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# Militancy and Its Impact on the Foreign Policy of Pakistan

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## IMPACTS AND TARGETS

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## Introduction

A militant is a person who, in order to achieve certain aims, pick up arms and do fighting; A militant can also be motivated by a belief which may make him inclined to fight. Militancy is a condition produced by the militant acts of a militant to meet the requisite aims or serve a cause; the word militancy also includes the impression of the word aggression without which neither can a person become militant nor can militancy be possible (Khan, 2005; Husain, 2012a; Husain, 2012b). A militant can resort to aggressive verbal or physical confrontation to achieve his objectives. A militant can be a political activist, revolutionary or an insurgent. What makes a militant an ardent supporter of a cause is the assumption that he is right or the cause is just. What makes a militant aggressive is that he is not being heard by others and he feels that he is left with no choice but to pick up the arms and assert on others his version of belief system or his set of ideas (Bobbitt, 2008). As per its definition, militancy flourishes more under autocracy or dictatorship than under democracy (Bobbitt, 2002).

The dividing line between a militant and a terrorist is quite thin. A terrorist is a person who terrorizes others to make them listen to him or to submit to his aims. A terrorist uses the means of terror to affect others. He may or may not pick up arms to commit terror. In this way, a militant is a kind of terrorist who picks up arms to achieve his ends (Bobbitt, 2008).

As per the cause there may be different branches of militancy. For instance, when the conflict is sectarian, sectarian militancy is found rampant. When the conflict is ethnic, ethnic militancy is found prevalent. When the conflict is political, political militancy in the shape of an insurgency appears (Khan, 2005; Rashid, 2013a). Hence, militancy is shaped by the underlying cause. The latest turn in these kinds of militancy is the entry of religion itself in the list of causes. However, at the minute level, militancy in the religion is actually militancy in the name of sect (i.e. to forward the agenda of one particular sect) because no religion of the world including Islam promotes militancy (Rizvi, 2005; Malik, 2008).

All these forms of militancy can be found in Pakistan which is an Islamic Republic. For instance, the port city of Karachi, Sindh, is marred by ethnic militancy; the province of Balochistan is affected by separatist insurgency; and the rest of the country especially the Northern Areas are inflicted with sectarian militancy; Modes such as suicide bombing and target killing are part of all the three forms of militancy (Rizvi, 2005; Khan, 2005), as writes Rashid (2013a): “the ethnic conflict is being articulated in sectarian terms. That is, the Pashtun-Muhajir conflict in Karachi — which is embedded in economic reasons — has been expressed in ethnic terms. Moreover, the Taliban-Shia conflict — which is actually embedded in ethnic reasons — has been expressed in sectarian terms”. There is another facet of militancy which burgeons inside Pakistan but affects neighbouring countries such as the areas of Afghanistan and India

(Jones, 2002; Haq, 2007). This militancy is expressed through a term called non-state actors. These are volunteers who are members of various sectarian-cum-militant organisations and inflict terror both inside and outside Pakistan (Rizvi, 2005). The militants whether active inside Pakistan or outside have invited the ire of both far and neighbouring countries of the region and have made Pakistan feel embarrassed on the international level (Rizvi, 2005; Haq, 2007). That is how militancy affects the foreign policy of Pakistan.

Rashid (2013) opines that “the foreign policy of a country is a reflection of its internal socio-economic and political strategies”. That is, a local factor dictates the kind of external policy a country makes. The state of mis-governance has forced Pakistan to re-adjust its foreign policy accordingly. The term non-state actors became popular after the gory incident of 9/11 and when the War of Terror started by the United States of America (USA) supported by other western countries was imposed on Pakistan (Jones, 2002). Pakistan joined the war because Pakistan was asked to do so and that was because Pakistan was considered to have produced the Taliban and supported the members of al-Qaeda, an Islamic militant organisation based in Afghanistan (the member of which are Arabs) purportedly caused 9/11 and took shelter in the tribal belt of Pakistan along with a few urban cities (Rahman, 2007).

The aim of this paper is to evaluate the impact of militancy on the foreign policy of Pakistan.

## **Hypothesis**

The post 9/11 events have significantly changed the direction of Pakistan’s foreign policy.

## **Research Question**

In what ways militancy has determined new direction of Pakistan’s foreign policy?  
(Or, In what ways militancy has pushed Pakistan to new grounds of foreign policy?)

## **Research Methodology**

Research is a planned inquiry undertaken to examine an event closely (Blaxter, 2004). Another objective of research is to construct new knowledge, which is not known before, and which is applicable to real life (Gay, 1990). To do research, out of the given two methods of research (qualitative and quantitative), qualitative method was selected to generate and analyse the data (Bordens, 2008). Qualitative research is interpretivist in nature and is subject the interpretation of the researcher. In this research, secondary sources of data collection were used (Walliman, 2011). To do that, books and journals were read and notes were jotted down (Adler, 2008). A brief literature review was done to find out not only the

contrasting themes but also what has been studied and what has yet to be studied (Best, 2006). It was done to make this paper worth reading for the readers and productive strategically for policy makers.

