Pass is frequently attacked by the militants who have

²⁷ Zahid Hamid, "Pakistani Politician Scared Of Baitullah, Want The Military To Get Stained," <http://www.ahmedquraishi.com/>; also see International Crisis Group "The State of Sectarianism in Pakistan," *Asia Report* (Islamabad, New Delhi, Brussels), no .95, (18 April 2005), http://www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/south_asia/095_the_state_of_sectarianism_in_pakistan.pdf

²⁸ "Conference Brief".

²⁹ "Mangal Bagh claims he refused to join Taliban," *The News International* (Islamabad), 21 April 2008.

³⁰ "Urgent Steps needed to save Peshawar from militants," *The News International* (Islamabad), 11 June 2008; Javed Aziz Khan, "Containing militancy in Peshawar," *The News International* (Islamabad), 16 June 2008.

already destroyed two historical bridges along this road.

Narco-terrorism strikes at the social and political foundations of a country. Without breaking this nexus, the latter cannot be curbed.³¹ Regrettably, Pakistan is again caught in the middle of this crisis. Well trained and fully equipped drug mafia uses Pakistani soil to transport drugs from Afghanistan to other parts of the world and in the process, the traffickers beside promoting other social evils also create serious security problems. I tend to agree with the views of Paul Leventhal and Brahma Chellaney who think that the U.S. has given free hand to narcotics cartels in Afghanistan with a view to earning their support against hard core Taliban. Michel Chossudovsky also expresses similar views that occupation forces in Afghanistan support narcotics trade and earn billions of dollars for organized crimes by intelligence agencies.³²

Externally, Pakistan finds itself geographically placed in a volatile environment and confronted with a host of problems. Since the day when Pakistan started poking its nose across its western border, it has invited the monster of terrorism to its own land and there has been no let up in its growing security problems. Although Pakistan is the U.S. ally in GWOT, nevertheless, a large section of Pakistani society views that the U.S. agenda is beyond GWOT as the American CIA alone or in close collaboration with the intelligence agencies of India, Israel and possibly Britain and some Muslim countries, is intimately involved in patronizing some factions from Afghanistan, tribal areas and other Muslim countries to target Pakistani forces. Their sponsorship is in the form of training, weapons and money. According to a Pakistani official, for reasons best known to Langley, the CIA headquarters, as well as the Pentagon, despite repeated reminders with solid proof of Brahamdagh Bugti's presence in Afghan intelligence safe houses in Kabul, and his visits to New Delhi, and his planning of terrorist acts in Balochistan, the U.S. had shown no interest in disrupting this Kabul-based fountainhead of terrorism in Balochistan nor questioned India's maligned activities through its

³¹ Kshitij Prabha, *Terrorism an Instrument of Foreign Policy (Hardcover)*, (New Delhi: South Asian Publishers, 2000), 58.

³² Leventhal and Chellaney, "Nuclear terrorism"; Michel Chossudovsky, "Pakistan and the "Global War on Terrorism," 8 January 2008, <http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=7746>, Michel Chossudovsky, "Heroin is 'Good for Your Health': Occupation Forces support Afghan Narcotics Trade, Multibillion dollar earnings for organized crime and Western financial Institutions," 29 April 2007, <http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=5514>

consulates in Kandahar and Jalalabad.³³

Predator strikes in violation of Pakistan's sovereignty are serving as a catalyst in creating disaffection and resentment among the people of affected areas against the Pakistan government and President Obama's 'new' plan to continue the old policy but make it deadlier and the recent buzz in Washington about missile strikes in Baluchistan, are thought to be all part of a plot hatched with India for separating that large region from Pakistan to create a corridor from Afghanistan to the Arabian Sea that not only by-passes Pakistan, but deprives the remainder of the state of a major source of natural resources and strategic value. In other words, there are some in Pakistan who believe that the type of statements made by President Obama and General Petraeus are, in fact, preparing the grounds for the U.S. and India to end "Pakistan's very existence" as a national state.³⁴

In the major terrorist incidents like the bombings of Marriot Hotel, Islamabad, and FIA headquarters, Lahore, attacks on Sri Lankan cricket team and Manawa training institute at Lahore, all fingers point at India which wants to destabilize Pakistan. These activities are part of a bigger game involving other regional/extra regional actors. As stated by Zahid Hamid, "Americans have no desire to catch or kill Baitulla, a hard core Taliban". In the U.S. renewed strategy which primarily focuses on Pakistan, there is a real disconnect between the two countries with regard to "who is terrorist and for whom?" A senior Pakistani official revealed that Pakistan's side has occasionally asked the American visitors "not to distinguish between a terrorist for the U.S. and Afghanistan and a terrorist for Pakistan". The past events indicate that not even once the CIA-run predators and the U.S. military have swung into action when they were provided the exact location of the targets impacting Pakistan's

³³ "U.S. seeks greater role for India in Afghanistan," *The Gaea News*, 8 April 2009, <http://blog.taragana.com/n/us-seeks-greater-role-for-india-in-afghanistan-26644/>; Also see Kamran Khan, "U.S. told not to back terrorism against Pakistan," *The News International* (Islamabad), 5 August 2008; Leventhal and Chellaney, "Nuclear terrorism"; Rooh-ul-Amin, "The game is old, players are new," *AfghanPress*, 19 November 2008, www.afghanpress.org/2008/11/19/the-game-is-old-players-are-new/

