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Pakistan in 2011

Ten Years of the “War on Terror”

ABSTRACT

Pakistan came into sharp conflict with the U.S. and the international community in 2011 over its long-standing support of Islamist militants. The killing of Osama bin Laden left many speculating whether Pakistan’s intelligence agencies were either complicit in harboring him or incompetent. Pakistan’s various conflicts, as well as Pakistan Taliban violence, continue to claim thousands of lives. Economic growth remains inadequate to provide jobs for its ever-growing population, and both the civilian and military leaderships appear unwilling to make structural economic changes to attract vital international developmental aid.

KEYWORDS: Pakistan, Taliban, Osama bin Laden, insurgency, militants

ANOTHER HARD YEAR FOR U.S.-PAKISTAN RELATIONS

October 2011 marked the tenth anniversary of Pakistan’s participation in the U.S.-led “war on terror.” But Pakistan’s involvement in this conflict has left both Pakistanis and Americans deeply frustrated. Observers from both nations often cite a “trust deficit” to explain Pakistan’s persistent failure to meet U.S. expectations and the perennially tumultuous bilateral relationship over the past decade.¹ Pakistani officials, commentators, and citizens alike frequently describe how, in their view, the U.S. has “used” Pakistan in the past, then abandoned it when expedient. Americans who are familiar with the past six decades of U.S.-Pakistan relations counter that each time Pakistan professed commitment to the strategic goals of the U.S., it did so to serve its own ends. Ten years into this most recent period of engagement, it has again become abundantly clear that Pakistan’s interests diverge starkly from those of the U.S.

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1. See Harlan Ullman, “U.S.-Pakistan Trust Deficit,” *New Atlanticist*, March 24, 2010, <http://www.acus.org/new_atlanticist/us-pakistan-trust-deficit>.

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In late January 2011, the U.S. and Pakistan clashed over the actions of Raymond Davis, an American who killed two young Pakistani men in Lahore. Davis was a contractor for the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), providing logistics and security to a CIA operation based in Lahore. The U.S. government claimed that the two men threatened Davis with weapons and that he acted in self-defense. A Pakistan-based journalist reported, based on compelling evidence, that the two men were in fact contracted by Pakistan's intelligence agency, the Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI).² If indeed these men were hired by the ISI, then the Raymond Davis affair may well have been orchestrated to force the U.S. government to curtail unilateral intelligence operations. In the aftermath of the episode, Pakistan's army chief Gen. Ashfaq Parvez Kayani personally demanded that the U.S. send home military and intelligence personnel engaging in unilateral covert operations.³

While early accounts of the Davis episode portrayed it as a robbery gone bad, the story quickly evolved in local media to portray a murderous U.S. spy with little regard for Pakistani life. The two countries wrangled over his legal status, with the U.S. claiming he had an official passport and thus diplomatic immunity. The Pakistanis rejected these claims. Although the Foreign Office did eventually concede that Davis had official status, the matter was only resolved when the U.S. agreed to pay *dayat* (blood money) to the victims' families, who subsequently dropped the charges. With the assistance of Pakistan's intelligence agencies and key Islamist and militant parties like the Jamaat ul-Dawa (JuD, Society for Preaching), the event sparked widespread protests and demands that Davis be sentenced to death.⁴

The Davis affair enraged Pakistani intelligence officials, who were infuriated by the creeping unilateralism of CIA operations in Pakistan. Many of these operations focused on militant groups patronized by Pakistan, such as the JuD; elements of the Pakistan Taliban (i.e., Maulvi Nazir and Gul Bahadur of South and North Waziristan, respectively) that target Americans in Afghanistan rather than Pakistanis; and the Afghan Taliban and allied fighters such as the Haqqani network. In the wake of the Davis affair, Director

2. Omar Waraich, "U.S. Diplomat Could Bring Down Pakistan Gov't," *Time*, February 9, 2011, <<http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2047149,00.html>>.

