

# PAKISTAN'S FATA, TRANSNATIONAL TERRORISM AND THE GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT MODEL

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*The concerns regarding Pakistan's instability – the increasing influence of the Taliban and radicals, and an fragile nuclear country – have led to debate as to the optimal, systematic approach to simultaneously bolstering the Zardari government and also stymieing the encroachment of the Taliban in Pakistan and Afghanistan. In particular, the unrest in the Federally Administrated Tribal Areas (FATA) has called into question whether or not Pakistan is a failed state, or simply plagued by an authority vacuum in the FATA that has implications beyond Pakistan's border that include providing a safe haven to global terrorist organizations. Through an overview of the ongoing challenges in the FATA region, and Pakistan in general, a development model is proposed to at least partially thwart the expanding influence of the Taliban in Pakistan and enable the Zardari government to reassert its legitimacy.*

## **KEYWORDS**

Pakistan, Federally Administrated Tribal Areas, Sovereignty, Intelligence Counterterrorism, Multilateral Development

In the post-Pervez Musharraf political environment of Pakistan, a short-lived sense of hopefulness emerged that the democratically elected leader, Asif Ali Zardari, would stabilize the country. Since September 2008, when he came to power, the opposite has occurred. Although the country's precipitous fall into turmoil is not Zardari's doing, he is haplessly at the helm of a Pakistan that is even more violent than recent decades. There are a myriad of political and military calamities throughout the country that contribute to its near failed state status. Currently, Pakistan is one of the least stable countries possessing nuclear weapons; the economy is crippled; Kashmir remains contentious; the northwest region, known as the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) harbors exiled Taliban leaders and al Qaeda's leadership; and there is an ongoing radicalization throughout the country—not limited to the FATA. As seen in the December 2008 attacks on Mumbai, the security of countries near and far could be gravely affected by Pakistan's inability to reign in terrorist elements. This ominous situation is why stabilizing the country is one of the most pressing issues for the international community.

International attention has increasingly focused on the global implications of the FATA as a terrorist safe haven and how best to eradicate the radicalization and threats that emanate from the region. In particular, the US has voiced concern that Taliban and possibly members of al Qaeda are launching cross border attacks, from the FATA, on US military personnel and other coalition forces in Afghanistan. These attacks have led to military incursions by the US and a generally deteriorating security situation. The main question explored is: How can the international community combat the radicalization and terrorist groups residing in this border region if the US is to move beyond unilateral actions in the FATA? While some terrorist experts have identified a growing trend of non-geographically based terrorism, the FATA may be an anomaly as it provides a physical and symbolic enclave for the al Qaeda structure and its subsidiary organization, the Taliban. While focusing mainly on the FATA, this paper also outlines the major factors contributing to Pakistan's destabilization, the global security implications and complexity of resolving Pakistan's status as a failed state.

### **Pakistan's Major Affliction: Failed State Status**

Pakistan has many signs of a state on the verge of collapse. According to a joint *Foreign Policy* magazine and the Fund for Peace study published in 2008, Pakistan ranks ninth in terms of failed states, coming after the Ivory Coast in eighth place and Afghanistan in seventh place.<sup>1</sup> Its best score came in its economic rating, which relative to other developing countries was fairly high. Twelve criteria and a composite score determined

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix II.

the ranking, and in areas such as “Factionalized Elite,” “Security Apparatus” and “Delegitimazation of State”, Pakistan ranked especially poorly.

Another view of Pakistan is that it is not a failed state but possesses a factionalized elite and government that is unable to manage parts of the country, especially the territory near Afghanistan. A third view almost entirely dismisses Pakistan as a failed state. *The Economist* magazine rejects the characterization and argues:

The fighting in the tribal areas and the killing last year of Benazir Bhutto misleads outsiders into calling Pakistan a failed state. If that were truly so, America’s policy of bombing al-Qaeda targets inside Pakistan might make some sense—as might Indian military intervention in Pakistan. But it is not that simple. Most of Pakistan is quite firmly under the state’s control.<sup>2</sup>

Semantics aside, if Pakistan is not a “failed state” yet, it has other trappings of a highly unstable one with a divided elite, vulnerable government and a deteriorating security environment overall.

As a result of the pressure that globalization<sup>3</sup> exerts on states, failed state status may become a global trend. Increasingly, states that suffer from the dual affliction of poverty and terrorism are often unable to contend with either situation effectively, and both perniciously feed into one another as a country’s inability to manage security issues creates disincentives for foreign direct investment. Pakistan has increasingly appeared as a dangerous country for investors, and that view was confirmed as a symbol of Western culture, the Islamabad Marriot, was bombed in September 2008. And even as governments attempt to facilitate adequate investor climates and uphold rule of law to promote foreign direct investment, their first priority must be towards fighting terrorism. However, to effectively combat terrorism, the state should possess significant authority and legitimacy, and if it lacks authority in the economic realm, it must regain authority by presenting the semblance that it is in control of the state’s security environment. This boost to authority, unfortunately, is usually only short-lived. As James Rosenau explains:

Although the authority of states subjected to terrorist attacks may be temporarily reinvigorated by such attacks, it is otherwise likely that the diminution of state authority throughout the world has led not only to a shift of authority to other collectivities but also to vacuums of authority, to situations in such disarray as to be lacking any centers of authority.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> “Dealing with Pakistan, After Mumbai” *The Economist*, 6 December 2008, 15-16.

