HOKKAIDO UNIVERSITY

Title	Afghan-Pakistan Border Rules : The U.S. Role
Author(s)	Weitz, Richard
Citation	Eurasia Border Review, 3(1), 1-18
Issue Date	2012
Doc URL	https://hdl.handle.net/2115/50857
Type	departmental bulletin paper
File Information	EBR3-1_001.pdf

Hokkaido University Collection of Scholarly and Academic Papers : HUSCAP

Afghan-Pakistan Border Rules: The U.S. Role

Richard Weitz*

Abstract

Relations among Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the United States have been troubled for most of the past decade. Historical conflicts, different priorities, and personal animosities have combined to weaken the collective ability of the three countries to repress Islamist extremists operating along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region. The United States has pursued several initiatives to reduce tensions between Afghanistan and Pakistan and to encourage both governments to concentrate their attention on countering the Taliban and al-Qaeda terrorists operating inside their territories. Despite these efforts, the border region remains a major source of tension in their trilateral relationship. Most recently, the intensified fighting in Afghanistan has led U.S. officials to adopt a less tolerant attitude toward the Pakistan-based Islamists who conduct cross-border attacks. Thus far, Afghan, U.S., and NATO forces have relied primarily on attacks by unmanned drones as well as search and destroy operations against Pakistani-based insurgents whenever they move into Afghan territory. Now, despite Pakistani warnings, U.S. officials, with Afghan government support, are considering more vigorous cross-border attacks on Pakistani territory.

Border Tensions

Following the U.S. military intervention in the fall of 2001, the Afghan Taliban, along with some members of al-Qaeda and other foreign Islamist fighters, established sanctuaries in northwest Pakistan, specifically in the Federally Administrative Tribal Areas (FATA). This region has long enjoyed substantial autonomy from Pakistan's central government based in Islamabad, but lacks equal political representation and social development.[1] The region has been a buffer zone operating under its own paramilitary forces and police and ruled directly by the President of Pakistan via the Governor of the North West Frontier Province, now known as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The FATA consists of Bajaur, Mohmand, Khyber, Kurram, North Waziristan, and South Waziristan. The presence of large ethnic Pashtun tribes on both sides of the 2,430-kilometer (1,510 mile) Afghan-Pakistan frontier facilitates the infiltration of Taliban insurgents, many of whom are ethnic Pashtuns. An estimated 40-50 million Pashtuns (some 29 million in Pakistan and 12.5 million in Afghanistan) live on either side of the Durand Line, which formally divided the territory of Afghanistan and

* Richard Weitz is Directer of the Center for Political-Military Analysis and Senior Fellow at the Hudson Institute, Washington, DC.

[1] Abubakar Siddique, "Pakistan's Tribal Area Reforms Too Little, Too Late," *RFE/RL*. August 22 2011, http://www.rferl.org/content/pakistan_fata_tribal_reforms/24302628.html

Pakistan (then part of the British Raj) in 1893.[2] The Pakistani government considers the line a formal international border, but the government of Afghanistan does not. From the perspective of the Afghan Taliban and other terrorists, the FATA has several advantages: the region is remote and largely under the control of sympathetic tribal leaders who exercise considerable autonomy. It provides a sanctuary where they can recruit, train, and supply their fighters. The porous borders permit easy infiltration of men and material into Afghanistan or into other areas of Pakistan where they can attack the coalition supply lines that traverse Pakistani territory. In the eyes of many Pashtuns, Pakistan's Punjabi majority clearly dominates the Pakistani regime, while Afghanistan's minority ethnic groups – Uzbeks, Hazaras, and Tajiks – exert greater influence over Afghanistan's central government than their minority status would seem to warrant. These circumstances allow the Taliban to claim to represent the aspirations of the Pashtuns better. Pakistan has made a greater effort than Afghanistan to seal the border, having established many more border checkpoints and at times suggesting that the border be mined or fenced.[3] The Afghan government has always rejected such proposals as likely to aggravate Pashtun anger over the division of their tribal units.

The Afghan Taliban are presently divided into three main groups: the Mullah Omar group, known to the West as the Quetta Shura because of the belief that its leadership has found refuge near the city of Quetta in Pakistani Balochistan; the Haqqani Network of Jalaluddin and his son Sirajuddin Haqqani, which operates out of North Waziristan and the bordering Afghan provinces of Paktia, Paktika, and Khost; and the Hizb-i-Islami of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, a former Mujahideen leader now operating from the Nuristan area. The Tehreek-e-Taliban of Pakistan (TTP) is the strongest member of the Pakistan Taliban. The Haqqani movement is reported to be the most violent group, engaged in criminal operations such as smuggling and kidnapping. It also conducts guerrilla operations in eastern Afghanistan, and is suspected of having extremely close ties with the Pakistani intelligence service.[4] There is hope that the Haqqanis might be bought off for the right price. The Afghan government has already sought to negotiate with the leaders of the other two groups and reintegrate any of their members who decide to lay down arms and reenter civilian life. Both these initiatives have met with minimal success. Following the assassination of the head of the Afghan government's peace commission in September 2011 by a suicide bomber claiming to be a Taliban peace envoy, President Hamid Karzai announced that he was focusing his peace efforts on the Pakistani government pending more credible evidence that the other groups would be willing to negotiate in good faith. He has also launched new diplomatic outreach initiatives to India and Iran.

Starting around 2005, Hamid Karzai and Pervez Musharraf repeatedly clashed over who was

---

[2] *The World Factbook* (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 2009), https://www.cia.gov/library/ publications/the-world-factbook/index.html

[3] Munir Ahmad, "The Battle for Pakistan: Militancy and Conflict in Balochistan," *New American Foundation*, September 2011, http://security.newamerica.net/sites/newamerica.net/files/ policydocs/Munir_Ahmad_ Balochistan. pdf

[4] Karen DeYoung, Peter Finn and Craig Whitlock, "Taliban in talks with Karzai Government," *Washington Post*, October 6 2010, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/10/05/ AR2010100506636. html

Figure 1

responsible for the deteriorating security situation along their joint border. Karzai advocated the expanded use of air strikes and ground raids into Pakistan, while Musharraf called on Karzai to get his own house in order. Proposals to seal the border were raised, but are impractical.

