



Centre Français de Recherche sur le Renseignement

***THE US OBJECTIVES IN GWOT
AND THEIR EFFECTS
ON AFPAK THEATER***

Research Paper n°11 - July 2014



Centre Français de Recherche sur le Renseignement

***THE US OBJECTIVES IN GWOT
AND THEIR EFFECTS
ON AFPAK THEATER***

Dr FARHAN ZAHID & HAIDER SULTAN

Research Paper n°11 - July 2014

PRESENTATION OF

Founded in 2000, the FRENCH CENTRE FOR INTELLIGENCE RESEARCH (CF2R) is an independent *Think Tank*, regulated by the French Association Law of 1901, and specialised in the study of intelligence and international security. Its missions are as follows:

- ***development of academic research and publications on intelligence and international security,***
- ***provision of expertise for public policy stakeholders*** (decision-makers, government, lawmakers, media, etc.),
- ***dispelling of myths surrounding intelligence and explaining the role of intelligence to the general public.***

➔ ORGANISATION

The FRENCH CENTER FOR INTELLIGENCE RESEARCH (CF2R) is organised around three specialist departments, consisting of some fifteen researchers:

- **History of Intelligence**, which studies the role of intelligence throughout history;
- **Intelligence policy**, which analyses the role of modern intelligence;
- **Emerging threat and risk assessment**, aimed at the identification and monitoring of issues of interest to the intelligence and security services.

➔ ACTIVITIES

Around these themes, CF2R develops:

- . research activities and supervision of doctoral theses. Each year, CF2R awards two university prizes for the best academic work on intelligence in French:
 - a "Young Researcher Prize" rewards a Master's Dissertation,
 - a "University Prize" rewards a doctoral thesis;
- . specialist courses, in particular a post-graduate degree course entitled « Intelligence and Security Agency Management »,
- . seminars and dinner debates,
- . exchange and partnerships with other French and foreign research centers,
- . monitoring and analysis,
- . consultancy, study and training services for companies, government clients, international institutions and non-governmental organisations,
- . awareness-raising and advocacy for the press, lawmakers, universities and political and economic decision-makers,

- . international conflict assessment missions,
- . publications and information for the general public.

CF2R makes its expertise available to journalists, screen-writers, novelists, publishers and translators to assist them in their approach to the intelligence world (assistance with production of documentaries, advisement on feature film writing).

Finally, CF2R has developed a partnership with the SPYLAND project, an amusement park devoted to the world of intelligence which is set to open in France in 2015.

➔ PUBLICATIONS

Publications by CF2R include:

- . research reports, intelligence bulletins, briefing notes, historical research and regular opinion pieces that are available on our web site,
- . a weekly online newsletter, *Renseignor*, that provides a summary of foreign radio programmes broadcast in French,
- . a monthly online bulletin, *I-Sources*, that lists all recent international publications on intelligence,
- . a tri-annual journal, *Renseignement et opérations spéciales*, (180 pages, published by L'Harmattan),
- . a monthly newsletter, *Intelligence et Stratégie*, that deciphers and provides inside information on the state of world geopolitics and major international issues,
- . several collections dedicated to intelligence (« Poche espionnage » published by Ouest France, « CF2R » published by Ellipses, « Culture du renseignement » published by L'Harmattan), as well as other individual and collective works.

Since its foundation, CF2R has carried out unparalleled work to promote better knowledge of intelligence in France and the French-speaking world. We have published more than 70 books, 60 research reports, 300 articles, 400 briefing notes and 800 radio programme reviews. The Centre has launched four journals and online newsletters and has organised 40 dinner debates and a dozen seminars. Our experts have given over 150 conferences, hosted numerous seminars and have given more than 2,000 interviews to the media (TV, radio, press).

REPORTS & RESEARCH PAPERS

Reports and research papers published by CF2R are deepened research works carried out by one or more of its researchers, and meant to bring new pieces of information on a given news event. Those are freely accessible to the public.

► CF2R/CIRET Reports

- CF2R/CIRET Report n°3, *The Lebanonization of Syria. Report on the Actors of the Syrian Crisis*, January 2012 (available in French and in English).
- CF2R/CIRET Report n°2, Yves Bonnet, *Role of Iran Overlooked during Arab Spring*, December 2011 (in French, with English summary).
- CF2R/CIRET Report n°1, *Libya : an Uncertain Future. Report on a Fact Finding Mission to Assess Both Sides of the Libyan Conflict*, May 2011 (available in French, Italian and in English).

► CF2R Research Papers

- Research Paper n°10, Dr Farhan Zahid, *Islamist Radicalization in South Asia : Origin, Ideologies and Significance of Radical Islamist Violent Non-State Actors*, May 2014 (in English, with French summary).
- Research Paper n°9, Gérald Arboit, *Intelligence, the Missing in French Contemporary History*, March 2013 (in French, with English summary).
- Research Paper n°8, Eric Denécé & Gérald Arboit, *Intelligence Studies in France*, November 2009 (available in French and in English).
- Research Paper n°7, Nathalie Cettina, *Terror Risk Communication and Management*, March 2009 (in French, with English summary).
- Research Paper n°6, Philippe Botto, *Noukhaev and Chechnya Nationalism*, September 2008 (in French, with English summary).
- Research Paper n°5, Alain Rodier, *The Iranian Threat*, January 2007 (in French, with English summary).
- Research Paper n°4, Nathalie Cettina, *Organizational Management of Antiterrorism in France : the Corsican's Case*, March 2006 (in French, with English summary).
- Research Paper n°3, Brigadier-General Alain Lamballe, *Terrorism in South Asia*, November 2005 (in English, with French summary).
- Research Paper n°2, Michel Nesterenko, *Project for a New American Century : Neocons' Strategy behind the War on Terror*, October 2005 (in French, with English summary).
- Research Paper n°1, Eric Denécé, *Radical Islamism's Development in France : Security, Social and Economic Consequences*, September 2005 (in French, with English summary).

All these Research Papers can be downloaded at the following link :

<http://www.cf2r.org/fr/rapports-de-recherche/index.php>

AUTHORS' BIOGRAPHY

Dr Farhan Zahid earned his PhD in Counter Terrorism from Vrije University Brussels (VUB), Brussels, Belgium. By profession, he is Superintendent of Police in Police Service of Pakistan (PSP). Dr Zahid has authored over 10 papers on Terrorism, Counter-Terrorism, Islamism, Afghanistan and Al-Qaeda.

Haider Sultan is a Pakistanese Forensics and Security Analyst. He did his Masters in Forensic Sciences on Erasmus-Mundus Scholarship. He studied at University of Cordoba, Spain and Lincoln's Inn, UK.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Global War on Terror or GWOT (officially Operation Overseas Contingency) refers to the US and allied countries' endeavors to defeat Islamist terrorist organizations, dismantle their terrorist training infrastructure, identify, locate and destroy the terrorist assets, deny sponsorship, support system and sanctuaries, enabling the weak states and compelling the reluctant states to join the alliance.

The GWOT is being fought in several conflict zones. The paper aims to discuss and analyze the US policy objectives amid Global War on Terror, and to evaluate the degree of successes as far as the South Asian theatre is concerned.

The AfPak theatre comprises Pakistan and Afghanistan. The region is also home to Al-Qaeda Central or Core. Historically, the region is geo-strategically important. Since the US withdrawal from Afghanistan is fast approaching this year, therefore, the factors related to Taliban resurgence have been debated in the paper. Pakistan-Afghanistan relations amid GWOT remains marred with controversies and lack of trust between the two neighbors.

In order to comprehend the broader objectives and analyze its effects, however, it was sine quo non to discuss the War in Iraq and its effects on the ongoing conflict in Pakistan and Afghanistan. The Iraq theatre of GWOT paved the way for the eruption of regional conflicts but also caused devastating effects on the AfPak theatre, mainly because of the thinning out the resources from AfPak essentially needed to combat Al-Qaeda and Taliban.

With the upcoming withdrawal of major chunk of US forces from Afghanistan by the end of 2014 with many of the objectives remained unattained it seems pretty obvious that a new phase of GWOT is about to kick off in the AfPak theater.

RÉSUMÉ

La « guerre mondiale au terrorisme » (Global War on Terror/GWOT, officiellement appelée « Interventions d'urgence outre-mer ») fait référence aux opérations des États-Unis et de leurs alliés pour vaincre les organisations terroristes islamistes, démanteler leurs infrastructures d'entraînement et leurs sanctuaires, identifier, localiser et détruire leurs dirigeants et leurs biens, empêcher le développement de soutien à leur profit et forcer les États réticents à adhérer cette démarche.

La guerre contre le terrorisme est conduite par Washington dans de nombreuses zones de la planète. Ce document vise en particulier à discuter et analyser les objectifs de la politique des États-Unis, et d'évaluer ses succès, sur le théâtre d'Asie du Sud.

Le théâtre AfPak comprend le Pakistan et l'Afghanistan. La région abrite également l'état-major d'Al-Qaïda central et revêt une grande importance stratégique. Alors que le retrait américain d'Afghanistan approche à grands pas, la résurgence des talibans est une préoccupation majeure. En effet, les relations entre le Pakistan et l'Afghanistan dans le contexte de la GWOT restent entachées de controverses et se caractérisent par le manque de confiance entre les deux voisins.

Afin de comprendre les objectifs et d'analyser les effets de la GWOT dans la région, il est indispensable d'évoquer la guerre en Irak et ses effets sur le conflit en cours au Pakistan et en Afghanistan. Les affrontements en Irak ont ouvert la voie à l'éruption de conflits régionaux et provoqué des effets dévastateurs sur le théâtre AfPak, principalement en raison de la réduction des moyens américains déployés dans la région, pour lutter contre Al-Qaïda et les talibans.

