

## **War on Terror Partnership: Problems and Prospects for Pakistan**

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### **Abstract**

The events of 9/11 led to substantial shifts in international relations (IR) especially regarding justifications for intervening militarily in the territory of another sovereign state. It also raised certain critical questions in the realm of international law as interestingly no laws existed or framed to govern the conduct of military intervention by one powerful country against non state actors on the territory of another sovereign state, even when that victim state is not directly sponsoring those actors. This war on terror has affected socio-political, security and economic conditions in Pakistan. The controversial issues like US drone strikes in tribal areas of Pakistan have led to breeding of more terrorists, thus creating a vicious cycle of suicide and terror attacks everywhere in Pakistan with multiple effects for the society and state. Furthermore, in the context of Pakistan US relations, the post 9/11 era introduced a major shift. This study attempts to explore and examine the underlying global and regional currents and ground realities of Pakistan US relations during this current phase as well as effects, problems and prospects of war on terror on Pakistan and the combined efforts of the stakeholders in finding a durable solution to Afghanistan problem, while also focusing on the key issues as well as prospective avenues of cooperation between the partners in future.

**Key Words:** War on terror, USA, Pakistan, drones, Afghanistan.

### **Background**

Terrorism has been used as a means to convey the particular demands by certain groups through use of violent methods leading to an environment of fear and destruction among the common people. Just after the 9/11, Pakistan was compelled to join the US-led NATO forces in Afghanistan due to its geographical proximity with this country by offering the NATO troops all-out support in their strikes against Taliban and Al-Qaeda fighters. Consequent upon US attack, a large Afghan population took refuge in Pakistan and certain suspects may have crossed into the tribal areas.

Pakistan has permanent and enduring historical, commercial, cultural and geopolitical interests in Afghanistan, which include eradicating extremism,

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strengthening the institutions of state and society, stability and capacity of the state, developing Afghanistan as a transit and trade corridor to Central Asian states especially to meet its urgent energy needs. That is why; Pakistan is linked to Afghanistan by history, geography, culture strategic and commercial interests that give texture and depth to their bilateral relations.

### **Post 9/11 Pakistan**

In the face of American pressure to withdraw support from the Taliban, Pakistan, being a country burdened with financial constraints and huge debt, a crippling economy, hostile India and an unfavorable international public opinion had no option except to side with the Americans and take a U-turn on its Taliban policy. Thus, due to imperatives of the changing global and regional scenario, Pakistan's leadership was compelled to follow the line and policy of the US-led NATO alliance in the region.

### **Effects on Pakistan**

A significant effect of Pakistan's joining the US-led NATO alliance on the domestic politics was that the religious political parties cashed in on the wave of anti-Americanism in Pakistan and subsequently won substantial seats in National Assembly as well as the provincial Assemblies of Balochistan and NWFP under the banner of Muthida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA).

Musharraf got a new lease of life in power and in the guise of fulfilling US objectives in the region, extended the term of his office as Chief of Army Staff. Along with this, he also made necessary changes at senior level in the Army and Intelligence Services, so that there is no deviation from the new American policy.

Ramesh Thakur (2012) informs that American drone attacks have killed over 3,000 people in tribal region of Pakistan and instigated anti-American sentiments .Pakistan has deployed 140,000 soldiers to fight against the militants in North and South Waziristan with more than 3,000 martyred there, which are rather higher figures than the corresponding ones for NATO in Afghanistan. (Thakur, 2012: 89)

It is quite puzzling to see the disastrous effects of the War on terror on neighboring Pakistan and its people, whose government joined the US in this war as a non-NATO ally. Even the death of Osama bin Laden after a decade of ceaseless hunt has not disoriented the hydra headed al-Qaeda network. It rather spawned the several groups of Taliban to continue the struggle against the foreign troops in Afghanistan. As claimed by Taliban over 3199 NATO

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soldiers including 2000 US troops have been killed in Afghanistan so far in this war.