3. Jane Parlez, "Pakistan Tells U.S. It Must Sharply Cut C.I.A. Activities," *New York Times*, April 11, 2011.

4. Waraich, "U.S. Diplomat Could Bring Down Pakistan Government"; Raza Rumi, "Raymond Davis Case: Bitter Truths," *Express Tribune*, February 15, 2011, <<http://tribune.com.pk/story/119334/raymond-davis-case-bitter-truths/>>.

General of the ISI Lieutenant General Shuja Pasha demanded deep cuts in the CIA's presence in Pakistan and insisted that Americans send home many special forces personnel who were involved in training Pakistani security forces.⁵

Before the U.S. and Pakistan could establish a new equilibrium, their troubled relationship sustained a near catastrophic blow. On May 2, the U.S. dispatched several teams of U.S. Navy SEALs in a helicopter-borne night raid to kill Osama bin Laden in Abbottabad, a cantonment town of the Pakistani army about a three hour drive north of Islamabad. Since 2010, the U.S. had cultivated Pakistani operatives to keep watch on a large, austere compound where U.S. officials suspected bin Laden was living. The news of his killing shocked Americans and Pakistanis, if for no other reason than that the compound was mere kilometers from the famed Pakistan Military Academy. Many Americans were incredulous that bin Laden could find sanctuary in such a town without the positive support of high-level figures in Pakistan's military and intelligence agencies. The ISI and the Pakistani military responded by rounding up and arresting those Pakistanis who cooperated in the raid. This further enraged U.S. lawmakers, who were already considering curtailing or conditioning Pakistani aid in light of the global financial crisis and Pakistani perfidy, including its ongoing support to the Afghan Taliban and allied fighters such as the Haqqani network and international terrorist organizations such as JuD (formerly known as Lashkar-e-Taiba [LeT, Army of the Pure]). U.S. lawmakers continue to debate the future of U.S. assistance.⁶

While Americans were celebrating the death of bin Laden, Pakistanis woke up to a morning of confusion, outrage, and embarrassment. Their government had insisted for a decade that bin Laden was not in Pakistan. Many were astonished by his presence in Abbottabad; three in 10 Pakistanis surveyed believed the ISI must have known he was there.⁷ Ordinary citizens were flabbergasted that a foreign military force could invade their air space with several helicopters, wage a firefight that spanned 40 minutes in a garrison town and involved blowing up a damaged helicopter, and make it back to Afghanistan

5. "Pakistan Demands Deep Cuts in CIA Presence," NBC News, April 12, 2011, <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/42550898/ns/us_news-security/t/pakistan-demands-deep-cuts-cia-presence/#.Tra57bjj-uf>.

6. K. Alan Kronstadt, "Pakistan-U.S. Relations: A Summary," Congressional Research Service (CRS) Report for Congress R41832, October 20, 2011.

7. Julie Ray and Rajesh Srinivasan, "Three in 10 Pakistanis Say Intelligence Knew Bin Laden's Locale," Gallup, May 19, 2011, <<http://www.gallup.com/poll/147650/Three-Pakistanis-Say-Intelligence-Knew-Bin-Laden-Locale.aspx>>.

before Pakistan's air force could even scramble its jets.⁸ The attack prompted many Pakistanis to question how efficaciously the army could respond should India act unilaterally against its terrorist enemies on Pakistani soil.

The Pakistani army took nearly a week to formalize a response to its humiliation. Rather than embracing the simple and disturbing truth that bin Laden was hidden in its midst, the army coopted political elites to defend its institutional position. Following a 12-hour, in camera session of the National Assembly, law makers condemned the U.S. raid and demanded a review of bilateral cooperation. The military blamed its inability to detect and respond to the incursion on unique technology only the U.S. possesses. This was clearly an attempt to reassure Pakistanis that India could not conduct such a raid without engagement by Pakistani armed forces.⁹

The marathon National Assembly session was a rare occasion on which Pakistan's military and intelligence chiefs were called upon to defend their performance before the country's elected officials. The ISI head, Lt. General Pasha, even offered his resignation, but Chief of Army Staff Parvez Ashfaq Kayani rejected this overture. The weak civilian government had not had such an opportunity to expand its control of the military since 1971, when public opinion of the army plummeted after the loss of Bangladesh, formerly East Pakistan.