Fin 2014, les forces américaines se retireront d'Afghanistan sans avoir atteint la plupart de leurs objectifs. Aussi, il semble assez évident qu'une nouvelle offensive terroriste prendra forme sur le phase théâtre AfPak.

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

2. THE CASUS BELLI

3. THE ISAF

THE BONN AGREEMENT

THE TALIBAN RESURGENCE

4. PAKISTAN-AFGHANISTAN RELATIONS AMID GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR

5. WAR IN IRAQ

EFFECTS OF IRAQ WAR ON SOUTH ASIAN THEATRE OF GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR

6. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In modern history the geo-strategic importance of Afghanistan came to light with the “Great Game” of imperial and strategically hegemonic designs between Russian and British Empires (to further their sphere of influence in Central and South Asia)¹. It was during the course of the Great Game politics that three Anglo-Afghan Wars (1842, 1878, and 1919) were fought and resulted in formulation of many policy decisions of international significance.²

Demarcation of the Durand Line (Treaty of Durand Line, 1893) as border between British Empire and Afghanistan made the country a buffer state between the two empires and resulted in key policy decisions in recognizing the geo-strategic importance of this country.³ Because of its rugged terrain and mountainous highlands Afghanistan remained a difficult country to be colonized. Rigorous weather conditions had made things difficult for every invading army in the past. Afghanistan was quite often served as a gate-way for the forces invading India. There was little interest of past invaders in conquering and forming a government in Afghanistan since all eyed India because of its tremendous wealth. Starting from Alexander the Great (327 BC) all foreign invaders went on to conquer India, loot and plunder the riches through Afghanistan⁴. Amongst invaders, were Afghan tribes, who at times settled and ruled over India during medieval times.⁵ Apart from invasions and Great Game politics, Afghanistan because of its terrain and arid zones offered nothing much hospitable for the invaders and their profound interest situated in neighboring India. Afghans tribes remained adherents of Buddhism but embraced Islam after the Islamic conquest of the region during 8th century.

Similar to Russia, the topography of Afghanistan makes conventional war difficult in the region. Russia has had the advantage of extreme weather conditions and Afghanistan has difficult and rugged mountain terrain along with extreme weather. Throughout history all the invading forces had been repulsed or faced crushing defeats in Russia not primarily because of the supremacy of the Russian forces but because of the weather conditions (either Swedish forces in 17th century or 19th century Napoleonic Grand Army or 20th century Hitler’s army). Same is the case of Afghanistan’s terrain which is not very hospitable for the invading forces throughout the course of history.

¹ Borrowed from the novel « *Kim* » by Rudyard Kipling, the term used for elucidating the strategic rivalry and conflict between the British Empire and the Russian Empire for supremacy in Central Asia. The rivalry between the two powers ended with the signing of the friendship Treaty of the Entente Cordiale in 1907.

² Anglo-Afghan Wars were a series of conflict between British Raj in India and the state of Afghanistan.

³ For details of the agreement signed between Afghan King Amir Abdur Rehman and British Secretary for India Sir Lord Henry Mortimer Durand, see the complete text of the agreement at : <http://afghanic.de/images/Docs/Durand%20Line%20Agreement.pdf>

⁴ According to historian Frank Smitha, by 1750-1800, India’s had a share of 25 % in world economy. For details see Frank Smitha, *World History and Timeline*, available at : <http://www.fsmitha.com/index.html>

⁵ Ghurids, Durranis, Lodhis and Suris were Afghan whereas Mughals, Timurids came from Central Asia via Afghanistan

Geographically speaking Afghanistan also exhibits a central and strategic location from all corners. It is landlocked, and borders with Pakistan, China, Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. It has a multi-ethnic and multi-lingual society with a heterogeneous and complex environment. Of 28 million Afghans, the country is divided amongst its many ethnic groups. According to *CIA World Fact Book*, the ethnic distribution is : Pashtun (42%), Tajik (27%), Hazara (9%), Uzbek (9%), Aimak (4%), Turkmen (3%), Baloch (2%), Kurds (1.2%) and others (4%)¹

With the dismemberment of Soviet Union and emergence of new Central Asian Republics, the strategic importance of Afghanistan grew even further with regard to commerce and trade routes. Because of its multi-ethnic society Afghanistan has an advantage of benefiting from newly emerged republics but could not capitalize much of it because of the perennial nature of civil war and political turmoil after the withdrawal of Soviet forces.

The Pashtun factor has remained dominant throughout Afghan history. Although a multi-ethnic society the Pashtuns (42%) have always remained in control and managed to play a pivotal role in Afghan politics. Pashtuns (Pashto language speakers) are of eastern Iranian ethno-linguistic group. Similar to Kurds the Pashtun diaspora is spread over in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran and India. Mostly Pashtun youth from Afghanistan and Pakistan participated in war against the Soviet occupation (1979-89) with US, Saudi and Pakistani support. In 1996 the Taliban had taken over the country; were also predominantly Pashtuns.

Most historians consider Pashtuns of Persian roots, but many do not agree with this theory. According to some historians the true origin of Pashtuns is unknown. There are various versions on their origin. Some consider them one of the lost tribe of Israel, where as others classify them as of Persian or Central Asian (Bactrian). It is pertinent to know that more Pashtuns live in Pakistan than Afghanistan and Pashtun politicians hold strong positions in both countries' political arenas². According to Shalva Weil, an anthropologist and senior researcher at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, "*Of all the groups, there is more convincing evidence about the Pathans Than anybody else, but the Pathans are the ones who reject Israel most ferociously. That is the sweet irony.*"³

Since independence of Pakistan in 1947 the Afghan-Pakistan relations remained hostile because of the Durand Line territorial claims dispute. Afghanistan's rejection of this border and demands for the creation of Greater Pashtunistan, have echoed time and again during last 65 years, straining relations between the two. In the most extravagant meaning of the word, upheld by Pashtuns living outside Pakistan, Pashtunistan extends from the Indian Ocean to Gilgit in Pakistan's Northern Areas and from the Durand Line to the Kashmir border⁴.

Pakistan's Pashtun-dominated North West Frontier Province (now named Khyber-Pakhtunkhawa) and Federally Administered Tribal Areas have remained bones of contention between the two. Border related issues time and again trigger off tensions

¹ *CIA World Factbook Afghanistan*, available at: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/af.html>

² Amie Ferris-Rotman, "Ancient Jewish scrolls found in north Afghanistan", Reuters, June 23, 2012, available at : <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/01/23/uk-afghanistan-jewish-scrolls-idUSLNE80M02T20120123>

³ Rory McCarthy, "Pashtun Clue to the Lost Tribes of Israel", *The Guardian*, January 17, 2010

⁴ Fredrick Grare, "Rethinking Western Strategies toward Pakistan: An Action Agenda for the United States and Europe", Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2007

between the two countries. Sometimes the tensions have resulted in hostilities and limited war between border security forces. During 1950s and 1960s the growing Indo-Afghan relations had also disturbed Pakistani policy makers. The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 made Pakistan once again on top of US agenda and Pak-US relations were reinvigorated.

Afghan security and foreign policy analyst Omar Sharifi summarizes Pakistan's Afghan policy as:

- « 1. To establish a Pakistan friendly/dependent government in Afghanistan. It is perceived that a Taliban-controlled Afghanistan would give Pakistan "strategic depth" against India
2. To secure access to Central Asian markets
3. To gain safe route for oil and gas pipeline from Central Asia to Persian gulf
4. To put an end to all border disputes with Afghanistan¹ »

In the light of the present situation one could clearly analyze that none of the policy objectives have been achieved. Pakistan was unable to achieve any of above mentioned objectives.

It was only after the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan that Pakistan had managed to have a friendly regime at its western border. But the honeymoon period was shortened by rigid and stubborn policies of Taliban and Pakistan's policies makers had to face worldwide criticism for their support to Taliban.² The US invasion of Afghanistan in the aftermath of 9/11 attacks made Pakistan once again a close ally of the US government after quite a long sabbatical.

During the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan the American-supported³ mujahedeen capitalized on two major benefiting factors in ousting Russians from their country: rugged terrain of Afghanistan and heat seeking Stinger missile provided by the US. According to Congressional Research Service, *"The Mujahedeen weaponry included US-supplied portable shoulder-fired anti-aircraft systems called Stinger, which proved highly effective against Soviet aircraft. The United States decided in 1985 to provide these weapons to the mujahedeen after substantial debate within the Reagan Administration and some in Congress over whether they could be used effectively and whether doing so would harm broader US-Soviet relations."*⁴

The steep mountainous ranges with valleys and gorges and naturally-built cave complexes had provided safe havens to mujahedeen against the Soviet fire power almost everywhere in rural Afghanistan. Although the Soviets were firmly controlling the urban centers but having a hard time in managing the rural areas from where the mujahedeen were operating. The Russian casualties were in hundreds of thousands and reported number of dead was above 13,000 in 10 years of warfare. The war finally resulted with Soviets signing Geneva Accords and withdrawing forces from the country in 1989.

After the 9/11 attacks the Taliban regime refused to hand over Bin Laden and other Al-Qaeda leaders to the US, the coalition forces attacked Afghanistan on October 7

¹ Omar Sharifi, "Pakistan's Foreign Policy towards Afghanistan from 1947-2008", English Edition, Afghanistan.ru, 16-05-2009

² Pakistan was one of the three countries in the world to recognize the Taliban regime (1996-2001) and to establish diplomatic relations, along with Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

³ It is a misconception that the American CIA directly trained the Afghan Mujahedeen; this is true to the extent that the CIA's Special Activities Division was involved in the war but never came in direct contact with the Mujahedeen groups. In fact Pakistan was on the forefront.