³⁴ Gregory Scoblete, "U.S. in Afghanistan: Nation Building to Nowhere?" *Real Clear World*, 30 March 2009, http://www.realclearworld.com/articles/2009/03/us_in_afghanistan_nation_build.html

supreme national interests.³⁵

With regard to internal ethnic, religious and sectarian vulnerabilities (influenced by Saudi Arabia, Iran and other actors sitting across Pak-Afghan border), there is a pause in activities not because the environment of understanding and harmony has been developed, but because other fronts have been fully mobilized and effectively causing damage to Pakistan's image. Last year's displacement of the Sunni faction from Kurram Agency and closure of the road between Thall-Parachinar since then, influenced by local and foreign sponsored factors, have all the ingredients to be exploited any time when other options are either exhausted or when there is a requirement to change the strategy. Kurram Agency issue is already influencing the areas like Hangu and Dera Ismail Khan and surrounding localities where sectarian tension prevails.

A wider availability of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) related materials and expertise, coupled with the increasingly transcendental agendas of terrorist groups, are at the heart of this concern. While in case of Pakistan, WMD related material remains under state's control, therefore there is no possibility that NSAs could ever have an access to such material. Pakistan's stance has been authenticated by Mark Fitzpatrick in his IISS Strategic Dossier published during 2007.³⁶ However, the possibility of NSAs acquiring a dirty bomb anywhere in the world including Pakistan cannot be ruled out; even a symbolic attack of this nature may have trans-boundary implications.

Pakistan's LEAs: Capabilities/Shortfalls-An Assessment

A country's economic and military strength indicate the kind of response it would present to an internal or external threat. Our armed forces are battle hardened and known for their professionalism. However, the kinds of challenges they are confronted with domestically are different and thus require a non-traditional approach to tackle them. While the SLFs are

³⁵ Hamid, "Pakistani Politician Scared Of Baitullah, Want The Military To Get Stained"; "Obama Announces New Afghanistan, Pakistan Strategies, Transcript," *The Washington Post*, 27 March 2009, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/03/27/AR2009032700891.html>, also see Kamran Khan, "U.S. told not to back terrorism against Pakistan,"

³⁶ Muhammad Khurshid Khan, "Nuclear Technology Proliferation: Challenges and International Response," *IPRI Journal* VIII, no. 1(Winter 2008): 21.

responsible for handling/managing domestic security threats there is no doubt as to their present inability and lack of expertise for such a duty. Keeping the current and emerging terrorism related challenges in view, understanding the role, limitations and capabilities of Pakistan's LEAs (Pakistan Army, Frontier Corps (FC), Frontier Constabulary and Police) as explained briefly in succeeding paragraphs, it is important to find what better course can be adopted by our government in future.

Pakistan army is primarily trained to fight a conventional war. In its training doctrine, operations like counter- terrorism, low intensity conflict (LIC) and counter-insurgency did not get due attention in the past, therefore conventional application of force in the initial stages proved costly in terms of casualties. As highlighted in a study, "It is possible that a majority of the problems related to the 'war on terror' have arisen because Pakistan does not have a counter-insurgency strategy even after years of fighting. The presence of such a strategy could have indicated the limits of Pakistani involvement and its compulsions, thus reducing external demands for it to do more".³⁷

While operations against militants in Waziristan were on, the Pakistan army realized the weaknesses in its operational strategy/tactics and accordingly mobilized its training institutions to impart essential training, which includes conduct of joint training exercises by Special Services Group (SSG) personnel with the U.S. forces. Pakistan army is also in touch with the U.S. intelligence agencies to bolster its intelligence capability against the militants.³⁸ Pakistan's military leadership is now very confident that its army is well trained as it has already developed a full range of counter- insurgency training facilities tailored to train troops for such operations in its own area as expressed by the Chief of Army Staff Gen Ashfaq Kayani. However, it would require special weapons, equipment and technology needed to match the challenges of a 21st Century war. The equipment it has received so far as partner in GWOT, is not sufficient.³⁹

Moreover, in fighting such a war it is very important that the

³⁷ Khalid Aziz, "Need for a counterinsurgency strategy".

³⁸ "U.S. plans bigger role in training Pakistani forces," *Thaindian News*, 2 March 2008, http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/uncategorized/us-plans-bigger-role-in-training-pakistani-forces_10023233.html

³⁹ *The News International* (Islamabad), 17 May 2009; Also see Tariq Butt, "U.S. favours control civilian control of Pak spy agencies," *The News International* (Islamabad), 24 May 2008.

troops have conviction in the correctness of the cause they are fighting for. It was felt some men in uniform especially among the lower ranks were not very clear about the objectives. They too were carried away by the media hype that was busy projecting the notion that they were fighting the U.S. "war on terror", a perception whose validity has been roundly proved wrong by the inhuman acts of the Taliban, especially their attacks on armed forces and police targets. Secondly, Pakistan army which has always enjoyed the respect of the general masses was put under tremendous pressure especially during the last three years due to its prolonged involvement in the country's politics which also acted negatively on its professional competence. During this period, the media also played a role in projecting its negative image. The compounding of these factors increased the vulnerabilities of the army. Extra security measures were required to safeguard against surprise terror attacks against military personnel and installations.⁴⁰

