India in Afghanistan and Beyond:
Opportunities and Constraints

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A Century Foundation Report

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The Century Foundation Project on Afghanistan in Its Regional and Multilateral Dimensions

This paper is one of a series commissioned by The Century Foundation as part of its project on Afghanistan in its regional and multilateral dimensions. This initiative is examining ways in which the international community may take greater collective responsibility for effectively assisting Afghanistan's transition from a war-ridden failed state to a fragile but reasonably peaceful one. The program adds an internationalist and multilateral lens to the policy debate on Afghanistan both in the United States and globally, engaging the representatives of governments, international nongovernmental organizations, and the United Nations in the exploration of policy options toward Afghanistan and the other states in the region.

At the center of the project is a task force of American and international figures who have had significant governmental, nongovernmental, or UN experience in the region, co-chaired by Lakhdar Brahimi and Thomas Pickering, respectively former UN special representative on Afghanistan and former U.S. undersecretary of state for political affairs.

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Introduction

On December 24, 1999, five Pakistani terrorists associated with Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami (HUJI) in connivance with the Pakistani external intelligence agency, the Directorate for Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), hijacked an Indian Airlines flight in Kathmandu with the goal of achieving the release of three Pakistani terrorists held in Indian jails. After a harrowing journey that included stops in Amritsar (India), Lahore (Pakistan), and Dubai (United Arab Emirates), the plane landed at Kandahar Air Field, under Taliban control.

After protracted negotiations with the Taliban, India's minister of external affairs, Jaswant Singh, personally delivered three terrorists to the Taliban in Kandahar in exchange for the surviving passengers.[1] The hijackers and the recently freed terrorists moved to the border of Pakistan, from which they received safe passage. One of the freed terrorists, Masood Azhar, appeared in Karachi shortly thereafter, announcing the formation of Jaish-e-Mohammad, an ISI-backed militant group formed from amalgamating elements of several Deobandi militant groups with the aim of conducting operations in India and Kashmir.[2]

India sustained criticism at home and abroad for releasing these terrorists, who eventually would be responsible for numerous high-profile attacks, including the attack on the Indian Parliament in December 2001, the killing of American journalist Daniel Pearl in 2002, the attack on the U.S. Consulate in Karachi in 2002, and the attack on French engineers also in Karachi in 2002, among countless other assaults in Pakistan, Kashmir, and the rest of India.

Nearly two years after the hostage swap, the Taliban fell, and Hamid Karzai took the reins of Afghanistan's interim government. On December 22, 2001, Jaswant Singh returned to Afghanistan both to observe the inauguration

of Hamid Karzai as head of the interim government of Afghanistan and to reopen the Indian embassy, which had closed the day before the Taliban seized Kabul in 1996.[3] The events of September 11, 2001, presented opportunities for India, which had been largely shut out of Afghanistan throughout the Taliban period. Since the ouster of the Taliban, India has worked to become Afghanistan's most important partner for reconstruction in recognition of the country's strategic importance for India within and beyond the South Asian region.

The international community has been ambivalent about India's profile in Afghanistan. While the Afghan government and its international partners welcome India's constructive role, many also worry about the negative externalities associated with India's footprint in the country, particularly with respect to Pakistan. Pakistan has long feared Indian encirclement and complains sharply about India's expanding presence in Afghanistan.

This report outlines India's current interests in Afghanistan, how it has sought to achieve these aims, and the consequences of these actions for India, Pakistan, and the international efforts to stabilize Pakistan. It argues that India's interests in Afghanistan are not only Pakistan-specific but also, equally, if not more important, tied to India's desire to be, and *to be seen,* as an extra-regional power moving toward great power status. This argument is elaborated in several parts. First, the report contextualizes India's interests in Afghanistan within the larger canvas of India's security interests in its extended strategic neighborhood. Second, it details India's specific interests in Afghanistan, and third, it draws out the various means by which India has sought to achieve its objectives. The final section draws out the implications for Afghanistan's future and, by extension, regional security.

