

“Security and Stability in Pakistan: Developments in U.S. Policy and Funding”

Prepared Statement of

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Mr. Chairman and Congressman McKeon, thank you for inviting us here today. I am pleased to have this opportunity to testify on the growing U.S.-Pakistan defense partnership.

As you know, the Administration’s core goal in the region is to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al-Qa’ida, and ensure the elimination of al-Qa’ida safe havens. Pakistan is a critical ally in these efforts, and we have been focusing particular attention on supporting Pakistan’s efforts to disrupt violent extremist organizations.

At the same time, we are working to develop an enduring, broad-based strategic partnership with the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Our shared interests extend far beyond combating violent extremism, and we are committed to building a long-term partnership with Pakistan that reflects the full range of our shared interests and concerns.

We are calibrating our assistance to strike the right balance between civilian aid and military cooperation in order to achieve what the President charged us to do – build an effective partnership with Pakistan that demonstrates that the United States will remain a strong supporter of Pakistan’s security and prosperity for the long-term. On the security side, our programs are designed to strengthen Pakistan’s capacity to target those groups that threaten both of our countries, the broader region, and the rest of the world. In the end, however, our material, financial, and other efforts are enablers that help reinforce the willingness of the Government of Pakistan and its security forces to take on these shared challenges. As Secretary Gates has said, Pakistan has its foot on the accelerator of this partnership, and we stand ready to be long-term partners.

We have reinforced our long-term commitment to Pakistan through steady and persistent senior-level engagement by DoD leadership. Secretary Gates, Admiral Mullen, General Petraeus, General McChrystal, and I have all visited Pakistan in recent months, and the

March U.S.-Pakistan Strategic Dialogue, hosted by Secretary of State Clinton, was an excellent opportunity for both nations to discuss their respective visions of our bilateral relationship. Together with Pakistani Secretary of Defense Athar Ali, I led a Defense break-out session, which continued to build on the momentum of the U.S.-Pakistan Defense Consultative Group discussions held in December 2009. The Department of Defense will continue to build on these discussions as we initiate a series of Exchanges on Defense Planning (EDP) this spring and summer. In Pakistan itself, the U.S. Office of the Defense Representative-Pakistan (ODRP) has also played a crucial role, leading to improved relations across the board with our Pakistani defense colleagues.

A number of significant security assistance events will take place by the end of this calendar year. These include the delivery of upgraded P-3C aircraft and the transfer of the *USS McInerney* (FFG-8) to the Pakistan Navy. Even more significantly, the delivery of 18 new Block 52 F-16s to the Pakistan Air Force will begin this summer, and will be marked by a public roll-out ceremony. The F-16 roll-out in particular will be a powerful symbol of continued U.S. security assistance to Pakistan.

We believe that these efforts to demonstrate our enduring commitment to Pakistan are bearing fruit. Over the last year, the Government of Pakistan has demonstrated a significantly increased commitment to combating violent extremist organizations that use its territory.

When I testified on this subject on March 29, 2009, the militants who constitute the insurgency along Pakistan's western border were entrenched, and were expanding their geographic influence into the settled areas of Pakistan. Extremists had expanded their reach to exercise effective control over the Swat valley in the North West Frontier Province (now renamed Khyber-Pakhtoonkhwa). At that time, our assessment was that opportunities for al-Qa'ida and associated groups to stage attacks against U.S. and Coalition forces were increasing – as was the direct threat militants posed to the Pakistani state.

Our Pakistani partners also recognized the growing militant threat to the Pakistani state. Over the last year, Pakistan has taken unprecedented military action against violent extremist organizations, capturing significant territory from insurgent groups and generating intense pressure that has also disrupted al-Qa'ida and its affiliates. In the face of a drastic increase in extremist bombings and suicide attacks that killed thousands of Pakistani citizens over the last year, the Pakistani people have demonstrated a resilient will to fight back against violent extremism. Widespread popular revulsion over militant

violence resulted in support for the Pakistani security forces taking significant military action against the militants.

Currently, Pakistani security forces are sustaining operations in Khyber-Pakhtoonkhwa and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) on an unprecedented scale. In 2009, Pakistan committed more forces toward its western border with Afghanistan – nearly a 50% increase since 2008 – than ever seen before. Pakistani security forces conducted 203 brigade-sized operations in 2009, twice as many as in the previous two years combined.

Pakistani security forces deployed along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border now operate in six of seven tribal agencies and throughout Khyber-Pakhtoonkhwa, conducting clear/hold/build operations. Major Pakistani combat operations have recaptured strategically vital territory in Swat and Malakand Division, as well as in South Waziristan, Khyber, Orakzai, Kurram, Mohmand and Bajaur Agencies. These combat operations continue today.

