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Conference Report

International Conference: Narratives of National Security

November 25-26, 2014

Inaugural Session: Tooba Khurshid, Research Fellow, ISSI

First Session: Shamsa Nawaz, Research Fellow & Mir Sherbaz Khetran, Research Fellow, ISSI

Second Session: Faraz Hameed, Research Fellow & Ghazala Jalil, Research Fellow, ISSI

Third Session: Mahrukh Khan, Research Fellow & Sara Akram, Research Fellow, ISSI

Fourth Session: Mahwish Hafeez, Research Fellow & Arhama Siddiq, Research Fellow, ISSI

Fifth Session: Amina Khan, Research Fellow & Mian Ahmad Naeem Salik, Research Fellow, ISSI

Sixth Session: Dr Ahmed Rashid Malik, Senior Research Fellow, ISSI

Seventh Session: Aimen Saleem Bajwa, Managing Editor & Ahmed Saffee, Research Fellow, ISSI

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Inaugural Session

The Institute of Strategic Studies, Islamabad (ISSI) in collaboration with United States Institute of Peace, Washington DC (USIP) and Hanns Seidel Foundation (HSF) organized an International Conference: “**Narratives of National Security**”, from 25-26 November, 2014. The aim of the conference was retrospective analysis of national security and to identify the emerging challenges and areas that still need focussed attention. Honorable Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Federal Minister for Water and Power & Additional Charge of Defense Ministry - Government of Pakistan, was the Inaugural Speaker at the event.

Dr. Rais, Director General ISSI, commenced the conference by emphasising, the fact that the aim of conference was to produce knowledge and informed analysis on National Security. He stated that the complex regional environment had gravely impacted Pakistani state and society. With this scenario it was recommended that it is crucial, for Pakistanis and also to the regional powers, to better ascertain that how we could establish stability in the region generally, and in the country particularly. According to Dr. Rais to better understand the Narratives of National Security continuous debate and discussion is necessary. Keeping in mind the objectives of the conference, he further stressed that; the various stakeholders within the country must create institutions where intellectual ideas are generated in a pluralistic environment. At the end Dr. Rais, stated that differences of thought need to be valued in order to generate multiple ideas, which will shape and strengthen democracy; and lead to formulation of National Security policy.

Following Dr. Rais, Mr. Duwaerts, Resident Representative HSF, commented that real agents of National Security of Pakistan are linked with the soft and traditional issues. Since the soft and hard issues are united there is a need to look into the security challenges that are abstruse. He, hoped that the conference would generate positive feedback for the government and academic institutions; and its recommendations would hopefully provide new perspectives for the formulation of National Security Policy of Pakistan.

In his inaugural address Mr. Asif, highlighted the multiple challenges confronting the Pakistani State emanating from a complex and rapidly changing environment; ranging from Afghanistan to larger parts of the Middle East. While focusing on the security challenges, he emphasized that Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif had pledged a non-interference policy in Afghanistan. He further, stressed that there would be no peace in the region without a peaceful and stable Afghanistan, and that direct interference cannot bring peace to Afghanistan. It has to come from within Afghanistan.

Moving on to India, Mr. Asif said that Pakistan always worked towards attaining peaceful relations with India. In this regard the government was putting in all its efforts to normalize relations between the two countries, by making India a central focus of government’s Foreign Policy. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif’s visit to India to attend Prime Minister Modi’s inauguration earlier in the year was also a key step in this direction. However, the relationship took a downturn when India cancelled Foreign Secretary level talks, in retaliation for Pakistani High Commissioner to India meeting with Kashmiri leadership. He cautioned that such setbacks in peace efforts were harmful for both the countries, as the Pakistani government hoped for renewed and lasting friendship.

Mr. Asif then talked about the brotherly Pakistan-China relations and the recent signing of multi-billion dollar contracts on various projects between the two countries, which would help to strengthen

Pakistan's fledgling economy. These projects would not only enhance the emerging regional cooperation in South Asia, but would also help Pakistan in managing its energy crisis. He further discussed the creation of Pakistan-China Economic Corridor which would transform the future of the region, driven by economy and energy, and the building of pipelines, ports, roads and railway-infrastructure.