India's Strategic Environment

Foreign policy analysts often describe India's strategic environment in terms of the entire Indian Ocean basin. Such persons explain that India's strategic neighborhood stretches to the Strait of Hormuz and the Persian Gulf in the

west; some will even claim the eastern coast of Africa as the western-most border of this strategic space. To the east, it includes the Strait of Malacca and extends up to the South China Sea. To the north, it is comprised of Central Asia, and to the south, it reaches out to Antarctica.[4]

The doyen of South Asian security, Raja Mohan, explains in comparable terms that India's grand strategy

> divides the world into three concentric circles. In the first, which encompasses the immediate neighborhood, India has sought primacy and a veto over the actions of outside powers. In the second, which encompasses the so-called extended neighborhood stretching across Asia and the Indian Ocean littoral, India has sought to balance the influence of other powers and prevent them from undercutting its interests. In the third, which includes the entire global stage, India has tried to take its place as one of the great powers, a key player in international peace and security.[5]

Within this extended neighborhood, India has a number of strategic interests. First and foremost, it seeks to be the preeminent power within the Indian Ocean basin. Second, New Delhi believes that it has a natural role in shaping regional security arrangements to foster stability throughout the Indian Ocean basin. Third, India is willing to be proactive to prevent developments that are fundamentally inimical to its interests. "Proactive" does not mean preemption in the sense promulgated by the U.S. President George W. Bush. Rather, India seeks to achieve these objectives and project power throughout this expansive neighborhood using two instruments of soft power: economic and political influences. These individuals expanded upon the utilization of these instruments by explaining that India seeks to promote itself as role model for economic and political development.

Consonant with this expansive set of interests within the entire Indian Ocean basin, India has pursued actively a "Look East" policy in which Prime

Minister A. B. Vajpayee made a number of openings to the states of Southeast and Northeast Asia.[6] India also has a very sophisticated greater Middle East policy that includes Israel, Iran, and several Arab states.[7] In addition, India is continuing its efforts to consolidate its strategic footing in Central Asia and in Afghanistan, for which Iran and Russia have had tremendous import.[8]

Thus, in many regards, India's interests in Afghanistan can be seen as merely one element within India's larger desire to be able to project its interests well beyond South Asia. To achieve India's interests in Afghanistan, it has cultivated important ties with Iran. Notably, Iran and India share several concerns in Afghanistan. Both despised the Taliban regime and the facilities they afforded to a raft of Sunni Islamist militant groups and both feared and continue to fear Pakistan for its efforts to sustain the Taliban regime and its continued export of Sunni militant groups. Both India and Iran were constrained in their ability to project influence during the Taliban period, but following September 11, both Iran and India moved with alacrity. Both have stepped up their coordination in Afghanistan and India has also undertaken several projects within Iran itself to facilitate operating in and beyond Afghanistan, as described below.

This alignment of instruments has focused upon concrete steps on oil and gas issues (for example, the ever-problematic Iran-Pakistan-India Pipeline), the commitment to expand non-hydrocarbon bilateral trade and other forms of significant economic cooperation, the joint effort to further develop Iran's Chahbahar port complex on the Arabian Sea, the Chahbahar-Zahranj-Bam rail link between the port and the Afghan border, the Marine Oil Tanking Terminal, and the linkage of Zahranj to the Ring-Road in Afghanistan, a portion of which India has built. In addition, India and Iran have been constructing a North-South Corridor that will allow movement of Indian goods from its own ports to Chahbahar, from which it moves through Iran via road and rail to the Caspian and beyond.[9]

Because India is denied access to Central Asia through Pakistan, Iran is the most important state in India's efforts to seek access through Afghanistan

and onward to Central Asia. The planned route from Chahbahar into Central Asia and beyond is a direct competitor to the line of control that Pakistan has sought to develop with Chinese assistance. China has helped Pakistan build a deep-water port along the Makran Coast (in the part of Baluchistan that abuts the Arabian Sea). Ideally, Pakistan and its Chinese partner would like this port to be the shortest route linking the Arabian Sea to Central Asia. However, several obvious hurdles present themselves. First, for Gwador to link up with the Ring Road in Afghanistan, roads must move from Gwador to Chaman on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, then move through the Taliban stronghold of Kandahar. The alternative route will move goods from Gwador through the tribal areas or via Karachi to the Torkham border crossing with Afghanistan and then north into Central Asia. With the current instability in Afghanistan, the benefits of the Gwador port have not been realized. As such, the Indian and Iranian effort at Chahbahar with the North-South Corridor has become the most secure route through which goods can move into Afghanistan and Central Asia.[10]