As explained earlier, it is the SLFs that are responsible for meeting all kinds of domestic security threats but for which they are neither fully prepared nor equipped. The former Inspector General Frontier Corps (IGFC), Major General Mohammad Alam Khattak, had expressed his frustration with the slow moving bureaucratic process that had left his troops to fight an insurgency with World War-II (WW-II) era rifles. His troops had been stymied by a doctrine of conventional warfare in an age of counter insurgency.⁴¹

The FC's current manpower is around 80,000 that will increase to 85,000 following fresh recruitment which is deployed in Balochistan and NWFP (about 30,000 & 55,000 troops respectively). It has lost over 300 troops since the fierce resurgence of Taliban activities in 2006. This force was never designed to fight the kind of war it is having to fight today. Nevertheless, with all the limitations since 2003, it has done a good job.⁴²

⁴⁰ Major General (Retd) Sultan Habib, "Pakistan Army's Role in the War on Terror in the backdrop of its Operation against Rebels in the Lal Masjid," http://www.epropertypak.com/opinion_lalmasjid.php

⁴¹ Candace Rondeaux and Imtiaz Ali, "Culture, Politics Hinder U.S. Effort to Bolster Pakistani Border Forces," *Washington Post*, 30 March 2008, www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/03/29/AR2008032902213.html

⁴² Ibid; also see Rahimullah Yusufzai, "Core Issues," *The News International* (Islamabad), 4 May 2008; John Moore, "U.S. Plans to Train and Equip Frontier Corps Paramilitary Troops," 20 November 2007, <http://www.Highbeam.com/doc/IPI-146287695.html>

New demands and requirements need different kinds of expertise and skills. The government's decision to equip the FC with tanks and guns from within the country's resources would take years to make it capable of leading anti-militancy operations.⁴³ In addition, low salaries and poor medical facilities have also weakened their morale. General Khattak explains that many of the casualties were not warranted if FC had been better equipped.⁴⁴

However, since 2002, the U.S. has provided some equipment to Pakistan's LEAs including the FC. The U.S. intends training 8400 FC troops during the next two years, of which the first group has already been trained during 2008. The U.S. \$ 400 million programme also calls for the paramilitary forces to be equipped with more modern weaponry, body armour and medical evacuation services.⁴⁵ The package also includes \$ 29.4 million to support expansion of the FC by another eight wings and develop an FC training centre at Warsak.⁴⁶ General Khattak emphasized that the move to train and equip the 80,000 strong force was long over due.⁴⁷ In view of the prevailing security environment, there is little possibility that in the short run the U.S. investment can raise a force capable of tackling the menace of terrorism. The FC is already overstretched and needs some pause to restore its strength.

The Frontier Constabulary's current state of preparedness hardly allows it to perform its primary role of maintaining routine law and order in the country. Frontier Constabulary, NWFP, with a force of 22,000 has a greater role in maintaining law and order in the country including the capital, Islamabad. As explained recently by a senior officer of FC Headquarters, NWFP, the force is sufficiently equipped to perform its primary role.⁴⁸ However, the officer acknowledged that this force was

⁴³ Hassan Abbas, "Pakistan: Corps is Ill-Equipped for 'War on Terror'," *Oxford Analytica*, 11 December 2007, <http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/files/OA-FC.pdf>.

⁴⁴ Rondeaux and Imtiaz, "Culture, Politics Hinder U.S. Effort to Bolster Pakistani Border Forces".

⁴⁵ Ibid; Also see *Thaindian News*, 2 March 2008; "U.S. wants FC turn into Formidable force to fight back Taliban, al Qaida," *The Hindustan Times*, 17 March 2007.

⁴⁶ Butt, "U.S. favours control civilian control of Pak spy agencies,"; See also "U.S. Provides Security Equipment to Frontier Corps," <http://highbeam.com/doc/IP3-1635891191.html>

⁴⁷ Rondeaux and Imtiaz, "Culture, Politics Hinder U.S. Effort to Bolster Pakistani Border Forces,"

⁴⁸ Col (Retd) Hamid Headquarters Frontier Constabulary, NWFP, discussion

not designed to undertake the kind of responsibilities which have been imposed on it. He also explained that the Balochistan Constabulary was similarly handicapped. Like the FC, its pay and allowances were also insufficient and medical and other allied facilities poor.

The police department has been a target of terrorist attacks for many years now. Mr Masud Khan Afridi, Deputy Inspector General of Police, Bannu, in a formal discussion held on 24 May 2008 explained that police was well prepared and was very effective in performing its primary role. However, he said that the department had not been able to evolve an effective strategy against suicidal attacks.⁴⁹ Mr Afridi's claim notwithstanding, this department is also overstretched, extremely hard pressed and ill equipped to participate in counter terrorism operations. This weakness is more pronounced in NWFP and Balochistan. The recent raise in their pay package is an encouraging step. Similarly, its training standards are too low to match the frenzy of the hardened militants. In a nutshell, our SLFs do not have the capability and are too inadequately equipped to confront the terrorists.