## **Research Limitations**

As the topic is quite broad, the area under study has been limited to evaluate the impact of militancy on the foreign policy of Pakistan in the post-9/11 phase. For the brevity, the cut date of 9/11 has been considered. The reason is that the term militancy has got currency in Pakistan after the sordid event of 9/11. Hence, the aim of this research paper is reduced to evaluate the changes in the Pakistan's foreign policy in the post-9/11 era of history.

## **Literature Review**

Regarding the relationship between militancy and Pakistan's foreign policy, there are two schools of thought. The first school of thought considers that militancy is the product of the change in Pakistan's foreign policy in the wake of 9/11. That is, the change in the foreign policy of Pakistan after 9/11 to launch a war against its own citizens (under the shadow of the War on Terror against those) residing in the tribal belt. This school supports its stance with the arguments that in the post-9/11 phase, the War on Terror killed innocent civilians including children and women by bombing civilian habitats and gatherings (Hasan, 2012). Moreover, drone strikes which are also the hallmark of the war against both the Taliban and al-Qaeda operatives living in the tribal (lawless) belt of Pakistan, have taken their toll by eliminating their (combatant) targets (who could be the heads of the Taliban groups or al-Qaeda) besides killing innocent non-combatants (Hussain, 2012). This school of thought says that this is not Pakistan's war and it has become counterproductive by swelling the number of terrorists, as Hali (2012) writes that "The controversial drone strikes by the US spy agency ... may have eliminated a number of militants but simultaneously, they are contributing to swelling the ranks of terrorists." This school of thought says that the term called collateral damage to justify the killing of innocent non-combatants along with the targets has failed to mollify the members of the bereaved families, as Akram (2012) opined that by 2012 the war had "claimed over 36,000 Pakistani lives". The supporters of this school further say that militancy in Pakistan in all its forms would not have been stoked, if Pakistan had not sided with the USA and its international coalition partners including the United Kingdom (UK) and the member countries of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and if Pakistan had not joined the War on Terror, as Almeida (2012) opined that "drones kill civilians... and the US kills people in Fata that it probably wouldn't get away with killing in less remote parts of the world".

The second school of thought considers that militancy has led to the change in the foreign policy of Pakistan (Jahangir, 2013). That is, militancy forced Pakistan to change its foreign policy. This school of

thought considers that the Taliban (who were the descendants of former Afghan *Majihideens*, i.e. volunteer fighters to wage a war called *Jihad*, and who are ethnically Pashtun brought up, sought religious education in *Madrassas* or religious seminaries of Pakistan and trained by Pakistan army and its intelligence agencies) created a form of government in Afghanistan after 1996 which was on the pattern of medieval Islamic states and sheltered al-Qaeda which later on caused 9/11 and killed more than 3000 innocent Americans (Sattar, 2012; Zaidi, 2013). Further, the Taliban regime led by its Amir Mullah Umar was recognized by only three countries: Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates, otherwise, it was bereft of any international legitimacy (Iqbal, 2012; Zaidi, 2013).

The Taliban regime refused to handover Osama Bin Laden the in charge of al-Qaeda to the USA to face justice for the dastardly act of 9/11 (Joshi, 2012). When the United Nation Security Council (UNSC) allowed the coalition of the willing to attack Afghanistan to sniff out bin Laden and his al-Qaeda, both the Taliban and al-Qaeda members fled to the tribal belt of Pakistan, they took refuge there and spread out subsequently to the urban cities of Pakistan (Hussain & Farani, 2012). In this way, Pakistan who was neither involved in planning to commit the event of 9/11 and nor was it involved at any execution stage got dragged into the conflict between the USA and al-Qaeda, two former friends (or coalition partners) in the war against communist Russia fought in the hilly train of Afghanistan from 1979 to 1989; all of them brought the fight inside Pakistan who was forced internationally to capture and handover the culprits to the coalition of the willing led by the USA (Latif, Abbas & Safdar, 2012; Khan, 2013a). This school of thought says that the War on Terror is Pakistan's war and Pakistan has to fight it, as Haider (2012) writes "no one can dispute that we are in the midst of an unending war of terrorism, more so from our own territory. It is no doubt our war and we have no option but to win and repulse the enemy Taliban from the soil of Pakistan." The same fact compelled Pakistan to modify its foreign policy and had to side with the USA and other western countries who had an agenda to set in Afghanistan. Hence, it was militancy first and the change in the foreign policy of Pakistan later.

It is known that a significant shift appeared in the foreign policy of Pakistan towards its neighbouring countries especially towards Afghanistan and India after 9/11. Similarly, it is also known that militancy as a phenomenon, with its entire surge, has been witnessed since 9/11. However, little is known about which school of thought is correct in its claims and to what extent Pakistan has drifted to new bounds of its foreign policy. This paper intends to address this aspect.

