



## Senate I

### US-Pakistan Relations

By Basima Tewfik

#### Introduction

*“The people of Pakistan are deeply shocked and outraged at the dreadful terrorist attacks in New York and Washington which have resulted in an unprecedented loss of thousands of innocent lives. It is difficult to describe in words our sorrow and grief at this moment of national tragedy for the American people ...I wish to assure President Bush and the US government of our unstinted cooperation in the fight against terrorism ... Pakistan is committing all of its resources in an effort coordinated with the United States to locate and punish those involved in this horrific act.”*

*- Statement from former Pakistani leader Pervez Musharraf*

The September 11, 2001 attacks proved to be a defining moment for Pakistan, a country known for harboring **Al-Qaeda** operatives and other militant extremists. On September 12, former United States Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage told the head of Pakistan’s intelligence agency, “Be prepared to be bombed. Be prepared to go back to the Stone Age” (“US ‘threatened to bomb’ Pakistan”). The following day, Pakistan pledged to cooperate with US counterterrorism efforts in the region. The War on Terror, however, is just one of many US policy interests in Pakistan: nuclear weapons and missile **proliferation**, South Asian and Afghan stability, democratization and human rights, trade and economic reform, and countering narcotics trafficking all play a large role in the complex situation that is US-Pakistan relations.

**Al Qaeda**—an extremist Islamist group behind the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks

**proliferation**—a quick and usually unnecessary increase

#### Explanation of the Problem

##### *History of the Problem*

Modern-day Pakistan emerged in 1947 as a result of the partition of British India. At the time, 95% of the population in the colony was either Muslim or Hindu. Consequently, the British government settled on a two-state solution to colonial independence, creating the neighbor states of Pakistan, (which was majority Muslim), and India, (which was majority Hindu). Almost immediately after the partition, tensions between the two nations began to emerge. More than one hundred thousand people were killed in religious violence, and tensions over Kashmir—a disputed region that bordered both nations—led to the Indo-Pakistani War of 1947. Though none of these early affairs directly in-

volved the United States, tensions and conflicts between Pakistan and India perpetuate into modern times and dictate much of Pakistan's foreign policy.

The beginning of relations between the United States and Pakistan can be traced back to the 1950s. The relationship between the two nations was built on strategic interests. Soviet expansion in South East Asia and the Middle East concerned the United States greatly, while Pakistan sought assistance against its neighbor and historical foe, India. With these interests in mind, the United States and Pakistan began talks in 1953 and signed a mutual defense agreement in 1954. In the following year, Pakistan further aligned itself with its western ally by becoming a member of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) and the Baghdad Pact, which in 1959 was renamed the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO). In exchange for joining these agreements, Pakistan received \$2 billion in US aid, \$508 million of which was in the form of military aid given between the years of 1953 and 1961. It also allowed the United States to place a base within Pakistani territory in order to conduct military **reconnaissance** flights over areas controlled by the Soviet Union. Neither of these pacts, however, addressed Pakistan's primary concern—India.

In an effort to further solidify the alliance between the two nations, Pakistan insisted that the US sign the Agreement of Cooperation, an additional security agreement that was concluded in 1959. This agreement stated that the United States was committed to the "preservation of the independence and integrity of Pakistan" and would deploy troops to assist the Pakistani government—as long as it was "mutually agreed upon" that US military action was necessary. Pakistan believed that such an agreement guaranteed that the United States would support them in any conflict with India. The US, on the other hand, viewed the agreement—which did not directly discuss India—in a more minimalist sense, believing that it had not committed to either side in the Pakistan-India rivalry.

The true nature of this agreement would reveal itself in later decades. In 1965, Pakistan and India again went to war over Kashmir. During the war, US President Lyndon B. Johnson failed to provide aid to Pakistan. The US, who had secretly been supplying military equipment to India as well, stopped all arms shipments to both nations. This caused Pakistan to question its alliance with the United States.