The worrying aspect is that even after all this war effort by NATO forces in Afghanistan; they are not leaving this country in a state of peace and democracy for future generations. Rather, because of the manner in which minority ethnic communities have been raised to power in the country, many observers predict the possible fate of this nation reverting to post Soviet times of chaos and lawlessness once the NATO forces leave. Presently, the US is increasingly shifting responsibility for eliminating terrorism and maintaining peace to the Afghan security forces. But, in many cases, the Afghan soldiers are firing at their foreign trainers. Moreover, they are suffering as many losses in the territories handed over to them as the foreign troops had faced there previously.

It is indeed a big challenge to re-build deeply shattered political and socio-economic fabric of the country.

The Americans have suffered heavy human and material losses in war along with suicides out of stress by soldiers. Huge debt and declining living standards of citizens have put the US economy under heavy pressure. That is why, increasing number of Americans are turning against the US engagement with this useless war. In UK, the public have resorted to street demonstrations to register their anti-war protest to UK government.

The NATO has been disappointed over its failure to eliminate the consequent tough resistance by the local groups, loss of life of its soldiers and loss of its face coupled with huge material losses. In the present financial crisis gripping the EU countries and NATO countries of EU, are hard pressed to spare any financial resources to continue with this endless war. Moreover, due to US engagement with this disastrous war, China has risen to power and prominence in this region, raising questions over the presumed American strategy of strategic spread across Central Asia.

Pakistan has suffered disastrous effects in all spheres of life and in all sectors of the business of state and society due to this war. The people had expected the post Musharraf democratic government to speed up economic growth and development thus creating conducive conditions for prosperity and advancement of the common citizens. But, it is disturbing to know that the country has backtracked in every sphere.

The economy is virtually in ruins. The ever increasing inflation has pushed more millions below the poverty line. There are fewer jobs with redundancies becoming an everyday occurrence resulting from the closure of many industries due to a host of continuing issues. There are prolonged spells of

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power cut offs and gas cut offs to industries as well as to domestic consumers. The lack of essential funds has cast the ill consequences for vital social sectors including education and health as well as development projects.

Pakistani society has suffered huge irreparable losses in terms of human lives. It is estimated that Pakistani people have sacrificed over 40,000 persons including 5,000 security staff in this US war on terror. The distressing and puzzling aspect of all these sacrifices by the people of Pakistan is that there seems to be no end to this cancer of terrorism and terrorist attacks even in the foreseeable future. This rising wave of military has led to a feeling of resentment and insecurity among all the citizens at all times and everywhere in the country. The people of the Tribal areas neighboring Afghan border also bear the brunt of everyday drone strikes by NATO forces against presumed Taliban or al-Qaeda suspects. The military operation by Pakistani forces is causing huge loss of life to the military personnel, which again is a continuing sacrifice by the people of Pakistan. The suicide attacks could happen anywhere and at any time in Pakistan.

Indeed, the whole population is living under perpetual threat and fear of terrorism and suicide terror attacks. Nobody is sure while going out of his home that he will be able to return back to his family in the evening safe and sound or alive. (*Nation*, "The War on Terror", 9 October, 2012)

Pakistan has offered numerous sacrifices and has suffered much more losses than any other country in this war on terror.

Firstly, there have been numerous casualties in Army operation in these tribal areas including civilian casualties as well as the Army personnel, both as an irreparable loss to Pakistani society in terms of human life. It was a stressful operation for the Army to conduct such an operation on its own territory, where the same could result in casualties of its own people.

Secondly, the terrorists and suicide bombers caused huge losses to the security forces and attacked everywhere thus causing loss of precious human lives and trained security personnel and commanders. This has added to the cumulative loss to the society.