<sup>3</sup> Throughout the paper, the term globalization is conceived in a somewhat traditional sense meaning the exchange of ideas and “to describe cross-border relations between countries, and...a growth of international exchange and interdependence. In this vein Paul Hirst and Grahame Thompson have identified globalization in terms of ‘large and growing flows of trade and capital investment between countries’” (Aart Scholte, 16).

<sup>4</sup> James Rosenau, *Distant Proximities*. (Princeton and London: Princeton University Press, 2003) 281.

As the legitimacy of the Pakistani government has diminished due to issues such as the economy and deteriorating security, the country's turbulence has been exacerbated by terrorist groups benefiting from globalization and finding an ideal haven in the border region.<sup>5</sup> The FATA is considered an isolated, rural, underdeveloped region but has attracted foreign fighters, an exchange of ideas (especially tactical) amongst terrorists, and has given the best known terrorist brand name—al Qaeda, an enclave and hub to continue a global jihad. While globalization and poverty have facilitated terrorism in Pakistan, other issues have also contributed to the rise of radical movements such as historical factors and Islamabad's lack of authority in the FATA. For the Pakistani government, securing the region and effectively asserting its authority and legitimacy is crucial. How to achieve this is what has eluded the Pakistani government if one believes that they are committed to improving their economic state of affairs and remedying their domestic security concerns.

### **The FATA's "Talibanization" and al Qaeda Inhabitants**

Pakistan's failed state status, if one accepts this characterization, has been greatly affected by the restive FATA region. Furthermore, the alliance between the Taliban and al Qaeda has signified both groups' ability to spread their influence in the region; ability to collect intelligence to execute opponents, diplomats or western aid workers in nearby regions; increased movement of jihadists from other countries; and an economy propped up by drug trafficking, which continues to fuel radical Islamists' staying power.

The FATA is composed of autonomous tribal agencies, and possesses isolated villages surrounded by rugged mountainous terrain—all of which create obstacles for administration by the government. According to Rajon Menon, a scholar on Pakistan and Central Asia, the region is, "...prime real estate for al-Qaeda. The local regimes are weak and ill-equipped to infiltrate and disrupt a major terrorist organization, which can gain recruits because there are so many deep-rooted problems and discontented young men."<sup>6</sup> Lee Hamilton, a former congressman and the 9/11 Commission's Vice Chair, described Pakistan as the most dangerous country in the world; however, it may be that the FATA is the most dangerous territory in the world. The political history of the Pakistan and Afghan border region has created an environment fertile for the establishment of radical groups.

Historically, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, which lasted from 1979 until 1989, was characterized by Pakistani involvement in supporting the CIA-backed Afghan

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<sup>5</sup> See the 9/11 Commission Report's assessment on page 88 that discusses how globalization (particularly technological innovations) has empowered terrorists.

<sup>6</sup> Rajan Menon, "'Greater Central Asia,' Russia, and the West: Challenges and Opportunities for Cooperation" in *Russia's Engagement with the West*. (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2005) 212.

freedom fighters or mujahedin.<sup>7</sup> The history of the mujahedin and their relations with Pakistan has a complex evolution but is explored here only in a cursory way. However, the allegiances that have been built in the region during the Afghan war, especially with the Pashtun tribal leadership and during the ascent of the Taliban, have strongly influenced the current state of the FATA.

With the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, the plight of the Afghans became a rallying point or jihad for many Muslims who used Pakistan's border regions to set up military training camps. The CIA, along with significant funding from the Saudi Arabian government, began funneling money to the mujahedin fighters in Afghanistan through Pakistan.<sup>8</sup> The CIA and Saudis sought to undermine the Soviets by arming and supplying the mujahedin, with the Pakistanis as the gatekeepers of funding. It was also in the early 1980s that Osama bin Laden's ventures into Pakistan to courier money from wealthy Saudis and his eventual residency in Peshawar (the largest city in the North-West Frontier Province) began.<sup>9</sup>

The Pakistani government, starting with General Mohammed Zia ul Haq to General Pervez Musharraf, backed the mujahedin, and later Taliban elements, even when world public opinion was against this latter alliance.<sup>10</sup> During the early period of the Afghan war, General Zia helped establish madrassas—many of which inculcated Afghans and Pakistanis with extreme religious views—and military training camps in the FATA and Peshawar.<sup>11</sup> Many Afghans sought shelter from their country's raging civil war during the Soviet invasion and grew up in refugee camps in Pakistan. By the 1980s there were an estimated 1.4 million Afghan refugees in the country.<sup>12</sup>