Ultimately, Pakistan's civilian leaders squandered this rare opportunity. Cyril Almedia, a columnist for the major daily newspaper *Dawn* summed up the civilian lack of initiative: "The political government we have has chosen to lie back, keep quiet, and try not to be blamed for a crisis in the country."¹⁰ Prime Minister Yousef Raza Gilani could have requested that General Kayani resign in light of the fiasco. After all, it is the army—not the ISI—that is charged with protecting Pakistan from military incursions. Instead, Gilani issued a statement explaining that there was no disharmony in the government and no interest in holding the army to account. The government did

8. C. Christine Fair, "Try to See It My Way," *Foreign Policy, Af-Pak Channel*, May 24, 2011, <http://afpak.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2011/05/24/try_to_see_it_my_way>.

9. Irfan Ghauri, "In-camera Session: Govt Asked to Review Relations with U.S.," *Pakistan Express Tribune*, May 14, 2011, <<http://tribune.com.pk/story/167947/bin-laden-operation-military-civilian-leadership-meet-behind-closed-doors/>>.

10. John Chalmers, "Analysis: Pakistan Squanders Chance to Bring Military to Heel," Reuters, May 10, 2011, <<http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/05/10/us-pakistan-military-analysis-idUSTRE7492TM20110510>>.

announce that there would be a commission to look into the debacle, but it would be headed by a general, not a civilian leader.¹¹

BETWEEN THE SHADOWS OF INDIA AND AFGHANISTAN: PAKISTAN'S REGIONAL DILEMMA

With Barack Obama's election as president of the United States in 2008, American objectives in Afghanistan shifted primarily toward transferring the country's security to the Afghans. The goal was to permit a graduated and conditions-based diminution of large-scale American counterinsurgency activities in Afghanistan. As this change in posture takes place, the U.S. will move increasingly to a counterterrorism strategy focused on pursuing international terrorists in Afghanistan, training Afghan security forces, and securing access to key Afghan military bases through a strategic partnership with the government.¹² As the American end game nears, the U.S. is trying to confront a problem that it has deferred for most of the past 10 years. The issue: how can it defeat the Taliban while Pakistan continues to actively support the group along with key allied networks such as the Haqqani network led by Jalaluddin Haqqani? In an unprecedented move, in September 2011, Admiral Michael Mullen, the outgoing chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, described the Haqqani network as being a "veritable arm" of the ISI, during testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee.¹³ U.S. policy makers are struggling to understand how any sort of transition in Afghanistan can take place when Pakistan remains dedicated to undermining U.S. interests there.¹⁴

American lawmakers are slowly coming to appreciate that Islamabad will never forego its efforts to manipulate Afghan affairs as long as Pakistan remains

11. *Ibid.*

12. See testimony and written statement of Lt. Gen. David Barno (ret.) before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia, "2014 and Beyond: U.S. Policy toward Afghanistan and Pakistan, Part I," November 3, 2011, <http://foreignaffairs.house.gov/hearing_notice.asp?id=1372>.

13. See testimony of Admiral Michael G. Mullen, chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, before the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee, "U.S. Strategy in Afghanistan and Iraq," September 22, 2011, <http://armed-services.senate.gov/e_witnesslist.cfm?id=5252>.

14. See opening statement of Representative Gary Ackerman before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia, "2014 and Beyond," November 3, 2011, <<http://link.brightcove.com/services/player/bcpid800924616001?bckey=AQ--AAAAukPARhE-,qbforVPjCtIU2U-gQt9yJ1PzfkAS6Wvc&bctid=1250356603001>>.

ensnared in a conflict with India and as long as it fears that Afghanistan will allow India access to its territory and developmental programs to the detriment of Pakistan's perceived interests. To prevent such a future, Pakistan has sought to ensure that it has a dominant role in any Afghan settlement with the various government and anti-government forces. Apart from continuing to support the Afghan Taliban militarily while pressuring those Taliban elements that resist Islamabad's efforts at control, Pakistan is suspected of sponsoring, through the Haqqani network, the killing of former Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani in September.

