

**Report**

# **National Security Strategy for Pakistan**

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**THE INSTITUTE OF STRATEGIC STUDIES,  
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## National Security Strategy for Pakistan

The Institute hosted an In-House meeting on December 1, 2011 with a team led by Air Chief Marshal (Retd) Kalim Saadat that included Ambassador (Retd) Salim Nawaz Gandapur and Air Marshal (Retd) Masud Akhtar. The agenda of the discussion was “*Suggested National Security Strategy for Pakistan*”. The meeting was also attended by former Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Mr. Inam-ul-Haque; Dr. Tahir Amin, Professor, Quaid-e-Azam University Islamabad; Gen (Retd) Talat Masood; Dr. Khalid Rahman, Director General, Institute of Policy Studies Islamabad; Ambassador (Retd) M. Ayaz Wazir; former Foreign Secretary Mr. Riaz Khokhar; renowned journalist Mr. Imtiaz Gul; Ambassador (Retd) Qazi Humayoun and former Foreign Secretary Mr. Tanvir Ahmad Khan. Welcoming the guests, the Director General ISSI, Ambassador (Retd) Ashraf Jehangir Qazi highlighted the importance of the subject under discussion and said that so many events are taking place that Pakistan has become a very insecure state. He was of the view that it has become imperative for Pakistan to look for the reasons of being in this sorry state and find a way out.

Presenting the ideas of Pakistan Ex-Servicemen Association regarding different aspects of National Security, Air Marshal (Retd) Masud Akhtar elaborated that a National Security Policy (NSP) serves three purposes:

1. Resourcing - a strategy document to better align priorities to funding;
2. Coordination - to help reduce the duplication of effort between agencies and various tiers of government;
3. Communication - to provide greater clarity for both government and the public.

Pakistan needs to chart a course that is decided, owned and willingly followed by its people. He said that the biggest challenge to Pakistan is “Poor Nationhood” which is holding all national discourses hostage. People in Pakistan do not have even the minimum possible bipartisan consensus on one common identity, national purpose and one set of vital national interests. Air Marshal (Retd) Akhtar strongly advocated the formalisation of strategic intent as per the vision of Pakistan’s founding father and universal paradigms.

Emphasising the need for a common identity of Pakistan, he went on to reiterate the national purpose given in Article 4 of Objectives Resolution i.e. to achieve the right to “democracy, freedom, equality, tolerance and social Justice for all Pakistanis”. He highlighted the importance of six vital national interests for a sharper national security focus, which included:

1. National integration and harmony;
2. Defence and Security;

3. Economic well-being;
4. Favourable regional and global order;
5. Peoples' vs State security; and
6. Promotion of national values.

He said that Pakistan has ample guidance to derive its all-important nationhood by revisiting the fourteen articles of the Objectives Resolution, the Quaid's speech to the Constituent Assembly and Iqbal's Allahabad address.

Talking about the challenges and opportunities that Pakistan faces today, Air Marshal (Retd) Akhtar said that poor nationhood is the biggest challenge that Pakistan faces as it tends to suffer from provincial, sectarian, institutional and social polarisation. Although Pakistan itself has been a victim of terrorism, it continues to be labeled as a sponsor of global terror. Similarly, despite denials to the charges and a commitment towards efforts to uncover the black market, Pakistan continues to be blamed by some. Besides economic, educational and constitutional challenges, he highlighted the problems of sectarian terrorism, water discord, non-state actors, the law and order situation in the country, and the defence, military and foreign policy challenges that Pakistan is facing. He was of the opinion that an enabling environment for nation-building, information technology, free and cheap access to knowledge, strong emotional commitment to the nation and a vibrant civil society are some of the opportunities that Pakistan should take advantage of.

He said that major challenges like poor nationhood and sectarian strife aided by international jihadist, and the right of centre shift through Cold War alliances are adversely affecting Pakistan's vital interests. Similarly, the absence of national integration, non-state actors, allegations of nuclear proliferation and multi-front defence are affecting defence and security. Pakistan's economic well-being is being hurt due to absence of national integration, constitutional and educational challenges and agrarian dependence.