Pakistan's political involvement with Afghanistan did not end once the Soviets withdrew in 1989. The mujahedin, a few of whom were the predecessors of the Taliban movement in Afghanistan, had lived and been educated in the Pakistani refugee camps and madrassas and their world vision was shaped in the tribal areas and the North-West Frontier Province. The Taliban realized that although the Soviets had been forced out, Afghanistan's one-time liberators, the mujahedin, had become corrupt and lawless. Therefore, "By choosing such a name the Taliban (the plural of *Talib*) [they] distanced themselves from the party politics of the Mujaheddin and signaled that they were a

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<sup>7</sup> The Afghan fighters (from Afghanistan) are frequently referred to by Steve Coll as mujahedin, which means holy warrior. However, Ahmed Rashid also calls the Arab fighters involved in the Soviet invasion mujahedin. For consistency, here the term mujahedin will refer to the Afghan fighters, and a distinction will be made for foreign fighters. In addition, there is no consensus on the proper spelling of mujahedin and this shorter form will be used unless quoting an author who uses another version.

<sup>8</sup> Steve Coll's book *Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan, and bin Laden, from the Soviet Invasion to September 10, 2001*, (New York: Penguin, 2004) provides a comprehensive look at the CIA's funding of the Afghan mujahedin.

<sup>9</sup> Lawrence Wright. *The Looming Tower* (New York: Vintage Books, 2006) 109, 119 and 127.

<sup>10</sup> Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000) 188-189.

<sup>11</sup> Coll, 61.

<sup>12</sup> Wright, 52-53.

movement for cleansing society rather than a party trying to grab power.”<sup>13</sup> Ahmed Rashid notes that Pakistan’s involvement in Afghanistan and near unconditional backing for the Taliban when they emerged in 1994 had much to do with gaining a strong military foothold in Afghanistan to strengthen their position vis-à-vis the Indians, especially in Kashmir.<sup>14</sup> In addition, some members of the Pakistan security forces, Inter-services Intelligence (ISI) fervently supported and personally believed in the agenda of the Taliban.<sup>15</sup> Pakistan would go on to become one of the few countries to recognize the Taliban.

In 2001, after the US’s military campaign in Afghanistan that ousted the Taliban from power, many members of the Taliban retreated to the FATA, or Pakistan in general, to establish an exile base. And since Osama bin Laden had been a key benefactor to the leader of the Taliban, Mullah Omar, he also moved his operation to the mountainous border region. The adverse repercussions for the Pakistanis after having supported the Taliban would come to haunt them. As Rashid says, “...the Taliban gave sanctuary and armed the most violent Sunni extremist groups in Pakistan, who killed Pakistani Shias, wanted Pakistan declared a Sunni state and advocated the overthrow of the ruling elite through an Islamic revolution...In fact the backwash from Afghanistan was leading to the ‘Talibanization’ of Pakistan, but Pakistan was providing strategic depth to the Taliban.”<sup>16</sup> The Taliban’s assimilation into the region as well as influence over local Pashtun and other groups in the FATA meant a governing challenge for the Pakistani government, especially with the Taliban in a strategic alliance with al Qaeda.

### **The FATA’s Confluence of Calamities**

The FATA’s violence and poverty have pushed its inhabitants into a dire situation. Approximately 3.1 million people live in the FATA—a region of abject poverty and in desperate need of economic assistance. As reported in a US government report, the FATA:

...is one of Pakistan’s poorest regions, with high poverty, high unemployment, and an underdeveloped infrastructure. Most of the population depends on subsistence agriculture. The FATA’s per capita income is \$250 per year, which is half of the national per capita income; about 60 percent of the population lives below the national poverty line. Per capita public development expenditure is reportedly one-third of the national average.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Rashid, 22-23

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 186.

<sup>15</sup> Coll, 293-294.

<sup>16</sup> Rashid 187.

<sup>17</sup> United States Government Accountability Office. *Combating Terrorism. The United States Lacks Comprehensive Plan to Destroy the Terrorist Threat and Close the Safe Haven in Pakistan’s Federally Administered Tribal Areas.* (Online) <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d08622.pdf>. April 2008, 6.

The poverty and presence of the Taliban in the FATA is already troublesome but other factors complicate the ability for Pakistan to address this regional crisis. Some of these issues include the British colonial legacy of FATA administration, the contentious Durand Line and tribal culture loyal to the Taliban—all of which have made the border regions between Afghanistan and Pakistan porous and untenable.

The remaining British colonial administration looms large in the Pakistanis' ability to manage the FATA. Notably, from a legal framework and as described in a US government report, "FATA residents do not have access to national political parties, and political parties are forbidden from extending their activities into the agencies of FATA."<sup>18</sup> This law was not created to disenfranchise the citizens of the region but is instead a remnant of British rule, and the FATA residents have not replaced it, in part because the status quo allows for significant autonomy. In addition, the Afghan government has not recognized the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan—also known as the Durand Line. As described by a leading authority on Afghanistan, "On the Pakistani side of the Durand Line, the British and their Pakistani successors turned the difficulty of governing the tribes to their advantage by establishing what are now the FATA. Within the FATA, these tribes, not the government, are responsible for security."<sup>19</sup> Overall, this administrative scenario creates problems for the Pakistani government to coordinate delicate military operations, build up basic infrastructure and provide governance in the region.