The attacker was a Pakistani national. Yet, both Pakistan and the Haqqani network reject such assertions of malfeasance.¹⁵ Rabbani was a key figure in the now-defunct Northern Alliance and headed the High Peace Council. He was charged with reaching a settlement with the Taliban, and his assassination undermined efforts toward reconciliation.¹⁶ After Rabbani was killed, Afghan President Hamid Karzai concluded that he must deal with Pakistan. This was no doubt what Pakistan wanted: a greater role in the peace process to ensure that any settlement in Afghanistan will have Taliban representation that will be favorable toward Pakistan and will help limit India's footprint along the border.¹⁷

Equally important, progress in mitigating the ever-present conflict between India and Pakistan has been glacial but promising. After a hiatus of nearly two years, both countries declared in early 2011 that peace talks would resume (this process had formally begun in 2004 but has always foundered on Pakistan's support for militancy in India and the disputed disposition of Kashmir). The first such meeting of this renewed dialogue between Indian Foreign Minister S. M. Krishna and Pakistani Foreign Minister Hina Rabbani Khar took place in July 2011 in New Delhi. While there was no movement on the most intractable issues, Pakistan did take the unprecedented step of offering India

15. Alissa J. Rubin, "Assassination Deals Blow to Peace Process in Afghanistan," *New York Times*, September 20, 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/21/world/asia/Burhanuddin-Rabbani-afghan-peace-council-leader-assassinated.html?_r=1>.

16. Burhanuddin Rabbani was the former president of Afghanistan from 1992 to 1996. His death set back negotiations, as expected. However, by the end of 2011, the Taliban announced that it would open an office in Doha Qatar to facilitate negotiations with the U.S.

17. Lianne Gutcher, "Karzai: Taliban Talks Are Over, We Will Negotiate with Pakistan Now," *The Telegraph*, October 4, 2011, <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/afghanistan/8804897/Karzai-Taliban-talks-are-over-we-will-negotiate-with-Pakistan-now.html>>.

“most favored nation” status, which will allow it trade concessions.¹⁸ This has been a major hurdle in improving economic and other relations between the two antagonists (India granted Pakistan such status in 1996).¹⁹ The move represents a major advance for the U.S. Department of State’s vision of a “new Silk Road” that could connect South and Central Asia economically and make Afghanistan a regional trade and transit hub.²⁰ Pakistan, principally motivated by a fear of India’s forging strong ties with Afghanistan, has long hindered the movement of goods between them, much to its own detriment.

Despite these modest—but promising—improvements in atmospherics with India, from Pakistan’s point of view developments in the region over the past decade have been deeply injurious to its security interests. India, under the U.S. security umbrella and with U.S. approval and encouragement, has re-ensconced itself in Afghanistan. The U.S. strategic partnership with India signals to Pakistan that America’s long-term partner in the region is India. Implicit in Washington’s pursuit of New Delhi as a partner is the recognition of India as both the regional hegemon and a growing extra-regional power of some consequence. The U.S. has simply failed to grasp that Pakistan will not, in any policy-relevant future, accept Indian hegemony. To do so would be to concede defeat for Pakistan’s expanding revisionist goals, which first focused on changing the territorial status quo over Kashmir, and which increasingly involve undermining India’s expansion in the region. Pakistan has few means of doing so apart from its militant proxies.

SPREADING VIOLENCE WITHIN PAKISTAN

Pakistan’s foreign policy strategy in the region has harmed its internal security. Pakistan has long patronized numerous Deobandi militant groups such as the Afghan Taliban, Jaish-e-Mohammad (Army of Mohammad),

18. Bilateral trade between India and Pakistan peaked at \$1.85 billion in 2010–11. This is relatively small: India’s trade with Sri Lanka was \$3 billion in the same year. For further discussion, see “Pakistan to Grant India MFN Status before October,” *Rediff.com*, May 30, 2011, <<http://www.rediff.com/business/report/pakistan-to-grant-india-mfn-status-before-october/20110530.htm>>.