Indian Objectives in Afghanistan

While India has many interests in Afghanistan that are germane to India's positioning itself as an important power beyond the confines of South Asia, India has several interests that are narrowly confined to Afghanistan as well as Pakistan. As is well known, India has had to contend with many significant security challenges directly stemming from the Taliban's regime in Afghanistan. In addition, Pakistan has raised and supported several militant groups such as Lashkar-e-Taiba, Harkat-ul-Mujahideen/Harkat-ul-Ansar, and Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami among others, which operate in India. All have trained in Afghanistan, with varying proximity to the Taliban and by extension al Qaeda. Consequently, India is preeminently interested in

ensuring that Afghanistan does not again return to being a terrorist safe-haven as it was under the Taliban. From India's optic, dealing with the camps in Pakistan is an inordinate challenge.

Perhaps of equal importance, India is interested in retaining Afghanistan as a friendly state from which it has the capacity to monitor Pakistan and even, where possible, cultivate assets to influence activities in Pakistan. India's interests in cultivating a significant partnership with Afghanistan are only slightly matched by Pakistan's interests in denying India such opportunities and cultivating Afghanistan as a client state, or at least as a state that is amenable to accommodating Pakistan's regional concerns. Notably, Pakistan has sought to increase its influence in Afghanistan since 1947, with varying degrees of intensity, and has failed in most senses, as Kabul—with the exception of the Taliban government—always has been closer to Delhi than to Islamabad.

An equally important—if often underappreciated—concern is that developments in Afghanistan and Pakistan have important and usually deleterious effects upon India's domestic social fabric as well as its internal security apart from the well-known problems in and over Kashmir. Indian interlocutors have explained to the author that Islamist militancy coexists with a burgeoning Hindu nationalist movement that seeks to re-craft India as a Hindu state. Hindu nationalists and their militant counterparts live in a violent symbiosis with Islamist militant groups operating in and around India. Islamist terrorism in India and the region provides grist for the mill of Hindu nationalism and its violent offshoots.

Means of Achieving These Objectives

India has sought to establish its presence in Afghanistan from the early days of its independence. In 1950, Afghanistan and India signed a "Friendship Treaty." India had robust ties with King Zahir Shah's regime. Later, in an effort to promote India's interests in Afghanistan, New Delhi formalized several

agreements and protocols with various pro-Soviet regimes in Kabul. Several cascading events from 1979 onward episodically constrained India's space for maneuvering and limited India's influence in Afghanistan until 1992. The first such event was the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi muted her public opposition to the invasion of Afghanistan in deference to India's longstanding strategic ties to the Soviet Union. However, Gandhi nonetheless was nonplussed that Russia brought the cold war to India's extended neighborhood. Gandhi had promulgated her own version of the Monroe Doctrine—the Indira Doctrine—that aimed to keep external powers out of South Asia and extended areas, which India has long considered part of its national security environment. (India frequently defines its extended strategic environment to encompass South Asia, Southwest Asia, Central Asia, and South East Asia, as well as the Indian Ocean littoral stretching from West Africa to the South China Sea.[11]) The Soviet aggression into Afghanistan was a clear failure of this doctrine.

To a significant extent, India remained marginalized throughout the 1980s when the United States, Saudi Arabia, and other Arab Gulf states along with Pakistan raised thousands of mujahideen to oust the Soviets. Pakistan had long faced Pashtun irredentist claims to an independent state called Pakhtunwa, which was variously formulated to include Pashtun areas in Pakistan as well as Afghanistan.[12] For this reason, Pakistan feared that bolstering militants in Afghanistan along ethnic lines would galvanize ethno-nationalist sentiment among its own Pashtuns straddling the border, who also have demanded in the past an independent Pakhtunwa or have espoused a desire to be rejoined with co-ethnics in Afghanistan. To mitigate any risk of fanning Pashtun nationalist aspirations in either Pakistan or Afghanistan, Pakistan insisted upon routing military as well as humanitarian assistance through seven explicitly (Sunni) Islamist organizations.[13] Pakistan supported Pashtun Islamist militant groups, notably Gulbadin Hekmatyar's Hizb-i-Islami, in hopes of channeling Pashtun political aspirations through the prism of Islam rather than ethnicity. Apart

from financial support from the United States, Saudi Arabia, and other national and multinational organizations, Arab individuals began arriving in theatre to support the mujahideen. Preeminent among these were Abdullah Azzam and Osama bin Laden.[14]