There have been continuous drone strikes in Pakistan's tribal areas. The contentious and painful issue is that most of the casualties in these drone strikes are innocent women and children or citizens. Yet, US-led NATO forces and C.I.A are not ready to halt these strikes. Pakistan has raised this issue with US several times, but US is not ready to listen to and give weight and due consideration to the genuine concerns of the people of Pakistan on this issue. On 22 January, 2012, Pakistan's foreign minister Hina Rabbani Khar told the Senate that the issue of drone strikes would be taken up with the US envoy to

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Pakistan as she termed these strikes as a clear-cut violation of Pakistan's territorial integrity. Her statement has come in response to Obama administration's chalking out of a rule book for targeted killings, which would not apply to Pakistan, thus giving the C.I.A free hand to continue with undertaking direct drone attacks in Pakistan's tribal areas. (*Dawn*, 22 January, 2013)

### **Indian Influence in Afghanistan**

Due to the ever visible Indian influence in Afghanistan, successive Afghan governments have been raising the Durand line and Pashtonistan issue at international forums. During the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and Taliban regime, Indian influence was minimized in that country. The two fold Indian strategy includes firstly, making Pakistan's Western border volatile with a hostile government in Afghanistan and secondly, India desires to have land route access to Central Asian states to use its energy and gas reserves and as potential markets.

India assisted the Northern alliance with military equipment, expertise and medical facilities in order to exert its influence there. India has been concerned that the militants trained in Afghanistan may help the freedom-fighters in Indian held Kashmir. That is why; India has been striving hard to eliminate Pakistan's influence in Afghanistan.

The American led operation Enduring Freedom provided a conducive environment for the Indians to minimize Pakistan's influence in Afghanistan and assert her regional hegemony.

In Post 9/11 era, the Indians and Afghan governments have become hand in glove with one another, with extended co-operation in political, military and economic spheres.

The Indian leadership and media did their utmost to paint Pakistan and Afghanistan as breeding ground for all terrorist activities around the globe. Consequently, Indians were successful in having regime led by Karzai, who has been closer to India than to Pakistan.

### **Problems**

Broadly speaking, there have been five main pillars of US-Pakistan relationship in post 9/11 era, which have outlined the US approach towards Pakistan. First, there is the US development assistance to Pakistan, where the US administration has been working with a different approach with the focus mainly diverting to civilian side assistance instead of the previous approach of overwhelming military aid. Here, the key change in US policy has been the

contractors' reform, considering the hard reality that under the existing system of aid disbursement, the major chunk of aid money proves to be an easy fortune for the contractors and bureaucracy instead of trickling down to the desired recipient publics.

Second, US engagement with Pakistan military has been one of the significant pillars of US policy. Here, US policy of supporting the military has continued. The key targets of American approach have been initially Lashkar-e-Tayyaba and more recently Haqqani network. Third, support for democracy has been the important pillar of US official policy. Though this has been the declared US policy, but the true test of US approach is yet to be seen. The real test of American policy on this issue will come if some political party or leadership not favorable to US comes to power in Pakistan's politics. How US will respond in such an eventuality will determine the real outcome of US approach.

Fourth, American humanitarian assistance to Pakistan has been one of the significant factors of US policy. In this area, US have extended substantial assistance to Pakistan during the deadly 2006 Earthquake. Next, US have given sizeable aid during 2010 devastating floods in Pakistan. Fifth, US policy of drone strikes in the Tribal areas of Pakistan have been the most disastrous and controversial one. Though US have its own justification for making these attacks, but the real issue in the regional context is whether these attacks are popular in Pakistan. The answer to this question is a big no. These attacks are leading to the growth of terrorists. (Abbas, 2011)

Regarding the American engagement with Pakistan military, it is worth mentioning that US policy seems to be disoriented here because Lashkar-e-Tayyaba is no more active, while Haqqani network is active only in Afghanistan.

Pakistan military has offered innumerable sacrifices in terms of human lives and material losses in this war on terror with over 3000 persons martyred while taking part in these operations. This has added to the cumulative sacrifices being offered by the people of Pakistan while assisting in this US-led War on terror.