19. Farhan Sharif and Haris Anwar, “Pakistan Grants Trade Concessions to India, Boosting Peace,” *Businessweek.com*, November 3, 2011, <<http://www.businessweek.com/news/2011-11-03/pakistan-grants-trade-concessions-to-india-boosting-peace.html>>.

20. See remarks of Robert D. Hormats, under-secretary for Economic, Energy, and Agricultural Affairs, address to the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, and Center for Strategic and International Studies Forum, Washington, D.C., September 29, 2011, <<http://www.state.gov/e/rls/rmk/2011/174800.htm>>.

Harkat-ul-Jihadi-Islami (Movement of Islamic Jihad), and others because they have been partners in pursuing Pakistan's objectives in Afghanistan and India.²¹ Beginning at least in 2004, many of these erstwhile proxies defected and began targeting the Pakistani state to protest its support of the American "war on terror." These anti-Pakistan militants eventually organized in 2007 under the banner of the Tehreek-e-Taliban-e-Pakistan (TTP, Taliban Movement of Pakistan) led then by Baitullah Mehsud, who was killed in August 2009 in a U.S. drone strike. His successor, Hakimullah Mehsud (who was not related to Baitullah), currently leads the TTP network of militants. The TTP also draws from Deobandi anti-Shia sectarian groups, such as the Sipah-e-Sahaba-Pakistan (Soldiers of the Sahaba) and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (Army of Jhangvi), whose membership overlaps with that of other Deobandi militant groups. All of these Deobandi militias have ties with the Deobandi *ulema* (religious scholars) political party, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI, Assembly of Islamic Clergy). Thus, the TTP draws from some of Pakistan's most vicious and sectarian groups and has support among some JUI politicians. The TTP has launched sustained attacks on Pakistan's military, police, intelligence, and civilian officials and infrastructure, in addition to ongoing offensives against Shia, Ahmediyas, and increasingly Barelvis—a sect of which a majority of Pakistanis are believed to be members.²²

The Pakistani military's efforts to defeat the TTP and related groups have alternated with efforts to appease them through various peace deals. Ultimately, Pakistan's ability to reduce the lethality of the groups will be limited by its unwillingness to completely decommission them. The ISI continues

21. Deobandism, with origins in the city of Deoband in India, began as a 19th-century religious revival movement. It is now one of five major sectarian traditions in Pakistan. While Deobandis in India tend not to be associated with violence, in Pakistan most of the militant groups are Deobandi in orientation. For further discussion, see Rizwan Hussain, *Pakistan and the Emergence of Islamic Militancy in Afghanistan* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2005); Mariam Abou Zahab, "The Regional Dimension of Sectarian Conflicts in Pakistan," in *Pakistan: Nationalism without a Nation?* ed. Christophe Jaffrelot (London: Zed Books, 2002), pp. 115–28; C. Christine Fair, "Militant Recruitment in Pakistan: Implications for Al-Qaeda and Other Organizations," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 27:6 (November/December 2004), pp. 489–504.

22. C. Christine Fair, "The Militant Challenge in Pakistan," *Asia Policy* 11 (January 2011), pp. 105–37. Also see "Deadly Blasts Hit Sufi Shrine in Lahore," BBC News, July 2, 2011, <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10483453>>; Salman Masood and Waqar Gillani, "Blast at Pakistan Shrine Kills Dozens," *New York Times*, April 3, 2011, <<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/04/world/asia/04pakistan.html>>. The Barelvis are one of the five major Islamic interpretive traditions in Pakistan. The origins of this Sunni tradition are in the city of Bareilly in India. The Barelvi tradition began as a 19th-century reform movement. Barelvis are also referred to as Sufis.

to believe that these groups can one day be rehabilitated and prove themselves useful in Pakistan's fight against India, or in managing Afghan internal affairs. Perhaps one of the most worrisome developments is that the various high-level attacks on Pakistani military facilities and personnel have been increasingly facilitated by civilians, as well as by serving soldiers and officers of Pakistan's armed forces. The most disquieting such attack in 2011 targeted a major naval base in Karachi a few weeks after the bin Laden raid. Saleem Shahzad, a Pakistani journalist, reported that the operation was facilitated by an al-Qaeda cell within the Pakistani navy itself.²³ Shahzad was subsequently kidnapped and murdered. Many within and beyond Pakistan believe that the ISI or even naval intelligence killed him as part of a renewed offensive against journalists who criticize the military and intelligence agencies.²⁴ Of course, the assault on the naval base was just one among many in recent years that relied upon inside assistance.²⁵ These attacks have left Pakistanis and non-Pakistanis alike alarmed about the integrity of their national security institutions and the degree to which they have been compromised by the enemy within.