The Pashtun population is located on both sides of the border and has enjoyed the right to cross the Afghan-Pakistan border on a routine basis without a visa. Some 80,000 people can also legally cross the border on special permits. Pakistan still hosts more than 3 million Afghan refugees that can readily cross back home. Meanwhile, alarmed U.S. officials became aware of the growing evidence that al-Qaeda was re-establishing its main base of operations in the FATA. They warned that any future 9/11-style attack against the United States from al-Qaeda would probably originate from the group's new safe haven in the FATA. In 2008, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Michael Mullen, singled out the terrorist camps in northwest Pakistan as one of the most serious threats confronting the next U.S. presidential administration: "Al-Qaida is there. Its leadership is there. We know that. And it continues to plan against the West, including against our homeland."[5]

[5] "Pentagon Official Says Next U.S. President Faces Challenges in Pakistan, Afghanistan," *VOA*, September 23 2008, http://www.voanews.com/english/news/a-13-2008-09-23-voa13.html

U.S. policy makers recognize that overt U.S. military incursions into Pakistan can prove counterproductive by antagonizing the local population and making the friendly Pakistani government look weak. For this reason, they have employed other tools for countering terrorism in northwest Pakistan. Since 2001, the United States has provided the Afghan and Pakistani governments and militaries with considerable money, training, equipment, and other security assistance. In addition, the United States has targeted some of its economic aid to the border region directly. Furthermore, the United States exchanges intelligence data directly with the Afghan and Pakistani governments. Finally, the United States has sought to enhance cooperation between the Afghan and Pakistani governments regarding security along their mutual border. For example, the Bush administration helped convene the innovative "Joint Peace Jirga" that took place in Kabul from August 9-12, 2007. More than 600 representatives from Afghanistan and Pakistan attended this unprecedented council of tribal and government leaders.[6] In addition, Washington also helped establish a Joint Intelligence Operations Center in Kabul. The center provides a forum where analysts from Afghanistan, Pakistan and the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) can share and evaluate data about terrorist activities along the Afghan-Pakistani border.

Unfortunately, none of these instruments appears to have proven very effective at reconciling Afghanistan and Pakistan or curbing the flow of men and material across their joint border. In its November 2010 progress report to Congress on the Afghan war, the Pentagon acknowledges that efforts to prevent the Taliban from sending men and material across the Afghanistan-Pakistan border "have not produced measurable results."[7]

Rules of Engagement

Pentagon spokespeople have always declined to comment on the U.S. rules for using military force on Pakistan's side of the border region, but from time to time information on this issue surfaces. In August 2007, while reviewing more than one thousand pages of documents released in the course of the Army's investigation of the death of Ranger Pat Tillman, the media discovered information regarding the rules of engagement that governed U.S. military operations along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border at the time of his death in April 2004.[8] As expected, the rules indicated that the U.S. Secretary of Defense, then Donald Rumsfeld, could order a major military incursion into Pakistan if he deemed such action necessary. In practice, the Secretary presumably would consult with his cabinet colleagues and the president before doing so. The head of U.S. Central Command

[6] "Text of Pak-Afghan Peace Jirga Declaration," *Daily Times*, August 13 2007, http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2007%5C08%5C13%5Cstory_13-8-2007_pg7_48

[7] "Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan November 2010 Report to Congress In accordance with section 1230 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Public Law 110-181), as amended," November 23 2010, http://www.defense.gov/pubs/November_1230_Report_FINAL.pdf, p.41.

[8] "Troops Allowed to Enter Pakistan without Notice," *Associated Press*, August 23 2007, http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/20416528/from/RSS/

could also, according to the released documents, authorize direct military action against "The Big Three" (al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden; his deputy, Ayman al-Zawahiri; and the head of the Taliban, Mullah Omar). U.S. intelligence analysts and other observers erroneously believed that all three men probably resided in the Afghan-Pakistan border region.

More controversially, the documents specify that U.S. field commanders could, on their own authority, authorize units to "penetrate no deeper than 10km" into Pakistan in three cases: (1) during "hot pursuits" of al-Qaeda, Taliban, or other terrorist operatives fleeing into Pakistan from Afghanistan; (2) as part of U.S. Special Forces operations to recover crews of U.S. planes and helicopters that have crashed inside Pakistan; and (3) in the event that American troops are engaging hostile targets located on the Pakistani side of the border. The documents do not indicate that U.S. commanders had to seek approval from – or even inform – Pakistani authorities before conducting incursions into their territory. Over the years, certain U.S. commanders have apparently expanded the concept to justify either pre-emptive or preventive strikes designed to disrupt an attack before it occurs, which expands the notion of "hot pursuit" considerably. U.S. and Afghan units that have come under attack by mortars and other fire from attackers in Pakistan have engaged in retaliatory counterfire on the grounds of self-defense. They have extended this concept to encompass both the tactical (disrupting the immediate attack) and the operational (impeding the cross-border movement of the insurgents and their supplies).

U.S. military commanders noted a sharp deterioration in border security after the Pakistani government began negotiating a series of peace deals with local tribal leaders and with various extremist groups, which effectively allowed the militants to operate in Afghanistan without Pakistani impediments. These agreements took effect in South Waziristan in April 2004 and February 2005, in North Waziristan in September 2007, and the Swat Valley district of the North West Frontier province in 2009.[9] After several of these ceasefire agreements began entering into force, the number of monthly U.S. combat deaths in Afghanistan began to exceed those in Iraq, despite the fact that five times as many U.S. troops were in Iraq than Afghanistan at the time.

Even after these agreements collapsed in 2009, and the military drove the Islamists out of the Swat Valley, NATO officers complained that the Pakistani military was only attacking the Pakistani Taliban, and not the Afghan Taliban or the al-Qaeda hideouts in the autonomous tribal areas of northwest Pakistan that threatened U.S. interests. Because the Afghan Taliban have not generally attacked Pakistanis, the Pakistani government and military have wanted to maintain a truce or non-aggression pact with these groups while concentrating their resources on the threat from the Pakistani Taliban, as well as maintaining robust defenses against India. Some members of the Pakistani national security community even see these groups as potential allies against India. In addition, many more Pakistanis believe that since the Western militaries are planning to withdraw from the region in the next few years, the Taliban could well return to power in Kabul, making it important for Pakistan not to antagonize them. U.S. analysts sometimes complain that some members of the Pakistani

[9] Brian Cloughley, "Uneasy Partnership: The U.S. and Pakistan's Dysfunctional Alliance," *Jane's Intelligence Review* vol. 22 no. 5 (May 2010) pp. 10-11.

intelligence services continue to provide aid to the Taliban, including alerting them to imminent U.S. air strikes on Pakistani territory. For this reason, the U.S. rules of engagement appear not to require advanced U.S. notification to Pakistani authorities of impending attacks inside the country's territory.