While the development of a U.S.-backed Islamist insurgency seriously circumscribed India's ability to project its interests in Afghanistan, India still sustained important projects. Fahmida Ashraf, a scholar of India's relation with Iran, Afghanistan, and Central Asia within the Indian Ministry of Defense think-tank IDSA, has noted that between 1979 and 1989, India actually expanded its development activities in Afghanistan, focusing upon industrial, irrigation, and hydro-electric projects.[15] That India was able to sustain this presence attests to the importance that India attached to this relationship and India's tenacity in persevering.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of several independent Central Asian republics, India sought to cultivate ties with those emerging states even while Pakistan sought to do the same. Pakistan believed it had a natural advantage: it was an overwhelmingly Muslim majority state that, during most of the 1990s, had a democratically elected government, howsoever flawed. But, in the same period, Pakistan also developed notoriety for being the source of Islamist militancy that began menacing the region. This motivated the Central Asian states—nearly all of which began experiencing Islamist militancy with ties to Pakistan—to pursue renewed security relations with Russia. As is well-known, Russia had been historically an ally of India and shared the concerns of India and the Central Asian States about Pakistan's Islamist adventurism. Iran too was chary of Islamabad, holding Pakistan responsible for the murder of eleven of its purported diplomats in Mazar-e Sharif in northern Afghanistan in 1998.[16] Ironically and perversely, while Pakistan supported this collective of Sunni militant extremists to bolster some of its foreign policy objectives in India and Afghanistan, this same policy undermined other important strategic goals, such as improved relations with

its proximate and distal neighbors. Indeed, most of its neighbors chose India as their most likely South Asian partner recognizing that they shared a common problem: Sunni militancy based in and originating from Pakistan.

After the Taliban consolidated their hold on Afghanistan, India struggled to maintain its presence and to support anti-Taliban forces. However, Indian objectives in Afghanistan remained necessarily modest given the constrained environment. India aimed to undermine, as best it could, the ability of the Taliban to consolidate its power over Afghanistan, principally by supporting the Northern Alliance in tandem with other regional actors. Working with Iran, Russia, and Tajikistan, India provided important (but not fully detailed) resources to the Northern Alliance, the only meaningful challenge to the Taliban in Afghanistan. India also ran a twenty-five-bed hospital at Farkhor (Ayni), Tajikistan, for over a year. The Northern Alliance military commander, Ahmad Shah Masood, died in that hospital after he was attacked by al Qaeda suicide bombers on September 10, 2001. Through Tajikistan, India supplied the Northern Alliance with high altitude warfare equipment worth around $8 million. India also based several "defense advisers," including an officer of a brigadier rank, in Tajikistan to advise the Northern Alliance in their operations against the Taliban. India also dispatched helicopter technicians from the clandestine Aviation Research Center (ARC), which is backed by India's external intelligence agency, RAW (Research and Analysis Wing). These technicians helped maintain the Soviet-made Mi-17 and Mi-35 attack helicopters in the Northern Alliance Fleet.[17]

Since 2001, India has relied upon development projects and other forms of humanitarian assistance. Almost immediately, Prime Minister Vajpayee announced a line of credit of $100 million to Afghanistan, pledged one million tons of wheat for displaced Afghans, and dispatched a team of doctors and technicians in December 2001 to establish a camp for fixing artificial limbs for amputees.[18] Since those early measures in 2001, India has sustained its interest in Afghanistan, having committed $750 million and having pledged

another $450 million.[19] In addition, India is increasingly involved in strategic infrastructure projects in Afghanistan, such as building transmission line to provide power to Kabul, a hydro-electric project in Herat, as well as the Zaranj-Delaram road that connects the Ring Road in Afghanistan to the Iranian port in Chahbahar.[20]

To facilitate these projects and to collect intelligence (as *all embassies and consulates* do), India also now has consulates in Jalalabad, Kandahar, Herat, and Mazar-e-Sharif, in addition to its embassy in Kabul. There also are a number of smaller-scale activities throughout Afghanistan. According to U.S., British and Afghan officials interviewed by this author, India's activities are not isolated to the north, where it has had traditional ties, but rather include efforts in the southern provinces and in the northeast, abutting the Pakistan border.