Proposed Role for Army

Pakistan army has been assigned the role of dealing with both domestic as well as external security challenges (including the remote possibility of use of a dirty bomb by NSAs which also falls in the category of a WMD threat). Like the U.S. where military involvement in direct law enforcement activities is normally prohibited under the Posse Commutates Act, Pakistan army is also barred from entering into law enforcement activities unless called upon by civil administration.⁵⁰ In a domestic crisis which might also involve the threat of a dirty bomb, the army may be called upon to assist in several different ways ranging from actual interdiction of the terrorists to the loaning of special equipment to other organisations for use.

In the face of a domestic threat, whether or not the army is directly involved in dealing with the terrorists, it should continue to

with the author, 5 May 2008.

⁴⁹ Mr Masud Khan Afridi, Deputy Inspector General of Police Bannu region, discussion with the author, 24 May 2008.

⁵⁰ Jeffrey D. Brake, *Terrorism and the Military's Role in Domestic Crisis Management: Background and Issues for Congress* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, April 2001),

perform two functions: first, to train the SLFs and secondly, take over the leading role from SLFs when the situation so demands. With democracy back on track, both the Ministry of Interior (MoI) and Ministry of Defence (MoD) should review their policies about assigning responsibility to the army for providing support to civil authorities in particular in case of an emergency involving a WMD-related threat.

In different scenarios including WMD related threat, the army may be asked to provide technical support such as explosive ordinance disposal and if the situation so demanded interdict an event and apprehend those responsible and restore peace. In the U.S., the Secretary of Defence is responsible for providing military assets that can assist in both crisis response and consequent management aspects of a WMD related threat.⁵¹ However, in Pakistan, such technical support will be provided by the army as well as by the strategic organisations working under the administrative control of the Strategic Plans Division (SPD). The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), which was formed after October 2005 in the wake of the earthquake, also needs to define the areas of its authority and role vis-a-vis the MoI and the MoD and become a part of the broad strategy with all stake holders.

Employment of a military tactical force in response to a domestic law enforcement emergency concerning terrorism and WMD could take place in two situations, one) armed conflict-like situations that threaten the integrity of the country and, two) a threat endangering public safety that is beyond the tactical response capability of SLFs. Major General (Retd) Sultan Habib, former IGFC, NWFP, has suggested that the political government with reorganised and modernised SLFs forces should carry the onus of responsibility to eliminate and contain Talibanisation while Pakistan army should be deployed on strategically important locations to react rapidly when considered necessary.⁵² In FATA and Swat context, he advised that army units should only be deployed at historically established cantonments with rapid deployment force readily available to move quickly, take punitive action and withdraw to their respective cantonments.⁵³ I believe that the army will be taking similar steps after consolidating the gains in Malakand Division, while handing over the law and order responsibility to the SLF.

Similarly, Brig (Retd) Ajmal Khan also suggested that the army

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Sultan Habib, "Pakistan Army's Role in the War on Terror".

⁵³ Ibid.

should be taken out from FATA in a phased programme, leaving the affairs to FC, the Political Administration and the tribal elders to revive the old tested traditions.⁵⁴ I would rather like to go a step further and recommend that the concerned authorities at the provincial level should be discouraged from making frequent requests for army's role in maintaining law and order during occasions like Moharram, 12 Rabi-ul - awwal and elections etc. In the light of our past experience, the federal and provincial capitals must reorganise and maintain sufficiently strong paramilitary forces to cater to all kinds of domestic crises; and army should be called sparingly as a last option.

Way Forward

International Dimensions

Terrorism has become a complex phenomenon which has no boundaries and thus cannot be tackled in isolation by a single state. For this reason the UN and other international organisations are more active in developing international counter-terrorism co-operation. The latest initiative was Resolution 1540, adopted by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) in April 2004 which is more strict and requires member states to establish financial controls to prevent the financing of such transactions to control NSAs, which will also help Pakistan domestically.⁵⁵

To win GWOT, the U.S. will have to alter the perception among the vast majority of Muslims, not only in South Asia but also in the Middle East that the ongoing 'war on terror' is not against them.⁵⁶ Reza Pirbhai proposes that the U.S. will have to adopt a holistic approach if it wishes to achieve long term objectives of global peace by taking all stakeholders on board for resolution of the core international problems. It would mean the inclusion of Kashmiri separatists in the first case, the Taliban in the second, and Hamas, Hizbullah and Syria in the last. An open and sincere attempt to address such issues will defang such groups as Al Qaeda and Taliban.⁵⁷ In the process, they will help Pakistan in tackling with domestic issues which have direct/indirect linkage with the issues as

⁵⁴ Discussion with Ajmal Khan.

⁵⁵ Khurshid "Nuclear Technology Proliferation," 27- 36.

⁵⁶ Scoble, "U.S. in Afghanistan."

⁵⁷ Masood Sharif Khan Khattak, "Faltering U.S. strategy," *The News International (Islamabad)*, 28 April 2009, <http://thenews.jang.com.pk/print1.asp?id=174639>

highlighted above.