⁴ Kenneth Katzman, "Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and US Policy", Congressional Research Service, CRS Report for Congress, March 1, 2010

2001. The US knew the nature of terrain and the upcoming difficulties and initially launched its Special Forces along with Allied forces of Northern Alliance.

2. THE CASUS BELLI

The United States government's casus belli for waging War against Taliban regime was none other than the 9/11 attacks. However there were others such releasing all foreign and American nationals in Taliban prisons. The war was not UN-authorized but the US right of self-defense was accepted by the UN Security Council and moreover a multi-national International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) was allowed to work under the NATO command (in 2002 after the invasion)¹. After the 9/11 attacks when the initial investigation leads pointed towards Afghanistan based Bin Laden network (Al-Qaeda), the US government put their demands before the Taliban regime². The demands were:

- To deliver Al-Qaeda leaders located in Afghanistan to the US authorities
- To release all imprisoned foreign nationals, including American citizens
- To close terrorist training camps in Afghanistan and hand over every terrorist and person and their support structure to appropriate authorities
- To give the US full access to terrorist training camps to verify their closure³

President Bush in his policy statement also categorically said that *"our war on terror begins with Al-Qaeda but does not end there"*⁴. The United States government also described its sine quo non policy objectives to be achieved in the War against Terror:

- Defeat terrorists and their organizations
- Identify, locate and destroy terrorists along with their organizations
- Deny sponsorship, support and sanctuary to terrorists
- End the state sponsorship of terrorism
- Establish and maintain an international standard of accountability with regard to combating terrorism
- Strengthen and sustain the international efforts to fight terrorism
- Working with willing and able states
- Enabling weak states to develop their counter terrorism infrastructure
- Persuading reluctant states
- Compelling unwilling states by diplomacy and at times brinkmanship
- Interdict and disrupt material support for terrorists
- Eliminate terrorist networks and sanctuaries/havens
- To build a partnership with the international community to strengthen weak states and prevent (re) emergence of terrorism
- Win the war of ideas
- Defend US citizens and interest at home and abroad
- Implement the Nation Strategy for Homeland Security (Operation *Noble Eagle*)

¹ See text of United Nations Security Council Resolution No 1386, on Afghanistan, 2001, available at: <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2001/sc7248.doc.htm>

² For details about the 9/11 investigations, please read, Ali Soufan, "The Black Banners: the Inside Story of 9/11 and the War against Al-Qaeda", W. W. Norton & Company; 2011

³ Patterns of Global Terrorism, US Department of State, 2001, available at : <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/10286.pdf>

⁴ "Bush gives Taliban ultimatum", *The Telegraph*, September 21, 2001.

- Enhance measures to ensure the integrity, reliability, and availability of critical physical and information-based infrastructures at home and abroad
- Integrate measures to protect US citizens abroad
- Ensure an integrated incident management capability¹

It is debatable that how many of the above mentioned objectives have so far been achieved during the still ongoing global conflict. Of course there have been major successes on several different fronts nonetheless still it appears to go a long way. For a deeply devastated country like Pakistan there is no question of losing the war². Once it seemed like purely an American war, now the conflict has fully gripped Pakistan within it and the only way out is to be victorious.

Hitherto there have been major policy blowbacks during the war. Initially a swift victory against the Taliban by Coalition forces was achieved and the Taliban regime fell like a house of cards. The re-emergence of Taliban and their regrouping started to begin in later years, followed by rising casualties of Coalition forces. Policy shifts have also been seen during the course of war with the change of US administrations.

After the fall of Taliban regime the first major issue was the functioning of government in Afghanistan. For that very purpose an interim set up was required for running the day to day affairs of the state. Another important issue was financial assistance for the war- torn country. An international conference on Afghanistan was held in Bonn, Germany and these pending issues were settled in the light of Bonn Accord³. An interim government was set up and financial assistance was also provided by donor countries. An international force was also sought for Afghanistan. Soon after the Bonn Accord, the UN Security Council also approved ISAF (December 2001)⁴.

3. THE ISAF

It is important to distinguish between International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (under US command). The ISAF was established with UN approval, comprising of 26 NATO member states and 10 non-NATO participant countries, where as OEF-Afghanistan is an operation solely led by the US and being conducted not only in Afghanistan but also elsewhere as part of achieving US primary objectives in global war against terror. The US forces are also part of ISAF along with other countries. There are occasions when the Operations have been carried out separately against the rogue elements. Initially the ISAF had a mandate to secure only the Afghan capital Kabul but in later years the scope of the operation was broadened to the whole of Afghanistan in a phased strategy. *Operation Enduring Freedom* (led by the US) has not been authorized by the UNSC (1386) but the US right of self-defense under UN's charter was accepted with no objections. The very first wave of attack was launched by the US under OEF along with the British forces.

¹ National Strategy for Combating Terrorism, 2003.

² 4 800 Military, paramilitary and law enforcement have so far lost their lives, the grand total is 49000, with an estimated economic loss of \$83 billion. For details see costofwar.org

³ See text of Bonn Agreement on Afghanistan, available at :
<http://www.un.org/News/dh/latest/afghan/afghan-agree.htm>.

⁴ *Ibid*

The core objectives in Afghanistan, as defined by General McChrystal, the Commander of ISAF/NATO forces are:

- To protect the population and to help the government of Afghanistan take steps to earn the trust of the population
- To reverse the Taliban momentum within 12-18 months or risk losing the potential to defeat the insurgency
- Expansion of Afghan National Army and Police (up to the goals of 134,000 ANA and 166,000 ANP)
- Additional troops for Afghanistan operations up to 44,000¹

The Bonn Agreement

The Bonn Agreement was the first international effort to bring stability to Afghanistan by providing financial aid to the country and re-establishment of state institutions. An interim government was set up and with the objectives of forming an interim authority, legal framework and judicial system (for Constitution), interim administration, the special independent commission for the convening of the emergency Loya Jirga and reorganization of Afghan National Army.

In following years most of the objectives were achieved. Loya Jirga was convened and Hamid Karzai was selected as the Chairman of the Interim Authority, and Afghan Constitution was also framed by Afghan Constitution Commission. Presidential Elections and Parliamentary Elections were also held in 2003 and 2004 respectively. ISAF started its operations in 2002. Follow up conferences were also held in upcoming years (Berlin-2004, London-2006, Rome-2007, Paris-2008, Moscow-2009, The Hague-2009 and London-2010)².

The post-Taliban set up was institutionalized by the international community. Many of the key government posts had been taken over by former Northern Alliance leaders but Pashtun factor still remained a dominant force. Hamid Karzai, a Durrani Pashtun from southern Kandahar province emerged as an indispensable political figure in Afghan politics. In later years the Karzai administration was accused of widespread corruption and malpractices but even then there was no other potential option available to fill the vacuum and replace him. Despite much accusation from both domestic and foreign fronts the Karzia administration has been successful in achieving some goals. Framing of constitution, convening of Loya Jirga, growth in Afghan economy and revenue collection, raising Afghan National Army and police and disarming of militias are some of the major successes³.

¹ Kenneth Katzman, "Afghanistan: Post-Taliban Governance, Security, and US Policy", Congressional Research Service, CRS Report for Congress, March 1, 2010

² Full Text of the agreement: <http://www.un.org/News/dh/latest/afghan/afghan-agree.htm>

³ A major chunk of anti-Taliban Northern Alliance (a cluster of former Mujahedeen groups) was absorbed into Afghan National Army and Afghan Local Police, whereas the rest of the militias were disarmed under DDR program.

The Taliban Resurgence

After remaining dormant for a number of years after the US-led 2001 invasion the Taliban re-emerged with full vengeance in late 2005. The resurgent Taliban were quite different from the ones who earlier fought the US forces in 2001. Their attacks against the coalition forces have now become more concerted and their reliance on suicide bombings characterizes use of new tactics. Their shadow leadership also issued a Code of Conduct for their rank and file with special focus on rules of engagements¹. Although the leadership mostly remains the same, the approach and methodology seem markedly different: *“The Taliban is not monolithic. It is composed of several layers: a hard-core group of former Taliban commanders (including Mullah Omar) who operate out of the sanctuaries across the border in Pakistan and who maintains ties with Pakistan’s ISI intelligence agency (although Pakistan vehemently denies this); bands linked to Al-Qaeda whose ranks have recently swelled Arab, Chechen and Uzbeks fighters operating craggy, north eastern ranges of Afghanistan; and a last group, probably the largest, made up of local tribesmen who have allied themselves loosely with the Taliban as a result of President Hamid Karzai’s often corrupt provincial officials pitting one tribe another.”*²

The Taliban regime when came under attack did not last for more than a month of fighting and Kabul fell to Coalition forces by early November 2001. The US Special Forces along with Northern Alliance soldiers kept on marching without any heavy fighting in all major cities except few like Kanduz and Kandahar, where they had to face stiff resistance from the Taliban. Many of Taliban governors changed sides and joined hands with the Northern Alliance. And by December the Taliban were on the run everywhere. The swift victory against well-entrenched Taliban forces also made allies quite over confident. The allies mostly relied on their airpower and Special Forces (around 1 000 troops) with Northern Alliance (around 15,000 troops) as their foot soldiers in subduing a Taliban force (more or less 50,000).

Caught in the middle was Pakistan where all the Al-Qaeda and Taliban elements took shelter in the bordering Tribal Areas of Pakistan.