As recently mentioned by Senator John Kerry, the new Secretary of State in a Senate hearing in January, 2013, only in 2012 more than 6,000 Pakistani people lost their lives adding to the cumulative loss of over 30,000 loss of its citizens over the past several years, while pursuing the US war on terror.

It is quite astonishing to observe that US has always been demanding of Pakistan government and military to do more, perhaps not considering the volume of sacrifices offered by the people of Pakistan as a price for siding with the US in this War on terror.

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Next, the drone strikes across the international boundary in Pakistan's tribal areas have no justification under the existing international laws. These drone strikes are leading to the growth of more terrorists, who are striking back as a reaction in Pakistan's cities. These drone attacks are assisting the Taliban groups, because of the fact that majority of the casualties in these drone strikes are civilian population including innocent women, children and men. According to local tribal customs, it is the responsibility of the surviving relatives of the tribe of the victims or the innocent people murdered, in this case the casualties of these drone strikes, to take revenge of the wrong done by the aggressor, in this case the US forces and CIA leading and conducting these drone attacks. The Taliban are cleverly and wrongly exploiting these feelings of the local tribesmen, whose relatives fall a victim to these drone strikes. This leads to a fertile ground for breeding of more terrorists, the young adolescents, who fall in the hands of Taliban to get trained and act as suicide bombers and potential terrorists. The Taliban wrongly incite and indoctrinate these jobless and uneducated adolescents to launch suicide and terrorist attacks against the foreign soldiers as well as Pakistan's security agencies. The main victims in these whole phenomena are the common innocent people of Pakistan because no place is safe from the attacks of suicide bombers and terrorists. The Taliban incite these adolescent terrorists that since Pakistan government and Pakistan's security services are aiding the US policy in this war on terror, who are killing the innocent civilian population in Pakistan's tribal areas through launching these drone strikes, hence the Taliban propagate that it is justified for these suicide bombers and terrorists to strike back anywhere in Pakistan, inflicting heavy losses to security services as well as to the common citizens. This has created an environment of perpetual fear and anxiety among the common members of Pakistan society. Nobody is sure of being safe from terrorist threat, even the high and the mighty in power in the land. No place is safe from their attacks, not even the places of worship and shrines of the great saints.

There have been several key missing linkages in American policy toward Pakistan. Firstly, there is the crucial linkage to civil society actors. So far, the US policy makers have not fully recognized and integrated their key role in achieving US policy.

Secondly, there is the fundamental issue of de-radicalization of society and total elimination of extremism. In this sphere, US have failed to launch any meaningful initiatives to reintegrate these extremist elements back into normal society. A wholesome approach is the need of the hour here. Thirdly, there is the whole issue of regional context, which has not been understood in the true perspective giving due consideration to the concerns of all regional actors with a legitimate stake in the future of Afghanistan including Pakistan, Iran and India. (Abbas, 2011)

Without taking into consideration the genuine concerns of all the stakeholders, while formulating policy regarding the future of Afghanistan, there could be little hope for a durable and stable peace in the region in the foreseeable future.

The US inability to contain Afghan resistance has led her to shifting the blame to Pakistan calling for rooting out militant sanctuaries in Tribal agencies and asking Pakistan to do more. Considering the increasing influence of Taliban groups in Afghanistan districts, Obama administration in 2009 moved toward reconciliation efforts and realizing the critical role of Pakistan in US withdrawal from that country. Pakistan has lost thousands of its trained soldiers. Secondly, Pakistani society has been facing the enormous collateral damage due to the ever increasing number of suicide attacks. The Pakistan's political and military leadership worked to contain extremism and terrorism due to its emerging effects. First, there arose enormous pressure from international community after Bombay attacks. Second, the rise of militants in Swat made the civil society groups, civilian government and the US administration scared about the security of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal and its capital city and a successful Army operation was conducted to eliminate this threat. Pakistan Army also conducted another operation in 2009 in South Waziristan against Taliban. The militants responded with increased suicide attacks everywhere in Pakistan. The Americans felt that it is vital to engage in a strategic dialogue with Pakistan to shape its policy rather than merely using it as an ally to secure US objectives in Afghanistan. US recognized the essential need of Pakistan in peace talks between Taliban groups and Kabul. Pakistan displayed its practical leverage in the Afghan imbroglio by striking against the militants within Pakistan, by compelling the Afghan Taliban leaders, by disrupting the NATO supply line and by putting a restraint on US intelligence networks in Pakistan. (Haque, 2012)