In the same context, Pakistan's former Ambassador to the UNSC, Mr Munir Akram, while speaking in a debate at UNSC on post conflict peace building, called for identifying and addressing the root causes of disputes in an effort to lay the foundation for sustainable peace and development in states recovering from conflicts. He suggested that peace building must be part of a comprehensive response to complex crises.⁵⁸ While addressing the soft launch of Internal Defence Exhibition and Seminar (IDEAS) 2008, the Prime Minister of Pakistan also stressed that the world community needed to pay more attention to elimination of the root causes.⁵⁹

A study conducted in Washington DC recommends that the U.S. should develop a comprehensive, collaborative and transparent policy approach towards Pakistan by involving all of its major institutional and political players. The report also suggests that the U.S. should accept Pakistan as a nuclear weapons state and dispel the impression that it is interested in targeting Pakistan's nuclear capability, and must also replace the "drone attacks policy in Fata" with a humanitarian aid package for the internally displaced people of the FATA and the Swat region.⁶⁰ Recognizing Pakistan as a nuclear weapons state and granting it similar status as that of India's, can bring a marked change in the overall opinion of Pakistani society that Pakistan is being treated with discrimination. This will help Pakistani establishment in getting support from all segments of its society in fighting terrorism.

A constructive relationship between Washington and Islamabad can be the determining factor in what happens in Afghanistan, and in eliminating Al Qaeda from across Pak-Afghan border. The \$1.5-billion Kerry-Lugar economic package for Pakistan needs substantial enhancement; benchmarks are a U.S. right as donor but attached strings compromising national self-respect are non-starters. The U.S. in collaboration with Pakistan needs to target areas of energy, education, health and transportation infrastructure; facilitate trade enhancement into

⁵⁸ *The News International* (Islamabad), 22 May 2008.

⁵⁹ "PM seeks world help in war on terror," *The News International* (Islamabad), 24 May 2008.

⁶⁰ Hassan Abbas, "Pakistan Can Defy the Odds: How to Rescue a Failing State," *Report*, 11 May 2009, http://ispu.org/files/PDFs/ispu-pakistan_can_defy_the_odds.pdf; also see "Think-tank asks U.S. to stop drone attacks," *The News International* (Islamabad), 12 May 2009.

U.S. and European markets, and assist flow of direct foreign investment (FDI) into viable projects in Pakistan. This will help Pakistan government in building consensus for greater cooperation on GWOT.⁶¹

In fighting GWOT, Pakistan is confronted with a serious humanitarian challenge in the shape of millions of internally displaced persons from areas where an operation is going on against Taliban militants. Concerted efforts on a giant scale are needed at all levels to reduce the horrendous effects of the exodus. Notwithstanding effective measures initiated by the government to ban Jihadi organizations, suspicions have persisted about harbouring these elements. This impression must be dispelled. The frequent statements made by officials of the U.S. administration are contributing negatively in maligning the government, encouraging anti-state actors to use such statements as ploy to exploit and weaken the government's resolve to deal with militants with a firm hand.⁶² The U.S. administration therefore, must change its mindset if it wishes to see a change in the attitude of Pakistani society.⁶³

President Obama's strategy that proposes a greatly expanded commitment to improving and enlarging not only the LEAs' of Pakistan and Afghanistan but also improving the overall structure of their respective national institutions will certainly make a marked difference in the effectiveness of the effort.⁶⁴ In this context the suggestions made by journalist Rahimullah Yousafzai and Zeenia Satti that rather than appear as an occupation force, the international community ought to rebuild both sides of the Pak-Afghan border and try to win over the masses, is very much on the agenda of the United States' new plan. However, mutual trust, cooperation and transparency in dealing with the problem which is common to all, will help in achieving intended results.⁶⁵ A principle decision by G-8 to grant \$ 4 billion to develop the troubled

⁶¹ Qudssia Akhlaque, "Pakistan to push for counter-insurgency weapon," *The News International* (Islamabad), 4 May 2009.

⁶² "Bush calls FATA most dangerous region," *Dawn* 13 April 2008; also see Caroline Wadhams and Colin Cookman, "We Need a Plan for the Federally Administered Tribal Area," 23 April 2008, <http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2008/04/fata.html>

⁶³ Rahimullah Yusufzai, "The U.S. will have to 'do more,'" ; also see "CJCS's address"

⁶⁴ *Washington Post*, 27 March 2009.

⁶⁵ Ibid; Zeenia Satti, "Peace that unleashes war," *The News International* (Islamabad), 21 May 2008.

border region between Afghanistan and Pakistan is a good sign.⁶⁶ In the greater interest of the world, Pakistan must assert its energies to make the important capitals realize that genuine peace and stability at large hinges on a stable Afghanistan.

With a view to countering propaganda against Islam and the Muslim community which has serious domestic implications, there is an immediate need to shed all differences within the Ummah so that Islam could be projected in its true form, as a peaceful ideology. If we fail to stand united, in my considered opinion, one or the other Muslim country will be made a battle field for the world powers to fight proxy wars, open their arms bazaar for insecure neighbouring countries and do business in costly weapons systems. The conference of leading scholars of the Muslim world organized last year at Mecca was a step in the right direction.⁶⁷ Similar efforts must continue to develop consensus so as to fight back from a common platform.