## **Discussion**

In this section, the paper throws light – briefly – on the effects of 9/11 on Pakistan, notwithstanding the fact that neither the state of Pakistan nor any Pakistani was involved in that dastardly act. Then, the paper discusses the effects of drone strikes on Pakistan in 2004 and the relevance of terms such as collateral

damage. The paper then focuses on the next important year for Pakistan and it was the year of 2009 when not only the AfPak strategy was announced but also the Kerry-Lugar-Berman Act was passed by the USA, though the section also elaborates on the relevance of Mumbai attacks took place in 2008. The paper focuses on the point that the year 2009 signifies the change in the foreign policy of the USA towards Pakistan. Then, the paper mentions the emergence of non-state actors out of militant groups and the way their presence was felt in and around Pakistan. Then, the paper enumerates the consequent foreign policy challenges to Pakistan.

## **9/11 Hits Pakistan**

No doubt, the gory incident of 9/11 impacted the USA and in retaliation the USA and its coalition partners hit back at Afghanistan, but the next victim of the incident was Pakistan. In the wake of 9/11, the USA and the international community was so pressed that they collectively forced the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to pass three resolutions one after another. The UNSC passed one resolution, 1368 on September 12, 2001, and two resolutions, 1373 and 1377 on September 28, 2001 and in these resolutions the UNSC demanded global cooperation against the menace of terrorism, besides declaring al-Qaeda as the number one enemy of the world peace (Rizvi, 2005). All countries except Afghanistan led by the Taliban got ready to cooperate with the UN (Jones, 2002). The crisis was so serious that in order to show their solidarity with its member, the USA, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) invoked first time Article 5 to reaffirm its resolve that an attack on one member country would be considered an attack on all NATO's member countries and so much so that Australia invoked Article 4 of ANZUS Treaty, a trilateral security treaty between Australia, New Zealand and USA (Hasnat, 2008).

Pakistan had to play its role in the operation "Enduring Freedom" launched by the USA and its coalition partners such as the UK called the "coalition of the willing" (Jones, 2002). From the choice given by USA President George W Bush "either you are with us or you are with the terrorists", Pakistan had to choose to side with the coalition of the willing led by the USA (Rahman, 2003, p. 65). This point signified the first major change in Pakistan's foreign policy in the wake of 9/11. The coalition of the willing demanded, among others, from Afghanistan to hand over it Osama bin Laden and other al-Qaeda members to be tried in the court of law but Afghanistan somehow turned down the demand (Khan, 2005). The tension between the coalition of the willing and Afghanistan got mounted and consequently Pakistan had to change its policy towards Afghanistan. Pakistan stopped recognizing anymore the government of Mullah Omar and asked Afghanistan to comply with the demands of the coalition (Malik, 2008). Afghanistan did not listen to Pakistan's pleading even. The coalition of the willing attacked Afghanistan in October 2001. This was the beginning of the War on Terror. To save their lives, thousands of Taliban and hundreds of al-Qaeda members relocated from Afghanistan to the tribal belt of Pakistan while some al-Qaeda members fanned out across the country especially to urban cities of Pakistan (Khan, 2005).

On June 1, 2002, the then USA President George W Bush gave a policy statement in his speech in the following words (Bobbitt, 2008):

[W]e will not hesitate to act alone, if necessary, to exercise our right of self-defence by acting pre-emptively against ... terrorists, to prevent them from doing harm against our people and our country (p.433).

In this part of address, George Bush showed the willingness of the USA to act unilaterally and pre-emptively against any threat to its territory and people. In this way, the principle of pre-emptive strike came into being.

In his address, George Bush further said:

We must be prepared to stop rogue states and their terrorist clients before they are able to threaten or use weapons of mass destruction against the United States and our allies and friends (p. 433).

In this part of his address, George Bush pointed out the targets by calling them rogue states and their clients who later on identified internationally as non-state actors. In his address, George Bush expanded the range of defending not only to the USA but also to the allies and friends of the USA.

In his address, George Bush further said:

The greater the threat, the greater is the risk of inaction and the more compelling the case for taking anticipatory action to defend ourselves, even if uncertainty remains as to the time and place of the enemy's attack (p. 433).

In this part of his address, George Bush showed the resolve of the USA to take on its enemy even if the time and place of the attack is not known. This is again a reference to the pre-emptive strike, which, as George Bush said, is more important against a bigger threat even if it is coming from a state. This point is important when one tries to understand the willingness of the USA to bypass the international bodies such as the United Nation Security Council (UNSC), in case the USA is threatened by any country. This point also refers to the procedural delay at the UNSC to give permission to attack a state and the impending threat of attack from non-state actors working under the auspices of the state. This policy statement also showed the resolve of the USA to defend its borders and people at all cost whether or not any international law or treaty is violated consequently. This policy statement is also sufficient to understand the rationale behind the attacks on Afghanistan and Iraq.