Due to the lack of administration in the region, the Taliban have not only settled in the FATA and in parts of the North-West Frontier Province, they have also co-opted tribal leaders to create an administration whereby they can impose their strict Islamic lifestyle and system of justice on the population. The tribal chiefs and clans are highly important and have been reluctant to recognize the authority from Islamabad and instead many accept Taliban rule. The pervasive tribalism (particularly the prominence of the Pashtun ethnic tribes) and the historic ties to the mujahedin/Taliban leadership established during the Afghan-Soviet War have allowed the Taliban's influence to become widespread in the FATA.

The Taliban serving as a de facto political and administrative authority in the FATA has already meted out harsh justice to those who do not abide by the Taliban's rules. Beheadings and other forms of public punishment to instill fear into the locals are on the rise. Recently, however, villagers in parts of the border region have voiced

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>19</sup> Rubin, Barnett, R. and Ahmed Rashid. "From Great Game to Grand Bargain: Ending Chaos in Afghanistan and Pakistan" *Foreign Affairs*, (online) [http://www.cfr.org/publication/17595/from\\_great\\_game\\_to\\_grand\\_bargain.html](http://www.cfr.org/publication/17595/from_great_game_to_grand_bargain.html). November/December 2008.

opposition to the Taliban, with tribal leaders pushing back against the Talibanization.<sup>20</sup> Attempts by residents to escape the rule of the Taliban have had mixed results since the new strategy to arm the villagers has not always been effective and sometimes even generated more violence.<sup>21</sup>

Overall, Pakistan's historic legacies have contributed to the present situation in the FATA. The Pakistani's inability to effectively exert political authority or deliver adequate services in order to improve relations with tribal leaders has resulted in the Taliban filling in the governance vacuum. This scenario has also forced the US to take initiatives to secure the region (at least partially) through military strikes since the US views the Taliban as directly targeting US and coalition troops all the while using the FATA as a safe haven.

### **Targeted Attacks on the FATA: Breach of Sovereignty or Counterterrorism Necessity?**

The Pakistani government's limited political authority has complicated any concerted effort by outside forces to help the government thwart terrorism and rid them of extremist groups who have strategically taken up residence in the forsaken FATA. The US has voiced concern over Pakistan's marginal progress fighting al Qaeda and Taliban elements in the country. The tenuous situation has led to both sides unsatisfied with the level of cooperation each offers. The US's chief concern and complaint is that cross border attacks emanating from the FATA have been directed towards American and NATO personnel as well as military installations in Afghanistan. On the Pakistani side, the "targeted" bombings using drones have resulted in collateral damage and contribute to the Pakistani public's negative perceptions of Americans.<sup>22</sup> The Zardari government further argues that the bombings contribute to ire against Americans and undermine the hand he can play in his support on the War on Terror.<sup>23</sup>

Since its beginning, controversy has surrounded the US's strategic bombing in the FATA in terms of the violation of Pakistani sovereignty and collateral damage. The US has not publicly acknowledged using drones to target suspected Taliban leaders or al Qaeda members, but because the US is the only country in the region with the military technology to execute this campaign, it is almost a foregone conclusion. As attacks in the

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<sup>20</sup> Jane Perlez and Pir Zubair Shah. "As Taliban Overwhelm Police, Pakistanis Hit Back." *New York Times*. (Online) <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/02/world/asia/02pstan.html>. 2 November 2008.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Baker, Aryn. "US Stepping Up Operations in Pakistan." *Time Magazine*, (online) <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1840383,00.html>. 17 September 2008.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

region have increased, debate over the utility or futility of the US's cross-border incursions into Pakistan has emerged.

Those opposed to these targeted military actions include former intelligence officers, scholars and policy makers. Some Pakistan observers have argued that the bombings are ineffective and will only harden the resolve of terrorists and complicate the position of the Zardari government. Scholars such as Barnett Rubin and Ahmed Rashid contend that the strikes are inadequate without a comprehensive regional solution. In terms of the US's intelligence gathering capacity, Robert Baer, a former CIA field officer in the Middle East writes:

...the Bush administration's decision to step up attacks in Pakistan is fatally reckless, because the cross-border operations' chances of capturing or killing al Qaeda's leadership are slim. American intelligence isn't good enough for precision raids like this. Pakistan's tribal regions are a black hole that even Pakistani operatives can't enter and come back alive. Overhead surveillance and intercepts do little good in tracking down people in a backward, rural part of the world like this.<sup>24</sup>