It is important to recognize that the Pakistani security forces have paid a high price for these operations. In 2009, the Pakistani security forces sustained nearly 4,000 casualties. The perseverance of the Pakistani security forces in the face of such significant losses testifies to their commitment to fighting violent extremism. For the Pakistanis, fighting violent extremism isn't just a contribution to a global effort: it's critical to their own security and stability.

Pakistan also continues to support U.S. operations in Afghanistan by providing and securing our primary ground and air lines of communication. Today, 80% of the dry cargo required to support increased U.S. and NATO military operations in Afghanistan transits through Pakistan, as does most of NATO's fuel. Impressively, losses due to attacks and pilferage are under 1% – a loss-rate lower than that we see in U.S. commercial ports.

Additionally, Pakistan continues to be a leader in the multinational coalition carrying out maritime security operations off the Horn of Africa. In July 2009, Pakistan assumed command of Combined Task Force-150 (CTF 150) for the third time, and Pakistan also works under the auspices of Combined Task Force-151. The Pakistan Navy provides security for the sea lines of communication in the northern Indian Ocean, and for anti-smuggling and counter-narcotic efforts along the Makran Coast.

Pakistan has also become a leader in multinational peacekeeping operations. Today, Pakistan provides the second largest number of peacekeepers to international peacekeeping missions, including United Nations operations in Liberia, Sudan, The Central African Republic, and Chad.

Challenges and Opportunities

Pakistan has seen significant progress against the militant networks that threaten the Government and people of Pakistan. But even with the momentum of recent operational successes, Pakistan still faces a Herculean task.

The threat of militant violence against the Pakistani state is ongoing and severe. And although Pakistan will need strong, stable, and just governance institutions if it is to move beyond this period of violence and uncertainty, democratic governance institutions remain vulnerable.

The Pakistani people face daily risks and the continued reality of militant violence. Violent extremist organizations retain the capability to stage attacks, as demonstrated by the recent bombings of police stations, schools, hospitals, and camps for internally displaced people, as well as assaults on the foreign presence in Pakistan. Recent targets have included both the World Food Program and the U.S. Consulate in Peshawar. The human cost of the violence and instability is incalculable, and the financial strain of maintaining such a high operational tempo is also becoming evident, taking a toll on Pakistan's economy.

We face three significant hurdles in our efforts to assist Pakistan: Pakistani capacity, Pakistani threat perceptions, and Pakistani mistrust of the United States.

When it comes to capacity, Pakistan's security forces have made progress in sharpening their ability to clear territory – but the risk remains that this progress could be reversed. There is still significant need for assistance to enhance Pakistan's counterinsurgency and counterterrorism capabilities. The Government of Pakistan must have the capabilities needed to translate tactical successes into the permanent elimination of militant and terrorist safe havens. This may require prolonged security force presence in key areas, and Pakistani security forces and the Government of Pakistan as a whole need to develop the capabilities that enable “hold” and “build” activities.

This is not solely or even primarily a security force issue. Our interlocutors in the Pakistani security forces have emphasized that economic and political reconstruction are key to holding the ground that they have taken from violent extremist organizations. The

Government of Pakistan's ability to hold areas once cleared – and the military's freedom to move on to conduct operations in other critical areas – will be greatly enhanced by a stronger civilian capability to move development and governance resources into cleared areas rapidly. DoD is fully supportive of the U.S. whole-of-government effort to help build Pakistan's civilian capacity to administer reclaimed areas.

In particular, a true interagency effort is underway to transfer \$10 million from the Department of State's Economic Support Funds to DoD for execution under Section 632 of the Foreign Assistance Act. This novel approach takes advantage of DoD's ability to support the Pakistan military in non-permissive environments, while also being fully supportive of and integrated with the Ambassador's development assistance plans for Pakistan. We will continue to work with our interagency partners and Congress to develop flexible, responsive mechanisms for the unique challenges we face in Pakistan.

Another hurdle on the path to long-term strategic partnership relates to Pakistan's threat perception. Although extremist attacks have led to the repositioning of substantial Pakistani forces from the eastern border and stronger efforts to combat militants, Pakistan's strategic concerns about India remain preeminent. Any significant escalation of tensions between Pakistan and India could cause Pakistan to shift its large military presence in the western border areas back toward its eastern border with India.

We must continue to reassure Pakistan that as it combats the threats posed by its domestic terrorists, it is not exposing itself to increased risk along its eastern border. We should encourage and reinforce cooperation between India and Pakistan, and continue to urge both sides to engage in candid dialogue about the issues at the heart of their respective security concerns.