In late 2001 and early 2002 some major battles were fought between Taliban/Al-Qaeda and US/Northern Alliance forces. The battle of Tora Bora (cave complex in eastern Afghanistan near Pakistani border) was the first major battle. The US forces could not achieve their targets by capturing Bin Laden who slipped into northern Pakistan along with other Taliban and Al-Qaeda leaders. In another battle called Operation Anaconda fought near Shahi Kot Valley in Paktia Province, close to Pakistani border, once again the high profile Taliban leaders managed to flee to Pakistan’s tribal areas and US forces once again failed to achieve the desired objectives and the primary goals³.

The failure of Allied forces to control over most of Afghanistan’s rural areas led to the resurgence of Taliban in 2006. Although there were skirmishes with Taliban during the years after the invasion but the major resurgence started to take place in 2006 when simultaneous attacks were launched against the US and allied forces, and nascent

¹ Muhammad Munir, “The Lahya for the Mujahideen: an analysis of the Code of Conduct for the Taliban fighters under Islamic Laws”, International Review of the Red Cross, pp. 81-90, available at: <http://www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/review/2011/irrc-881-munir.pdf>

² Tim Mcgrik, “Behind the Taliban’s Resurgence in Afghanistan”, Sep. 16, 2009, <http://time.com/time/world/article/08599192330300.html>

³ It is suspected that Mullah Omar and Taliban high command that later formed Quetta Shura, Girdi Jungle Shura and Waziristan Shura were among those who managed to cross into Pakistan.

Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police. According to one report :*“In the first six months of 2006, Afghanistan faced thirty-two suicide attacks, unprecedented in the country’s three decades of violence (Karzai and Jones, 2006). Since May 2006 violence has reached new levels. Some 800 insurgents, civilians and soldiers died in the four south western provinces. The reorganized Taliban, operating in Afghanistan from bases in Pakistan, form the bulk of the insurgency, which also includes elements led by Afghan Islamists Gulbaddin Hikmatyar’s Hizb-i-Islami and foreign Jehadi forces, including the leadership of Al-Qaeda.”*¹

There are various factors that led to the emergence of Taliban insurgency, and failure of US in attaining the objectives:

- The Taliban had not been completely defeated and many of their commanders and leaders continued to remain at large.
- There had always been a large number of Islamist radical Pakistanis in the Taliban rank and file and when the tide turned against Taliban their Pakistani sympathizers in taking refuge inside Pakistan.
- Many of the religious parties in Pakistan were supporting Taliban styled Deobandi-Wahabi/Salafi state and shared their beliefs. The same parties provided Taliban and Al-Qaeda leadership with safe havens, logistics and finances. Later many high profile Al-Qaeda leaders were arrested from the houses of Pakistani Islamist party Jamat-e-Islami leaders in Pakistan (Khalid Shaikh Mohammad was arrested from Rawalpindi, where he was residing at Jamat-e-Islami leader’s home).
- The Taliban high command managed to flee into Pakistan’s tribal areas where they found refuge and safe havens along with Bin Laden network. Strategically speaking the tribal areas also provided the Taliban and their Pakistani supporters to place themselves in fortress like valleys and caves and strategic mountains made environment healthy for running new training camps for the new recruits.

Barnett Rubin explains this phenomenon as, *“Since Al-Qaeda’s retreat from Afghanistan in winter 2001, some tribal areas have become a small-scale copy of Taliban-controlled Afghanistan, where Islamist militants can recover and plan fresh operations while gradually imposing their will on the secluded region. Violence also has spread into the adjacent districts of the North West Frontier Province (Hussain 2006).”*²

- Pakistan did not have the will and capacity to destroy the newly-arrived Taliban/Bin Laden network in tribal areas immediately (first military operation was launched in 2004, after repeated Al-Qaeda attacks on President General Pervez Musharraf)
- Pakistan could not take any serious security measures on its side to block the movement of Taliban leaders/troops into its territory as it was expected that the Taliban elements might take refuge in tribal areas and Baluchistan province of Pakistan.
- The Taliban are predominantly Pashtuns and follow Pashtunwali code, a tribal code which predates their conversion to Islam. According to the code it is mandatory for the Pashtun tribes to give shelter to help seekers even if they are their sworn enemies. One of the known and relevant tenets in this regard is Melmastia, meaning hospitality and asylum to all guests seeking help³. The Taliban rank and file found a hospitable

¹ Abubakar Siddique, and Barnett R Rubin, “Resolving the Pakistan-Afghanistan Stalemate”, Special Report, United States Institute of Peace, October 2006, Special Report 176

² *Ibid*

³ Farhan Zahid, “Understanding Taliban through the Prism of Pashtunwali Code”, Tribune Libre, Centre Français de Recherche sur le Renseignement (CF2R), November 2013, available at : <http://www.cf2r.org/fr/tribune-libre/understanding-taliban-through-the-prism-of-pashtunwali-code.php>

environment in Pakistan's Tribal Areas and their leadership enough time to plan future operations in Afghanistan and Pakistan against US interests.

- It was only after the two consecutive assassination attempts against Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf in 2003 where the investigations resulted in clues pointing towards the tribal region of North Waziristan that the authorities started to take military action in tribal areas.
- In September 2006, along with the Pakistani followers, the Taliban announced Islamic Emirate of Waziristan¹. No firm action was taken from Pakistani side and the military operation was suspended after signing an accord with the local tribal leadership that had joined hands with Taliban (Sarrarogha Agreement-2006)².
- Poppy cultivation in tribal areas of Pakistan and in some districts of Afghanistan was also reportedly administered by the Taliban, helped finance the resurgence.
- Taliban high command also took advantage of thickly populated cities like Karachi, Rawalpindi, Faisalabad and Quetta and these cities became hub of Taliban activities³. Mushroom growth of slums helped allow safe havens and the recruitment of fresh batches of radical Islamist youth for nurturing.
- Most of the Kashmiri radical organizations also joined hands with Taliban because of their old ties with Al-Qaeda and Taliban⁴. During their era, Taliban provided trainings and financed the activities of these Kashmiri organizations (such as: Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jesh-e-Mohammad and others).
- Radical sectarian organizations (mostly Wahabi/Salafi) in urban areas of Pakistan started colluding with the Taliban and helped support their resurgence (Sipah-e-Sahaba and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi) in mounting terrorist attacks against US interests and Pakistani civilian and military installations in urban centers of Pakistan.
- Russian military action in Chechnya against the radical Islamist led to the closure of their base of operations for the Islamist radicals and they found safe havens in tribal areas of Pakistan and joined hands with Taliban and Bin Laden network.
- In Central Asian Republics of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan stern military action was taken against the Islamist radical organizations and they were driven away from their bases. These Islamist militants (Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan) also found refuge in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan and later after the fall of Taliban regime moved in to Pakistan's tribal region where Taliban were also hiding.
- The Chinese Islamist rebel organization Eastern Islamic Movement of Turkistan (ETIM) from Xinjiang province also followed suit and joined hands with Taliban in tribal areas.
- Even before the US invasion of Afghanistan thousands of radical Islamists from many other countries had arrived in Afghanistan to receive training at Al-Qaeda-run training camps and also to fight alongside the Taliban against their bête noire the Northern Alliance. With the fall of Taliban regime they also found refuge in Pakistan (Islamist radicals from the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Maldives, Burma, Egypt and many other countries).

¹ Syed Saleem Shahzad, "The Taliban's Bloody Foothold in Pakistan", *Asia Times Online*, February 8, 2006.

² Amir Mir, "War and Peace in Waziristan", *Asia Times Online*, May 4, 2005

³ Declan Walsh and Zia ur Rehman, "Taliban spread terror in Karachi as the new gang in town", *The New York Times*, March 28, 2013

⁴ Most of the Kashmiri Islamist groups (such as Harkat ul Jihad Islami, Harkat-ul Mujahedin, and Jaish-e-Mohammad), and sectarian groups like Lashkar-e-Jhangvi received training at Al-Qaeda-run training camps based in Taliban-administered Afghanistan, therefore, all had long standing ties with both Al-Qaeda and the Taliban.

- There had already been many Arab Afghans¹ of 1980s era who got settled in the tribal areas. Their presence also swelled the ranks of Taliban and Al-Qaeda forces.
- In 2002 general elections of Pakistan, an alliance of Islamist parties Mutahida Majlis-e-Amal (United Movement), a conglomerate of mostly Pashtun-dominated parties, won the majority seats in two Pashtun dominated provinces of Pakistan (Baluchistan and Khyber). Both provinces had borders with western neighbor Afghanistan and ethnic ties with predominantly Pashtun Taliban. The election victory and administrative control over these two provinces paved the way for the Talibanization of these areas. The two provincial governments did not disturb the movement and activities of Taliban in their jurisdictions. Ethnic ties played more of role than the religion factor. Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan; as safe haven and two provinces of Pakistan with Taliban-friendly regimes in control, indeed nothing more was required for a favorable situation for Taliban resurgence.
- It was alleged that the Taliban leadership found refuge in Quetta, provincial capital of Baluchistan province. The high command formed Quetta Shura which allegedly played an important role in Taliban resurgence, according to General McChrystal, the commander of ISAF in Afghanistan. Consisting of high ranking Taliban commanders, the Shura is headed by Mullah Omar, the supreme commander of Taliban and issues operational orders for insurgent Taliban in Afghanistan. Pakistan strongly denies such allegations and instead arrested some key members of Shura (Mullah Baradar and two former Taliban era governors) in January 2010 to prove its point².
- Taliban supporters and sympathizers in Saudi Arabia and Arab countries have also been a great financial support to Taliban. *“A majority of Saudi citizens practice the strict Wahabi brand of Islam similar to that of the Taliban, and Saudi Arabia was one of the three countries to formally recognize the Taliban government.”*³
- Growing Afghan-Indian ties also disturbed elements in Pakistani army/Intelligence agencies and encouraged them to compete against the growing Indian influence in Afghanistan⁴. Pakistani government has repeatedly denied such accusations; nevertheless, it is quite likely that rogue jihadists within the apparatus may still consider them assets.
- At least 400 high profile Taliban prisoners escaped from Kandahar prison in June 2008, the escape undoubtedly provided a new launching pad and a bigger boast to insurgency.⁵
- Growing number of civilian casualties (18,000-20,000) as a result of allied bombardment had turned out to be another major cause of Taliban insurgency⁶. Taliban effectively launched a propaganda campaign reflecting upon both religion and Pashtun nationalism and taking issues like civilian casualties and occupation of Afghanistan.