From December, 2012 onwards, another painful effect of Pakistan's engagement with US war on terror surfaced. It was aimed at targeting immunization health workers, most of whom are females, participating in immunization campaigns to fight epidemics including polio. The militants have resorted to targeting these health workers after the death of Osama bin Laden, which it is believed by extremists that the blood samples received by Dr. Shakeel Afridi in the guise of immunization campaign run by an international NGO led to the identification and killing of al-Qaeda leader in Abbottabad in May, 2011. It also highlights this new trend of targeting female workers. The religious leaders need to take the lead to resolve this issue because it involves the health and safety of children and the future generations of this society. (Imtiaz, 18 December, 2012, ). As a response to these ongoing killings, the UN agencies in Pakistan temporarily called back its entire staff carrying out polio vaccination campaigns from the country. (Ahmad, December 19, 2012)



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Moreover, in January, 2013, one of the most deadly incidents of Shia killings occurred in the Hazara Shia community in Quetta resulting in loss of life of over 80 people in a religious gathering. This led to widespread protests against such incidents in Pakistan and across several cities outside the country. The protestors demanded effective action against the members of Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, the group accused of these killings. (Siddiqui, January 13, 2013)

The federal government responded by imposing Governor's rule in the province for two months. But, whether this step will be able to forestall the increasing monster of sectarian killings remains yet to be seen.

As a result of this war on terror, Afghanistan has risen to the centre-stage of the new great game. That is why, Pakistan feels threatened from future Afghanistan. It is commonly apprehended that there may be anarchy and political turmoil in the country after American withdrawal. It remains to be one of the key questions that what could be the prospective nature of the US-Pakistan relations after America's exit from Afghanistan. (Waqas Sohrab, March 2012 )

It is quite painful and astonishing to see how US administration is unconcerned and aggressive towards genuine concerns of the people of the most allied non-NATO ally of US in this war in the region, whose people have offered uncountable sacrifices for the safeguarding of US interests in the region so far. But, despite all this suffering by the people of Pakistan in pursuit of US interests in the region, the issues which directly impact their daily lives such as drone strikes in Tribal areas and the resultant breeding of more terrorists, leading to the increasing everyday terror and suicide attacks in Pakistan's urban centers, have not been considered by US policy makers seriously so far.

Sajjad Malik (2012) argues that "Terrorism has resulted in social fragmentation by creating fissures in society, as people are more uncertain about the future, more concerned about their welfare and more fearful about the prevailing law and order situation. Politically the war on terror and terrorism has created instability and there are questions about the future of democratic institutions and political process. The economy has been badly hit and the immediate economic future looks bleak, with little chances of revival unless massive investment is made, which is not possible without substantial progress in defeating militancy. The strategic policy remains hostage to terrorism, which has become the major threat for national security". (p.57) Thus, the ill consequences of this war have manifested in all sphere of life of Pakistani people. (Malik, Spring 2012. )

## **Future Prospects**

**Ramesh Thakur (2012) argues that** “The exodus of western countries from Afghanistan has the appearance of being all exist, no strategy. By the end of 2013, all western troops will have withdrawn from combat roles in Afghanistan and the troops themselves will leave the country by the end of 2014. One hundred thousand American troops at an annual cost of \$100 billion, backed by European and Australian allies, have failed to defeat a mere 20,000-25,000 Taliban who fight for no pay, but rather a cause.” (P.87) He further examines that “No peace in Afghanistan is likely to be stable and durable unless Pakistan has a seat at the table during the negotiations that produce the peace agreement”. (P.88)