The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) assigns a small number of American civilians and paramilitary troops to operate alongside the Pakistani military, but primarily as advisors. The United States also maintains a liaison relationship with the director, staff, and operational levels of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), which originally sponsored the Afghan Taliban and reportedly still maintains some contacts with it.[10] U.S. and Pakistani intelligence and law enforcement services have conducted more than one hundred joint raids against suspected Taliban, al-Qaeda, or other Islamist extremists.[11] The Americans provide Pakistanis with various types of intelligence, especially analyses of intercepted communications and imagery data from U.S. planes and spy satellites, in addition to hundreds of millions of dollars in military equipment and training annually. In return, the Pakistanis share their superior human intelligence about militant activities in the tribal areas and other terrorist plots.[12]

The Trust Deficit

One problem is the high level of distrust among all three parties. Obama administration representatives consider the Afghan central government corrupt and ineffective. They would have preferred that someone more energetic and effective replace Karzai as president but could not find a suitable replacement during the most recent Afghanistan presidential election. Despite extensive foreign training programs and other support, the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police have little capacity to defeat the Taliban insurgents without continued direct U.S. assistance. The expansion of their size in recent years has compounded the problem that the Afghan government lacks the budget to sustain a large security establishment. Their persistent weaknesses is one of the main reasons why the Obama administration felt compelled to send tens of thousands of additional U.S. troops to Afghanistan after assuming office.

Relations between Washington and Islamabad are worse. Many Pakistanis erroneously believe that the United States favors India over Pakistan and is seeking to work with New Delhi and Israel to constrain Pakistan's regional influence and hobble Pakistan's nuclear arsenal. They also mistakenly argue that the rise of suicide terrorism within Pakistan is due to Islamabad's support for U.S. counterterrorism policies, such as sending in the army to fight Islamists in the FATA, and not to their own sponsorship and mistaken belief that they can separate "good" from "bad" terrorists. Some extremist groups originally sponsored by the state as proxy forces against India have shown evidence of acting on their own against Pakistani targets.[13] Extremist influences were evident in several recent

[10] Cloughley, "Uneasy Partnership," p. 10.
[11] Kimberly Dozier and Chris Brummitt, "Pakistan, U.S. Tensions Spike after Border Closure," *Associated Press*, October 4 2010, http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20101004/ap_on_re_as/as_pakistan
[12] Dozier and Brummitt, "Pakistan, U.S. Tensions Spike after Border Closure."
[13] Moeed Yusuf, Huma Yusuf, and Salman Zaidi, "Pakistan, the United States and the End Game in Afghanistan:

developments, including the January 2011 assassination of the Punjab's secular governor by his police guard.[14]

In this regard, both Americans and Pakistanis have a perception that the other is ungrateful. Whereas Americans resent the fact that Pakistanis hate them despite the billions in aid they have provided, Pakistanis gripe that Americans fail to appreciate all the sacrifices they have incurred in fighting terrorism. Pakistanis blame their financial losses and other costs on Islamabad's decisions to join Washington's war on terror after 9/11; though the number of suicide attacks and Pakistani government and civilian casualties has only soared since the July 2007 military operation against the Red Mosque in Islamabad, following the kidnapping of several Chinese citizens.[15] Pakistanis note that U.S. aid covers only a small percentage of those costs, and that even now the U.S. Congress is cutting back on earlier aid pledges, many of which remain unimplemented.[16] They see the current criticism as simply an Afghan-U.S. effort to "scapegoat" Pakistan for their inability to reverse what looks to be a losing war.[17]

Drone Wars

Former Pakistani President Musharraf, while rejecting proposals to conduct joint missions with U.S. forces inside Pakistan and downplaying the need for Pakistani troops to suppress the growing strength of the Pakistani Taliban in the FATA and Swat Valley, reportedly privately agreed that the United States could conduct drone and hot pursuit operations. Since assuming office in 2008, however, Pakistan's new civilian government has never publicly authorized U.S. military operations on its territory, even as cross-border operations. Instead, it has insisted that Pakistani regular troops and paramilitary forces can deal with the Taliban insurgents and any high-value al-Qaeda terrorist targets. When it negotiated controversial peace agreements with the insurgents soon after assuming office, the civilian government argued that it had only negotiated with the Pakistani Taliban, not their Afghan counterparts or international terrorist groups using Pakistani territory as a safe haven. Still, it is widely known that the unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) operate from Pakistani territory and that the Pakistani government provides some of the intelligence used to select their targets and assess the damage inflicted. The most obvious sign of Pakistani consent is that the government has never ordered the Pakistani Air Force to shoot down the drones, which they could easily do. In recent years,

---

Perceptions of Pakistan's Foreign Policy Elite," *U.S. Institute of Peace*, July 2011, http://www.usip.org/publications/pakistan-the-united-states-and-the-end-game-in-afghanistan-perceptions-pakistan-s-forei

[14] Terrence P. Smith, "An Assassination in Pakistan: Betrayal and the Insider Threat Facing Pakistan's Nuclear Program," CSIS, January 13 2011, http://csis.org/blog/assassination-pakistan-betrayal-and-insider-threat-facing-pakistans-nuclear- program/?zbrandid=4263&zidType=CH&zid=5220842&zsubscriberId=1012356683&zbdom=http://csis.informz.net

[15] Howard W. French, "Letter from China: Mosque siege reveals the Chinese connection," *New York Times*, July 12 2007, http://www.nytimes.com/2007/07/12/world/asia/12iht-letter.1.6629789.html

[16] Karin Brulliard, "Aid Plan For Pakistan Is Falling Short of Promise," *Washington Post*, August 5 2011.