India has also engaged in training of Afghan civilian and military personnel as well as providing Afghan students with scholarships to study in India. The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) has offered as many as five hundred scholarships a year for Afghans.[21] India is keen to have a much larger role in training Afghan National Security Forces. While Indian development assistance and efforts to train Afghan civilians is welcomed by the international community, India's attempts to expand its contributions to building Afghanistan's security institutions has received a lukewarm reception—if not rebuke—from the international community.[22]

India's efforts to regain its foothold throughout Afghanistan have been fraught with significant security challenges affecting the execution of its projects as well as the safety of its institutions and personnel. Indian engineers, medical staff, and government employees have been targeted. The Indian embassy in Kabul was attacked twice and Indian consulates in Herat and Jalalabad were assaulted, as were Indian private sector companies and personnel.[23] To protect Indian staff building the southern portion of the Ring Road, India deployed the Indo-Tibetan Police Force (ITPF) as well as a small number

of army commandos to protect personnel. (This infuriated the Pakistanis, who already were nonplussed that the Indians were involved in this portion of the Ring Road.) After the embassy and other attacks, India is expanding the ITPF presence in Afghanistan to protect key Indian installations.[24]

More controversially, in addition to these activities, some analysts interviewed by this author in the United States, the United Kingdom, Afghanistan, and, of course, in Pakistan, accuse India of engaging in intelligence operations against Pakistan from Afghanistan as well as Iran. One of the boldest assertions of this kind is advanced by Mushahid Hussain, a former Pakistani senator holds the chairmanship of the Foreign Relations Committee among other important public and private sector posts. Hussain claims that India uses its consulates in Jalalabad and Kandahar to foster insurgency in Pakistan. Furthermore, he explained,

> the Afghan Police, the Border Security Force and customs officials facilitate the visit of Indian diplomatic staff and intelligence agents to border areas, and help them to hold meetings with dissatisfied pro-Afghan dissidents, anti-state elements, and elders of the area. In this context, meetings of tribal elders are arranged by the Afghan intelligence agency (Riyast-i-Amniyat-i-Milli or RAM) at the behest of those RAW officials who serve in different diplomatic offices of India in Afghanistan. Indian agents are carrying out clandestine activities in the border areas of Khost and in Pakistan's tribal areas of Miranshah with the active support of Afghan Border Security Force officials.[25]

In recent years, Pakistan now alleges that India is supporting the Pakistan Taliban as well.

These allegations are nearly impossible to verify. For one thing, the United States intelligence community *does not* collect information on these activities and thus is not in a position to adjudicate empirically. Drawing upon my field-

work in Iran (where India has a consulate in Zahidan in abutting Pakistan's restive Baloch province), Afghanistan, and India, anecdotal evidence suggests that, while Pakistan's most sweeping claims are ill-founded, Indian claims to complete innocence also are unlikely to be true.

Despite deepening security threats from both the Taliban and other Pakistan-based proxies operating against Indian personnel and institutions in Afghanistan, thus far India has remained committed to staying in Afghanistan. However, there is a fierce domestic debate that is ongoing within India. India has watched with some alarm at the U.S. handling of Pakistan and its steadfast refusal and/or ability to compel Pakistan strategically to abandon militancy as a tool of foreign policy and to dismantle the terrorist infrastructure that has inflicted such harm in India and in the region. Moreover, India has been concerned that the United States continues to provide massive military assistance, including lucrative reimbursements under the Coalition Support Funds program and access to conventional systems that are more appropriate to target India than Pakistani insurgents. Against these issues, which have endured since October 2001, India has been alarmed at the Obama administration's lack of attention paid to India in stark contrast to that of Bush. India is also worried about Obama's nonproliferation policy and commitment to seeing the Indo-U.S. nuclear deal bear fruit. Finally, Obama's (misconstrued) announcement that U.S. troops will begin withdrawing from Afghanistan in August 2011 has left India deeply concerned about the future of Afghanistan.