¹ Arab Afghans is a term used for those ‘mujaheden’ who came to Pakistan in 1980s to fight the Soviet forces in Afghanistan. Many of them returned to their native homelands whereas some settled in tribal areas of Pakistan, mingled up with the locals, learned the local language Pashtu and even married local women.

² Gordon Lubold, “Gen. McChrystal to Congress: ‘We can defeat Taliban’”, *The Christian Science Monitor*, December 9, 2009.

³ Kenneth Katzman, *op. cit.*

⁴ Jayshree Bajoria, “India-Afghanistan Relations”, Council on Foreign Relations, July 2009

⁵ . Greg Bruno, and Eben Kaplan, “The Taliban in Afghanistan”, Council on Foreign Relations, Publication 10551, August 3, 2009, <http://www.cfr.org/publication>

⁶ “Afghanistan: 18,000-20,000 Civilians Killed”, Costs of War, available at : <http://costsofwar.org/article/afghan-civilians>

According to Frederick Grare, *“The insurgency started in a corridor 35 miles wide along the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan, spanning the provinces of Konar, Nangarhar, Paktia, Paktika, Zabol, Kandhar, and Helmand, before moving west. Most attacks are carried out in southern Afghanistan by Taliban coming from the Quetta district. The guerrilla could not operate without the benefit of sanctuaries in Pakistan. Islamabad rightly argues that it cannot control the border. It has proposed fencing the border, but this proposal is totally impractical as former director general, ISI, Lieutenant General Asad Durrani has acknowledged.”*¹

4. PAKISTAN-AFGHANISTAN RELATIONS AMID GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR

There have been controversial issues in Pak-Afghan relations marred with tensions and hostilities since the beginning of relations back in 1948. Having a bird’s eye view over Pakistan-Afghanistan relations one could easily figure out that there have been only few years in more than 60 years of relationship that the countries were not at odds with each other. Although there are things in common like religion, history, culture and language but even then the countries do not share much as far as international politics is concerned. These tensions have been dominated by two major issues: the Durand Line dispute and Pashtunistan Issue² (practically both are interrelated and could be considered one).

In 1998, Pakistan became the first country to recognize the Taliban regime (followed by Saudi Arabia and UAE) and continued to enjoy warm ties, though in later years the policy seemed to backfire as the Taliban regime also refused to recognize the Durand Line.

The relations further soured as Taliban turned down Pakistan’s demands on various issues³. With no option Pakistan continued to rely on Taliban till 9/11 attacks. It would not be unfair to say that Taliban had become Hobson’s choice for Pakistan with all other options to support in Afghanistan fallen into the hands of India, Iran and Russia. Veteran Afghan groups were already dumped by Pakistan’s intelligence apparatus and moreover they were no match to Taliban’s military might. Taliban leaders had already realized this situation and used Pakistan as transit for worldwide radical Muslim youth to visit and receive military training at Al-Qaeda-run training camps in Afghanistan. They also used Pakistan as their main source of recruitment of radical youth. Moreover Pakistan’s support to predominantly Pashtun Taliban also made other ethnic groups inclined towards India and Iran.

In the words of Omar Sharifi, Director American Institute of Afghanistan Studies: *“by recognizing the Taliban, Pakistan gave preference to the Pushtuns, thereby alienating non-pushtuns and turn Afghan civil war into a rather semi-ethnic conflict. On the*

¹ Fredrick Grare, “Rethinking Western Strategies toward Pakistan: An Action Agenda for the United States and Europe”, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2007

² Pashtunistan refers to the areas inhabited by people of Pashtun ethnic group, located in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Out of 34, 13 provinces of Afghanistan are Pashtun-majority, whereas in Pakistan the Khyber province and tribal areas are Pashtun-dominated areas. Northern Baluchistan is also Pashtun dominated. Pashtuns are one of the largest ethnic groups without a homeland though their estimated number is over 40 million.

³³ Such as providing refuge to Pakistani sectarian terrorists belonging to Sipah-e-Sahaba and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, two extremely violent and anti-Shia sect militant organizations. For details see, Khaled Ahmed, *Sectarian Wars*, Oxford University Press, Karachi, 2011

other hand, with the ever increasing role of terrorist organizations within the Taliban regime, especially in terms of providing financial and military support in Taliban war against the resistance movement, the Pakistani government started to lose the grip over Taliban and was no longer capable of controlling and managing Taliban. The Taliban transformed them from being subservient political client, into a regime closely connected to international terrorist networks that could easily destabilize Pakistan itself. Taliban to reduce their dependency on Pakistan's government (while keeping its ties with the ISI and army as strong as always), and to get some autonomy, began cultivating close ties with Osama Bin Laden. He set up private bases in different parts of south and eastern Afghanistan, not only supported Taliban financially but also sending thousands of Arab and other international terrorists to fight Taliban enemies in the northern Afghanistan and Indians in Kashmir.”¹

Pakistani policy makers had to take the U-turn after 9/11 and dropped their support for Taliban regime of Afghanistan. The US had given Pakistan no option but to follow the US policy or face the music. The seven US demands to Pakistan were:

1. Stop Al-Qaeda operatives at its borders, stop the arms transfer through Pakistan and also end logistical support to Osama.
2. Pakistan should allow the blanket over flight rights to conduct air operations.
3. Provide territorial access to the United States. That included the use of naval ports, air bases, and strategic location and borders.
4. Pakistan should provide the intelligence support to the US authorities, about the Taliban and Al-Qaeda.
5. Continue to condemn publically the terrorist attacks of 11 September and also any other act of terror against the US and its coalition partners.
6. Cut off all shipments of fuel and any other items to the Taliban.
7. Pakistan should cut off all diplomatic ties with the Taliban²

Pakistan abided by all the demands. Although it was difficult for Pakistan's strong intelligence networks to back off from their pro-Taliban policy and sacrifice their “assets” but in fact there was no other way³. Without Pakistani support the much anticipated Taliban regime fell like house of cards before the invading forces of Northern Alliance and the US troops. The strong 50,000 Taliban army did not last for even a month of fighting and all major cities fell to the US backed Northern Alliance forces.

With the U-turn in Taliban policy the Al-Qaeda-linked Islamist armed non-state actors in Pakistan turned violent against the state. The result was hundreds of suicide attacks against civilian and government buildings. The country that has been most effected by the outcomes of global war against terror is Pakistan in terms of loss of lives and property. The shift in 20 years old Afghan policy by Pakistan has led to many other problems for Pakistan's policy makers:

- In pre-9/11 Afghanistan, Pakistan mainly focused on Taliban, thus, the post-9/11 U-turn left Pakistan alone (with no pro-Pakistan group) in the new set up of Afghanistan

¹ Omar Sharifi, “Pakistan's Foreign Policy toward Afghanistan from 1947-2008”, English Edition, Afghanistan.ru-16.05-2009

² Waqas Sohrab and Ishtiaq Ahmad Choudhry, “Pak-US Relations in 21st Century: Challenges in Opportunities for Pakistan”, Berkley Journal of Social Sciences, Vol 2, Issue 3, March 2012

³ President Bush said, “Every Nation, in every region now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists”

- Non-Pashtun ethnic communities of Afghanistan had already developed a hatred for Pakistan. “The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan gave Pakistan the opportunity to rethink its Afghan policy. Islamabad tried to play both the Pashtun and Islamist cards. Out of the seven resistance parties sponsored by Pakistan, six were Pashtun. Only the Jamiat-e-Islami led by Burhanuddin Rabbani and Ahmad Shah Masoud had a Tajik majority.”¹
- All the Taliban enemies joined hands with Pakistan’s bête noir India; and some with western neighbor Iran
- Iran and other Central Asian Republics had cultivated their allies from various Afghan factions, mostly non-Pashtun groups
- Saudi Arabia and UAE also supported Taliban and recognized the Taliban regime but had no proximity with the region unlike Pakistan, thus, had no substantial effect.
- Many radical Islamist parties and militant organizations in Pakistan with Pakistanis as leaders of these parties/organizations preferred to support Taliban rather than their own country Pakistan
- Trained in Afghan camps, run by Al-Qaeda, these Islamist militants (Pakistanis mostly) turned against Pakistan government and military and caused a destructive spree all over the country
- India opened up its consulates in many Afghan cities and it is alleged that its agency RAW started to support Baluch nationalists in Afghanistan-bordering Pakistani province of Baluchistan. “Pakistan has accused India of setting up networks of terrorist training camps, located inside Afghanistan, including at the Afghan military base of Qushila Jadid, north of Kabul; near Gereshk, in southern Helmand province; in the Panjshir Valley, northeast of Kabul; and at Kahak and Hassan Killies in western Nimruz province.”²
- The Taliban and Al-Qaeda found their new safe havens in Tribal Areas of Pakistan, making Pakistan their centre of operations
- Because of the growing militancy in Pakistan and suicide attacks by Taliban inside the country, Pakistan army had to launch several military operations against the militants in tribal areas that resulted in thousands of casualties of Pakistan army men and loss of other equipment³
- Continuous wave of Taliban attacks led to their take over one whole Division (Malakand division) of KPK Province of Pakistan and army had to take them on (Operation Rah e Rast), although resulted in recapture of territory but at a very heavy toll (both civilian and military)
- Even after the success of Operation Rah e Rast, Islamist militants remained strong in tribal areas with firm control of many of the districts of tribal region. Pakistani military had to launch another Operation Rah-e-Nijat inside the tribal areas of Pakistan, mostly centered on South and North Waziristan Agencies. Pakistani policy makers argued that that its actions in Waziristan, the tribal agency where some eighty thousand Pakistani troops have been mobilized, are proof that Islamabad is doing whatever it can to stop the fundamentalist insurgency from spilling over into Pakistani territory, thus possibly causing Pakistan itself to become a victim of the Taliban. Pakistani difficulties in Waziristan were real. Approximately 450 Pakistani soldiers lost their lives, fighting the

¹ Frederic Grare, “Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations in the Post-9/11 Era”, Carnegie Papers, South Asia Project, number 72, October 2006

² *Ibid*, Grare.