Those advocating military action include a range of Pakistan observers—from military scholars to intellectual elites—who see the utility of continued cross-border incursions if the Pakistanis cannot control the FATA. Therefore, the US—all the while not admitting responsibility for the incursions—has no other options than to target terrorists by relying on high tech surveillance. The proponents of selective military strikes include military scholar, Anthony Cordesman, who argues that the US cannot wait if Pakistan will not act to curb attacks from non-state actors in Pakistan's border region.<sup>25</sup> Christopher Hitchens, an investigative reporter and writer has voiced similar concerns and has noted that the next administration would need to take a hard approach with Pakistan.<sup>26</sup> As two New York Times journalists explained: “The White House has adopted a clear position to justify those attacks [in the FATA]: if a country cannot deal with a terrorism problem on its own, the United States reserves the right to act unilaterally.”<sup>27</sup>

Another key criticism by the US of the Pakistanis is the role that the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) plays in fighting radicalization. The ISI and the Zardari government do not always appear to be working towards a common goal. The ISI's activities factor into Pakistan's failed state status, which is plagued by a rouge security apparatus and is partly the reason for a divided elite, according to the *Foreign Policy*

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<sup>24</sup> Robert Baer, “Washington Is Risking War with Pakistan,” *Time Magazine*, 17 September, 2008, (online) <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1841649,00.html>.

<sup>25</sup> Baker.

<sup>26</sup> Christopher Hitchens. “Pakistan is the Problem.” *Slate*. (online) <http://www.slate.com/id/2200134/>. 15 September 2008.

<sup>27</sup> Mark Mazzetti and Peter Baker. “Attacks Imperil Delicate U.S. Role Between Rivals.” *New York Times*. (online) <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/30/world/asia/30diplo.html?hp>. 30 November 2008.

magazine and Fund for Peace “Failed States Index 2008.” As part of the military, the ISI has excellent intelligence gathering capacity and wields great power throughout the country. The ISI had worked with the CIA during the Afghan-Soviet war sharing intelligence but has increasingly become an embarrassment if not detriment to the Pakistani government. One Muslim Indian politician suggests that ISI is not only reluctant to help the US with intelligence regarding Taliban and al Qaeda members, but is in fact aiding these groups.<sup>28</sup> Thus, the argument goes, if the US cannot always depend on the ISI for intelligence, it must surreptitiously launch strikes so that the ISI does not warn Taliban members.

Even if the ISI has a divided loyalty between the government and militants, military forces are positioned around the FATA. Its progress in removing militants, however, is hindered due to low moral—in part because of soldiers’ repulsion at Muslim killing Muslim—and secondly,<sup>29</sup> due to its inability to build bases in the region since locals continue to reject the military and prefer to rely on their own tribal forces.<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, the military and increasingly law enforcement are targeted by suicide bombings or threatened with beheadings by Taliban elements.<sup>31</sup> Pakistani military success continues to be daunting due to low moral and the lack of a residual force in the region. An Indian-Sikh military scholar and retired brigadier proposes: “One method that can be adopted is to establish an interlinked grid of company-sized ‘posts’ to dominate given areas, conduct patrolling and strike operations based on hard intelligence and, simultaneously, enable the civil administration to execute development projects and run schools, hospitals, a postal service and banks.”<sup>32</sup> Tactically, the Pakistani military would need to combine their targeted attacks with infrastructure development and continue to garner hard intelligence which is difficult to obtain.

President-elect Barack Obama, early into his presidential campaign asserted that if he had high-level intelligence he would consider bombing al Qaeda targets in the border regions between Pakistan and Afghanistan—something which is believed to be have been ongoing even before his declaration was made. The objection to Obama’s statement was initially that this tactic would violate Pakistan’s sovereignty and weaken our strategic partner. The sovereignty issue, however, has been side-stepped, possibly because the Zardari government is seen as emasculated or subservient to the military. One could also speculate that the Pakistani government is not altogether opposed to these

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<sup>28</sup> Arif Mohamed Khan, “Pakistan government can’t rein in ISI” India Abroad (online), <http://www.indiaabroad.com/news/2008/dec/01column-pakistan-government-cannot-rein-in-isi.htm> 1 December 2008.

<sup>29</sup> Brigadier (retired) Gurmeet Kanwal, “Losing Ground: Pak Army Strategy in FATA & NWFP” in *IPSC Issue Brief*, No 84, October 2008. Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies, (online) <http://www.ipcs.org/IB84-Gurmeet-PakArmy.pdf>. 1.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid. 2.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid. 1.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid. 4

bombings since the Taliban is undermining Zardari's legitimacy, even as the government voices opposition to show the Pakistani public that it does not condone such actions. As a failed state—or one on the brink—Pakistan's situation has been exacerbated by domestic terrorism, the continuing tensions over the Taliban and al Qaeda in the FATA, the government's complications at fighting the unpopular War on Terror and ongoing military strikes on targets in the FATA. Notwithstanding, especially post-Mumbai, Pakistan will be forced to show greater progress fighting radicals whether in Kashmir, Pakistan proper, or the FATA. The other alternative would be to deem what the FATA may very well be: another front on the War on Terror. If this description were articulated, it would suggest that the US is considering launching an attack on the non-state elements of Pakistan.