As India contemplates (howsoever unlikely) an Afghanistan that is free of U.S. and international military forces, some Indians increasingly are calling for India to find some way of placing troops on the ground. Politically, this will be a hard sell. India is loath to operate outside of a UN mandate and it not clear whether or not the institutional and political requirement can be massaged. Moreover, in India's tumultuous coalition-based political system, some Muslim communities comprise local but strategic vote banks that are necessary for some coalitions to survive. Indian political figures—particularly in the

Congress party—have been and will remain loath to inflame the sentiments of these important constituencies. Nonetheless, there is a vocal set of commentators and analysts who believe that India's preeminent security interests reside in Afghanistan and thus demand serious attention.[26]

India has viewed with particular alarm the trend toward negotiating with "moderate Taliban," a term it refuses to entertain. Nonetheless, Indians understand that the momentum is building for a process of reintegration and reconciliation and they are working to understand its implications for India.

At the other extreme are those Indians who—much like some Americans—do not believe that the benefits are worth the risks, and thus India should leave Afghanistan if and when the international troops leave.

Conclusions: Impacts on Regional Stability

Since 2000 and the advent of the George W. Bush administration, the United States has sought to "de-hyphenate" its relations with India and Pakistan. Ashley Tellis, who argued this position in a 2000 RAND transition document for the new president, stated that a de-hyphenated policy in South Asia would have three distinct features:

> First, U.S. calculations [would] systemically decouple India and Pakistan; that is, U.S. relations with each state would be governed by an objective assessment of the intrinsic value of each country to U.S. interests rather than by fears about how U.S. relations with one would affect relations with the other. Second, the United States would recognize that India is on its way to becoming a major Asian power of some consequence and, therefore, that it warrants a level of engagement far greater than the previous norm and also an appreciation of its potential for both collaboration and resistance across a much larger canvas than simply South Asia. Third, the

> United States would recognize that Pakistan is a country in serious crisis that must be assisted to achieve a "soft landing" that dampens the currently disturbing social and economic trends by, among other things, reaching out to Pakistani society rather than [simply] the Pakistani state.[27]

Notwithstanding the logical eloquence of the argument, while the United States has strived to pursue relations with India and Pakistan independently of their security competition under the policy rubric of "de-hyphenation," in practice, it has been nearly impossible, if for no other reason than that both India and Pakistan continue to see relations with the United States as a zero-sum game.

The results of these efforts have been uneven. U.S. efforts to forge and sustain a tactical relationship with Pakistan centered upon the war in Afghanistan—at whatever price Pakistan asks—have irked India. At the same time, U.S. efforts to forge a strategic relationship with India have discomfited Pakistan, particularly the U.S. commitment to help India become a global power—inclusive of military assistance, missile cooperation, and the notorious U.S.-India Civilian Nuclear Deal.[28] Pakistan is particularly chagrined that it has born the brunt of the violence of the global war on terror while continually being asked to "do more" and excoriated for those elements of its policy that rile Washington (for example, support of the Afghan Taliban and groups such as Lashkar-e-Taiba). (Needless to say, Pakistan denies publicly that it in fact supports such groups, a position that few if any informed persons in the U.S. government seriously entertain.)

Ironically, while the confrontation of India and Pakistan has abated in the contested territory of Kashmir, it has expanded into new theaters, including the Indian heartland and, increasingly, in Afghanistan. While India continues to establish a presence, which it claims is benign, Pakistan stands accused of using violent proxies such as Jalaluddin Haqqani to attack Indian interests and personnel in Afghanistan.

The failure of the United States to appreciate adequately how its policies in Afghanistan affected Pakistan and its equities vis-à-vis India has had enduring consequences. Pakistan has long complained about the excessive influence of the Northern Alliance in the interim regime crafted at Bonn and in the subsequent Afghan government. U.S. failure to honor its commitments to not let the Northern Alliance take Kabul and its reliance upon Northern Alliance warlords to provide security while the United States maintained a light footprint were further incitements to Islamabad. Washington seemed oblivious to Pakistan's reading of events. According to Pakistan's assessment, the United States handed the keys of Kabul to India's proxies, having routed their own proxies. The Bush administration decision to rehabilitate discredited warlords likely prompted Pakistan to resume support for the Afghan Taliban, perhaps as early as 2002 but certainly by 2004.