A final hurdle relates to the legacy of mistrust between the United States and Pakistan. Pakistan's experience of being subject to U.S. sanctions, its concerns about the growing U.S.-India relationship, and its skepticism about the U.S.'s staying power in the region have made it a wary partner. Similarly, reports of Pakistan's tolerance of and support for some violent extremist groups have created skepticism on the U.S. side. DoD leadership has expressed concerns about these impediments to mutual trust and a transformed relationship. This is a partnership that is both vital and delicate, and the need for candid dialogue and mutual reassurance remains strong.

The Role of U.S. Assistance

U.S.-Pakistan cooperation in the form of material assistance, training assistance, operational coordination, and reimbursement for operational costs has been critical in enabling Pakistani progress against insurgents.

The Pakistan Counterinsurgency Fund (PCF), supplemented by the Pakistan Counterinsurgency Capability Fund (PCCF), has proven to be a particularly effective and flexible tool in the effort to expand the counterinsurgency capabilities of Pakistani security forces. The flexibility of the combined total of \$1.1 billion of PCF and PCCF in FY09-FY10 has allowed DoD, in cooperation with the Department of State, to take advantage of emerging opportunities to equip, train, and coordinate with Pakistan security forces. In particular, PCF has enabled us to work with key elements of the Frontier Scouts, Special Services Group, and Pakistani Army, and with combat multipliers such as Pakistani Army aviation units and the Pakistan Air Force. PCF assistance has focused on enhancing key capabilities required to combat resilient insurgent networks such as air mobility, command and control, night operations, counter-improvised explosive device capability and survivability, close air support and joint fires, and combat logistics. For FY11, the Department of State has requested \$1.2 billion for PCCF.

Material support has helped Pakistani security forces operate and communicate in the challenging terrain of the western frontier. Within weeks of PCF availability, twelve Mi-17 helicopters were shipped from Pakistan for badly needed overhauls. Mi-17s, which provide heavy-lift capabilities, are important for Pakistan's air mobility and air assault capabilities – especially in the mountainous areas along the border where insurgents are present. They have been used extensively in the Swat Valley and tribal areas against insurgents. An urgent need for helicopters still remains, however.

Counterinsurgency training has also been important, helping to prepare the Pakistan Military and Frontier Scouts through courses in basic combat skills, sniper operations, small unit tactics, intelligence analysis, civil-military operations, and the law of armed conflict. Our training of the Frontier Scouts has led to real gains in capabilities that are being demonstrated on the battlefield. Overall, close coordination and training relationships have proven to be one of the most effective antidotes to mistrust.

DoD has supported enhanced coordination, both within Pakistan and among Pakistan, Afghan, and Coalition forces across the border. PCF's availability and flexibility have

allowed DoD to assist Pakistan in the formation of several intelligence fusion centers throughout the country, which have become increasingly valuable to Pakistan's ongoing operations. Separately, Combined Campaign Planning Conferences have allowed Pakistani, Afghan, and ISAF commanders to coordinate operations on both sides of the border more effectively.

In addition, Coalition Support Funds (CSF) allow us to reimburse Pakistan for logistical, military, and other forms of support that Pakistan provides to assist U.S. overseas contingency operations. Since 2001, Pakistan has received \$7.2 billion in CSF reimbursements for expenses incurred in providing critical support to U.S. military operations in connection with OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM.

Our ability to make CSF reimbursements in a timely manner remains vital, as CSF provides the Government of Pakistan the financial capacity to maintain the necessary security forces and on-going military operations in its western border region and protect our ground lines of communications with greater consistency than Pakistan could otherwise provide. Prompt payment of claims while still ensuring that claims are carefully addressed is absolutely critical to our ability to influence and sustain Pakistani willingness to conduct combat operations. While Pakistan is expected to receive a significant portion of the FY11 CSF request, the funds are also available to reimburse 27 other eligible nations.

Finally, I would like to affirm DoD's strong support for Secretary of State Clinton's statement following the recent U.S.-Pakistan Strategic Dialogue on the goal of a multi-year security assistance package, including foreign military financing, based upon identified shared strategic objectives. We agree that such a package would further strengthen our long-term strategic partnership with Pakistan.

Mr. Chairman, our partnership with Pakistan is complex and fraught with challenges, but it remains absolutely vital to our overall goal of disrupting, dismantling, and defeating al-Qa'ida and enhancing stability in a critical region. We will continue to stand firm in our support for Pakistan's counterinsurgency and counterterrorism capabilities, and we will continue to seek broader and deeper cooperation with Pakistan.

I want to thank you and members of the Committee once again for allowing us this opportunity to testify today, and we look forward to working closely with you on these issues as we move forward.