### **The Two US Options: War or the Global Development Model**

Suggestions will continue to be bandied about as to how best to resolve the critical threat of terrorism in Pakistan's FATA region, as well as Pakistan's near failed state status, which contributes to global terrorism. The way forward is either battling the terrorist militarily in the FATA or implementing a global model on development.

Recent experience from the Bush doctrine offered that terrorism, or the potential for state-sponsored terrorism, spawned from specific countries required the US to take the war to the terrorists. Moreover, toppling regimes that facilitated terrorism, and following this up with nation-building, would counter terrorism. If Iraq and Afghanistan are the benchmarks for success, neither military campaign has effectively prevented terrorism since both countries suffer from extremist attacks on a daily basis. The paradigm of country specific terrorism became discredited because of the failures in Afghanistan and Iraq, and as more people viewed the "leaderless jihad attacks"—even ones which failed—perpetrated in Western nations without clear instructions from al Qaeda leadership as signs of a changing terrorist structure.<sup>33</sup> The leaderless-jihad theory gained currency and overshadowed the supposition that terrorists remain regionally based. However, with the new focus, what may have been overlooked is that the worst case scenario exists: there are self-organizing cells or leaderless jihads globally, and terrorism is still regionally or geographically based.

US analysts and policymakers are acting prudently not to say that part of the territory of the US's strategic partners in the War on Terror, Pakistan, is also a new front on the War on Terror. The US, if it were to engage in a full-scale assault on the FATA would need to divert precious personnel and military resources away from Afghanistan and possibly Iraq. War on the FATA, even if the Pakistani government could somehow

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<sup>33</sup> Marc Sageman, "The Next Generation of Terror," *Foreign Policy*, March/April 2008, 37-39.

agree to this attack would likely fail.<sup>34</sup> The current targeted air strikes are also an unpleasant alternative unless intelligence is significantly improved and firstly the regional tribal leaders allow the Pakistani military to establish permanent bases. Winning the hearts and minds of the tribal leadership and empowering them to resist the Taliban and finally diverting their allegiance from the Taliban to the Pakistani government is one of the few solutions that may work. As Brigadier Kanwal suggests:

Clearly, at present the [Pakistani] army lacks both the will and the capacity to fight the insurgents effectively in the NWFP and FATA. It is also completely out of synch with the aspirations of the tribal people inhabiting these areas and is unable to win the battle of hearts and minds that is crucial to gaining popular support. While a few of the tribal chieftains are neutral in the fight between the army and the militants, most of them encourage their people to provide shelter and succor to the militants.<sup>35</sup>

The era of asymmetrical warfare is here and the hearts and minds military strategy could be implemented in Pakistan's border. US military leaders, especially David Petraeus, have seen the challenges of asymmetrical warfare and given testimony on how conventional warfare is no longer an adequate response to fighting counterinsurgencies.<sup>36</sup>

A newer paradigm has emerged to handle counterinsurgencies or asymmetrical warfare. And while the cross border incursions have suggested that the US has de facto identified the next possible front on the War on Terror, the US is not likely to engage in a full-scale battle in the FATA. Along with this military strategy, there is need to provides services and opportunities to the FATA residents.

The development model alternative to war has many critics, many of whom would be US taxpayers who find it loathsome that the US government would offer funds to supply Pakistan with weapons and some development aid, especially since Pakistan is showing little progress fighting radicalism. What should be presented by policy makers is that the festering terrorism will not be eliminated by bombs as most of the militants are living in remote hideouts. Furthermore, a military campaign would kill many civilians and embolden the Taliban. The military strategy of the past must be adjusted to accommodate the surprising notion of sustainable development—a strategy that is also acknowledged by the GAO when they report: “Since 2002, the United States has relied principally on the Pakistani military to address U.S. national security goals in the FATA. There have been limited efforts, however, to address other underlying causes of terrorism

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<sup>34</sup> Rubin and Rashid.

<sup>35</sup> Kanwal, 4.

<sup>36</sup> Andrew J. Bacevich, “The Petraeus Doctrine” *The Atlantic* (online) <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200810/petraeus-doctrine>. October 2008.

in the FATA, such as providing development assistance of addressing the FATA's political needs."<sup>37</sup>

Another argument against substantial aid would be the premise that poverty does not breed terrorism. However, in the FATA it is not only poverty, but brainwashing and social conformity, particularly in madrassas that has led to a proliferation of radical mindset.<sup>38</sup> Villagers in the FATA do not live in a society that is traditional and conservative because of their lineage, but because of what the Taliban has imposed on them and because they have become a pliant population under the Taliban due to lack of economic alternatives. The heroine trade has remained the key funding source and monopoly industry for those involved in terrorism in the region. If villagers in parts of the FATA are willing to stand up against the militant Taliban, as has been the case, there is some chance that the Pakistan government could win over the tribal chieftains.