The year 2011 was also marked by the January killing of Punjab Governor Salman Taseer, who had advocated reforming Pakistan's flawed blasphemy law and publicly suggested that President Asif Ali Zardari pardon a Christian woman who had been sentenced to death under the law in late 2010. Taseer's killer, celebrated throughout the country as a hero, was one of his bodyguards, Mumtaz Qadri. Religious leaders throughout Pakistan warned mosque leaders not to offer prayers for Taseer. In March, Minister for Minorities Shahbaz Bhatti (a Christian himself) was also shot dead.²⁶ Both murders exposed the growing threat to religious minorities, not only from militants but also from

23. Syed Saleem Shahzad, "Al-Qaeda Had Warned of Pakistan Strike," *Asia Times*, May 27, 2011, <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/ME27Dfo6.html>.

24. Committee to Protect Journalists, "Pakistan Must Explain ISI's Role in Murder," July 15, 2011, <<http://cpj.org/2011/07/pakistan-must-explain-isis-role-in-murder.php>>.

25. "Two Soldiers Convicted in Musharraf Assassination Attempts," VOA (Voice of America) News, December 24, 2011, <<http://www.voanews.com/english/news/a-13-2004-12-24-voa35-67335172.html>>; Muqaddam Khan and Azaz Syed, "Ex-soldier, Brothers Held on Tarbela Attack Suspicion," *Daily Times*, September 15, 2007, <http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page%42007/09/15/story_15-9-2007_pg1_7>; Raza Rumi, "The Spectre of Islamist Infiltration," *Friday Times*, May 27, 2011, <<http://www.thefridaytimes.com/27052011/page3.shtml>>; Karin Brulliard, "Pakistan's Top Military Officials Are Worried about Militant Collaborators in Their Ranks," *Washington Post*, May 17, 2011, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/pakistani-military-worried-about-collaborators-in-its-ranks-officials-say/2011/05/27/AGgN1oCH_story.html>.

26. "Minorities Minister Shahbaz Bhatti Assassinated in Islamabad," *Dawn*, March 2, 2011, <<http://www.dawn.com/2011/03/02/minorities-minister-attacked-in-islamabad.html>>.

ordinary Pakistanis who rallied to support their killers. While Qadri, who proudly pleaded guilty to slaying Taseer, was ultimately sentenced to death, the judge who issued the sentence had to flee Pakistan amid threats to his own life.²⁷

Pakistan faces other challenges apart from the well-publicized ones posed by Islamist militants. Over the course of 2011, Karachi once again emerged as a powder keg primed with ethnic and sectarian rivalries, as well as political standoffs between politicians and organized criminal elements operating with and on behalf of the parties themselves. Well over 1,000 persons were killed in Karachi in 2011 alone. Ambulance agencies must ensure that drivers have the same ethnic identity as the destination district, to ensure safe passage. The parties at the center of much of the violence are (1) the Muttahida Quami Movement (United National Movement), which draws support from ethnic Muhajirs (whose families came from the Urdu-speaking areas of India during Partition in 1947); (2) the Awami National Party (People's National Party), which claims to speak for the burgeoning ethnic Pashtun population in Karachi; and (3) the ruling People's Party of Pakistan, whose following is generally the ethnic Baloch in the city. The worst aspect of the violence is that it is under the control of the political parties. Given the political nature of the gang warfare, the police are reluctant to intervene. As politicians become less interested in protecting the public and more interested in securing political control, citizens of Karachi are increasingly calling for military intervention.²⁸