[17] Jeff M. Smith, "U.S. Takes Gloves Off With Pakistan," *The Diplomat*, September 25 2011, http://the-diplomat.com/2011/09/25/us-takes-gloves-off-with-pakistan/

drone strikes have constituted the principle U.S. military activity inside Pakistani territory. According to various media and think tank reports, CIA and Department of Defense drones, such as the Predator and Reaper, armed with Hellfire missiles have killed hundreds of people in northwest Pakistan. These numbers have reportedly surged in 2010 and 2011 as the Obama administration has been seeking to complement the increase in U.S. combat troops inside Afghanistan with intensified operations in the Taliban sanctuary in neighboring Pakistan.[18]

The drone strikes are controversial, but are still considered the best of a bad set of options by both U.S. and Pakistani officials. Human rights groups criticize drone strikes as extrajudicial killings, since the suspected terrorists are killed outright rather than given trials. Since U.S. officials decline to comment on the UAV operations in Pakistan, the Taliban and others are free to exaggerate to the media the number of innocent victims they cause. Polls show that the UAV attacks are not popular with the Pakistani people, though the inhabitants of the tribal areas who are oppressed by the foreign Islamist radicals are not really free to express their opinion for fear of retaliation. Experts believe that the number of civilian casualties has declined in recent years due to improved intelligence, stricter rules of engagement, and the use of less powerful missile warheads.[19] Still, the UAVs cannot capture terrorist suspects for further interrogation and cannot gather additional intelligence at the attack site such as documents and computer files. Confirming deaths also is difficult due to the absence of credible witnesses or physical evidence at the site. Several prominent targets have been proclaimed dead only to turn up alive later.

Members of the Pakistani Taliban also cite the continuing UAV strikes to justify their terrorist campaign against the Pakistanis living outside the tribal zone. They describe their bombings as retaliation for the Pakistani government's allowing the UAVs to operate. Although most Pakistanis have little sympathy for the militants, polls indicate that they blame the Americans and their own government for antagonizing the Islamists, whose operations had originally been focused on the Afghan-Pakistan border region. The drone strikes have also led the jihadists to kill many other tribal inhabitants whom they suspect of providing targeting data to the Americans or their Pakistani partners. A more recent development has been that the Pakistani Taliban has cited the U.S. drone attacks as the reason why they have started to attack Western targets, such as the torching of the trucks delivering fuel through Pakistan to the NATO forces in Afghanistan.[20] The Pakistani government has come to support them more since their range of targets has been extended to those Pakistani Taliban leaders who are harming the Islamabad government and Pakistani civilians. UAV-launched missiles have reportedly killed several anti-Islamabad guerilla leaders. Although the Pakistani Taliban cite the drone strikes as the reason for their efforts to attack the Pakistani government, Pakistani civilians, and now civilians in NATO cities, it is unlikely that ending the UAV strikes would lead the terrorists to curtail their operations. These advantages explain why industry analysts expect the global market for UAVs

[18] Greg Miller, "CIA Backed by Military Drones in Pakistan," *Washington Post*, October 3 2010, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/10/02/AR2010100203887.html

[19] Sloggett, "Attack of the Drones," p. 15.

[20] "Taliban Blow up NATO Tankers to Avenge Drone Attacks," *AFP*, October 6 2010, http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20101006/wl_asia_afp/pakistanunrestnato

to grow from $5 billion to a cumulative total of more than $70 billion during the next decade.[21] The U.S. Air Force plans to increase its number of UAVs from 250 to 450 units.[22]

Perhaps the most important argument in favor of using drone strikes in northwest Pakistan is that the two main alternative options for attacking the terrorists are worse. The Pakistani military has made clear that they cannot repress the terrorists in the tribal regions. Although the controversial ceasefire accords negotiated earlier have formally collapsed, the Pakistani Army has repeatedly postponed announced plans to occupy North Waziristan, home to Afghan insurgents and the foreign fighters supporting them, as well as al-Qaeda and other terrorists having more global ambitions. A military occupation of North Waziristan would meet fierce resistance from the region's population, which has traditionally enjoyed extensive autonomy. The recent floods have also forced the military to divert its assets to humanitarian purposes, helping the more than ten million displaced people driven from their homes.

Yet, sending in U.S. combat troops on recurring raids or a protracted occupation of Pakistani territory would provoke widespread outrage in Pakistan and perhaps in other countries as well, since the UN Security Council mandate for ISAF only authorizes military operations in Afghanistan**.** On one such occasion, when U.S. Special Forces conducted a ground assault in the tribal areas in 2008, the Pakistanis reacted furiously. On September 3, a U.S. Special Forces team attacked a suspected terrorist base in Pakistan's South Waziristan region, killing over a dozen people. These actions evoked strong Pakistani protests. Army Chief of Staff, Gen. Ashfaq Kayani, who before November 2007 had led the ISI, issued a written statement denying that any agreement or understanding existed with the coalition forces in Afghanistan that permitted them to attack targets inside Pakistan. The general pledged to defend Pakistan's sovereignty and territorial integrity at all cost. Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani and President Asif Ali Zardari also criticized alleged U.S. military operations on Pakistani territory. On September 16, 2008, the Pakistani army announced it would shoot at U.S. forces attempting to cross the Afghan-Pakistan border.[23] On several occasions since then, Pakistani troops and militia have fired at what they believed to be American helicopters flying from Afghanistan to deploy Special Forces on their territory. Further large cross-border U.S. military operations could easily rally popular support behind the Taliban and al-Qaeda in Pakistan. It might even precipitate the collapse of the Islamabad government and its replacement by a regime in nuclear-armed Pakistan that is less friendly to Washington.

[21] "The Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) Market 2010-2020: Technologies for ISR and Counter-Insurgency" (London: Visiongain, June 21 2010), http://www.visiongain.com/Report/486/The-Unmanned-Aerial-Vehicles-(UAV)-Market-2010-2020-Technologies-for-ISR-and-Counter-Insurgency

[22] "Air Force Chief: We Will Double the Size of the UAV Fleet," *National Defense*, June 10 2010, http://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/blog/Lists/Posts/Post.aspx?ID=213

[23] Mark Tran, "Pakistan Orders Troops to Fire on US Cross-Border Raids," *The Guardian*, September 16 2008, http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/sep/16/pakistan.afghanistan