Development aid is a tricky business but leaving an administrative and basic needs gap that the Taliban can fill is worse. There have been enough precedents to empirically show that terrorist groups have realized how to curry favor with the local population—namely by positioning themselves as social welfare organizations. As mentioned, the FATA is a destitute region, lacking infrastructure and an industry, and while the Zardari government is unable to provide economic aid packages, there is also a Pakistani Taliban with similar goals of setting up a “pure” Islamic state in Pakistan and may fill the vacuum of needs in the FATA and throughout the country. Although the Taliban are poor, they may eventually gain economic clout in Pakistan, if not in Afghanistan. Its partnership with al Qaeda, which has been adept at securing funding, and heroine industry control will help the movement with some cash flow. The Taliban could even model itself after other radical groups who have succeeded politically through charitable giving. One example is Hamas, whose political success in supplanting the more moderate PLO in power was aided by its welfare services. Currently, in parts of Africa, Wahhabi charities are funding mosques in countries such as Mali and throughout the Maghreb.<sup>39</sup> The US government has grasped the urgency in these situations and scaled up aid packages that have a distinct counterterrorism component.<sup>40</sup>

The US Government Accountability Office (GAO) has also said that urgent planning is needed to combat radicalism in the FATA and the operational word is comprehensive. All of the instruments at the US's disposal from economic incentives, intelligence gathering and military action must all be available. As the GAO reported, “...in its 2007 *Country Reports on Terrorism*, State [the State Department] indicated that

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<sup>37</sup> *Combating Terrorism* 9.

<sup>38</sup> Rashid 32.

<sup>39</sup> Eric Schmitt, “U.S. Helps African States Fend Off Militants” *The New York Times* (online) <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/13/world/africa/13mali.html?partner=permalink&exprod=permalink> 12 December 2008.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

Pakistan recognized that military operations alone would not restore stability to the FATA; instead, a comprehensive strategy was needed that also included economic, social development, political and administrative efforts to enhance security in the region.”<sup>41</sup> Lee Hamilton echoes the findings of the GAO report and says:

The U.S. needs a comprehensive plan to promote stability in the region with integrated security, political and economic components. Even then, the U.S. cannot achieve success and eliminate terrorist sanctuaries in the tribal areas without Pakistani help.<sup>42</sup>

The development model for Pakistan has been highly skewed towards military aid; however, this will not be sufficient if there is an attempt at winning of hearts and minds in the FATA region. Also the effectiveness of this approach is contingent on Pakistan having the authority to win over the tribal leaders' allegiance and improving their desperate economic plight through a development model. In addition, one distant country alone cannot facilitate success; regional players need to be involved. As the US extricates itself from Iraq and possibly scales up forces in Afghanistan under the umbrella of NATO, this bold move will need to be made multilaterally.

## **The Multilateral Development Agenda to Failed States & Transnational Terrorism**

Barnett Rubin and Ahmed Rashid assert, “The regional crisis is of that magnitude, and yet so far there is no international framework to address it...The next U.S. administration should launch an effort, initially based on a contact group authorized by the UN Security Council, to put an end to the increasingly destructive dynamics of the Great Game in the region.”<sup>43</sup> The US can serve as a facilitator and move the development model steadily ahead while incorporating other regional actors or organizations. Although the UN has proved to be ineffective in many conflict zones, it may still have a role to play. NATO has had more military leverage internationally than the UN, making it the only security organization that has clout on and as it is currently attempting to stabilize Afghanistan, it must also be invested in Pakistan's stability. The two states' move away from failed state status must be the international community's simultaneous goal in order for progress at countering terrorism in the region to truly begin. NATO partners and regional actors must address the FATA crisis before there are further spillover attacks from a region that is harboring terrorists.

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<sup>41</sup> *Combating Terrorism*, 16.

<sup>42</sup> Hamilton.

<sup>43</sup> Rubin and Rashid.

Throughout the decades US aid packages have had a checkered record. The largest of all packages, the Marshall Plan was considered a success and averted many fragile nations from drifting towards communist or socialist systems of government. There are many aspects to explore when considering aid programs, but clearly from lessons learned, programs must be comprehensive, include oversight and operate under some security structure. Moreover, a proactive approach incorporating aid packages where terrorisms flourish may be a new counterterrorism strategy, and overall is much more cost-effective than bombing a country into submission and then moving aid to the region.