³ So far since 2004, 13 major military operations and 14 rounds of peace talks have been conducted. According to conservative estimates more than 4800 military and law enforcement personnel have lost their lives during last 12 years. For more details, see www.costofwar.org

local Taliban and members of Al-Qaeda. Cities like Miramshah and Mirali had virtually fallen under Taliban control. Three years of military campaigning have not only failed to eliminate foreign militants but also reinforced the local Taliban.”¹

- A new phenomenon Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (or Taliban Movement of Pakistan) came into being with strong ties to parent Afghan Taliban in 2007, and primarily focused to deal with Pakistan army and civilian set up. The TTP like its sister concern Afghan-Taliban proved itself to be more vindictive and lethal. “The Taliban of Afghanistan are increasingly linked politically and operationally to Pakistani Taliban militants. The Pakistani Taliban are primarily seeking to challenge the government of Pakistan, but they facilitate the transiting into Afghanistan of Afghan Taliban and support the Afghan Taliban goals of recapturing Afghanistan.”²
- TTP suicide bombers had targeted military and police installations in mainland Pakistan, resulting in deaths of fifty thousand people in last 12- year³
- One of the biggest successes of TTP was assassination of two times former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in a suicide attack and in other attacks at least two major generals and four brigadiers had been killed⁴.

More disturbing and irritating for Pakistan, is the growing Indian influence in Afghanistan. As Pakistan had invested in Taliban, the Indians had their bets on the anti-Taliban Northern Alliance. *“Pakistan says India is using its Embassy and four consulates in Afghanistan (Pakistan says India has nine such consulates) to train and recruit anti-Pakistan insurgents, and is using its reconstruction funds to build influence there.”*⁵

When the tide turned against Taliban after 9/11, and Pakistan also departed from their active support, Taliban turned against Pakistan and termed it a betrayal from Pakistani side. Whereas Northern Alliance proved out to be a better investment for Indians as the relations between the two further grew and after coming into power the new Afghan set up rewarded Indians handsomely by giving pro-Indian politicians a lion’s share in government. That also resulted with increasing number of activities of Baloch insurgents as Pakistan claimed that they received training, arms and financial support from Indian bases in Afghanistan (four Indian consulates are in Mazar-e-Sharif, Herat, Jalalabad and Kandhar). *“The interests and activities of India in Afghanistan are almost the exact reverse of those of Pakistan. India’s goal is to deny Pakistan Strategic Depth in Afghanistan, and India supported the Northern Alliance against the Taliban in the mid-1990s. Tajikistan allows India to use one of its air bases; Tajikistan supports the mostly Tajik Northern Alliance. Many of the families of Afghan leaders have lived in India at one time or another and Karzai studied there. India saw the Taliban’s hosting of Al-Qaeda as a major threat to India itself because of Al-Qaeda’s association with radical Islamic organizations in Pakistan dedicated to ending Indian control of parts of Jammu and Kashmir.”*⁶

¹ Grare, *op. cit.*

² Katzman, *op. cit.*

³ According to Pakistan government official figures more than 49,000 people lost their lives, with \$83 billion infrastructure and economic damages, 400 plus suicide bombings and a total of 13,198 incidents of terrorism, for details see National Internal Security Policy of Pakistan (2014-18), available at: nacta.gov.pk

⁴ United Nations Commission of Inquiry into the facts and circumstances of the assassination of former Pakistani Prime Minister Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto

⁵ *Ibid*, Katzman

⁶ *Ibid*, Katzman

In fact the Pakistan-Afghanistan relations have remained sour since the fall of Taliban regime. There have been occasions where both cooperated and worked together but overall the situation could not improve because of the policy measures taken by the two to serve their interests. The gulf of conflicts of interest is becoming wider.

5. WAR IN IRAQ

Iraq is one of earliest centers of civilization with a history of invasions and foreign rule. The ancient civilization of Mesopotamia is also called Cradle of Civilizations. The ancient city-state of Babylon was one of the oldest city states (2300 BC). In the era of antiquity it had been ruled over by Assyrians, Persians, Seleucids and Parthians. Later it was conquered by Muslim Caliphate and became its capital. Baghdad like Rome had seen many golden eras and invasions by foreign forces. With the fall of Ottoman Empire in 1919, Iraq was mandated to the Great Britain under the mandate system of League of Nations. The modern Republic of Iraq was established in 1958. From 1979-2003 Iraq remained under the dictatorship of Saddam Hussain, leader of Baath Party.

The second phase of Global War against Terror began with the US invasion of Iraq in March 2003. Although the invasion was called a continuation of Global War against Terror but the military operation did not come under the parameters of Operation Enduring Freedom (as it was called in other places like the Philippines, Trans-Saharan Africa, Horn of Africa and Georgia). It was first called Operation Iraqi Liberation and then later Operation Iraqi Freedom (now Operation New Dawn, 2010). There were altogether 49 countries that supported US invasion of Iraq but only four actively participated and contributed troops for the invasion. President George W Bush in one his pre-invasion statements termed it as “the central front in the War against Terror”¹.

The invasion was launched by US led Alliance (aka: coalition of the willing) after serving warnings to Iraqi leadership. The invasion was also supported by Irregular forces of Iraqi Kurds. Baghdad fell to the Allied forces after just nineteen days of fighting but war in Iraq did not end with it. Sunni militias and former Iraqi Revolutionary Guards along with Iran backed Shia militias continued to create havoc in Iraq resulted in the deaths of thousands of US and allied troops. The ensuing fighting has continued to this day, making Iraq one of the most unstable regions in the world.

The US led invasion did not have the formal and renewed UN authority but Allies claimed that the invasion was the result of Iraq’s non-compliance of previous UN Security Council Resolutions (660, 661, 678, 686, 687, 688, 707, 715, 986, and 1284), especially 1441 passed in November 2002 (a final opportunity to comply with its disarmament obligations). The Resolution 1441 authorized UNMOVIC and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to verify Iraq’s disarmament process even the inspection team has to go anywhere and talk to anyone in that order. Moreover the US Congress passed its “Iraq War Resolution” in October 2002 (citing the Iraqi Liberation Act of 1998), giving President George W Bush a free hand to execute his Iraq policy.

Raison de etre of Invasion of Iraq as envisage in Iraq War Resolution :

- Iraq’s alleged possession of Weapons of Mass Destruction

¹ President George W Bush, global message:

<http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/09/20030909.html>

- Iraq's refusal to abide by the UNSC Resolutions for inspections
- Links with Al-Qaeda and other terrorist organizations
- Violation of human rights by Iraqi regime
- Iraq's financial support to the families of Palestinian suicide bombers
- Possession of chemical and biological weapons
- Refusal to cooperate with United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspections Commission
- Iraqi leader Saddam Hussain as global threat for world peace
- Iraq's hostility towards the US as demonstrated by the 1993 assassination attempt of former President George H.W. Bush
- The efforts by the Congress and the President to fight terrorists, including the 9/11 , 2001 terrorists and those who aided them
- Iraqi Liberation Act of 1998, a US Congressional statement of policy for regime change
- An effort to spread democracy to the region¹

Effects of Iraq War on South Asian theatre of Global War on Terror

In the words of Afghan President Hamid Karzai, *"if the money wasted on the Iraq war was actually spent on rebuilding Afghanistan, this country would be in heaven in less than one year"*².

Since the 9/11 attacks the US has initiated military campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq. The wars cost \$1.283 trillion by fiscal year 2011. This includes:

- \$806 billion for Iraq (63%)
- \$444 billion for Afghanistan (35%)
- \$29 billion for enhanced security (2%)
- \$5 billion unallocated DOD costs (1%)³

The then Pakistani President General Pervez Musharraf cast serious concerns over the Iraq's invasion and its effects on overall global war against terror. In an interview to CNN International he said: *"the war in Iraq has not made the world safer from terror, and this war would make world more dangerous."*⁴

According to one source the war has cost tremendously the US government in terms of both material and human losses.

"About 4,000 American troops have died since our baseless invasion of Iraq, and the Department of Veterans Affairs is overwhelmed by the sheer volume and dire condition of wounded soldiers who manage to return alive."

Conservative estimates hold that nearly 80,000 Iraqi civilians have died, but a study published in 2006, which included those who have died of disease and other issues related to the war, indicated that 650,000 Iraqis had perished. About 2 million of the country's population has been internally displaced while 2.5 million have left Iraq.