Pakistan became a “frontline state in the war on terrorism” (Sattar, 2007, p. 247). Under the pressure of the coalition, Pakistan had to provide its airspace to the air attacks been carried out by the air forces of the coalition. At this juncture, India offered refueling and other logistic support to the coalition and showed its intent to replace Pakistan. Pakistan had to provide the coalition forces physical access to Afghanistan, which is a landlocked country. Pakistan offered its naval bases in Karachi and air bases in Sindh and Balochistan to the coalition forces to operate from. There took place not only heavy bombardment on Afghanistan but also Pakistan’s security forces had to fight against some al-Qaeda members inside the territory of Pakistan (Kapur, 2002; Iqbal, 2012; Latif, Abbas & Safdar, 2012). These developments led to confrontation between the supporters of al-Qaeda in Pakistan and the security forces of Pakistan.

This confrontation grew further in both intensity and variety when Pakistan allowed drone strikes on its otherwise lawless tribal belt. Drones operated from Pakistan’s land used to hover over the tribal belt, picked up their targets and fired guided missiles to kill their targets who were both the Taliban operatives and al-Qaeda members (Harrison, 2009). This permission is considered a major cause of blowback from the supporters of the Taliban and al-Qaeda present in Pakistan. In its wake, a militant action against Pakistan was launched. Neither civilians nor the military was spared. The collateral damage caused by drone strikes further aggravated the situation and the attacks from militants worsened (Rahman, 2003; Khan, 2005). Inside Pakistan, the sect which was ideologically near the Taliban ideology was the Deoband school of thought. Many followers of this school picked up arms against the state of Pakistan and targeted security forces, key defence installations, significant buildings, important persons and what not (Sahi, 2014). They also carried out the spate of suicide bombing killing hundreds of innocent civilians; One of the major brunt of suicide bombing and target killing was also faced by the Shia school of thought, though the Brelvi school of thought (a Sunni sect) was also not spared. Both Imam Bargha and Shrines of Sufis were attacked (Hazara, 2012).

Pakistan cut off its diplomatic ties with the Taliban and recognized the new government installed by the coalition with the help of Northern Alliance of Afghanistan; Hamid Karzai became the interim President and assigned with the task of constitution building to turn Afghanistan into a democratic country (Hasnat & Faruqi, 2008). This point also infuriated the Taliban hiding in the tribal Pashtun belt of Pakistan and they brought ferocity in their attacks against the state of Pakistan.

In 2004, George Bush announced to grant Pakistan the status of a Major Non-NATO Ally (MNNA) (Rashid, 2011b). Theoretically, it was the compensator mechanism to keep the military of Pakistan to its side, the status of the MNNA was offered to Pakistan. Secondly, the status was given to appease Pakistan on its insecurity vis-à-vis India in the region (Rashid, 2014d). That is, if India attacks Pakistan, the USA will defend Pakistan. Nevertheless, Pakistan sees the increased role of India in Afghanistan as a point of

concern. Pakistan considers itself one of the biggest stakeholders in the affairs of Afghanistan (Iqbal, 2012). Pakistan also thinks that the prolong stay of the USA forces in the region changed the balance of power in the region and bring new foreign policy challenges to Pakistan.

Pakistan also got disillusioned with the issue of Kashmir because Pakistan remained no longer in the position to support the cause of Kashmir's freedom. India's position to support the coalition also put Pakistan under pressure; India went nearer to the coalition than reluctant Pakistan to join the War on Terror (Kapur, 2002). Pakistanis did not own the War or Terror till the Swat Operation was launched by the Pakistan Army in 2009 to clear the area from the Taliban of Swat (Torwali, 2014).

## **Drone Strikes Begin**

In 2004, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) of the USA introduced pilot-less drone laden with missile to do surveillance and attack the Taliban and al-Qaeda targets in the tribal belt of Pakistan (Khan, 2013a). The CIA claimed its high success rate for precise attack and limited collateral damage as compared to conventional bombs (Synnott, 2009). This kind of violation raised the issue of violation of sovereignty to become a "national traged" (Inayatullha, 2013). Moreover, the local people raised the issue of the death of innocent people attending a funeral or a marriage ceremony, celebrating the occasion of Eid, or children studying in a religious seminary (Hali, 2012; Hassan, 2012). Pakistan also tried to make the point that the use of drone was counterproductive in nature because it increases retaliatory attacks on the security forces of Pakistan launched by the tribal men or the members of the bereaved families (Khan, 2013b, Medina, 2013). Reportedly, from 2006 to 2009, the CIA launched 60 drone strikes and killed 14 al-Qaeda operatives and about 687 innocent civilians as collateral damage (Synnott, 2009).

Several times Pakistan protested against the violation of its sovereignty. On the diplomatic level, Pakistan has raised a hue and cry but the attacks remained unabated (Noorani, 2012). It is said that drone strikes were the main reason for the spike witnessed in suicide bombing attacks in their wake in the breadth and length of the country; it is also said that the drone strikes prompted the members of the bereaved family to pick up arms against the state of Pakistan and become militant and "[o]nce American drone strikes cease, and the Pakistan Army halts all operations in the tribal areas, then militancy will automatically die down" (Husain, 2012a). The CIA has claimed that the drone strikes (Hellfire missiles) remained successful and it almost wiped out al-Qaeda and their Taliban supporters from FATA, the tribal belt of Pakistan and al-Qaeda has abandoned the area and relocated elsewhere (Pape & Eldman, 2010).