Ramesh Thakur (2012) outlines that “Pakistan fears that with a substantial presence in Afghanistan, India would not be able to resist the temptation to dismember Pakistan yet again by supporting and arming an insurgency in Baluchistan”. (Page 89)

In August, 2012, on the eve of the Non-aligned Movement summit in Tehran, India held trilateral discussions with Iran and Afghanistan “on the development of transport corridors to reduce Kabul’s reliance on Pakistan for access to the sea”. (Thakur, 2012: 90)

## **China: Future**

To secure its strategic interests in Afghanistan in the face of US military presence, in September, 2012, China also signed agreements with Afghanistan to fund, train and equip ;the Afghan security forces. (Thakur, 2012: 90)

## **Indian Role**

As pointed out by Ramesh Thakur (2012) Indian influence in Afghanistan has increased during war on terror, “As Western forces wind down their military presence in Afghanistan, there are widespread concerns about the country’s future security and stability. While much attention has been focused on the stake Pakistan perceives itself to have in who governs Afghanistan, India has quietly re-emerged as a player in a now iteration of the great game.” (Thakur, 2012:87)

As on a giant chessboard, the pieces of the great game are being re-arranged. Karzai government signed several high-level agreements with Manmohan Singh in October, 2011 “that will see India bolster its soft-power contributions with hard-power activity”. Alongside energy, educational and

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development assistance, India is also training officers of Afghan security services (Thakur, 2012:90)

India has provided civilian aid worth \$2 billion, built Afghanistan's parliament and runs a large children's hospital in Kabul. India welcomed overthrow of Taliban regime in 2001 and wants the presence of Western forces in Afghanistan in future too. Afghanistan is on agenda in security and political dialogues between US and India, including sharing of intelligence, security and combined defense exercises. Both are collaborating in capacity building, energy, agriculture, women's empowerment in the volatile country. In June 2012, India hosted the Delhi Investment Summit on Afghanistan to showcase the country's potential and attract foreign investment. The US hard power and Indian soft power in the shape of movies and music as well as medical treatment of senior Afghan military officers is visible in Afghanistan. (Thakur, 2012)

Presently, numerous internal threats are posing a serious challenge to the foreign policy decision makers of Pakistan. This includes lack of good governance, crippling economy, terrorism, human rights position, gender issues, proliferation of weapons and narcotics in society.

Pakistan has to bear the cumulative brunt of CIA drone strikes in the Tribal areas in all its severity. The Americans and the West perceives Pakistan's military especially nuclear policy and intelligentsia as pursuing a fundamentalist approach. The issue of Balochistan, especially in the backdrop of increasing suicide attacks, sectarian and ethnic terrorism has become a burning issue for the nation. The frequent impositions of Governor's rule, political assassinations, like that of Akbar Bugti and issue of missing persons have further complicated the crisis.

The mineral resources like natural gas, copper and coal remain to be main points of attraction and motivate many countries including America, India, and Iran etc to interfere in Balochistan affairs. The countries like India are directly engaging in anti-state activities with a view to destabilize Pakistan internally. Due to importance of Gwadar port for the economy of Pakistan, several states have a stake in creating volatile conditions in Baluchistan to restrict Pakistan from utilizing full potential of this resource. In the post 9/11 era, due to presence of intelligence agencies of several countries hostile to Pakistan in Afghanistan, Baluchistan has become a hotbed for all their nefarious designs against the people and state in Pakistan.

Due to financial costs of military operations in Pakistan's tribal areas as well as the loss of property and jobs because of continuing suicide attacks, Pakistan's national economy has been further worsening during the post 9/11 years.

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Due to rising terrorism and extremism in Pakistan in post 9/11 years, the opponents of Pakistan and their media have been continuously campaigning to give the impression to the international community that the nuclear installations of this country are unsafe and could easily fall in the hands of the terrorists.

In post 9/11 years, most Muslim countries including Pakistan were deliberately painted as being associated with terrorism in order to win a favorable public opinion for the achievement of global American objectives across the world.