In 1971, Pakistan was rocked by a civil war when **East Pakistan** revolted, seeking its independence from the rest of the country. The war was bloody—estimates of the total civilian death toll often reach as high as three million people—and ended only after India intervened to help East Pakistan gain its independence. Upon India's intervention, the US again suspended military aid, upsetting Pakistani President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Bhutto decided to pursue a policy distancing his country from

**reconnaissance**—  
*investigation with the  
intention of gathering  
information*

**East Pakistan**—  
*formerly a province of  
Pakistan, it revolted  
and broke away in  
1971, forming the mod-  
ern-day country of  
Bangladesh*

the US, a policy that resulted in Pakistan's withdrawal from SEATO, as well as CENTO's disbandment in 1979.

In 1974, India shocked the world by testing a nuclear bomb. The United States worried that India's nuclear test might provoke Pakistan into developing its own nuclear program but did not believe that Pakistan was advanced enough at the time to do so. However, Pakistani President Zulfikar Bhutto had secretly begun developing Pakistan's nuclear program in 1972—and had escalated the project after India's 1974 test. Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq, who assumed the Pakistani presidency in 1978, would continue Bhutto's efforts.

In 1979, the US discovered that Pakistan had constructed a uranium enrichment facility. In accordance with the Symington Amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, which stated that the US cannot provide economic assistance to countries involved in obtaining uranium enrichment technology, the United States stopped economically aiding Pakistan. Relations further soured when protesters, falsely informed that the US had been behind a fire in the Grand Mosque of Mecca, attacked the United States embassy in **Islamabad**, burning it to the ground and killing two Americans.

Relations between the two nations improved when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan in December of 1979, as the US viewed Pakistan as an ally in the region against the Soviet Union. In exchange for \$3.2 billion in aid presented over a period of six years, beginning in 1981, Pakistan served as a base for the United States and Saudi Arabia to arm the Afghan resistance fighters, the mujahideen, from 1980 to 1988. Although the Symington **Amendment** had been waived, the Pressler Amendment of 1985 to the Foreign Assistance Act placed restrictions on US aid to Pakistan. According to the amendment, the President had to certify each year that Pakistan did not possess a nuclear weapon before it could receive US aid. This certification was made annually until 1989.

Attention again turned towards Pakistan's nuclear program when the Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan in 1988 and the Cold War thawed the following year. In 1990, President George H.W. Bush, uncomfortable with Pakistan's nuclear program, suspended all aid to the country by failing to reaffirm the certification required by the Pressler Amendment. Not only was aid suspended from that point forward, but the F16 fighter jets purchased from the US by Pakistan in 1989 were not delivered. Consequently, tensions between the two nations increased. Although in 1992 Congress relaxed sanctions and began allowing the US to provide food aid and aid to **NGOs** in Pakistan, a relationship between the US and Pakistan was largely nonexistent during the 1990s. In December 1998, the US compensated Pakistan for failing to deliver the purchased F16s, paying \$325 million, as well as \$140 million worth of goods.

**Islamabad**—the capital of Pakistan

**amendment**—an addition to a written constitution, law, or proposed bill

**NGOs**—non-governmental organizations that further certain political, social, economic, or humanitarian aims of its members who are not affiliated with any particular government

## Recent Developments

The United States's current interests concerning Pakistan can be divided into five main concerns: nuclear weapons and missile proliferation, South Asian and Afghan stability in the face of extremist militants, countering narcotics trafficking, democratization and human rights, and economic reform.

**fissile**—any material, made up of atoms, whose nuclei can be split by neutrons, releasing energy in the process

### *Nuclear Weapons and Missile Proliferation*

In May of 1998, India conducted another nuclear test, its first since 1974. In response, Pakistan conducted its own nuclear test, and both nations then declared that they possessed fully developed nuclear weapons. Unhappy with its failure to prevent nuclear proliferation in Southeast Asia, the United States cut off all food, economic, and military aid to both Pakistan and India. However, this did not deter Pakistan from continuing to conduct nuclear tests and develop its nuclear program. In 2000, the country's nuclear program was placed under the jurisdiction of a National Command Authority chaired by then-President Pervez Musharraf. This was followed by increased development of nuclear-capable missiles, including the Shaheed-II, a ballistic missile with a range of up to 3500km.