Mr. Asif also highlighted the highs and lows of Pakistan-United States relations, and stated that the Pakistani government wished to have reliable relations with US. According to him the recent statements by US Department of Defence on the ongoing operations in the tribal areas were quite discomfoting for the Pakistani, as they questioned the Pakistani governments intentions in the fight against terrorism. He further stressed that different periods in history have witnessed varying levels of interaction and cooperation between the two countries, however economic and political cooperation must not exclude meaningful dialogue, if a beneficial and durable relationship is to be established.

Mr. Asif also touched upon the warming up of Pakistan-Russia relations and the arms import agreement signed between the two countries. This agreement was significant as these arms would help the Pakistani Army in its anti-terrorism campaign. Finally, Mr. Asif talked about the current security situation in the Middle East and the growing menace of the Daish, which was a tangible threat for the Pakistani State.

In conclusion Mr. Asif stated that for National Security, growing economy is pivotal, for which regional cooperation is a must. He emphasised on the point that for the regional problems there must be solutions from within the region. In the end he said that Pakistan needs to work closely with its neighbours to attain national as well as regional security.

Tooba Khurshid, *Research Fellow*

Session I: Debating the National Security Dilemma

*Speakers: Ambassador (Retd) Shamshad Ahmad Khan, Dr. Sunil Dasgupta,
Mr. Ejaz Haider, Ms. Zeenia Satti*

There is a compulsion of safeguarding and preserving the sovereignty and territorial integrity since borders are unchangeable and no grave internal qualms can overlook them. Pakistan is distinct in array of its experiences with its bordering states ever since its emergence in 1947. For example, the troubled relations with India had throughout inflicted damages on Pakistan's domestic issues, its security and its international relations. Pakistan's geo-strategic confluence with the most volatile regions of 1970s in South Asia, on its western borders, have made it pivotal in international unipolar politics, but its sufferings have been multiple due to the influx of Afghan refugees, massive internal displacement, socio-economic burden, rampant terrorism and unabated Kalashnikov culture. The challenges of geopolitical imbalance are further aggravated by the complex regional configuration with the growing Indo-US nexus and thereby the preferential status along with strategic/nuclear ascendancy of India in the region. India's massive presence in Afghanistan is also being used for redefining the Indo-Pakistan issues. The risk of Pakistan-India proxy war in Afghanistan is laden with perilous implications, considering Pakistan's historical, cultural and social ties with Afghanistan, particularly since 1979.

The region needs a criteria based stable nuclear order without discrimination. Pakistan's long-standing proposals on nuclear and missile restraint, conventional balance and conflict resolution can help sustain the stability in the region. It would be hard to pin down conflictual standoffs between the two states unless Kashmir issue is resolved as per the UN resolutions and through constructive engagement. However, this requires peace at home as well through physical integrity and politico-economic independence. Only good governance can ensure that.

A country domestically weak is always vulnerable to external invasions. Unfortunately, Pakistan today is reduced from a major power of South Asia and is bracketed with Afghanistan in its outlook, roles needs and problems. This perception of the country needs a change by getting relief from obscurantism, extremism, violence, militancy and intolerance. A welfare state is the only viable option, however with the military guards having at least the minimum deterrent abilities. Only a comprehensive national security policy backed by appropriate enforceable laws, institutional structure and functional methodology can address the prevalent security perceptions of Pakistan.

The panel further discussed that there is a realistic relationship inherent in narratives; in the social sciences and humanities, which can be altered by the human agencies for their own interests. However, the driving force for the humans also remains the narratives, resulting into cause and effect phenomenon. The creation of Pakistan can be seen as an example of the phenomenon reigned at that time of belief in democracy as a majoritarian institution rather than the structural institution.