New Border Incidents

The cross-border situation deteriorated again in late September and early October 2010, when Western intelligence agencies intercepted evidence that terrorists were preparing to conduct mass murder in major European cities along the lines of the November 2008 Islamist terrorist attacks in Mumbai, India. Concerned about evidence that the likely attackers were undergoing training in the terrorist safe havens of the tribal areas of northwest Pakistan – especially North Waziristan – the United States stepped up its UAV attacks on targets in Pakistan, conducting a record number of drone strikes in September, and even launching controversial air strikes using helicopter gunships operating from Afghanistan.[24] At the same time, U.S. helicopters assigned to ISAF were engaging in a more aggressive campaign to defend Afghan border outposts. Taliban and Haqqani guerrillas would sally forth from their sanctuaries in Pakistan and attack Afghan army outposts in eastern Afghanistan, then flee back across the border with NATO aircrews in hot pursuit. Even before the recent incidents, NATO commanders had been justifying the cross-border attacks by citing the failure of the Pakistani army to occupy and suppress the guerrilla and terrorist bases in the tribal regions, especially in North Waziristan. The White House and the Pentagon became increasingly frustrated by the presence of the insurgent sanctuaries on Pakistani territory and the failure of the Pakistani government to establish control there. The Obama administration eventually authorized a more "proactive" air campaign against the Pakistani-based militants.[25] While still declining to send U.S. ground forces across the border into Pakistan, the Pentagon increased the use of both manned helicopter attacks along the border and unmanned aerial vehicles for striking targets deeper inside Pakistani territory.

In one of these operations, two ISAF Apache helicopters attacked a site from which the insurgents were reportedly preparing to fire a mortar at a coalition base in Afghanistan's Paktia province. After attacking this target, which resulted in their briefly crossing into Pakistani territory, the U.S. crews concluded that they were taking small-arms fire from the Mandat Kandaho border patrol post, located some 200 meters inside Pakistan in the Kurram Agency. In self-defense, the helicopters reentered Pakistani airspace and fired two missiles that destroyed the post, killing three members of Pakistan's paramilitary Frontier Corps and wounding three others in the process.[26] The whole affair was marked by confusion. The incident occurred before dawn, which made it even harder to avoid straying across the Afghan-Pakistan border. According to the Pakistani military, the Frontier Corps troops, a poorly trained and equipped tribal patrol force, fired "warning shots" to caution the helicopter crew that they had entered the territory of Pakistan's upper Kurram Agency.[27] A

[24] Mark Mazzetti and Souad Mekhennet, "Drones Kill Westerners in Pakistan," *New York Times*, October 4 2010, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/10/05/world/asia/05drone.html?_r=2&ref=world

[25] Matthew Rosenberg and Zahid Hussein, "NATO Strike Fuels Pakistani Backlash," *Wall Street Journal*, September 30 2010, http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704116004575523111015705120.html

[26] "Afghan, Coalition Troops Capture Insurgent Leader," September 30 2010, Compiled from International Security Assistance Force Joint Command News Releases, http://www.defense.gov/ news/ newsarticle. aspx?id =61091

[27] Dion Nissenbaum and Saeed Shah, "Pakistan Closes Critical Border after Confused U.S. Attack," *McClatchy*

joint NATO-Pakistani inquiry concluded that the two helicopter crews misinterpreted the shots as an attack against them and fired back.[28] Coalition officials considered this approach dangerous considering that NATO interpreted the existing rules of engagement as allowing coalition forces to engage targets across the border without seeking advanced permission in cases of self-defense. In Kabul, NATO staff criticized the border guards' decision to fire at the helicopters rather than use established procedures to protest the border overflight, while in Washington, defense officials wondered why the Pakistanis did not simply try to communicate with NATO by car or radio.[29] U.S. officials initially resisted apologizing for the incident or offering to pay compensation to the victims' relatives since those killed had opened fire first on U.S. forces.[30]

However, the Pakistani Ministry of Foreign Affairs termed these overt border violations and attacks on its territory a "clear violation and breach of the UN mandate," which authorized ISAF combat operations only in Afghanistan.[31] Interior Minister Rehman Malik said that an investigation was needed to assess the reasons for the attack, in effect to determine in NATO eyes "whether we are allies or enemies."[32] Prime Minister Gilani told members of Pakistan's National Assembly that his government would defend Pakistani national sovereignty at all costs: "We can never allow you [NATO] to infringe on Pakistan's sovereignty and security. And if you will not explain your actions, compensate us and apologize for this, we can use other means. And we have other options."[33] More importantly, the Pakistani officials denied that agreed rules of engagement existed that permitted coalition forces to attack and even enter Pakistani territory in reaction to insurgent threats. A Foreign Ministry statement insisted that, "there are no agreed 'hot pursuit' rules" and that, "Such violations are unacceptable."[34] In addition to the rhetorical flourishes, the Pakistani government closed the Torkham Gate at the Afghan border for more than a week. Simultaneously, various groups of militants, perhaps with the complicity of the local Pakistani authorities, torched dozens of the oil tankers and other vehicles at various locations in Pakistan that were transporting supplies to ISAF.

Newspapers, September 30 2010, http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2010/09/30/101417/pakistan-closes-critical-border.html

[28] Al Pessin, "Bad Coordination Blamed for NATO Attack on Pakistanis," *VOA*, October 6 2010, http://www.voanews.com/english/news/US-Apologizes-for-Raid-that-Killed-Pakistani-Soldiers-104438223.html

[29] Matthew Rosenberg and Zahid Hussein, "NATO Strike Fuels Pakistani Backlash," *Wall Street Journal*, September 30 2010, http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704116004575523111015705120.html

[30] Karin Brulliard, "NATO Airstrike Undermines U.S. Goals in Pakistan," *Washington Post*, October 6 2010, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/10/05/AR2010100505498.html

[31] Julius Cavendish, "Pakistan Anger as Cross-Border Raids Kill Up to 60 militants," *The Independent*, September 28 2010, http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/pakistan-anger-as-crossborder-raids-kill-up-to-60-militants-2091311.html

[32] Jane Perlez and Helene Cooper, "Signaling Tensions, Pakistan Shuts NATO Route," *New York Times*, September 30 2010, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/10/01/world/asia/01peshawar.html?_r=1

[33] Abubakar Siddique, "NATO-Pakistan Border Row Could Herald Deeper Strategic Disagreements," *RFE/RL*, October 5 2010, http://www.rferl.org/content/NATOPakistan_Border_ Row_Could_Herald_ Deeper_ Strategic _Disagreements/2177564.html

[34] Alex R. E. Londoño and Haq N. Khan, "Rebuke from Islamabad after NATO airstrikes kill 55 on Pakistani soil," *Washington Post*, September 27 2010, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/09/27/AR2010092700530.html

But Pakistani officials kept other logistics routes, including the Chaman crossing, open to NATO's convoys. In the end, NATO officials decided to resolve the crisis by issuing various forms of regret and apologies.