Our presence in Iraq has hindered our ability to fight the good fight in Afghanistan and the \$12 billion-per-month costs of remaining in Iraq have no doubt left our

¹ President George W Bush's Iraq invasion policy speech, available at: <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2003/02/20030226-11.html>

² Karzai speech: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/14986859/>

³ Amy Belasco, "The Cost of Iraq, Afghanistan, and other Global War on Terror Operations Since 9/11", Congressional Research Service, September, 2011

⁴ President General Pervez Musharraf's interview to CNN, available at : <http://edition.cnn.com/2006/world/asiapcf/09/26/musharraf.terror>

government in a tough spot in dealing with our current economic woes.”¹

In a Congressional testimony, when asked by Senator Joe Biden (Committee Chairman) about the importance of Iraqi campaign, the US ambassador Ryan Crocker admitted that Al-Qaeda in Iraq was less important than the Al-Qaeda organization led by Osam Bin-Laden along the Afghan-Pakistani border².

The US and allied primary objectives of war mostly resulted in utter failure. Because of the shift in focus from Afghanistan to Iraq, the Taliban in Afghanistan’s southern provinces and in tribal areas of Pakistan had regrouped and surfaced after remaining mostly dormant for four years. This time a full-fledged Taliban insurgency emerged with their launching of concerted attacks against US and Afghan forces in Afghanistan. It became difficult to administer Iraq than to occupy it. Radical Islamic militias of both Sunni and Shia sects of Islam started targeting US and allied forces. These militias were backed by Iran and Syria and launched Hezbollah and Hamas styled suicide attacks against the allied forces. As far as the objectives were concerned, there have been many views on it.

- There have been inspections after the first Gulf War of 1991 and 2003 invasion and the theory that Iraq still possessed Weapons of Mass Destructions came out to be untrue. Most of the WMD were either dismantled or destroyed by UN’s Inspections team. Thus no evidence of WMD was found after the invasion. The investigation by Iraq Survey Group concluded that Iraq had destroyed all major stockpiles of WMDs and ceased production in 1991 when sanctions were imposed (Duelfer Report: Comprehensive Revised Reports with Addendums on Iraq’s Weapons of Mass Destruction)
- Objectives of change of Iraqi or “decapitating the regime” were successfully met.
- No chemical or biological weapons or laboratories were found (only decayed chemicals weapons of Iran-Iraq War era were discovered)

As the US and allied forces had no UN’s authority and the matter was taken up on the grounds that later came out to be untrue, resulting in failure of US intelligence. Primarily the Iraq War devastated and discredited the global war against terror, specially its original theatre: Afghanistan and Pakistan. Overall ratings and public opinion that had remained in upward trends started to decline steeply. According to one report published by International Institute of Strategic Studies that *“the Iraq War had swollen the ranks of al-Qaida and galvanized its will by increasing radical passions among Muslims.”³*

In one Questions and Answers session of House of Commons, former British Prime Minister Tony Blair accepted the fact that he was advised against the attack. Excerpts of the session:

- “Mr. Dalyell: *To ask the Prime Minister if he will make a statement about the advice which he received before the conflict on the impact of a military offensive against Iraq on the incidence of terrorism. [131993]*

- The Prime Minister: *The assessment I received was that the greatest terrorist threat to Western interests came from al-Qaeda and related groups, and that this threat would be heightened by military action against Iraq. This assessment informed the Ministry of Defence’s planning for military action, as well as the Foreign and Commonwealth Office’s consular planning and in the published Travel Advice.*

¹ Seattle Post, Editorial Board, available at: http://www.seattlepi.com/opinion/355509_ward.html

² M Ambinder, « Biden’s Audition », *The Atlantic*, April, 2002

³ Richard Norton-Taylor, “Iraq War has swollen ranks of Al-Qaeda”, *The Guardian*, October 16, 2003

When I took the decision that military action would be required to ensure that Iraq complied with United Nations Security Council Resolutions, I had to weigh all the factors, including the possible short term risk of increased terrorism, against the longer term risks of rogue states developing weapons of mass destruction.”¹

6. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Global War against Terror is a broad term, being used to describe the operations launched by the United States and allies in the aftermath of September 11, 2001 attacks. The war is a counter terrorism endeavor to combat radical Islamic organizations, worldwide. The first and foremost objective of these operations is to destroy the network of terrorist organizations worldwide working under the umbrella of Bin Laden network or Al-Qaeda.

As far to defeat terrorist organizations, identify, locate and destroy their infrastructure the US has hitherto been able to achieve these objectives in Afghanistan. The surfacing of Pakistan problem and the way this country has been plagued with Islamist terrorist attacks, is the aftermath and shows that Al-Qaeda and Taliban have been able to relocate themselves and found likeminded allies in the neighborhood.

The US has been able to cajole many nations to deny sponsorship, and sanctuaries. But once again the issue of weak states (see Failed States Index) is an issue of major concern for US policy makers. In this regard the US needs to build a partnership with the weak states in order to strengthen their institutions. Pakistan must be primary beneficiary in this regard.

In the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq the US policy objectives lacked international consent, therefore, making it difficult to convince the unwilling states to partner with the US, and also it became difficult to persuade and compel the reluctant states to pool resources in GWOT.

By destroying terrorist safe havens in Afghanistan, the US has been able to interdict and disrupt the material support for terrorists and we see very few international terrorist attacks. The issue of terrorism and insurgency in Pakistan remains and because of the state continues to pay high price by the hands of Islamist terrorist networks led by Al-Qaeda central based in Pakistan.

The US policy objectives have been successful in defending the US interests at home and abroad and we see implementation of national strategies for countering terrorism and security. But again as the interests are integrated and the US policy measures have resulted in an insecure Pakistan. A weak Pakistan would only make US policy makers uncomfortable.

It took the US and Allied forces only month and a half to take Kabul and other major cities under their control and same was the case in Iraq where the Coalition of the Willing succeeded in toppling the Saddam Hussain regime in just after 19 days of fighting. But the post-invasion scenarios in both the cases are almost identical. In Afghanistan we see the resurgence of Taliban and in Iraq the Islamist radical groups backed by Syria and Iran. It is pertinent to mention scholars like Peter Bergen and Michael Doran who believe that “9/11 was a strategic way to provoke America into a war that incites a pan-Islamic revolution.”

¹ House of Commons, Speeches,
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200203/cmhansrd/vo031015/text/31015w01.htm>

There was no substantial relationship between Jihadists/radicals of Afghanistan and Iraq but the event of Iraq war provided a *casus celebre* for radical Islamist movements worldwide. This is exactly what Bin Laden network wanted to achieve by attacking symbols of American might in September 11 attacks. Al-Qaeda or Bin Laden network may not have formal connection and ties with worldwide Islamist radical organizations but the ambition is to present Al-Qaeda as an umbrella organization for the worldwide Wahabi/Salafi terrorist organizations. This is one of the objectives Al-Qaeda has so far been able to achieve. Whether it is Islamic Courts Union or Al-Shabab of Somalia or Jamiah Islamia of Indonesia or radicals Nigerian Boko Haram, all these organizations have started calling themselves Al-Qaeda. There were no substantial proof of Iraq's involvement and support for Al-Qaeda. There had already been the presence of radical Islamist groups in Iraq such as Ansar ul Islam (a Kurdish Wahabi/Salafi radical organization) and Jamaat Ansar al-Sunnah (militant Wahabi/Salafi group). These groups were easily defeated by Peshmerga or Armed forces of Kurdistan (with the support of CIA's Special Activities Division) before the invasion and there were no formal Al-Qaeda base in Iraq. During the course of investigations started after September 11, attacks it was believed that Mohammad Atta the ring leader had some ties with Iraqi intelligence and reports that he met with some Iraqi intelligence officer in Prague, Czech Republic. These reports later came out to be untrue and no evidence was found supporting the Iraqi involvement in September 11 attacks.

In one his messages released in 2003 (after the US invasion) Bin Laden said: *"Be glad of the good news: America is mired in the swamps of the Tigris and Euphrates. Bush is, through Iraq and its oil, easy prey. Here is he now, thank God, in an embarrassing situation and here is America today being ruined before the eyes of the world."*¹

A letter was found from the rubble where Iraqi militant Abu Musab al-Zarqawi was killed and believed to be by some Al-Qaeda operative to Zarqawi (believed to be from Atiyah Abd Rahman) had the same tone: *"The most important thing is that the Jihad continues with steadfastness...indeed, prolonging the war is in our interest."*²

The only evidence that vaguely linked Iraq with Al-Qaeda was Abdul Rahamn Yasin, a fugitive and one of the FBI's most wanted terrorist (wanted for his role in 1993 WTC Bombing). Yasin assisted Ramzi Yousaf in making the bomb and was the only member of Ramzi Yousaf's cell in New York City who managed to flee and later given asylum by the Iraqi government. He continued to live there till the US invasion. But again it is disputed that whether the Ramzi's cell was financed by Bin Laden network or was it a sleeper cell.

In his article "Resurgence of the Taliban Insurgency in Afghanistan: How and why?", former Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan Najibullah Lafraie categorically described one of causes was diversion of essential intelligence, military and reconstruction resources from *Operation Enduring Freedom* to *Operation Iraqi Freedom*. He further stated other follies of both the US and Afghan administration that eventually paved the way for their insurgency that made things difficult for Allied forces and local Afghans :

- The rise of warlords that led to political persecution, human rights abuses, criminal activities include rape, murder, illegal detention, forced displacement and human

¹ Bin Laden, « Message to Iraqis », Al-Jazeera English, Octobre 2003.

² Dan Murphy, « How Al-Qaeda views a long Iraq war », *The Christian Science Monitor*, 10/06/2006, <http://www.csmonitor.com/2006/1006/p01s04-woiq.html>

trafficking of women and children.