Throughout 2011, Balochistan Province continued to present enormous challenges to human security through anti-Shia violence, inter-ethnic carnage, as well as state-sponsored brutality against Baloch nationalists and other opposition activists. Hundreds of activists were subjected to "forced disappearances" in 2011. While many were killed and their bodies dumped, others remain unaccounted for. Human Rights Watch believes that the intelligence agencies, the army, and the Frontier Corps are likely the main culprits. Balochistan has for years presented challenges to the state via long-standing demands by some Baloch nationalists who seek independence from Pakistan or greater autonomy under a federal structure. The military has responded to their political mobilization with lethal force. However, amid the numerous

27. Ismail Khan, "The Assertion of Bareilvi Extremism," *Current Trends in Islamist Ideology* 12, October 19, 2011, <<http://www.currenttrends.org/research/detail/the-assertion-of-bareilvi-extremism>>.

28. "Into the Abyss: Gangsters and Politicians Collude to Turn Karachi into a Hell for Ordinary Folk," *Economist*, August 27, 2011, <<http://www.economist.com/node/21526919>>.

other crises, this conflict sustains little attention among Pakistanis outside of Balochistan or within the international community. Given official recalcitrance and impunity in Balochistan, there are few hopes that Pakistan's least populated, but largest, state will see a modicum of peace and security in the near term.²⁹

PAKISTAN'S ECONOMY: STILL CIRCLING THE DRAIN

As Pakistan's international political isolation continued to increase in 2011, it also engaged in high-stakes economic brinkmanship. Pakistan had a stand-by arrangement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in place from November 2008 that was due to expire in September 2011. The two parties had been wrangling for at least a year because of Pakistan's refusal to expand its tax base and lower subsidies. As a consequence of this impasse, less than US\$8 billion had actually been disbursed out of the \$11.3 billion loan originally approved. Despite Pakistan's harrowing economic conditions, Finance Minister, Abdul Hafeez Shaik, announced that it would not continue the IMF program at all. At the crux of the problem is the simple fact that this—and likely any—civilian government will not make fiscal commitments that are domestically unpopular. Given that Pakistan's political elites will not countenance levying industrial or agricultural taxes, which would undermine their own interests and that of their patronage networks, the only option on the table was a regressive general sales tax that would disproportionately affect the less affluent. Moreover, there is a popular sense that Pakistan can always return to the IMF at a later time, when it will hopefully receive more favorable terms. Spurning the IMF thus appears to be a low-cost move.³⁰

After jettisoning its agreement with the IMF, the Pakistani government pledged that it would indeed pursue at least some fiscal reforms and consolidation. Yet, there are few, if any, analysts who find these commitments credible. The Economist Intelligence Unit anticipates that Pakistan's deficit will stand at 6.1% of gross domestic product (GDP) in fiscal year 2011–12,

29. Human Rights Watch, *"We Can Torture, Kill, or Keep You for Years": Enforced Disappearances by Pakistan Security Forces in Balochistan* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2011).

30. Nancy Birdsall, Milan Vaishnav, and Daniel Cutherell, "Why Pakistan Told the IMF to Get Lost," *The Nation*, November 6, 2011, <<http://nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/International/06-Nov-2011/Why-Pakistan-told-the-IMF-to-get-lost>>.

compared to 5.9% in FY 2010–11.³¹ (The government declared that it will accept the debt of the country's shambolic power sector. If one includes those figures, the FY 2010–11 deficit is 6.6% of Pakistan's GDP.) In fact, FY 2010–11 was the third consecutive year in which deficit figures exceeded targets significantly.

Pakistan's economy continues to grow slowly. In 2011, Pakistan's real growth rate was 2.4%, compared to 4.1% and 3.6% for 2010 and 2009, respectively. Pakistanis also continue to be battered by rising prices. Consumer price inflation was about 10% in 2011, making it the fourth consecutive year in which prices rose at double-digit rates. Meanwhile, the official recorded unemployment rate has remained remarkably stable over the past three years at 5.5%, 5.6%, and 5.7% for 2009, 2010, and 2011, respectively. But, these figures are absurdly low.³² The CIA *World Fact Book* estimates that unemployment for 2011 was actually 15.4% for 2011—a substantial increase from its 14.4% estimate in 2009.³³ In addition, underemployment is believed to be rampant, even though it is not officially well-recorded.