The narratives are always numerous, and therefore competitive, subjective, and plural emerging from social and environmental circumstances. Unless the narratives are evolved, however successful they may be, they lose their appeal, and thereby dominance. There is an equally powerful narrative of resistance an example of which is the surrender document of 1971, which in the contemporary history, has strengthened the narrative of resistance in Pakistan contrary to the narrative of victory in India. The narrative of power also needs to be backed by the physical extinction, which is long-term, robust and violent; otherwise the narrative of resistance becomes powerful.

Furthermore, the narrative is very different from culture and needs some countervailing narrative to keep its short-to medium-term life e.g. the narrative on the defense of Islam needs to have an attacking narrative, which eventually gives strength to the narrative of resistance. Pakistan had been successful in its narrative of resistance and never submitted to the external narratives. And this is what defines its relations both with the USA and India. There had been an *exigent* compromise on its security goals, vis-à-vis India.

Narratives must be understood at the three levels of individual, the group, which can go from a family to a nation or state and the international or all of mankind. The last level requires more structural analysis though. However, the outsider's views on national narratives are often hard to take, therefore sub national engagements if encouraged could help getting best alternative narratives.

Furthermore, the panel suggested that in the presence of nonlinear wars, non-conventional wars are promoted which necessitates the national support and internal cohesion by using both kinetic and non-kinetic means. Hybrid Wars is all about using kinetic means. Both civil and military policy makers need to understand this. Pakistan has failed in its narrative of resistance because the civil-military imbalance in Pakistan has contributed to the sub-set of the foreign policy in Pakistan. Besides, narrative is an oral position with its own embellishments and selective amnesia cannot be allowed to remain a dominant force while prioritizing the security challenges. Furthermore, multiplicities of narratives also have a dominant role.

Finally, the panel suggested that threat perception has to be both collective and sovereign. Security perception in Pakistan does not unfortunately reflect our security requirements. There also had been sudden breakups of security narratives in Pakistan. The US crafted security narratives are mainly meant to contain regionalism. US hegemony is challenged by the emerging economic activity in the South, the economic corridors and therefore it discourages regionalism; whereas, the security of Pakistan lies in regional cohesion.

Shamsa Nawaz, *Research Fellow* & **Mir Sherbaz Khetran**, *Research Fellow*

Session II: Narratives on Militancy & Radicalism

Speakers: Ms. Nasim Zehra, Mr. Mohammed Amir Rana, Dr. Aasim Sajjad Akhtar

The second session of the conference focused on the themes of Militancy and Radicalization. The panelist traced the origin of issue of militancy in Pakistan's security paradigm to the times of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Gen. Zia UlHaq who used religious extremism as a tool of State Policy. This gave birth to systematic militancy. Consequently the roots of militancy go back to the 1980s, when the Pakistani state gave patronage to foreign and indigenous religious militant elements, as a deliberate instrument of state policy in order to counter Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. There were two events that triggered this move towards militancy – the 1979 Iranian Revolution and Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. This state policy of patronage to militancy that was meant for limited purposes then permeated into segments of the larger society. The state made the mistake of bringing in militants from abroad and training them. These people came with politico-religious beliefs and found resonance in segments of Pakistani society. The state patronage of militant groups continued even after the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. The panel emphasized that civil military collaboration was crucial to rooting out the scourge of militancy from the Pakistani society.

The panel further talked about the threat of militancy and how it is evolving; the talk centered on the idea that the state needs to realize the shifting nature of the militancy from territorial to sectarian. The problem is of how the threat is perceived by the state. The state needs to accept the evolving challenges and assess the threat in the backdrop of the changing militant landscape.

The panel also touched upon the Balochistan movement, which is a different kind of threat than Talibanization; where the futility of state narrative can be seen by branding Baloch militants as traitors without understanding the grass root issues involved. There is a need to understand the phenomenon of political violence as a theoretical construct within which militancy and political violence can then be studied and analyzed systematically. Political violence is a sociological phenomenon as well as a universal one. There is a reason why certain segments of the society take up arms in order to achieve their objectives, and there is a need to take a holistic approach in order to understand the phenomenon. The panelists pointed out that violence can also be used by the state against political or nationalist movements. The futility of state narrative of Baloch traitors and use of force against them is exacerbating the problem rather than solving it. Therefore, Political violence needs to be studied systematically as a sociological phenomenon.