In addition, Pakistan has also set out to create more facilities for developing nuclear weapons. In 2006, it was discovered that Pakistan was in the midst of constructing a new nuclear reactor, which ignited fears that China might also escalate its production of **fissile** material. Shortly thereafter, it was revealed that Pakistan was building not just one nuclear reactor but multiple reactors intended to be completed in the coming years. Two new reactors would lead to an increase in 200 kilograms in plutonium production each year, which is enough fissile material to produce 50 nuclear weapons. Though Pakistan has not officially confirmed the existence of these new reactors, it has insisted that it will continue to develop its nuclear program despite discouragement from the United States.

Even more troubling are reports that Pakistan was not just concentrating on its own nuclear program but was also assisting other nations in the creation of nuclear weapons. In 2002, reports revealed that Pakistan had been giving nuclear technology and related assistance to North Korea since the 1990s. Pakistan denied these reports. In 2003, reports came out stating that Pakistan had also assisted Libya and Iran. Initially, Pakistan again denied these reports. In December of that year, however, Pakistan began investigating several of its senior scientists, who may have operated independently. One of these senior scientists was Abdul Qadeer Khan, the founder of Pakistan's nuclear program. In

February 2004, Khan along with other senior scientists, confessed to giving information and uranium enrichment materials to Libya, Iran, and North Korea. While the Pakistani government indicated that it was ignorant of its scientists' doings, Khan disagreed, claiming that Pakistan's troops had overseen at least one delivery of nuclear technology. Because he was considered a national hero in Pakistan, Khan was given a pardon subject to several restrictions, such as house arrest. In May 2006, the case surrounding Khan was deemed closed by the Pakistani government. However, Khan's smuggling network is still a grave concern for the United States, particularly since the Pakistani Supreme Court removed all restrictions on his pardon in February 2009.

**emergency rule**—rule that is imposed by the government, often constitutions are suspended resulting in a dismissal of governmental procedural and civil liberties

### *Human Rights and Democratization*

Human rights violations are plentiful in Pakistan. The State Department reports that the Pakistani government has placed limits on freedoms of religion, association, movement, and political belief. The situation became particularly dire during a six week period in 2007, when then-President Musharraf imposed **emergency rule** and ordered troops to take control of Pakistan's radio and TV stations, as well as its Supreme Court. Even in quieter times, Pakistan has been linked to a judiciary heavily influenced by the executive; killings, tortures, and disappearances carried out without typical judicial procedure; expansive corruption; terrible conditions for prisoners; and other major violations. The US Commission on International Religious Freedom has found that Pakistan inadequately protects those belonging to religious minorities, and the organization Reporters Without Borders has ranked Pakistan as 159<sup>th</sup> out of 169 countries regarding world press freedom. Due to international pressure, the Pakistani government signed three key international human rights conventions in April 2008: the Convention Against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Punishments, the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. While such a movement was praised by numerous human rights organizations, human rights abuses in Pakistan still occur today.

Many see democratization of Pakistan as a way of reducing human rights violations. The Bush Administration repeatedly stated that democratization was the solution to achieving moderateness in Pakistan. Similarly, Benazir Bhutto, a former Prime Minister of Pakistan, maintained that democracy would end extremism and regional militancy in Pakistan. Though Butto was assassinated in December 2007, her husband, Asif Ali Zardari, assumed the Pakistani presidency in September 2008, signaling hope for democracy in Pakistan. Confronted, however, with a declining economy and rising militancy, analysts are unsure whether Pakistan is on a path to true democracy.

### *South Asian and Afghan Stability*

Stability in the region has been a main concern for the United States. First and foremost, Pakistan's rivalry with India, including the dispute over Kashmir, has troubled the United States—particularly in the realm of nuclear weapons and missile proliferation. Recently though, the conflict in Afghanistan has grown in importance, as the conditions there are heavily affected by Taliban fighters and extremists living in Pakistan.