As indicated earlier, use or threat of use of WMD will have strategic implications which would need greater willingness among international community to share even strategic intelligence to enable the involved country to respond in time to neutralize the infrastructure of terrorist organizations. Realizing its importance, Colin Powell, former U.S. Secretary of State said, "...the president has made it very clear that the kinds of things that will probably be most successful in the campaign against terrorism are intelligence-sharing, controlling people going across borders,... You can't do this, America alone. You need coalitions".⁶⁸ It is a highly sensitive matter that needs full international cooperation. Pakistan has already taken extensive measures which include sharing of its exit control list with the international community.⁶⁹

Regional Cooperation

The regional approach that President Obama highlighted in his strategy can be an effective instrument for the suppression of terrorism within local jurisdiction. Unfortunately, South Asian countries, especially India

⁶⁶ *The News International* (Islamabad), 28 June 2008.

⁶⁷ "Muslim World Conference in Macca," *The News International* (Islamabad), 6 June 2008.

⁶⁸ John Ikenberry, "American Grand Strategy in the Age of Terror," *Survival* 43, no.4, (Winter 2001-2): 27.

⁶⁹ "Cabinet approves tight N- controls," *The News International* (Islamabad), 6 May 2004; *Nation* (Islamabad), 6 May 2004.

and Pakistan, lack mutual trust. Similarly, relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan too are not very warm. Therefore, signing of an agreement at the regional level on the lines of "European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism, 1977" seems unlikely. In order to bridge the trust deficit, India, Pakistan and Afghanistan should evolve a framework of periodic discussions on counterterrorism issues and share intelligence to preempt terrorists' attack anywhere in this region. The commitments made in the declaration of 11th SAARC Summit with regard to terrorism must also be implemented to improve mutual confidence and trust.

In a broader context, rather than offering services to the U.S.-EU or NATO in support of their operations against terrorism, Pakistan, Afghanistan and India should cooperate with each other to allay mutual suspicions and build mutual confidence to deal with terrorism on a regional level. The Tri-Partite Commission must be made to play its role to restore mutual trust and confidence.

Predator strikes in FATA in isolation will bring no fruit rather they would further complicate the issue for Pakistan at home, and will have a negative impact on its role in GWOT. It calls for evolving a common strategy. The recent steps approved about the use/control of predators need to be elaborated for public information.

The initiative taken recently by Iran and Pakistan to find a solution to Afghan problems is highly desirable since all three nations share common geography, culture, history and values, provided the summit to be organized in Iran on 24 May 2009 develops consensus on a common approach and unified strategy to address the grave issues that plague the region.⁷⁰ The Tehran trilateral summit can set a new course of action that may also invite the U.S. and NATO and possibly India to join later to effectively meet the security challenges that threaten regional peace and stability. The possibility of involving China, which has stakes in a stable Pakistan and Iran, can also be considered.

The security of Afghanistan and the stability of Pakistan depend on the two countries' cooperation with each other and with the region in facing a common threat. A regional approach, such as that spelled out in the new U.S. strategy, may bring about a positive change in the region. It will then be possible for the U.S. to facilitate a longer-term exchange between Afghanistan's neighbours to identify shared economic

⁷⁰ "Iran ready to provide 1,100MW power to Pakistan," *The News International* (Islamabad), 22 May 2009; See also *The News International* (Islamabad), 24 May 2009.

interests, engage in a new diplomatic effort, and implement confidence-building measures to address legitimate security concerns in the region⁷¹. In this context, the dual role being played particularly by India in connivance with other actors must be seen and monitored and discouraged to achieve long term peace in this region.

National Approach

Evolving a comprehensive foreign/domestic policy for Pakistan, accommodating the concerns of domestic /foreign audience through national consensus of all elements of the national power spectrum is a must.⁷² For a stable Pakistan, the broad objective of the national policy should be to provide an enabling environment conducive to prosperity; one) by eliminating the threat of terrorism while enhancing religious harmony, modernization and tolerance, two) by strengthening a politically stable and democratic government while augmenting harmony between the provinces and the federation, three) improving governance by strengthening state institutions, and establishing the writ of the government by ensuring supremacy of law, four) by pursuing the socio-economic uplift of under developed provinces/areas, fifth) provision of justice at the doorstep of all by improving efficiency of the courts and, finally, augmenting the security mechanism by upgrading LEAs, and fortifying the security of the installations of strategic importance.

Our core problems are well registered and must be addressed on priority. As emphasized by the Prime Minister of Pakistan that with a view to tackling terrorism, the government will use multifaceted approaches combining the use of force against hardened terrorists with the main thrust on using diplomatic and political means with those who because of religious or ethnic considerations were misled into supporting extremists.⁷³ However, Munir Akram, former representative to the UN, thinks that “the rising insurgency in Pakistan could only be reversed

⁷¹ “President Obama’s New Strategy – what’s new, will it work?” Statements Dr Zahir Tanin, Permanent representative of Afghanistan to the United Nations, New York, 21 April 2009, <http://www.afghanistan-un.org/2009/04/president-obama’s-new-strategy---what’s-new-will-it-work/>

⁷² CJCSC’s address to 37th staff course at the Pakistan Navy War College,” *The News International* (Islamabad), 12 June 2008.