Chishti (2012) writes: "The Pakistani security establishment has publicly distanced itself from the CIA's drone programme, while it continues to support it quietly." The support infuriated the militants and they launched attacks on Pakistan's military establishment such as GHQ, Rawalpindi, Naval Base, Karachi,

and other airports (Khan, 2005; Khan, 2013b). Since 2004, when the drone strikes began, the USA started asking Pakistan to launch a military operation in the lawless tribal belt to eliminate the Taliban or al-Qaeda taken hide there. Pakistan kept on refusing the demand and “it was quite apparent that till 2013 the Pakistan Army was quite reluctant to take on North Waziristan” (Rashid, 2014b) and was saying that it would launch an operation at the time of its own choice (Hussain, 2012).

## **2009 Changes Hearts**

The Mumbai attacks which took place in November 2008 allegedly caused by non-state actors (or militants) trained and sent from the territory of Pakistan to the port city of Mumbai (former Bombay), India, belied Pakistan’s claims of the absence of militants on its land or that no rogue elements are there to jeopardize the peace of the region (Rashid, 2011a). The Mumbai attacks played an important role in turning the international opinion against Pakistan and Pakistan’s claims that it was not supporting the Taliban or al-Qaeda members seemed to have lost credibility.

In 2009, the USA made major announcements which affected Pakistan’s foreign policy contours. The first was the AfPak policy announced by USA President Barack Obama in March 2009 (Ahmar, 2012) and the second was the Kerry-Lugar Berman Act enacted/adopted in October 2009 (Rashid, 2011b).

On March 27, 2009, in the beginning of his first term as USA Presiden, Barack Obama delivered a policy speech and showed the resolve of his country to take fight to al-Qaeda hiding in both Afghanistan and the tribal region of Pakistan (Rashid, 2014d). The premise given was that after 9/11 al-Qaeda shifted its bases to the lawless tribal belt of Pakistan and had been silently waiting to repeat 9/11. The pronouncement of this policy led to the surfacing of the AfPak strategy which clubbed both Afghanistan and Pakistan together to be viewed as one strategic region dealt by one strategy. There were two main characteristics of the AfPak strategy. The first was the elimination of the terror network, whether it consisted of local or foreign militants. The second was to improve bilateral relations with each other (between Afghanistan and Pakistan).

On December 1, 2009, USA President Barack Obama delivered another speech in which he highlighted three more contours of his earlier announced AfPak strategy (Rashid, 2014d). He said that, first, a military effort will be undertaken to create the conditions for a transition in Afghanistan; second, a civilian surge will be made that reinforces positive action; and third, an effective partnership with Pakistan will be established. In the same address, Barack Obama also highlighted the main goal of his AfPak policy (Rashid, 2014d):

[It was to] disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and to prevent its capacity to threaten America and [its] allies in the future.

In both instances, Pakistan was asked to destroy the terrorist network existing/flourishing on its land, be the place is the tribal belt or Muridke near Lahore. The USA showed its weariness towards the inner support provided to the Taliban fighters and the al-Qaeda fugitives. The USA wanted Pakistan to sever the supply line of militants provided to Mullah Omar and al-Qaeda from Pakistan. In turn, Pakistan had to lay down its intelligence network and encounter the threat physically by engaging the militants. The fight was fought in both urban and rural cities of Pakistan. One of the major aims of the USA was to attenuate the response power of the militants so that another attack on the mainland of the USA could not be launched from Afghanistan, as mentioned in its AfPak strategy in March 2009 (Rashid, 2014d).

Apparently, there is no policy statement linking the change of hearts in 2009 by the USA with the Mumbai attacks of 2008, the impact of the bad impression the Mumbai massacre created on the international community can be fathomed. India was so infuriated that it announced to toe the strategy of George Bush to undertake “pre-emptive” strikes against the militant hideouts in the part of Kashmir called Azad (independent) Kashmir which is on working terms with Pakistan. Secondly, India also threatened to use drone strikes to eliminate militant camps of Lashkar-e-Tayyaba from Mureedke. Thirdly, India was ready to act unilaterally (Kapur, 2002; Khan, 2005; Malik, 2008). No doubt, international community interfered and Pakistan showed its eyes to India to subside the three-pronged threat, India is still insisting on Pakistan to bring the elements behind those attacks to justice (Rashid, 2014c). The USA also indirectly carried out the same demand in its Kerry-Lugar-Berman Act of October 2009.<sup>1</sup> In the Act adopted by the USA government made the USA aid of total \$ 7 billion (\$ 1.5 billion/year) for years conditional Pakistan’s cooperation in stamping out the identified terrorist/militant network from Pakistan, besides several other conditions (Kerry Lugar Bill, 2009).