Shortly after the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks, Pakistan joined the United States in the War on Terror. Pakistan has aided the counterterrorism effort by sharing intelligence, searching for and transferring Al-Qaeda operatives to the US, and providing naval and air force bases for the US military. Pakistan has sent more than 70,000 troops to the Afghan border and conducted numerous successful operations. Specifically, at least 700 Al Qaeda and Taliban operatives have been captured since the United States began to directly involve itself in Pakistan's efforts in the spring of 2002. The most notable of these captures are Abu Zubaydah in March 2002, Ramzi bin al-Shibh six months later, Khalid Sheik Mohammed in March of 2003, and Abu Faraj al-Libbi in May of 2005. Despite Pakistan's efforts, Al-Qaeda and Taliban members, often operating under new names, still maintain a strong foothold in Pakistan's mountainous region along the border with Afghanistan. In exchange for Pakistan's efforts, the US has given Pakistan \$12 billion dollars, including \$3.1 billion for economic assistance and \$2.2 billion for security-related programs.

While Pakistan has been somewhat successful in its counterterrorism efforts, some question the nation's sincerity, arguing that Pakistan's alliance with the United States was largely the product of post-9/11 coercion by the Bush administration. Because Pakistan has little control over its western provinces, where Taliban and Al Qaeda are thought to be headquartered, many observers feel that it has given extremists room to rebuild networks and become stronger. Such lack of sincerity was most apparent in Pakistan's operation aimed at capturing Baitullah Mehsud, one of the Taliban leaders responsible for the assassination of Benazir Bhutto. In June 2009, Pakistan made clear of its plan to capture Mehsud when President Asif Ali Zardari said in an interview that the army was heading to South Waziristan, Mehsud's alleged location. Pakistan did not block the main roads running through South Waziristan. Unsurprisingly, it is believed that Mehsud fled, leaving his subordinates to conduct roadside ambushes, carry out suicide attacks, and detonate improvised explosive devices, known as **IEDs**.

Though the United States has not deployed ground troops into Pakistan to directly attack extremists and terrorists hiding there, it has

**IED**—*improvised explosive devices, often used in unconventional fighting*

taken some limited military actions. In 2004, the Bush Administration began authorizing attacks on high-ranking terrorist leaders inside Pakistan. These attacks are carried out by missiles launched from Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs). As is implied in the name, UAVs do not use on-board pilots and are instead guided remotely from a base station on the ground, meaning the missile strikes do not involve any US personnel actually crossing the border into Pakistan.

**sovereignty**—*the quality of having supreme rule over a territory*

The UAVs have been extremely successful. US officials have indicated that the so-called Predator strikes—named for the MQ-1 Predator drone, the aircraft typically used in the attacks—have killed 9 of Al-Qaeda’s top 20 commanders, as well as the top Taliban leader in Pakistan. Since he took office, President Obama has escalated the Predator airstrikes, carrying out more during the first six months of 2009 than occurred in all of 2008.

At the same time, Pakistan has—at least in public—voiced its protest of the strikes, calling them a violation of its **sovereignty**. However, it is unclear to what extent these public remarks reflect the true stance of the Pakistani government. Some reports, including a 2008 *Washington Post* article, claim that the US and Pakistan have secret agreements to facilitate the Predator strikes. Pakistan is perhaps more sincere, though, when it decries the civilian deaths that often accompany drone strikes. Because terrorist leaders deliberately hide in areas populated with civilians, Predator strikes have high casualty rates, with some experts estimating that as many as ten civilians are killed for each militant leader assassinated—a figure that calls into question the true value of the attacks. After all, if the drone strikes alienate Pakistan’s population, they may do more long-term harm than good.