Umbreen Javaid (2013) suggests that “ Post 9/11 period has brought about dire consequences to Pakistan’s internal as well as external security, only a politically and economically strong Pakistan with a dedicated leadership and a moderate educated and tolerant society can shun off the threats being faced by Pakistan. The terrorized society of Pakistan calls for uprooting militant extremism for a more tolerant society”. (Javaid: 199)

Recently, there has come a silver lining as reflected out of hearing before US senate by the new secretary of state John Kerry, which gives strength to the hope that US-Pakistan relationship may usher into a new era based on mutual respect and consideration of each other’s concerns and sensitivities. He has termed cutting down on Assistance to Pakistan being an unjust move. He has clarified that Pakistan’s co-operation and sacrifices in War on Terror should be recognized. Pakistan’s help in denting Al-Qaeda and eliminating its leadership including Osama bin Laden is of much value. It is a country, which has borne the brunt of participating in the war on terror including the loss of life of over 6,000 of its citizens only in 2012 and over 30,000 lives over the past several years.

He stressed that the challenges being faced by Islamabad and Washington today demand their strengthened ties. The people in Pakistan belonging to various walks of life also feel that these six-decade-long relations should be extended based on mutual and bilateral trust and respect. Besides this, no country should adopt such an approach, which injures the feelings of the people in the other country. America’s interests require good relations with Pakistan as she needs Pakistani roads for its military supplies. Pakistan’s human and ground intelligence has been very useful in eliminating Al-Qaeda targets including Osama bin Laden. Since America still needs Pakistan to ensure safe withdrawal of her troops from Afghanistan before 2014, so the bilateral relations among both these countries should be valued. (*Jang*, January 27, 2013)

Zafar Nawaz Jaspal (2010) proposes this strategy to counter terrorist threats in Pakistan, pleading that “The problems such as extremism and radicalization need non-military approaches in addition to military tactics for their solution.

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The intellectual/academic input in the counter-terrorism strategy is inevitable because in the asymmetrical warfare one needs to chalk out innovative strategy for combating the terrorist attacks. More precisely, the strategic military option; open political dialogue; committed social development; and promising political empowerment of the people of FATA (federally administered tribal areas) must go in tandem with one another". Thus it is high time that Pakistan's present and future policies consider these significant dimensions. (Jaspal, Winter 2010)

Firstly, the U.S. civilian aid program should continue in partnership with Pakistan's civil society. Its goals are to strengthen Pakistan's democracy, empower its middle class, and meet the basic needs of Pakistan's people. Secondly, the two governments should strengthen mutual government accountability, rule of law, and transparency through deeper engagement with civil society leaders in both countries. A key result of this would be more private investment and employment opportunities in Pakistan. Thirdly, the U.S. and Pakistani military and security services should explicitly define areas of cooperation with regard to Al Qaeda, the Taliban and other extremist groups operating in and from Afghanistan, and make that framework public. Fourthly, recognizing the concerns that Pakistan has raised about its sovereignty, the U.S. should give assurances that no U.S. combat troops will enter Pakistan without Pakistan's agreement. Fifthly, the issue of drone strikes must be resolved in a way that recognizes both Pakistani sovereignty and the perceived national-security threat to the U.S. and NATO. Sixthly, the U.S. should give firm assurances that it will not threaten Pakistan's nuclear program as it is the key to regional security balance in the South Asian regional context. Seventh, in the longer term, U.S.-Pakistan military cooperation should focus on building an effective force against extremist threats to both countries. Finally, the U.S. should continue to encourage diplomatic dialogue, security and trade agreements between India and Pakistan. The U.S. has real and significant national-security differences with Pakistan, but it also has strong complementary interests in Pakistan's security and development. A new understanding, based on frank and constructive efforts to deal with our differences and build on common ground is the only realistic way forward in the interest of our people and regional security (*Chamberlin*, June, 2011).