Faraz Hameed, *Research Fellow* & **Ghazala Jalil**, *Research Fellow*

Session III: Narratives on Nuclear Deterrence and Stability

Speakers: Dr. Zafar Iqbal Cheema, Dr. Zafar Nawaz Jaspal

The panelists while introducing the concept of Nuclear Doctrine said that, Nuclear Doctrines are an essential component of national security specially in the case of South Asian subcontinent. It is generally drawn from the strategic literature of the Cold War with specific doctrinal formulations for the regional security paradigm. However, in Pakistan and India's case nuclear postures have gradually shifted due to response capabilities from non-weaponised or existential postulation to contemporary embodiments. They highlighted the fact that both, Pakistan and India have moved towards development of sea based assets as a second strike capability. India doctrinal orientation has taken a shift towards a proactive strategy whereas Pakistan has proclaimed full spectrum deterrence.

The panelists cited many factors as being instrumental in the National Security discourse and for the most part the primacy of military security. The increasing conventional weapons imbalance obliged Pakistan to transform its catalytic Nuclear Posture to Asymmetric Escalation Nuclear Posture in order to counter India's Cold Start Doctrine. Furthermore, they attributed this action reaction syndrome to the intensification of the arms race between India and Pakistan.

Mahrukh Khan, *Research Fellow* & **Sara Akram**, *Research Fellow*

Session IV: Narratives on India-Pakistan Relations

Speakers: Dr. Partha Ghosh, Mr. Hannes Ebert, Ms. Atia Kazmi

The fourth session of the Conference exclusively focused on India-Pakistan relations. The panelists at first argued that India-Pakistan conflict originated in the pre partition conflict between Congress and Muslim League, and later over Kashmir. Since these parties are no more in power, half of the problem is solved. Remaining half would be solved once Kashmir issue is resolved. But there are still doubts. In fact there are deeper societal dynamics at play which need to be addressed. There was discussion about national memory which is a collective memory quite different from personal memory. It is formed through the recalling of a nation's violent past as well as non-violent memories like social interactions and cultural productions. Response to violent memory can be violent and sometimes, even silence can be a memory statement. Most societies nurture multiple memories and same is the case with India and Pakistan. At the time of partition, three sets of memories were at work i.e. Hindu nationalistic memory, Muslim nationalistic memory and the Hindu-Muslim syncretistic memory. The first two sets of memories have been in conflict with each other whereas the third one is pervasive at the societal level.

All these three kinds of memories tried to make use of the national memories to meet their ends. Interestingly, in India it was the Hindu nationalistic forces which were powerful whereas in Pakistan, the power fell in the hands of modernists who were challenging the traditionalists. In other words, India had to focus on One-Nation theory whereas for Pakistan Two-Nation theory was important. India continued to be ruled by Nehru which ensured that the secularism survived and Pakistan, following the first Kashmir war and entry of army in politics fell in the hands of traditionalists. The events of 1971 war further helped the traditionalists to stoke anti-Hindu memory. The panelists suggested that there should be joint textbook committees of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh to write the common history of this region; and hoped that syncretistic tradition of the subcontinent will survive.

The Panelists then talked about Narratives on Rivalry Termination in South Asia, with the help of different images that have been appearing in media in order to explain how India-Pakistan rivalry is perceived in the western world. The conflict between India and Pakistan is by all its characteristics an enduring rivalry.

Since independence, India and Pakistan had incompatible goals as is evident by the four wars that the two countries have fought as well as number of crises with the potential for violent escalation. As a matter of fact, India-Pakistan rivalry is more conflict and war prone than other enduring rivalries both in terms of frequency and severity of disputes. India-Pakistan rivalry qualifies as both a positional (competition over regional preponderance) and spatial rivalry (dispute over territorial claims).