### *Narcotics Trafficking*

In 2008, former US President George W. Bush named Pakistan as one of the top 20 countries in the world involved in narcotics production or trafficking. Often, criminals and terrorists produce opium—a drug that can be refined to produce heroin—in Afghanistan and traffic it through neighboring Pakistan. With opium production at an extremely high level in Afghanistan, it has been suspected that some Pakistani government officials may be involved in drug trafficking. However, the State Department has not found any evidence to corroborate such statements. The network involved in narcotics trafficking in Pakistan has been described as expansive and profit-driven. The US has encouraged and supported Pakistan’s counter narcotic efforts, helping to fortify Pakistan’s borders and coast, eliminate poppy growing in Pakistan, and prevent further cultivation. Unfortunately, these efforts are often hindered by several factors, including corruption and lack of funding.

### *Economic Reform*

Despite widespread poverty, Pakistan's economy has had significant positive growth in the past decade, growing at an average rate of 6.6% per year between 2002 and 2007. However, political instability in 2007, including Musharraf's six-week imposition of emergency rule and Benazir Bhutto's assassination, caused the Pakistani stock market to fall by more than 10%. In an effort to rebound, Pakistan has relied on federal spending cuts and assistance from foreign nations, such as the US.

Pakistan's efforts have been somewhat successful. Its **real GDP** increased by 5.8% between June 2007 and June 2008, largely due to its service and manufacturing sectors. Pakistan's national debt is roughly \$46 billion, which equals about a quarter of Pakistan's current GDP, down from a debt of one-half its GDP in 2003. However, Pakistan still relies on the importation of basic commodities, which suggests that reform is needed.

Some have suggested that economic reform should take the form of broadening the tax base. New tax revenue can then be used to improve the health and education systems, as well as infrastructure. President Musharraf was somewhat successful in reforming the economy, although many Pakistani people believe that Musharraf's economic policies only benefited a portion of the population. Ultimately, much economic reform has been held back due to the nation's political instability.

**real GDP**—*real gross domestic product, measures the production of all final goods and services produced within an economy resulting in a single figure in monetary terms*

## Congressional Action

Several bills introduced in the House and the Senate concerning Pakistan have been voted on and/or signed into law by President Barack Obama during the most recent session of Congress.

### *S 962*

Also known as the Enhanced Partnership with Pakistan Act of 2009, S 962 was introduced on May 4, 2009 by Senators John Kerry (D-MA) and Dick Lugar (R-IN). The bill proposes that the US give \$15 billion to Pakistan in order to help Pakistan further grow and develop its economy. Half would be given in the first five years while the second half would be given in the second five years. Currently the US gives Pakistan \$500 million per year. Therefore this bill would increase aid by 300% annually to \$1.5 billion. The bill aims to dispel Pakistanis' beliefs that the US has no concern for its ally—a belief perpetuated because most US assistance has been military aid. The bill also requires that the administration give detailed reports every six months on how the non-military aid is being spent, as well as its effectiveness. Furthermore, the bill requires that the amount of military aid be determined annually, but that it will be renewed only if President Obama presents evidence that Pakistan is effectively combating Taliban and Al Qaeda operatives hiding in Pakistan's hills. The Senate voted unanimously to

pass this bill on June 25, 2009, and it is now set to be discussed in the House.

#### *HR 2346*

HR 2346, the Supplemental Appropriation Act, 2009, became **public law** on June 24, 2009. This act allots \$106 billion to fund US efforts in Iraq, Afghanistan and surrounding regions, with the goal of defeating the Taliban and Al-Qaeda. The bill was introduced by Representative David Obey (D-WI) on May 12, 2009, passing the House and Senate on May 14 and May 21 respectively. The Supplemental Appropriation Act, 2009 also provides for economic aid and political aid for post-conflict areas and includes other provisions like the allotment of \$8 billion to further improve our defense against the spread of the H1N1 virus that causes swine flu.