Despite the apologies from NATO officials and reopening of the border crossing on October 10, 2010, the incident came at an unfortunate time in the relationship between the United States and Pakistan, which had been on the upswing in previous months. By early October, frustrated American officials were worrying that the incident had negated whatever goodwill the United States achieved by enacting billions of dollars in aid, including a five-year, $7.5 billion civilian aid package aimed to show that Washington wanted a long-term nonmilitary commitment to Pakistan extending beyond the war on terror. Additionally, the U.S. government spent more than $100 million on Pakistani flood relief partly, as Morrell noted, for "enhancing our reputation and our image in Pakistan."[35]

The Current Crisis

The recent intensified fighting in Afghanistan has led U.S. officials to adopt a less tolerant attitude toward the Pakistan-based Islamists who conduct cross-border attacks. Thus far, Afghan, U.S., and NATO forces have relied primarily on attacks by unmanned drones as well as search and destroy operations against Pakistani-based insurgents whenever they move into Afghan territory. U.S. officials are now considering more vigorous action to counter the threat presented by the cross-border attacks from Pakistan.

2011 was a terrible year in the U.S.-Pakistan relationship, beginning with the Raymond Davis affair. Davis was a CIA contractor working under the cover of the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad who shot two Pakistani men in January claiming they meant to rob him. The affair highlighted the complex relationship between the two intelligence agencies, whose members distrust one another even as they work together in joint operations. Not only does the CIA work with the Pakistani government to identify and apprehend suspected terrorists, but they also collaborate to identify targets for the U.S. drone strikes on Pakistani territory.[36] Although a Pakistani court released Davis after compensation was paid to the victims' families, the affair badly strained relations, with the Pakistani government refusing to support U.S. claims that Davis enjoyed immunity from prosecution. Many Pakistanis complain the incident exposed problems inherent in the large U.S. intelligence presence in their country. During his April 2011 visit to Washington, ISI head Lt. Gen. Ahmed Shuja Pasha asked the CIA to withdraw intelligence operatives from Pakistan and curtail its unpopular drone strikes. Mullen made clear that the UAV operations in Pakistan would continue, describing the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region as the "epicenter of terrorism in the world."[37] The White House then ordered

[35] "DOD News Briefing with Geoff Morrell from the Pentagon," *U.S. Department of Defense*, October 5 2010, http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=4694

[36] Yoram Schweitzer and Dan Barak, "The United States and Pakistan: Partnership in Crisis," *INSS Insight* No. 259, May 29 2011.

[37] Ariel Zirulnick, "Pakistan Says Alleged Taliban Ties Are U.S. Negative Propaganda," *Christian Science Monitor*, http://www.csmonitor.com/World/terrorism-security/2011/0421/Pakistan-says-alleged-Taliban-ties-are-

the May 2 attack on bin Laden's compound in central Pakistan without seeking Pakistani permission or notifying Pakistani authorities in advance. In response, on May 14, 2011, a joint session of both houses of Pakistan's parliament unanimously enacted a resolution to defend Pakistan's sovereignty, security, and territorial integrity against U.S. military actions.

Shortly before retiring as Chairman, Mullen made some explosive comments about the continuing links between Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence and the Haqqani terrorist network whose members, thought to number some 10,000 to 15,000 fighters, operate in Afghanistan from bases in Pakistan. The support for the Haqqani network has been known in Washington though not publicized. A leaked State Department cable dated December 5, 2008, records the National Intelligence Officer for South Asia briefing NATO representatives that the ISI "provides intelligence and financial support to insurgent groups – especially the Jalaluddin Haqqani network out of Miram Shah, North Waziristan – to conduct attacks in Afghanistan against Afghan government, ISAF, and Indian targets."[38] What was unusual about Mullen's September 22 testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee was his explicit claim that the ISI had directed and supported Haqqani attacks on U.S. targets in Afghanistan.[39] After noting the difficulty of winning an insurgency when the guerrillas enjoy sanctuary in a neighboring country, Mullen added that official Pakistani support for the Afghan insurgents "represent[s] a growing problem that is undermining U.S. interests and may violate international norms, potentially warranting sanction."[40] The ISI confirms supporting the Haqqani and other terrorist groups during the 1990s, but claims to have severed all operational ties with these networks during the last decade since the 9/11 terrorist attacks. At most they acknowledge maintaining liaison ties with these groups to exchange information and simply follow their activities. Observers differ on whether the Pakistani armed forces have the capacity to suppress the Haqqani network even if they wanted to, with many suspecting that Pakistani commanders either support its activities or fear that attempting to suppress the group would lead it to retaliate against Pakistani targets.[41]

The timing was right for airing these differences in public. There is widespread frustration that the Pakistani government is playing a "double game," aligning with the United States in public while cultivating terrorist ties in private.[42] Mullen's imminent retirement afforded him with a license to make more controversial statements than in the past. In addition, the U.S. and NATO forces are

---

US-negative-propaganda

[38] "Statement of Admiral Michael Mullen, U.S. Navy Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Before the Senate Armed Services Committee on Afghanistan And Iraq, September 22 2011," http://armed-services.senate.gov/statemnt/2011/09%20September/Mullen%2009-22-11.pdf

[39] Elisabeth Bumiller and Jane Perlez, "Pakistan's Spy Agency Is Tied to Attack on U.S. Embassy," *New York Times*, September 22 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/23/world/asia/mullen-asserts-pakistani-role-in-attack-on-us-embassy.html

[40] "Statement of Admiral Michael Mullen."

[41] Elisabeth Bumiller and Jane Perlez, **"**Mullen Asserts Pakistani Role in Attack on U.S. Embassy," *New York Times*, September 22 2011.