Pakistan wants a government in Kabul which could recognize the Durand Line as the international border. The line divides the Pushtun tribes into two halves: one resides in Afghanistan’s south eastern areas and the second lives in Pakistan’s north western areas. Pushtun are ethnically a majority in Afghanistan and used to have sway in the affairs of Kabul; however, this sway was lost after the Northern Alliance (which is compromised mostly of Uzbeks and Tajiks, another two ethnic communities) took control over Kabul after 2001 (Rashid, 2014a). The pressure exerted by the “do more” refrain has kept on bringing Pakistan under pressure, though Pakistan was given economic and military aid in the meantime either through the Coalition Support Fund (Sattar, 2007, p. 247-255). On the other hand, the “do more”

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<sup>1</sup> The bill calls for closing the militant camps in Mureedke, near Lahore, and ban Laskar-e-Tayyaba which allegedly trained the militants and carried out the massacre in Mumbai in 2008.



refrain voiced by the USA has also brought Pakistan under pressure. The USA has also tried to blame Pakistan for all its failings in Afghanistan. The ire of the USA was evident when its forces destroyed Salala checkpost along the Pak-Afghan border in 2012 and killed dozens of Pakistani soldiers (Rashid, 2012).

Another reason of reaction from the tribal belt was that Pakistan kept the area comparatively independent of the central control and the tribal elders used to decide matters, as per their customs and traditions. The free movement of the Taliban, al-Qaeda and other militants belonging to Southern Punjab took place because the porous border between Afghanistan and Pakistan (Rana, 2007; Malik, 2008). The sudden change in policy offended the tribal people and they turned against the state to the extent of non-cooperation and retaliation (Rana & Gunaratna, 2007). The ongoing military operation, Zarb-e-Azb, is a testament to this fact, as Rashid (2014) writes: “The attack on Karachi Airport left the government with no choice but to give in to the plea of the army to launch an operation”.

### **Non-State Actors’ Surface**

Voices are being raised at the international level to appreciate the shift in the global security perspective which in 1945 at the end of the World War II and in 1991 at the end of the Cold War (Rana & Gunaratna, 2007; Jabeen, Mazhar & Goraya, 2010). Similarly, the gory incident of 9/11 has also made world realize the importance of creating disconnect between a state and any militant group existing in that state (Rizvi, 2005). The group might be there to recruit new and more volunteers ready to lay down their lives for a cause. The group may be there to live as a sleeper cell to get active when a situation arises. The group may be there to exploit the land to launch an attack on another country which may be far or near the culprit country. Examples are al-Qaeda taking refuge in Afghanistan and launching attack on the World Trade Centre and Pentagon, USA, in September 2001 and a militant group Lashker-e-Tayyaba getting training in Pakistan and (allegedly) causing the Mumbai massacre in India in November 2008 (Pape & Eldman, 2010).

Attacks on the Indian Parliament in 2001 and later on the Mumbai attacks done by non-state actors brought Pakistan and India on the verge of war, as Tertrais (2012) writes: “Both countries went to the brink of war in the winter of 2001-2002. Delhi was close to retaliate against Pakistan after the 2008 Mumbai attack” (p. 26). He further says that the Mumbai attacks prompted India to promote the concept of pre-emptive strike against the militant groups around its territory and use drone strikes against the militant hideouts purportedly in the Pakistan part of Kashmir. These points raised the concern of Pakistan on the issue of its sovereignty and the future of the Azad Kashmir.

The point is the activities of non-state actors who, with or without the knowledge of the state, carry out their activities ranging from resource collection and mobilization, recruitment and training, and carrying out attacks (Feinstein & Slaughter, 2004)<sup>2</sup>. On bilateral talks on mutually disputed issues such as Kashmir, India has put the demand bringing to justice the facilitators and planners of the Mumbai attack on the top; consequently, the future of Indo-Pak talks is still in limbo, despite peace overtures initiated by incumbent Prime Minister of Pakistan Mian Nawaz Sharif (Rashid, 2014a).

## Foreign Policy Poses Challenges

Since 9/11, Pakistan has been facing certain foreign policy challenges. A few them can be enumerated here for the sake of brevity. First, Pakistan aspires to have a pro-Pakistan government in Kabul or at least it should be neutral from the effects of India (Kapur, 2002; Iqbal, 2012). Secondly, Pakistan thinks that its borders (or sovereignty) should be violated by neither drone strikes nor the Afghan National Army (Khan, 2013b; Rashid, 2013b). Thirdly, before the raids into Pakistan's territory such as conducted in 2011 on Abbottabad by the USA forces, Pakistan should be taken into confidence. Fourthly, the issue of the self-determination of Kashmiris should be kept alive (Harrison, 2009). Fifthly, Pakistan should sustain its parity with India in the region (Rashid, 2013b). Sixthly, the freedom struggle launched by Kashmiri freedom fights should not fall in the ambit of a terrorist struggle to be condemned internationally (Harrison, 2009). Seventhly, Pakistan should not be hyphenated with Afghanistan through the AfPak policy announced by Barack Obama in 2009 (Rashid, 2014d).

## Critique

The post-9/11 era has brought two major challenges to Pakistan. The first is related to its sovereignty and the second is related to the control on militancy going on inside the country.