Today, the challenge for Obama in his second term is to ensure success of his national security team including Defense Secretary Mr. Hagel, Secretary of State Mr. Kerry and CIA director Mr. Brennan, which will demand effective and coherent action by multiple US agencies "applying all instruments of national power in ways that are complementary and not contradictory. It also involves collaborating with other countries, achieving consensus when possible about the root causes of emerging crises, and taking decisive action that is broadly viewed as legal and legitimate... Mr. Hagel's task would be to manage the end

of the war and recommend the shape, size and scope of a follow-on mission. Mr. Kerry would oversee Afghanistan's political, social and economic development for which diplomats will need security. How will that be achieved? The manner in which Mr. Brennan chooses to continue the drone campaign in the tribal areas will impact - positively or negatively - the reconciliation process between Afghanistan, Pakistan and the Taliban. The key question is whether the three men can mould the existing three separate approaches into a revised and cohesive strategy". (Crowley, January 17, 2013). So, it depends upon the new security, foreign policy and intelligence team under Obama during his second term that a peaceful and durable solution of the Afghanistan issue is explored and implemented in the larger national interest of all the key stakeholders for a stable future Afghanistan.

So, the continuation of carrying out deadly drone strikes in Pakistan's tribal areas may further complicate the issue of continuing extremism and terrorism, leading to creation of more terrorists as a result with disastrous consequences for all the stake holders. It is hoped that John Kerry, the new Secretary of State would be able to examine the impact of civilian deaths caused by drone strikes in tribal region of Pakistan. "A dispassionate look at their aftermath, a new crop of vengeful militants, went contrary to Washington's declared purpose of launching the war on terror. A man of Senator Kerry's political acumen would have no difficulty in coming to that conclusion. Meanwhile, the UN has launched an investigation into the impact of drone strikes and the deaths of civilians as a result. Its special reporter on counter-terrorism and human rights Ben Emmerson told journalists, on Friday, of the need for accountability when drone attacks went wrong. He is conducting a probe that focuses on 25 case studies of attacks in Pakistan and some other countries. The exponential rise in the use of drone technology was a real challenge that required a legal framework of an established international law, he remarked. There is urgent need to put in place suitable checks on the use of drones to avoid the violation of the fundamental right of man to life" (*Nation*, January 27, 2013 )

The sooner this war ends and peace returns to Afghanistan, the better for the peace and stability of Pakistan as well. "How exactly peace is to be established in Afghanistan is, as it has always been, the multi-billion question." (*Nation*, "The War on Terror", October 9, 2012)

## **Conclusion**

While examining the issue of Pakistan's engagement with the US-led war on terror in Afghanistan over the past decade, it becomes crystal clear to the observers that mutual understanding of each other's national concerns and sensitivities, especially by the big partner, is the first and the foremost requirement for ensuring mutually beneficial relations between both the

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sovereign states to ensure an enduring and stable peace in the region in future. A total elimination of the extremist tendencies and terrorism is essentially needed to save the present and future generations of societies in this region from the continuing scourge of suicide and terror attacks. A patient realization and nurturing of the mutual trust and confidence regarding each other's intentions, policies and national concerns is a must for continuity of this relationship successfully in future. Considering the case of war on terror and exit strategy for the US and her allies from Afghanistan, it needs to be understood that a comprehensive regional approach involving all the key stakeholders including Pakistan, Iran, India, China etc, who have a manifest stake in the future of Afghanistan, in the negotiations towards finding a solution to the Afghan imbroglio, is the only feasible and workable approach. Securing willingness and consent of all these key stakeholders through regional dialogue among all the key partners will ensure the stability and successful implementation of any future peace plan in Afghanistan. It will also lead to peace and prosperity in the neighboring countries including Pakistan, whose people have been bearing the brunt of this war in the shape of suicide and terror attacks with huge cost to the society and economy. The sooner this realization and simple wisdom dawn upon the partners and stakeholders in this issue, the better for the future generations of these societies.

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