- The Bonn Conference and Agreement did not fully represent as far as this country's ethnic diversity was concerned. All the key ministries (Interior, Foreign and Defense) were given to Tajik dominated Northern Alliance, alienating the Pashtuns segment of Afghan society.
- The Taliban were not comprehensively defeated. Many of the low ranking Taliban were executed during captivity by warlords like General Rashid Dostum. The treatment of captured Taliban by the Northern Alliance was one of the major causes of resurgence.
- Because of the growing relations between Northern Alliance leaders and Pakistan's arch rival India, the Pakistani policy makers and intelligence apparatus also started to play its role. Ahmed Rashid, a renowned Pakistani journalist and author believes that the Musharraf regime played a double game after changing sides and joining the war on terror. While vigorously hunting Al-Qaeda, it supported the Taliban not only to retain the US interest in the region but also to be able to play a role in future Afghan politics. But the whole Pakistani exercise was India centered as the Indians have already started to play their Northern Alliance cards and had opened up four consulates in cities near Pak-Afghan border¹.
- Incompetence, massive corruption and weakness of Karzai government were other major factors.
- Growing factionalism in Afghanistan and Pashtun and non-Pashtun rivalry.
- Slow pace of reconstruction and development projects
- Weak and inefficient Afghan army and police
- And above all the Taliban insurgency is predominantly Pashtun. It is true that the non-Pashtuns have tolerated the presence of the US and NATO so far owing to a fear of the return of the Taliban to power and resumption of Pakistani interference in Afghanistan affairs².

The fact of the matter is that there were number of options available for continuing the War against Terror with the same fervor as the war was fought against Al-Qaeda and Taliban in Afghanistan and maintaining the same public opinion figures. There might have other and more important theatres of GWOT.

- Undoubtedly Iraq under the dictatorship of Saddam Hussain was no worse than China, North Korea, Russia etc, but the state had a secular agenda and no established ties with radical Islamist terrorist organization were known. It does not mean that the country was in good state of affairs. It was a brutal and totalitarian regime but its worst human rights record does not provide a rationale for military intervention. There were no substantial connections found that support Iraqi regime's role in accommodating Al-Qaeda and other terrorist networks, thus, there were no urgency to take on this country rather than those with clear indications.
- Iran on the other hand seemed to pose a substantial threat for the US and allies. The Iranian regime is even more repressive and Taliban-styled in running the affairs of the country. Iran not only provides significant military and financial aid to terrorist organizations like Hezbollah for many years but also presents itself as role model for radical Islamist organizations. It is now the only state being run by radical clergymen

¹ For details see, Ahmed Rashid, "Descent into Chaos: The US and the Disaster in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Central Asia", Penguin Books, 2007

² Najibullah Lafraie, "Resurgence of the Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan: How and why?", International Politics, Vol 46, 1, 102-113, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009

with fifth largest oil reserves at their disposal along with unlimited financial means to aid and train international terrorist organizations.

- Hezbollah could have been taken to task instead. Hezbollah is an International terrorist organization based in Lebanon, and has been in business for more than 30 years. There have not been any substantial military action against this organization and it continues to operate freely.
- There has been a continuous threat of Islamist terrorist organizations in countries like Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. These countries are in severe need of sound assistance of both of military and financial to help upgrade their state apparatus to curb the indigenous terror networks
- Most importantly, plagued with Islamist terror networks Pakistan needs assistance on all grounds more than any country in the world. There has been widespread violence and acts of terror by Islamist militant organizations during all of these years after the beginning of War against Terror.
- Poverty provides the breeding ground for terrorism and because of the abject poverty in most of the Muslim-majority countries; Islamist terrorist organizations find suitable grounds of recruitment. There are many areas in Muslim world where by providing better health and education facilities Islamist terror networks could easily be checkmated. Political wings of Islamist terrorist organizations always adopt the same strategy in winning hearts and minds of general masses. One example is Muslim Brotherhood, on one hand it is considered to be famous for its philanthropist works as a charity organization and on the other hand continued to provide tacit support to its militant wing Islamic Jihad.
- There have been quite a number of attacks against western and US citizens in Saudi Arabia by militant Wahabi/Salafi and efforts should have been taken to persuade Saudi Arabia to curb these groups along with active US support.
- Egypt, Morocco, Algeria, and Lebanon must have been supported on state level to enhance these countries' capabilities to combat jihadist groups; already having strong bases in these countries.
- Even in the 9/11 Commission Report it was acknowledged that the terrorist financial networks and the source of terrorist funding could not be ascertained. There is a serious need to reckon the fact that without dismantling the terrorist financing networks there could not be an end.

As far as Pakistan-Afghanistan relations are concerned, border issues have always been the bone of contention between the two states. Pashtuns have always remained dominant in Afghanistan's policy making but it's not the case in Pakistan, where it is more institutional rather than ethnic¹. In present day Afghan politics there are some new players: India, China and Iran. Pakistan is not ready to accept the new Indian role in Afghan politics and India is not ready to quit the ground.

Pakistan has repeatedly alleged the role Indian consulates in aiding militancy in Pakistani province of Baluchistan. *"Prime amongst these issues was Kabul's allegation about the Taliban and Al-Qaeda presence in Pakistani territories and Pakistan's concerns about Indian consulates based in Afghanistan and their role in the militancy in Baluchistan."*

During President Karzai's visit, Islamabad is reported to have provided proof to the Afghan President of the role of the Indian consulates in Jalalabad, Kandahar, Mazar-e-

¹ Ethnic groups in Pakistan: Punjabi 44.68%, Pashtun (Pathan) 15.42%, Sindhi 14.1%, Sariaiki 8.38%, Muhajirs 7.57%, Balochi 3.57%, other 6.28%, *Pakistan: CIA World Factbook*, 2014.

*Sharif and Herat in fuelling violence in Pakistan especially Baluchistan.*¹

And adding insult to injury a financially strong Indian government has provided \$650 million for reconstruction projects in aid and grants. There have been allegations against Pakistan of not doing enough to root out Taliban and Al-Qaeda presence in Pakistan, which may not be true (Pakistan has denied the allegations) but the growing Afghan-Indian relations, have definitely made Pakistan edgy². *“Islamabad has on its part has been expressing its concerns over the location of six Indian consulates in cities along the Pakistan border, and the Indian military assistance to the Afghan authorities for the building of the Afghan National Army. India recently sent 300 commandos into Kandahar. While the Indians claim that their troops are there to protect Indian workers, Pakistan finds this explanation unconvincing as there are workers from other countries in Afghanistan and Afghan government has not allowed any of them to send their troops to protect their citizens.”*³

In their article “The Iraq Effect”, Peter Bergen and Paul Cruickshank broadly describe effects of the Iraq Operation and its overall impacts on the War against Terror. Their study shows a sevenfold increase in the yearly rate of fatal Jihadist attacks. Some of increasing trends were noted as:

- Globally a 607% rise in the average yearly incidence of attacks (28.3 attacks per year before and 199.8 percent after) and a 237% rise in the average fatality rate (from 501 to 1,689 deaths per year).
- Jihadist terrorists have attacked key American allies since the Iraq conflict began, mounting multiple bombings in London and Madrid.
- There have been six jihadist attacks on the home soil of the United States’ NATO allies (including Turkey) in the period after the invasion of Iraq.
- One measure of the impact of the Iraq war is the precipitous drop in public support for the US in Muslim-majority countries. Jordan a key US ally saw popular approval for the US drop from 25% in 2002 to 1 percent in 2003.
- There have been 37 attacks in Arab countries outside of Iraq since the invasion, while there were only 3 in the period between 9/11 and March 2003.
- The Iraq War has made Bin Laden’s message of global struggle even more persuasive to militants. Over the past three years, Iraq has attracted thousands of foreign fighters who have been responsible for the majority of suicide attacks in the country.
- A majority of suicide bombers in Iraq were Saudis (2002 to 2005 study 104 from Saudi Arabia and 21 from Iraq).
- A drastic increase in the followers of hardcore Takfiri ideology⁴.

According to Peter Bergen, the growth of global jihadist culture and rise in number of attacks is indeed Iraq Effect and that has changed the overall perception of GWOT.

Afghanistan is considerably weak and unstable in comparison to its neighbors for the last four decades. It provides a venue for not only its neighbors but regional and global powers to settle scores, in fact brute international politics. All these countries

¹ Rizwan Zeb, “Cross Border Terrorism Issues Plaguing Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations”, China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly, Volume 4, No 2 (2006), p.69-74

² For details about the Pakistan-India and China competition on Afghanistan see, Farhan Zahid, Herman Matthijs and Jacque Verraes, *Kabul after NATO withdrawal in 2014: Impediments or Incitements for Taliban?*, Centre Français de Recherche sur le Renseignement (CF2R), August 2013

³ Rizwan Zeb, *op cit*.

⁴ Peter Bergen, and Paul Cruickshank, “The Iraq Effect: The War in Iraq and its Impact on the War on Terrorism”, Mother Jones, March/April, 2007 Issue

have invested heavily in Afghanistan and in different periods managed to use their proxies against each other. Each state is considering its interests in foreign policy formulation and not ready to give up an inch.

One could talk about the legitimacy and need of war in Iraq or its timings but one thing is crystal clear that it has tremendously effected the eastern front of Global War on Terror in general and Pakistan in particular. With the withdrawal of major chunk of US forces by the end of 2014 with many of the objectives remained unattained it seems pretty obvious that a new phase of GWOT is about to kick off in the AfPak theater.

Dr Farhan Zahid & Haider Sultan

July 2014