What has become clear is that the need for international development must be comprehensive—not only US funded—since the unilateral approaches to aid dispersal is ineffective. As stated by two diplomats from the region, Husain Haqqani and Said T. Jawad:

People who are well fed are not desperate. People who have confidence in public education do not turn toward political madrassas to educate their children. People who have good jobs do not shelter terrorists. In other words, prosperity is one of the most important predictors of stability, which in turn is the single most critical element in the containment of fanaticism and terrorism.<sup>44</sup>

## Conclusion

The international community must finally move forward in establishing some mechanisms or a concerted action plan to combat radical global terrorism. Financial concerns have motivated countries to assemble, as in the recent G-20 conference to deal with the global financial meltdown. Terrorism, as in the case of the Mumbai bombings, also has economic consequences, and worldwide, the psychological costs and resources that are allocated are immeasurable. The world is watching to see what the US can achieve under President-elect Obama but the US must move beyond unilateralism. As a starting point, the new administration could facilitate a global meeting on terrorism, especially since it would not be burdened, as the Bush administration was, with a backlash against Afghanistan and Iraq war and the War on Terror campaign, which in global surveys has shown the US's image abroad tarnished.<sup>45</sup>

Multilateral development, provided it is accompanied by a regional political approach and a military presence, can partially remedy the extreme border difficulties

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<sup>44</sup> Husain Haqqani and Said T. Jawad. "Pakistan and Afghanistan Unite Against Terrorism." *Wall Street Journal* (online), <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB122238726795877141.html#>. 26 September 2008.

<sup>45</sup> Meg Bortin, "Global poll shows wide distrust of United States" *The International Herald Tribune* (online) <http://www.ihf.com/articles/2007/06/27/news/pew.php> 27 June 2007.

between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Aid packages should be country specific but also incorporate regional actors.

Location remains important in countering terrorism and stabilizing failed or failing states. The global trends that put more pressure on states also embolden terrorists who are increasingly moving into vacuums of authority and are relying on innovations in technology to promote their message of a violent global jihad. While some theorists postulate that terrorist threats will not be regionally based, the FATA suggests otherwise. The spill over effect of securing the FATA could halt one of the last geographic safe-havens for terrorism. Terrorism may never be eradicated but the FATA is a region that must be addressed.

Although Pakistan has been an imperfect partner in the War on Terror, there have been conciliatory gestures by the democratically-elected Zardari government towards its long-time nemesis, India; and he has shown some cooperation in cracking down on terrorists. There are arguments to be made that a delicate balance can be struck as the international community pursues stabilization in the restive FATA and supports the government. The divisions between the political elite, military, security services and law enforcement certainly make it a challenging situation, but partners can be found in the Pakistani government. Particularly if the Zardari government is able to increase its legitimacy in the economic and security realm, aid—not only military—would at least partially reduce radicalism as it would allow the Pakistani government to regain some of its legitimacy. A concerted multinational effort of “carrots and sticks” implemented in this increasingly turbulent region remains one of the most compelling counterterrorism propositions.

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## ADDENDUM I

### *The FAILED STATES INDEX 2008<sup>46</sup>*

			INDICATORS OF INSTABILITY											
RANK	TOTAL	COUNTRY	DEMOGRAPHIC PRESSURES	REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS	GROUP GRIEVANCE	HUMAN FLIGHT	UNEVEN DEVELOPMENT	ECONOMY	DELEGITIMIZATION OF STATE	PUBLIC SERVICES	HUMAN RIGHTS	SECURITY APPARATUS	FACTIONALIZED ELITES	EXTERNAL INTERVENTION
1	114.2	Somalia	9.8	9.8	9.5	8.3	7.5	9.4	10.0	10.0	9.9	10.0	10.0	10.0
2	113.0	Sudan	9.0	9.6	10.0	8.8	9.3	7.3	10.0	9.5	9.9	9.8	9.9	9.9
3	112.5	Zimbabwe	9.7	9.0	9.5	10.0	9.6	10.0	9.5	9.6	9.8	9.5	9.3	7.0
4	110.9	Chad	9.1	9.2	9.7	7.8	9.1	8.3	9.7	9.4	9.5	9.8	9.8	9.5
5	110.6	Iraq	9.0	9.0	9.8	9.3	8.5	7.8	9.4	8.5	9.6	9.9	9.8	10.0
6	106.7	Dem. Rep. of Congo	9.6	9.2	8.8	7.9	9.0	8.3	8.3	9.1	8.9	9.6	8.6	9.4
7	105.4	Afghanistan	9.1	8.9	9.5	7.0	8.1	8.5	9.2	8.3	8.4	9.6	8.8	10.0
8	104.6	Cote d'Ivoire	8.4	8.3	9.5	8.4	8.0	8.5	8.9	7.8	9.0	9.2	8.9	9.7
9	103.8	Pakistan	8.0	8.6	9.5	8.1	8.8	6.2	9.5	7.1	9.5	9.6	9.8	9.1
10	103.7	Central African Republic	9.0	8.8	8.9	5.5	8.8	8.4	9.2	8.6	8.7	9.4	9.4	9.0

#### Worst Categories for Pakistan:

9.5 Group grievance

9.5 Delegitimazation of state

9.5 Human rights

9.6 Security apparatus

9.8 Factionalized elites

<sup>46</sup> Compiled by: Foreign Policy and the Fund for Peace

Source: Edited image from *Foreign Policy* magazine online at [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/story/cms.php?story\\_id=4350&page=1](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/story/cms.php?story_id=4350&page=1)

## ADDENDUM II

### *Map of the FATA*



Sources: GAO, USAID and Map Resources