On the matter of sovereignty,<sup>3</sup> Bobbitt (2008) divides it into three types. The first type is "Opaque Sovereignty" which is a traditional concept making the events happening within a state borders entirely an internal matter and not subject to the judgment of other states. This type of sovereignty cannot be penetrated (p. 469). The second type is "Translucent Sovereignty" which is considered an outgrowth of European integration and the third is "Transparent Sovereignty" which is considered a non-traditional

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<sup>2</sup> The concept of "responsibility to protect" lying on the international community collectively is intriguing in the sense that it allows the states not only a *carte blanche* to avert a humanitarian crisis but also to avert any terrorist attack on another country. In some ways, it is intriguing and in some ways it is preventive. This principle does not take care of the opaque sovereignty but establishes a transparent sovereignty.

<sup>3</sup> Sovereignty means that "the state authorities are responsible for the functions of protecting the safety and lives of citizens and promotion of their welfare". Similarly, sovereignty also means that the "national political authorities are responsible to the citizens internally and to the international community through the UN" and that the "agents of state are responsible for their actions; that is to say they are accountable for their acts of commission and omission" (Bobbitt, 2008)



concept making the events happening within the jurisdiction of a state not an internal matter but subject to the judgment of other states (p. 470). This concept arises from the concept that a regime's sovereignty is a product of the agreement of a state with other states and with its own people especially on the topics of human rights, liberty, and freedom of speech, etc (Sasen, 1996). When this agreement is breached by the state by committing widespread acts of violence against its citizens, other states have a right to intervene, as committing atrocities on one's own people is not protected under the concept sovereignty (Feinstein & Slaughter, 2004). No doubt, this point is more relevant when the case was of Iraq and the atrocities committed by the regime of Saddam Hussain on its own people but the existence of this concept around in its applied form also indicate its subsequent application as well. That is, if Iraq can be attacked under the excuse of saving human rights, other countries can also be attacked under a similar if not the same excuse (Bobbitt, 2008). This message has also influenced Pakistan's internal policy towards its own citizens to protect them from militants.

No doubt, the UN Charter does not approve intervention in the name of human rights, but the UN Charter guarantees the protection of human rights (Feinstein & Slaughter, 2004). The related treaties have been signed by almost all countries of the world. This point also brings those countries under pressure where the scourge of militancy of any sort (ethnic, sectarian or political) is rampant not being controlled by the host state wittingly or unwittingly, such as Pakistan. The supremacy of human rights has made states including Pakistan to take punitive measures against militancy of any form and side with those countries stand for the uprightness and prevalence of peace inside the borders (Hazara, 2012; Nadeem, 2012; Sehgal, 2012).

Though the international law has not been changed so far in this regard, Bobbitt (2008, p. 471-473) argues that there is a growing awareness<sup>4</sup> to understand the relationship between the "responsibility to protect" and the "duty to prevent" as the latter is a corollary of the former.<sup>5</sup> The Khan network (named after Pakistani nuclear scientist, Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan), has also been alleged "for nuclear proliferation" and attempting to "supply (and selling) nuclear centrifuges and other related techniques to countries" such as Iran, Libya and North Korea (Bobbitt, 2008, p. 119-121). The international community showed its concern about illegal nuclear proliferation under the fear that the technology or information could fall into wrong hands who could be individuals bent on jeopardizing the peace of any region such as the

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<sup>4</sup> In late 2001, an international commission of legal practitioners and scholars proposed a new doctrine, "The Responsibility to Protect", which calls for the UN member states to shoulder their responsibility for protecting the lives, liberty, and basic human rights of citizens of its signatory states. Further, in case the signatory state fails to do so or is unable to carry out the responsibility, the international community is obliged to step in.

<sup>5</sup> They introduced (or proposed) the corollary principle in the field of global security under which the international community is duty bound collectively to prevent from acquiring or using Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). This is applicable to the states run by rulers enjoying a full monopoly over state affairs unchecked by any other institution of the state such as in autocracies of the Middle East and dictatorships of South Asia, South America and South Africa.

Middle East inhabiting countries including Israel, Korean Peninsula inhabiting South Korea as well or the world in general. There is also an international concern about the presence of militants especially those inspired by extremist Islamic thoughts and nuclear weapons on one land such as Pakistan, as Rashid (2014) writes that no other country of the world projects such a unique combination as Pakistan does because Pakistan's identity is unique in the sense that it possesses both nuclear weapons and religious extremists together in the same land". The allegation that the Khan network was on the selling spree and the allegation that the Islamic militants had monetary resources<sup>6</sup> to buy any weapon were inimical to the interests of Pakistan both regionally and internationally. Nevertheless, the state sponsored militancy is not yet found in Pakistan as it is found in other countries of the world such as in Iraq.<sup>7</sup> The incidents of Madrid bombing in March 2004, London bombing in July 2005, failed Time Square bombing in March 2008 and Mumbai attacks in November 2008 produced an added effect (Bobbitt, 2008, p. 139, 176; Harrison, 2009) to change Pakistan's both internal and foreign policy, as all of these incidents were somehow linked to Pakistani soil (Pape & Eldman, 2010).