Air Marshal (Retd) Akhtar opined that a Pakistan at peace with itself and consequently with others can stabilise the region and the world. Only a strong, democratic, dynamic and prosperous Pakistan can look after its people, and only then truly lend moral and political support to Muslim causes the world over. Poor nationhood has isolated Pakistan in the region and the world. This has also resulted in a fratricidal war that, if not addressed, would become an existential threat at some stage. Failure of leadership over the last six decades has resulted in problems like corruption, and the breakdown of institutions and societal values. Pakistan could thus increasingly become vulnerable to hostile attack from inside or from outside (under the Pre-emption Doctrine) unless remedial action is taken quickly.

Pakistan, with poor definitions of nationhood and consequent ineffective governance would be vulnerable to the adverse forces of the Free Market Economy in a globalised world. Rapid advances in information and other technologies being easily available to non-state actors continue

to create new dangers for Pakistan, and the country's proximity to global energy sources will continue to have major strategic significance. Depending on policies, it would either make Pakistan more secure or increase its vulnerabilities. In addition to this, an insecure leadership without a strategic vision and fighting for its own political survival cannot face these challenges effectively.

Air Marshal (Retd) Akhtar said that Pakistan needs to display resolve to project and affirm the approved nationhood in all national policies and strategies. It must have a common identity, national purpose, and strengthen all regional identities within the ambit of Pakistani nationalism and incorporate the identity and purpose enunciated in Article One of the Constitution. The government should review the political structure to make it more responsive and accountable to the citizens' needs.

The presentation was followed by an interactive session. Mr. Inam-ul-Haque, while appreciating the effort of the Association, said that the presentation spoke about the reasons why Pakistan is in this situation and how to get out of it. This is a useful first step through which a National Security Policy may be formulated. He also pointed out, however, that the document did not offer any mechanism to implement the recommendations.

Mr. Riaz Khokhar said that Pakistan is going through a difficult time both externally and internally. In these circumstances, the nation needs to be given an accurate message to which it can relate. He was of the view that if the Constitution was respected, not many such documents would be

needed to find solutions to the problems that plague this nation. Pakistan is a directionless country that needs to put a lot of things together.

Dr. Tahir Amin opined that there are different notions like socialist or liberal Pakistan which lead to different policies and strategies. To find a consensual paradigm is a difficult task. He said that the idea of “nation state” is no longer important and instead the concept of “globalised world” is emerging. Regional blocks and global orders therefore, are the elements that need to be looked into. He also said that Pakistan is in a state of national crisis and some steps need to be taken on urgent basis. Some state organs need reforms. With media and internet available to everyone, nothing remains hidden.

Mr. Imtiaz Gul said that enough focus has not been given to the main issue. Pakistan was created as an Islamic state. However, what is going on in this country requires that the Islamic ethos be moderated in the Armed Forces. He was of the view that the issue of terrorism was actually created by the intelligence agencies and this needs to be looked into comprehensively and addressed in order to bring stability.

Gen. (Retd) Talat Masood believed that there is a need to address the major issues that confront Pakistan; these include the difficult civil-military relations, and there is a need to strengthen institutions. Pakistan faces a number of challenges i.e. militancy, the deteriorating situation in Balochistan and the problems in Karachi. There is a need to devise a clear policy with regard to the issue of militancy and jihadi groups, as well as Pakistan’s policy towards the United States.

Dr. Khalid Rehman was of the view that the “maulvi” factor is being held responsible for the growing extremism in society. However, one cannot ignore the fact that maulvis in Pakistan never came to power and instead this country has always been ruled by people who never agreed with the views of maulvis.

Ambassador (Retd) Ayaz Wazir said that people in Pakistan are far away from reality and tend to focus on things that suit them. There has been a problem of religious ideology in Pakistan since the day this country was created.

Winding up the discussion, the Director General ISSI, Ambassador (Retd) Ashraf Jehangir Qazi said that every document that is prepared with sincerity provokes thought. There is a consensus here that there is a problem and there is a need to sit together and find lasting solutions to these problems. He thanked Air Chief Marshal (Retd) Kalim Saadat, Ambassador (Retd) Salim Nawaz Gandapur and Air Marshal (Retd) Masud Akhtar for sharing their views and the guests for taking out time to bring their opinions to the table.

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