⁷³ “We will fight terrorism our way,” *The News International* (Islamabad), 1 May 2008.

through a nationally endorsed strategy, not one “made in America”. Mr Riaz Khokhar, former Foreign Secretary of Pakistan, also emphasized that only an indigenous national policy with full backing of the people will work.⁷⁴ Thus, as the bottom line, Pakistani establishment will have to change this perception and remove the apprehensions of the common people that Pakistan is being dictated by foreign powers. The recently concluded all parties conference at Islamabad that displayed greater unanimity and resolve to root out terrorism from Pakistan was a step in the right direction. However, the Balochistan problem also needs special attention. An all parties' conference needs to be convened immediately to look into the sensitive issues causing discontentment and helping anti state elements which are playing in foreign hands.

Creating national harmony by taking all provinces on board is a gigantic task and a serious challenge for the leadership. National harmony can only be ensured by instilling a sense of belonging among the various units of the federation and making them a part of the mainstream of national life by ensuring their fundamental rights and fulfillment of basic needs. As an immediate measure, all national institutions must be brought back on track. This enormous task cannot be completed without reviving the concept of nationalism. Improving civil-military relations by projecting the military's role in nation-building efforts is important in cementing national harmony. Unfortunately, today there is a gap on all fronts which needs to be bridged immediately.

As highlighted by the Prime Minister, peace is achieved through strength. The best way to handle terrorism is not to yield. By adopting an all encompassing policy and a unified approach, the chances of success of the terrorists can be foreclosed. The current army operations against militants must be taken to their logical end. However, political strategy must give a safe exit to the army. If the government wishes to see a successful outcome of the ongoing operations, it must pull out the army at the earliest on completion of the operations. A prolonged army stay in troubled areas will not only cause anxiety among the people, but will also affect the overall efficiency of the forces which Pakistan cannot afford in view of the danger on the eastern front.

Evolving a nationally accepted counterinsurgency strategy that should address anomalies and related difficulties at the strategic, tactical

⁷⁴ “Militants Not ‘Existential Threat,’” *Associated Press of Pakistan*, 2 May 2009; see also Mr Riaz Khokhar, views on Talk Show on Geo TV, 7 May 2009.

and human rights level is a must. It will protect us from many internal and external pressures in the conduct of the current GWOT. Since a national counter-terrorism authority has already been set up with the help of Friends of Pakistan and duly sponsored by the UN to provide financial assistance to Pakistan, it must immediately come up with a workable strategy to win the hearts and minds of all those who have already suffered much, especially the people of Malakand Division.⁷⁵

The media must contribute towards fostering a national spirit and creating mutual trust and harmony between the provinces and various sectarian and communal groups. As suggested by Kamila Hyat, "The media must rise to the challenge. Surely keeping the federation of Pakistan united is the biggest service it can render. This can happen only if the truth is told...."⁷⁶ Media must stop glamourizing the terrorists' activities as they have done earlier. The laid down objectives can only be achieved by inducting scholars in this field. In order to guide the media in the right direction and harmonizing their nation-building efforts, a comprehensive code of conduct must be evolved and implemented strictly. The recent tone adopted by the media in support of Pakistan army's operations in Malakand Division is very encouraging.

Communal, parochial and regional sentiments exert profound influence on the performance of the LEAs, which become prone to political interference. The prestigious national institutions have been politicized. The ill effects of this disease must be eradicated to eliminate nepotism, favouritism and victimization. The credibility of all institutions needs to be restored. Pakistan needs to strive for accommodating the concerns of all communities including the majority and minority groups and/or backward classes who feel isolated and exploited politically, socially and economically. The government should build political, social and economic safety nets for various national groups and individuals, particularly minorities. At no stage the state should allow space and shelter to the terrorists for renewal of their activities. The main objective should be to improve inter-ethnic coexistence, protect the collective rights of the various nationalist groups, promote and encourage regional parties, instill a national sense of

⁷⁵ "Pakistan to raise additional 80,000 police to fight terrorism," *Gaea News*, 28 March 2009.

⁷⁶ Kamila Hyat, "Marching to a different tune," *The News International* (Islamabad), 26 June 2008.

belonging and being one nation among the people.

Sectarianism also endangers national security. The intelligentsia, political figures and religious scholars can play an important role in resolving differences. Vigilance is needed to watch against infiltration of foreign elements that exploit sectarian differences. The Anti Terrorism Act of 1997 which was further amended in 2001 to enlarge its scope and provide legal framework to deal with terrorism, also covers the activities of the promoters of sectarian violence. It must be implemented in letter and spirit. The issue of Kurram Agency affecting areas like Hangu, Dera Ismail Khan and surroundings needs to be taken seriously, and on priority.

Prevalence of poverty and illiteracy will continue to neutralize all efforts to promote harmony and peace. A poor person at time is left with only two options, either to commit suicide along with his family to get rid of hunger or commit suicide and kill those responsible for his miserable life. Poor people have exercised both the options in Pakistan quite frequently. Thus provision of basic needs including job opportunities etc is the primary responsibility of the government if peace and progress are its objectives.