#### *HR 1886*

Sponsored by 13 Representatives,—eleven Democrats and two moderate Republicans—HR 1886, entitled the Pakistan Enduring Assistance and Cooperation Enhancement Act of 2009 (or the PEACE Act), aims to assist Pakistan economically, socially, politically and militarily. The bill authorizes Pakistan to receive \$1.5 billion dollars a year from 2010 to 2013. Furthermore, the Pakistan Counterinsurgency Capabilities Fund, a military assistance program, would be set to receive \$300 million in 2010, in addition to the funds provided from HR 2346. Discretionary assistance funding amounts to \$400 million for 2010. Lastly, the bill supports the creation of **Reconstruction Opportunity Zones** in Pakistan and Afghanistan. The PEACE Act of 2009 passed the House on June 11, 2009 and is awaiting debate in the Senate.

**public law**—a bill or resolution that has passed both the House and the Senate and has been signed into law by the President

**Reconstruction Opportunity Zones**—areas where production of duty-free goods can occur with the aim of job creation for people living in the area and enhancement of trade and development in the area

## **Focus of the Debate**

### *Conservative View*

Conservatives are upset with what they see as a lack of major progress in Pakistan's counterterrorism efforts. While they state that they are committed to fostering a partnership between the US and Pakistan built on trust, they feel that the US should be more aggressive and take a more active role in the region. They also favor military aid over other types of aid but recognize the importance of assistance aimed at democracy establishment and economic reform.

### *Liberal View*

Liberals tend to be more flexible in their approach towards Pakistan. They believe that military power alone will not win the fight against extremism, arguing that relations between the US and Pakistan

must be improved through non-military aid. They also favor setting bench marks for Pakistan's counterterrorism efforts and are open towards revising the US approach towards Pakistan along the way. Most liberals support President Obama's new Afghanistan-Pakistan strategy unveiled in the spring of 2009.

#### *Presidential View*

In March of 2009, after consulting with the governments of both nations, members of Congress and other experts, President Obama announced a new strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan. President Obama believes that the approach towards Pakistan should be more flexible and include frequent progress reports to determine the effectiveness of any programs. He also advocates increased aid to Pakistan, supporting bills like the Enhanced Partnership with Pakistan Act of 2009. Furthermore, Obama believes that there should be an open international and regional dialogue for all those who have a stake in the region, relying on partnership to defeat Al-Qaeda and other extremist groups.

**think tank**—a group whose members research issues advocating for certain social, economic, political or military policies

## **Interest Group Perspectives**

#### *Heritage Foundation*

A conservative **think tank**, the Heritage Foundation feels that Pakistan is not doing all that it can to combat the extremists that reside within Pakistan. Pakistan has been known for appeasing some extremists while fighting others in its counterterrorism efforts. Such seemingly contradictory actions have led to confusion, which has caused both the Pakistani people and the nation's security forces to fail to grasp the true seriousness of the extremist threat. According to the Heritage Foundation, the US is being quite generous with its military and non-military aid, but a true alliance can only be achieved if Pakistan adjusts its approach to efforts against Taliban and Al Qaeda operatives in the region. Therefore, the Heritage Foundation believes that the onus is on Pakistan to improve its tactics, rather than on the US to increase aid. The Heritage Foundation believes the US should be even more aggressive in its attempts to influence Pakistan's strategy and impress upon Pakistan the importance of its counterterrorism efforts.

#### *Center for American Progress*

The Center for American Progress (CAP) is seen as the liberal counterpart to the Heritage Foundation. CAP sees three issues that must be addressed. First, the alliance between the US and Pakistan is filled with distrust. Second, Pakistan's government is not strong enough to assert the rule of law. Third, Pakistan is incapable and unwilling to thoroughly invest itself in its counterterrorism efforts. Therefore, CAP has proposed several recommendations. The think tank feels that the

US should begin working with a variety of Pakistani institutions, rather than just the government and military. Furthermore, the two nations should sit down and come up with a comprehensive plan, rather than reacting to one another's policies. CAP believes the US should also focus on improving Pakistan's police and **judiciary**—two sectors that are just as important as the military in the fight against terrorism.