In the effort to stabilize Afghanistan, some analysts have sought to link Pakistan's support to the Taliban with its unresolved security competition with India over Kashmir. For example, Barnett Rubin and Ahmed Rashid, writing of India's activities in Afghanistan, have argued that "pressuring or giving aid to Pakistan, without any effort to address the sources of its insecurity, cannot yield a sustainable positive outcome."[29] Rubin and Ahmed continued to propose a regional solution that suggested that Afghanistan could be resolved through Kashmir. Similarly, Lisa Curtis cautiously argued that a "transformation of Pakistan-Afghanistan ties can only take place in an overall context of improved Pakistani-Indian relations."[30] And, as is well-known, this animates some of Ambassador Richard Holbrooke's approach to the region. This author believes that this logic is in some measure ill-founded. Pakistan's fears of India are neuralgic and unlikely to be alleviated even if—by some heroic diplomatic success—the Kashmir issue were to disappear. Indeed, over the long term, Pakistan will be increasingly disconcerted by India's continued rise as an extra-regional and possible global power and its continued defense modernization fueled by its impressive economic growth.

The prognosis for regional security is not promising. The United States has tended to stove-pipe its approach to Pakistan's various noxious policies. While seeking its help with eliminating the al Qaeda threat and, since 2007, increasing pressure upon Islamabad to cease support for the Afghanistan Taliban, the United States has been loathe to contend with the other terrorist groups supported by the state. Arguably, Washington's failure to approach Pakistan comprehensively is the biggest problem for regional security. Unless Washington is willing to devise new (and likely political) carrots as well as sticks that it will apply consistently when needed (as opposed to waiving for political and other contingencies), Pakistan is unlikely to deviate from its course of politics.

This suggests that in some ways—but not all ways—U.S. priorities are reversed. U.S. policies in Afghanistan hold the international community hostage to Pakistani interests and render the international community unable to pressure Pakistan to abandon terrorism, deployed safely under Pakistan's nuclear umbrella. The United States and other members of the international coalition in Afghanistan are utterly dependent upon Pakistan. Goods such as food, petrol, and other supplies are transited to Afghanistan through Pakistan's ports and roads. Pakistan provides assistance in capturing al Qaeda, conducts supporting military operations along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, and permits the United States to prosecute drone strikes against militants ensconced in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas. Thus, the United States and its allies in Afghanistan are wary about pushing to Pakistan "too far" on key policies for fear of diminishing Pakistan's willingness to cooperate with the United States—even if that cooperation is deeply flawed. Thus, as long as Afghanistan is a theater for U.S. troops, Pakistan can be nothing but a secondary theater.

The challenge before the United States is either to devote the same sort of attention to Pakistan as it did to India to forge a "big idea" that will alter Pakistan's calculus about the utility of Islamist proxies *or* to accept the trans-

actional nature of the U.S.-Pakistan relationship but insist upon a better return on each transaction.

The challenge for India is also basic but difficult. India does not have a vision for what kind of neighbor it wants from Pakistan, nor does it know how to devise a set of policies and incentives that will make that future more likely than not. Until India decides whether and how it will manage its competition with Pakistan, the outlook for regional security is dim and likely consigned to episodic crises that will require the management and intervention of the United States, as well as other countries that are influential in the region, such as China. In the meantime, some Indians are demanding that their government take a more militarily proactive role in the absence of a political strategy that can fructify.

Notes

1. Embassy of India, *Information on Hijacked Indian Airlines Flight IC-814*, http://www.indianembassy.org/archive/IC_814.htm#Identity%20of%20hijackers (accessed June 11, 2010).

2. Praveen Swami, "Terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir in theory and practice," *India Review* 2, no. 3 (2003): 55–88.

3. AU Asif, "New Phase in Indo-Afghan Relations," *Mill Gazette*, January 1, 2002, http://www.milligazette.com/Archives/01012002/0101200223.htm (accessed June 11, 2010)/.

4. Juli MacDonald, *Indo-U.S. Military Relationship: Expectations and Perceptions* (Falls Church: Booze Allen Hamilton, 2002).

5. C. Raja Mohan, "India and the Balance of Power," *Foreign Affairs* 85, no. 4, (2006): 17–34.

6. Satu P. Limaye, "The Weakest Link, but not Goodbye," *Comparative Connections* 4, no. 4 (2003), http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/0204qindia_easia.pdf.

7. Sushil J. Aaron, *Straddling Faultlines: India's Foreign Policy Towards the Greater Middle East,* CSH Occasional Paper no. 7 (New Delhi: French Research Institutes in India, Rajdhani Art Press, 2003).