The shifting of education from state responsibility to private sector has made it lose its national direction. Pakistan's education policy needs a complete overhaul. It is not only the *Deeni Madaris*/religious institutions which warrant immediate attention, the government is also required to introduce a common curriculum to facilitate government institutions in coming up to people's expectations.

Timely and reliable intelligence forms the first line of defence against terrorism. Till now our intelligence network has failed in checking terrorist activities. We seriously need to evaluate shortfalls in our intelligence organizations and must organize a cohesive intelligence set-up, which should be fully equipped and especially trained to take care of this ongoing challenge. An integrated approach ensuring unity of effort will be of prime importance to monitor anti state elements with militant linkages. In the same context, an independent Counter Terrorism Institute in the form of a Think Tank may be constituted in the private sector to carry out focused research on projects ranging from improving the ability to respond to the projected/ emerging terrorism related threats to developing new strategies.

It is ironic that despite Pakistan having been a victim of multi-faceted terrorism for the last 20 years, it has failed to establish a

Specialized Federal Agency to combat this menace. Though resources may be a constraint, a similar organization on the lines of the U.S. Homeland Security may be constituted to harmonize the activities of all agencies. National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) established in the aftermath of 2005 earthquake may also extend its role to terror related disasters, security measures and strategies. The proposed agency must also incorporate a counter terrorism network that must work in close harmony with friendly countries' intelligence set-ups. In the current war against terrorism, a Tri-Partite Commission established in Afghanistan is one such arrangement that can help all parties in keeping watch over enemy intensions and activities through intelligence sharing. We suggest that similar arrangements may also be made with other countries especially China, Iran and India.

Pakistan borders being porous are prone to illegal entry. The situation has been aggravated due to Afghan refugees' influx and Afghan family ties inside Pakistan. Although the NWFP Home Department maintains records of all foreigners as well as Pakistanis returning from Afghanistan, this effort must continue on other fronts as well.

Since the early 1980s, all kinds of illegal weapons are kept by the people. The government is fully aware of this problem. It has launched numerous arms control measures including preparation of a positive list of weapons. Surrender of Illicit Arms Act 1991 has been strictly enforced in Pakistan, however, the legal procedures are meant for responsible citizens. The government is also required to initiate effective steps to address this issue from a politico-social perspective as well. A special monitoring mechanism must also be evolved to clear our mega cities from the menace of illegal weapons.

Pakistan army being the custodian of maintaining and ensuring external as well as internal security must continue to prepare and improve its operational readiness to deal with all kinds of threats. Our training methodology for the Corps engaged in LIC must encompass real requirements which should be inbuilt in the curricula of formation level battle schools and other schools of instruction. Based on our past experience, joint training exercises with other LEAs must be made a regular feature and accordingly, Army's training institutions must help SLFs in their capacity building so as to integrate them into the wider national fighting force. And finally, a unified command of the civil and defence forces on the lines as India has in occupied Kashmir is essential to deal with any terrorist situation.

Unlike the army which has fewer constraints, SLFs are ill prepared to take on their primary role. Despite the U.S. promise to train the FC, the situation on ground is quite different.⁷⁷ A major overhaul of the SLFs in terms of their mandate, service conditions including pay packages and medical service, new training facilities, and modern equipment including aviation support etc are steps that can rejuvenate the force.⁷⁸ Realizing the stakes involved in bringing in the army, the government must mobilize their energies and prepare SLFs accordingly. A principle decision to raise an additional 80,000 strong constabulary to fight terrorism is a step in the right direction.

Conclusion

The most pressing threat to the security of Pakistan is the threat posed by the internal extremists and groups such as Taliban and the syndicated extremists fully or partially sponsored by foreign hands. Clearly there is need for a holistic new approach to the campaign against terrorism. As long as the underlying social, political and sectarian factors fostering terrorism remain unchanged in society, the situation will not change. It is therefore high time Pakistan's establishment took domestic issues seriously and addressed the real causes behind terrorism. The loans with heavy baggage acquired from international donors must be utilized with sincerity, honesty and due care. Patchwork policies will not deliver as explained by Dr Maleeha Lodhi. Pakistan will have to adopt a coherent policy that is constantly and patiently applied and sustained until the achievement of the objectives.⁷⁹

It goes without saying that so far there has been no systematic approach to counter the appeal of fundamentalism. Over time various law enforcing and intelligence agencies have made numerous valuable recommendations. However no heed was paid by the concerned authorities as the issue never appeared on their priority agenda. Wisdom lies in devoting resources and high-level attention to the safeguarding of national interests by addressing the core causes of the terrorism menace.

Internationally the U.S. and its allies need to do more. A discriminatory approach especially towards the Muslims must be avoided

⁷⁷ Rahimullah Yusufzai, "Core Issue," *The News International*, 24 May 2008.

⁷⁸ Abbas, "Pakistan Can Defy the Odds."

⁷⁹ Dr Maleeha Lodhi, "Moment of reckoning," *The News International*, 13 May 2009.

to give breathing space to the establishments of Muslim countries to develop consensus within their respective nations against terrorism. The core problems are well registered, which must get reflection in the long term strategy to uproot the causes of terrorism, extremism and fundamentalism because such trends are present in every society, irrespective of its religion.■