**judiciary**—the sector of government comprised of courts and judges

#### *Amnesty International*

Amnesty International, an NGO dedicated to documenting and fighting human rights abuses around the world, has found Pakistan guilty of numerous human rights violations. For instance, during the six-week state of emergency beginning in November 2007, then President Musharraf suspended the rule of law, dismissing all of Pakistan's judges and detaining many human rights activists and lawyers without trials. Recently, Amnesty International has expressed concern for the more than 2 million Pakistanis that have been displaced by Pakistan's counterterrorism efforts. Amnesty urges the US to use its influential position and its monetary aid as leverage to pressure Pakistan to stop committing human rights violations.

## **Possible Solutions**

#### *The Obama Plan*

President Obama's plan is built upon partnership and cooperation with nations in the South East Asia region and the broader international community. Under the Obama Plan, US foreign assistance to Pakistan would no longer be skewed toward military aid, as it has in past years—a change that strives to make the relationship between the two nations multi-dimensional. Importantly, however, aid would not be handed out unconditionally. Instead, the plan would require frequent evaluations to ensure that monetary aid is being used correctly and efficiently. While President Obama's plan is broad in its scope, some see it as not aggressive enough, and others worry about increasing spending on foreign aid when the US's domestic economy is ailing.

#### *More Direct Military Action*

Military action involves deploying more troops to Pakistan and directly participating in Pakistan's counterterrorism efforts instead of working together behind the scenes, as is often done currently. Advocates of this idea believe direct involvement will allow the US to ensure that counterterrorism efforts proceed in a manner that is more strategically beneficial to the United States. However, some believe that US troops are already overextended and that such efforts will have disastrous consequences for US standing among citizens in South Asia and

the Middle East, similar to the backlash that occurred as a result of the Iraq War.

## Questions a Bill Should Address

While current legislation is mostly focused on Pakistan's counterterrorism efforts, US interests extend to other issues, including but not limited to nuclear weapons and missile proliferation, countering narcotics trafficking, democratization and human rights, and economic reform. Despite the complexity of US-Pakistan relations, good bills must succinctly address these important concerns. A good bill should not be too ambitious, however, and attempt to address all these concerns at once. Instead, each bill could comprehensively address one policy area.

There are several important questions that Senators should consider when formulating a bill: Should the US be more aggressive and more active in Pakistani counterterrorism policy? How should the US work with Pakistan to prevent a nuclear weapon ending up in the hands of extremists residing within Pakistan? With today's ailing economy, how can the US justify the amount of aid it is giving Pakistan, and how can the US monitor the aid's effectiveness?

**reconcile**—to bring two seemingly conflicting statements or interests into agreement

## Summary

Liberals and conservatives alike unite in their desire for a more trusting relationship between the US and Pakistan. The history between the two nations has been tumultuous, fraught with long periods of little interaction. It's up to you as Senators to **reconcile** the US's strategic interests in the region with the goal of improved relations with Pakistan—two objectives that have often been at odds with each other. Good luck!

## Guide to Further Research

US-Pakistan relations are very complicated. Further research can help explain some of these complexities and help you draft thoughtful bills that effectively tackle these issues. Below are a few sources to help you start your research.

<http://www.state.gov/p/sca/ci/pk/>

Check out the State Department's site for updated press releases and remarks on Pakistan! The site also has a link to the US Embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan where you can find the latest embassy news!

<http://topics.nytimes.com/topics/news/international/countriesandterritories/pakistan/index.html>

Look up popular newspapers, such as *The New York Times*, and skim through past articles detailing US – Pakistan relations. Above is a link to *The New York Times*'s Pakistan topic page where you can read articles and read about recent developments.

[http://hsgac.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Hearings.Hearing&Hearing\\_id=b3968170-80d8-4dce-8f8e-d3c9144f4bfe](http://hsgac.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Hearings.Hearing&Hearing_id=b3968170-80d8-4dce-8f8e-d3c9144f4bfe)

The Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs posts their hearings online. Check out the above link for the hearing “From Strategy to Implementation: Strengthening U.S.-Pakistan Relations” given on July 7, 2009.

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