[42] Daud Khattak. "The Cost of Pakistan's Double Game," *The Afghan Channel*, May 25 2011, http://afpak.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2011/05/25/the_cost_of_pakistans_double_game

being dramatically downsized. Pakistanis have undoubtedly begun to consider a post-NATO Afghanistan, and the potential value of relying on their terrorist proxies to exercise influence there. Given this context, Mullen's words were appropriately blunt: "In choosing to use violent extremism as an instrument of policy, the government of Pakistan, and most especially the Pakistani army and ISI, jeopardizes not only the prospect of our strategic partnership but Pakistan's opportunity to be a respected nation with legitimate regional influence," he said. "They may believe that by using these proxies, they are hedging their bets or redressing what they feel is an imbalance in regional power. But in reality, they have already lost that bet. By exporting violence, they've eroded their internal security and their position in the region. They have undermined their international credibility and threatened their economic well-being."[43]

Whither the War

Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta agreed with Mullen that the Pakistani authorities "must take steps to prevent the safe haven that the Haqqanis are using," adding that, "We simply cannot allow these kinds of terrorists to be able to go into Afghanistan, attack our forces and then return to Pakistan for safe haven."[44] Yet, Panetta was coy about how the United States would respond to the continuing attacks on its troops. The expectation is that the drone strikes against the Haqqani network could escalate, despite Pakistani objections. U.S. commanders rightly insist that they cannot allow Afghanistan insurgents and international terrorists unimpeded use of safe havens on Pakistani soil to support attacks on American soldiers. That said, the long-standing U.S. view has been that the best way to make enduring progress in weaning Pakistan away from supporting international terrorism is by continuing to partner with Pakistan rather than berating Islamabad in public or openly embarrassing its civilian government through overt cross-border attacks that violate Pakistani sovereignty.

It is possible the United States would launch airborne forces, like the helicopter-enabled commando attack against bin Laden's headquarters in central Pakistan. But these Special Forces operations would rouse strong Pakistani feelings and might prove counterproductive. Pakistani Interior Minister, Rehman Malik, said his government would "not allow" U.S. forces to attack the claimed Haqqani strongholds in North Waziristan. "Our government is already cooperating with the U.S. … but they also must respect our sovereignty."[45]

The Congress is likely to respond to the latest crisis by cutting back on some aid and imposing restrictions on other U.S. assistance to Pakistan. For example, future aid might require executive branch certification for release of the funds. The Obama administration already employed

[43] Cheryl Pellerin, "U.S., Pakistani Militaries Work to Resolve Differences," *American Forces Press Service*, September 27 2011, http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=65468

[44] Donna Cassata, "Mullen: Pakistan Helped Haqqanis Attack U.S. Troops," *Associated Press*, September 23 2011, http://www.military.com/news/article/mullen-pakistan-helped-haqqanis-attack-us-troops.html

[45] "No Boots on our Ground," *Reuters*, September 22 2011, http://www.dawn.com/2011/09/22/%E2%80%9Cno-us-boots-on-our-ground%E2%80%9D.html

this approach earlier this year by withholding hundreds of millions of dollars in Coalition Support Funds in response to Pakistani restrictions on the number and movement of U.S. government security personnel in Pakistan.[46] Pakistanis saw the restrictions as an affirmation of Washington's transactional view of their relationship in which Pakistanis would only receive assistance when Islamabad met Washington requirements. When Senator Susan Collins asked Panetta about making such aid conditional on administration certification that Pakistan was cooperating with the United States in the war on terror, the Defense Secretary agreed that, "Anything that makes clear to them that we cannot tolerate their providing this kind of safe haven to the Haqqanis, and that they have to take action – any signal that we can send to them – I think would be important to do."[47] Congress applied the same kinds of restrictions during the 1990s, after the joint U.S.-Pakistani campaign against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan had ended and concerns about Pakistan's nuclear proliferation activities increased, culminating in the 1998 detonation of several nuclear weapons by India and Pakistan. There is also strong congressional support for having the State Department add the entire Haqqani network to its list of foreign terrorist organizations, which would restrict the movement of its members and perhaps disrupt their foreign financing. At present, only a few of the network's leaders have been sanctioned as terrorists.

Pakistan's civilian government is in a difficult situation. On the one hand, its members must show Pakistani nationalists that they are not American lackeys and will resist Washington's pressure. Pakistani public opinion is clearly hostile to the United States in general and U.S. military operations within their country in particular.[48] Pakistanis note that whatever consent Musharraf gave lapsed with his retirement and the end of military rule. Pakistanis widely blame the U.S. war against the Taliban and other Muslim militants for bringing terrorism to Pakistan, which has suffered from suicide bombings and other civil strife in recent years, and for seeking to use the Pakistani army as Washington's mercenary force. Pakistanis calculate that they have incurred enormous financial losses and other costs in terms of the elevated terrorist violence Pakistan has experienced since Islamabad's decisions to side with Washington and support the U.S.-led Operation Enduring Freedom after 9/11. They note that the Pakistani armed forces have suffered more casualties fighting Islamist militants than have coalition forces on the other side of the Afghan-Pakistan border. In their view, more U.S. drone and cross-border attacks would further increase Pakistani military causalities and terrorist victims.

On the other hand, Pakistan receives billions of dollars of assistance from the United States – originally focused on security assistance but increasingly encompassing nonmilitary aid as well – and the civilian government is genuinely opposed to terrorism. Breaking with the United States and

---

[46] Chris Brummitt, "Pakistan Places Limits On Travel Of U.S. Diplomats," *Associated Press Boston Globe*, July 31 2011; Karin Brulliard, "Pakistan Tightening Control Of Foreigners, U.S. And International Aid Officials Report," Washington Post, July 25 2011.

[47] Donna Cassata, "Mullen: Pakistan Helped Haqqanis Attack U.S. Troops," *Associated Press*, September 23 2011, http://www.military.com/news/article/mullen-pakistan-helped-haqqanis-attack-us-troops.html

[48] "Support for Campaign Against Extremists Wanes, U.S. Image in Pakistan Falls No Further Following bin Laden Killing," *Pew Research Center*, June 21 2011, pp. 1-2.