8. Meena Singh Roy, "India's Interests in Central Asia," *Strategic Analysis* 24, no. 12 (2001): 2273–89; Stephen Blank, "The Indian-Iranian Connection and Its Importance for Central Asia," Eurasianet.org, March 11, 2003, http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/business/articles/eav031203.shtml (accessed June 11, 2010).

9. See C. Christine Fair, "India and Iran: New Delhi's Balancing Act," *Washington Quarterly* 30, no. 3 (2007): 145–59; C. Christine Fair, "Indo-Iranian Ties: Thicker Than Oil*," Middle East Review of International Affairs Journal* 11, no. 1 (2007): 41–58.

10. See C. Christine Fair, "Pakistan's Relations with Central Asia: Is Past Prologue?" *Journal of Strategic Studies* 31, no. 2 (2008): 201–27.

11. Devin T. Hagerty, "India's Regional Security Doctrine," *Asian Survey* 31, no. 4 (1991): 351–63; MacDonald, *Indo-U.S. Military Relationship*.

12. Afghanistan was the only country to oppose Pakistan's admission to the United Nations upon independence, citing claims to the Pashtun areas of Pakistan. Afghanistan rejects the de jure border that separates Afghanistan and Pakistan, the Durand Line. The Durand Line was agreed to in a treaty signed in 1893 between the Afghan Amir Abdul Rahman and the government of British India. Rahman conceded to its demarcation with various inducements. It is named after Sir Mortimer Durand, the foreign secretary of the British Indian government. The treaty granted Rahman an annual stipend and arms shipments. Modern day Afghanistan rejects the treaty along various grounds, almost none of which are rooted in international treaty law. See inter alia Rizwan Hussain, *Pakistan and the Emergence of Islamic Militancy in Afghanistan* (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2005), 31; Ralph H. Magnus and Eden Naby, *Afghanistan:*

Mullah, Marx and Mujahid (Boulder, Co.: Westview Press, 2002), 24–69; Barnet Rubin, *Fragmentation of Afghanistan* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 45–73.

13. See Olivier Roy, *Islam and Resistance in Afghanistan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

14. William Maley, *The Afghanistan Wars* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002)*),* 57–84; Magnus and Naby, *Afghanistan*, 135–57; Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan*, 184–95.

15. See Fahmida Ashraf, "India-Afghanistan Relations: Post-9/11," *Strategic Studies* 27, no. 2 (2007).

16. "Taliban Threatens Retaliation If Iran Strikes," CNN.Com, September 15, 1998, http://edition.cnn.com/WORLD/meast/9809/15/iran.afghan.tensions.02/index.html.

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18. Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, *Ministry of External Affairs Annual Report 2000-2001*, (New Delhi: Ministry of External Affairs, 2001), http://meaindia.nic.in/.

19. "India Extends $450-m Aid to Afghanistan," *Financial Express,* August 8, 2008, http://www.financialexpress.com/news/india-extends-450m-aid-to-afghanistan/344577/. Aid that is pledged is often not committed (that is, budgeted). Once aid is committed, it is often not executed or disbursed in the recipient country for a number of reasons, including insecurity, poor absorptive capacity of the recipient, poor execution capacity of the donor, among others. An exact accounting of aid disbursed is very difficult to determine and thus exact figures are not generally available. However, according to Afghan government figures cited by Matt Waldman in his study for the Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief, India has only disbursed about one third of its commitment for 2002–08. In contrast, the United States has disbursed about half, whereas the European Commission and Germany have disbursed about two-thirds. See Matt Waldman, *Falling Short: Aid Effectiveness in Afghanistan* (Kabul: ACBAR, 2008), 1, www.acbar.org/ACBAR%20Publications/ACBAR%20Aid%20Effectiveness%20(25%20Mar%2008).pdf. For an alternative but similar accounting, see cumulative data on aid committed and disbursed available through the Donor Assistance Database for Afghanistan. For a discussion of Indian aid to Afghanistan, see Shanthie Mariet D'Souza, "Change the Pattern of Aid to Afghanistan," *IDSA Strategic Comments*, June 28, 2007, www.idsa.in/publications/stratcomments/ShanthieDSouza280607.htm; Shanthie Mariet D'Souza, "India's Aid to Afghanistan: Challenges and Prospects," *Strategic Analysis* 31, no. 5 (2007): 833–42.

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