Though in the name of protecting human rights (from violations), the international law does not allow another state to intervene by using a military force, the human rights aspect of the international law does not refrain other states from condemning human rights violations happening in a state that has signed the United Nations' charter on human rights (Bobbitt, 2008). That is why whenever there have taken place sectarian attacks on the Shia Hazara community either in Balochistan or in the Northern Pakistan, an international condemnation and hue and cry has been voiced which has pressurized Pakistan to take measures against the sectarian militancy (Akram, 2012; Hazara, 2012). The ongoing operation Zarbe Hazb is one example of that. Pakistan is now trying to satisfy the international community of its commitments to protect human rights within it.

Regionally, on the foreign policy front, Pakistan considers that it went one notch down on the USA preference ladder when the USA signed a nuclear energy exchange agreement famously known as 123 Agreement with India in 2008 and when the USA hyphenated Pakistan with Afghanistan in 2009. The level of distrust rose between the USA and Pakistan despite their coalition on the War on Terror, as Ezdi (2014) opined: "The main reason the US continues to deny civilian nuclear cooperation to Pakistan today

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<sup>6</sup> The practice of sending money from the Middle East through *Hundi* has made the west suspicious of the activities of the militants in Pakistan. Money is also collected through local agents who work in the philanthropic fields of constructing and running *Madrassas* (religious seminaries), orphanages and hospitals in Pakistan and are active in prompting lay people to contribute money to run their philanthropic work. The money could be diverted to buying weapons, contesting cases of their followers in the court and safeguarding their sectarian interests.

<sup>7</sup> In Iraq, the WMD was considered threatening because it could be used not only against other countries of the region (as rockets were fired on Israel in 1991 during the first Gulf war) but also against its own people as Kurds were killed by Iraqi forces on the orders of one called Chemical Ali. Consequently, under such autocratic regimes, every potential adversary is a potential victim.

is that it does not want to displease India. But Washington has refused to admit it and instead seeks to justify its refusal on grounds of Pakistan's proliferation record." One of the major manifestations of not paying attention to the sentiments of others became manifest in May 2011 when the USA Seal raided a compound in Abbottabad to kill Osama bin Laden, the head of al-Qaeda Durrani (2012). But with that another round of suspicion grew between both the countries that Pakistan was perhaps clandestinely giving refuge to al-Qaeda members and by inference other Taliban militants to use them afterwards for its strategic interests in Afghanistan, as Chaudhry (2013) wrote: "For Osama, the entire intelligence structure is held responsible, even if chiefly the ISI [Inter-Services Intelligence], and the inability to react appropriately to the raid is systemic collapse which failed to determine if the US indeed was a friend or foe".

## Conclusion

The hypothesis of the paper that the post 9/11 events have significantly changed the direction of Pakistan's foreign policy seems to be true. Since 9/11, the years 2002, 2004 and 2009 have so far produced major effects on the contours of the foreign policy of Pakistan. By 2002, the post-9/11 policy of the USA towards Pakistan became clear. From 2004 onwards, Pakistan witnessed not only the beginning of drone strikes but also a rise in militancy. This relationship broached a debate of cause of effect: whether drone strikes are a cause of militancy or vice versa. The ensuing debate divided Pakistani society into for and against sections. Sectarianism broke out which brought Pakistan under further pressure. Non-state actors also became active to bring more embarrassment to the government of Pakistan from both domestic and regional front. Despite international pressure, Pakistan refused to launch a military operation on the hideout of militants in North Waziristan. The year 2009 showed the palpable change in the foreign policy of the USA towards Pakistan in the context of the AfPak strategy and the Kerry-Lugar-Berman Act which are still functional. These both were the practical expression of the refrain 'do more' uttered by the USA. Though Pakistan has launched the operation Zarb-e-Azb, it is obviously clear that militancy done domestically in the form of ethnic and sectarian conflicts and regionally through non-state actors have become able to significantly impact the foreign policy of Pakistan.

Photo: World Times

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# ABOUT ITCT

ITCT is UK based organisation and founded in 2018. It is a non-political and non-profitable organisation and is a unique think tank in itself. There is not a single organisation around that specifically counters the narratives of Islamist terrorism by using the tools of Islamic Theology. ITCT exposes the root causes of Political Islam and works hard to eliminate it through introducing the actual concept of Islamic Theology.

ITCT conducts a comprehensive research to find out the key elements that draw the most vulnerable people of the society into the fire of religious extremism. ITCT works on three main factors in order to educate the Muslim community:

- That Islamist Terrorism is wrongly associated with Islam
- And is committed by misguided Muslims
- By manipulating religious texts to brainwash Muslims

## ITCT has three pillars to stand on:

- **MISSION**

Countering Islamist Terrorism

- **VISION**

Educating Muslim Community

- **OBJECTIVE**

Providing the Solution of Islamist Terrorism

ITCT is an independent organisation that generates funds through donations. ITCT warmly welcomes talented writers, researchers and experts and would like to publish their work.