Unfortunately, the current government seems unable to create jobs for its burgeoning population, repair the infrastructure damaged by recent floods, or halt consumer price inflation. The country's shortfalls of energy, electricity, and water, not to mention its ongoing security concerns, will ensure that Pakistan's economic growth lags behind its potential over any foreseeable time horizon.³⁴

MILITARY, DIPLOMATIC, AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS OF LATE-2011

In November, a NATO airstrike killed 24 Pakistani soldiers, as a result of several operational mistakes made by the former. Pakistan responded by closing all ground routes going through its territory for logistical supplies for the war in Afghanistan, ousted the U.S. from Shamsi (one of two Pakistani air bases from which American drone operations are launched), and began a Parliament-led process of reexamining its ties with the U.S. As the year 2011

31. Economist Intelligence Unit, *Pakistan: Country Report*, December 2011, <www.eiu.com> (by subscription only).

32. Ibid.

33. CIA, *World Fact Book, Pakistan*, last updated December 20, 2011, <<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/pk.html>>.

34. Economist Intelligence Unit, *Pakistan: Country Report*, October 2011.

came to a close, the U.S. and Pakistan remained perched upon a precipice of a widening diplomatic conflict.

During the same period, Pakistan's civil-military relations also became increasingly tense. In October 2011, American business tycoon, Mansoor Ijaz, alleged that he delivered a memo to then U.S. Chief of the Joint Staff Admiral Michael Mullen requesting American assistance in curtailing a potential military coup following the May 2 raid that killed bin Laden. Ijaz later claimed that Pakistan's ambassador to the U.S., Husain Haqqani, authored the memo. In the last two months of 2011, "Memogate" seized Pakistan's institutions and threatened to bring down the government after former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif filed a petition to the Supreme Court demanding a probe into the scandal. With no charges filed and without any reference from a lower court, the Supreme Court ordered a judicial commission to determine the authenticity and providence of the memo.

As soon as Haqqani returned to Pakistan in November, his passport was seized, and he was put on Pakistan's export control list limiting his travels even though no charges have been filed against him. He remains a virtual prisoner in Prime Minister's Gilani's house fearing for his life. The Army believes that President Zardari was involved in the memo and would like to see him resign, but it is unable to enact a coup at this time. However, Ijaz also claimed that Pakistan's intelligence chief Pasha travelled to the Gulf to seek permission from Arab states to fire Zardari. Curiously, Pakistan's press and courts have not taken up this charge, which would comprise high treason under Article 6 of Pakistan's Constitution if true. This suggests a disturbing level of collusion between the court and the military, both of which have long disliked Zardari and his government. The Army's efforts to oust Zardari are concurrent with the rise of former cricketer turned politician, Imran Khan. In 2011, he leapt from obscurity to celebrity with the likely help of the Army. As he continues to gather defecting politicians around him, a Khan-led coalition could provide a palatable alternative to the Zardari administration sought by the Army.³⁵

CONCLUSION

Pakistan remains politically unstable and mired in multiple complex webs of sectarian, ethnic, communal, and political violence. There is little evidence

35. C. Christine Fair, "Pakistan's Slow-Motion Coup," *ForeignPolicy.com*, January 5, 2012, <http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/01/05/pakistan_s_slow_motion_coup?page=0>.

that either the civilian government or the military establishment, which are locked into increasing friction between each other, has the will to make the controversial decisions needed to protect the country's citizenry. Pakistan continues to clash with the international community over its steadfast refusal to abandon or eliminate the Islamist militants it has used as proxies for decades. Even though the civilian government has managed to stay in power since being elected in 2008, it has become clear that the civilians do not control key national security policies. They continue to make decisions geared more toward ensuring regime survival than governing Pakistan and shepherding it and its wary population through the multiple crises besetting the country.