NATO would benefit India in the diplomatic competition between the two nations. Pakistani officials have sought to limit U.S. military operations in their country by affirming their commitment to reign in extremist activity in Pakistan and across the border. The Pakistani army has also resumed military operations against the Pakistani Taliban; though the recent floods have disrupted whatever plans might have existed to expand operations throughout the remaining tribal areas. Despite the government's formal opposition to the drone attacks, it is understood that the UAVs operate within Pakistan with the government's approval and, reportedly, with its intelligence assistance – vitally important given the limited U.S. human assets in the region – now that the drones target the Pakistani Taliban as well.[49]

From the perspective of the Pakistani government, the problem with the recent helicopter attacks was that they deviated from the standard rules of engagement, as well as their killing of three Pakistani soldiers. Pakistani authorities regularly overlook occasional incursions across their border as long as these incidents do not attract much public attention. The Pakistani government even rapidly overcame the negative fallout from the June 2008 incident in which an ISAF air strike killed 11 Frontier Corps members manning a border checkpoint, leading to an exchange of fire with other Pakistani forces.[50] But in late September, U.S. helicopters fired missiles into Pakistani territory four times in one week. Additionally, the U.S. government addressed these incidences publically.[51] Pakistani officials originally said nothing about the September 24 and 25 helicopter missile strikes on their territory, but the September 30 attack killed three paramilitary soldiers located inside Pakistan, making it hard to conceal.[52] One of the cross-border helicopter attacks that occurred a few days before the attack on the Frontier Corps members killed as many as 60 fighters who had been attacking an Afghan border post; by the time the attacks were perpetrated the militants had fled to the Pakistani side of the border. Rather than remain silent, moreover, NATO officials confirmed the media reports that its manned helicopters had crossed into Pakistani territory and killed Pakistanis, actions that alliance representatives justified as legitimate acts of self-defense.[53]

Misperceptions regarding each other's capabilities and intentions is also an enduring problem in the U.S.-Pakistani relationship. U.S. officials and their NATO and Afghan allies believe that the Pakistani military could suppress the Afghan Taliban insurgents in the border areas if they really made an effort to do so. Meanwhile, Pakistani officials think that if the coalition really got its

---

[49] "Three Killed in Pakistan Following U.S. Missile Strikes," *Dawn*, October 3 2010, http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/news/pakistan/three-killed-in-pakistan-following-us-missile-strikes-jd-02

[50] Baqir Sajjad Syed, "Petraeus calls Kayani, Regrets Strikes," *Dawn*, October 2 2010, http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/front-page/moves-afoot-to-defuse-crisis-petraeus-calls-kayani,-regrets-strikes-200

[51] "Nato Supplies in Pakistan Blocked for Second Day," *Dawn*, October 1 2010, http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/news/pakistan/14-nato-supplies-in- pakistan-blocked-for-second-day-zj-04

[52] Jane Perlez and Helene Cooper, "Signaling Tensions, Pakistan Shuts NATO Route," *New York Times*, September 30 2010, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/10/01/world/asia/01peshawar.html?_r=1

[53] "Pakistan Protests NATO Airstrikes on its Territory," *Associated Press*, September 27 2010, http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20100927/ap_on_re_as/as_pakistan_afghanistan_airstrikes; and "Pakistan Protests but Nato Defends Airstrikes," *Express Tribune*, September 28 2010, http://tribune.com.pk/story/55126/30-insurgents-killed-in-hot-pursuit/

act together it could easily employ its overwhelming capabilities to crush the Taliban guerrillas and secure the Afghan-Pakistan border. The failure to do so gives rise to all sorts of suspicions that the United States is secretly sustaining the insurgency in order to justify its continued military presence in the region. They also believe that ineffective Afghan and NATO policies have contributed to the rise of the Afghan Taliban, and believe that some anti-Islamabad terrorists have been attacking Pakistani forces while using Afghan territory as a sanctuary. The parties' clashing perceptions have been manifest in their firefights along the Afghan-Pakistan border, which involves their troops alternately cooperating and combating one another.[54]

Concluding Observations

Geography and other factors will force Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the United States to collaborate despite their differences over the border region. Pakistan needs financial and diplomatic support from Washington to complement that provided by China, which has placed firm limits on its annual aid levels. The United States gives Pakistan billions of dollars in direct assistance to Islamabad, as well as considerable revenue to Pakistanis involved in the shipping of U.S. military supplies to Afghanistan. U.S. diplomats have also helped dampen Indian desires to retaliate militarily against Pakistan for earlier terrorist attacks.

The United States in turn needs Pakistani support to transit military supplies to its troops in Afghanistan. Efforts to develop an alternative supply route through Russia and other former Soviet bloc states have made considerable progress, but these shipments are more expensive and make the NATO war effort excessively dependent on Moscow. Washington must have some Pakistani support to achieve a favorable regional environment for an eventual peace settlement in Afghanistan. The United States is also very eager to collaborate with the Pakistani military to secure the country's growing nuclear weapons arsenal.

One task is to clarify the rules of engagement under the new conditions of a departing Western military presence, a resurgent Taliban, and a Pakistani government and military frustrated with the United States and Afghanistan but yet still open to some cooperation. When President Zardari met Marc Grossman, the new U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan who replaced Richard Holbrooke, he said they needed "clear terms of engagement" in the battle against Islamist militants to avoid further damaging bilateral security ties. Zardari's office subsequently explained that, "In the absence of well-defined and documented terms of engagement, wrong plugs may be pulled at the wrong times by any side that could undermine the bilateral relations." The statement added that, "The president said that terms of engagement should be clearly defined and specified so that any dispute could be settled amicably."[55]

Unfortunately, there is no easy way to reconcile to these different priorities. Afghan-Pakistan

[54] Issam Ahmed, "As U.S. Troops Begin Drawdown in Afghanistan, Violence Threatens Pakistan Border," *Christian Science Monitor*, July 25 2011.

[55] "Zardari Calls for Clear Terms of Engagement between US and Pakistan," *AFP*, August 1 2011, http://www.dawn.com/2011/08/01/zardari-calls-for-clear-terms-of-engagement-between-us-and-pakistan.html

border tensions are likely to recur – and worsen – as NATO troops withdraw from Afghanistan. The U.S. government will increase pressure on Pakistani authorities to prevent the Taliban from exploiting the vacuum, but Pakistani leaders will want to hedge their bets against the Taliban's regaining control of some, if not all, of Afghanistan. They will seek at minimum to avoid antagonizing the Taliban, and at least certain Pakistani national security managers will invariably be tempted to rely on old ties and use the Afghan Taliban as an instrument for asserting Pakistani influence in this important neighboring country while also countering Indian influence there. Rebuilding trust between the two nations will require many years, and possibly multiple generations, to achieve. In the meantime, the current status quo of wary cooperation and mutual mistrust is likely to continue.