The last part of the session centered on the challenges of the geopolitical imbalance that has only served to increase Pakistan's national security dilemma. The world order and balance of power is rapidly transforming with America's rebalancing towards Asia-Pacific. The rebalancing affects Pakistan's immediate neighborhood and has intensified Islamabad's security dilemma. There is a widely held belief that Washington is in a competitive-cooperative relationship with Beijing and is propping up New Delhi to rise as a regional counterweight to China's rise. How the US-China competition pans out, what role India will play in this relationship, and how this triangular relationship between the three States affects Pakistan's security is an area that has not been explored in detail.

America's new path was made clear when president Obama in 2010 termed the relationship between India and the US as playing a defining part in the 21st century. Prime Minister Modi's visit to the US this year, where many agreements on trade and security were renewed, was also a case in point with regards to this security cooperation. However, a number of hurdles remain. Without resolving its issues with Pakistan, it is difficult for India to play a global role. Therefore, the US, India and Pakistan will have to play a unique tango of three where India will have to settle its disputes if it is to reap maximum benefits.

The concluding remarks of the session focused on the fact that the narratives presented in both India and Pakistan are mirror images of each other, and hence researchers should take both into account when forming a conclusion. The media still relies on the press notes supplied by the political class and so real journalism does not exist in the region. There was an urgent need for people of both countries to come together and sort out history books because education is a state subject in the Indian constitution, and the portrayal of wrong history could hold profound damages for the future of both countries. It was also stated that no one can contest India's rise in the global order but there will be delays unless India resolves its issues and irons out its differences with Pakistan. If both countries can resolve the Kashmir issue, then they can easily solve all their differences. People on either side of the border hold memories- both bitter and sweet- of the days before partition, but due to the lack of transport and exchange between the two countries now, the new generation is deprived of such memories. Hence governments of both countries need to facilitate travel between them and create an environment of remembrances.

Mahwish Hafeez, *Research Fellow* & **Arhama Siddiq**, *Research Fellow*

Session V: Narratives on Pakistan's place in the International Community

Speakers: Dr. Ishtiaq Ahmad, Ambassador (Retd) Tariq Osman Haider,
Ambassador (Retd) Khalid Khattak

The discussants of the fifth session, stated that in the West, Pakistan was perceived as a country that is deeply stuck in the past, pursuing conflict in the region, and where the possibility of any change for better was close to impossible. However, transformation has been taking place in Pakistan's internal reality and external relations which has been governed by the recent transition to civilian rule, accompanied by a major shift in foreign policy. Improving relations with neighbours, such as Afghanistan and India, and consolidating strategic ties with regional powers like China have emerged as key pillars of what is officially pronounced as Pakistan's Regional Pivot. The current Pakistani government was focused on building upon existing convergences and trying to overcome the divergences in these key relationships.

Moving on the panellists discussed that, in the context of Pakistan's geo strategic location, it views itself as a developing regional power. Within this context, they outlined Pakistan's core national interests, such as territorial integrity and sovereignty, national cohesion, socio economic development, and Kashmir - the unfinished agenda of partition. Pakistan's key interests in terms of external policy, such as Pakistan's aspiration to play a central role within the region, within the Muslim world, to become a relevant player within the international fora and to maintain a strategic balance in South Asia by projecting and maintaining its own independent position, were also highlighted. However, despite Pakistan's aspirations and the fact that it is a hardworking, resilient and peaceful nation, the country's image is adversely affected by being associated to terrorism. However, external factors such as instability in Afghanistan, attempts by the intelligence services of regional states to destabilize Pakistan are not taken into account, when building the image of Pakistan in the West. To overcome these issues Pakistan needs to put its domestic house in order, bilateral policies and image projection must also be pursued at the same time. As a Nuclear Power, Pakistan should behave self confidentially.

At the end the panellists gave an appraisal of Pakistan's ties with Russia within the context of a global, regional and bilateral perspective. Stressing on current bilateral ties between the two states, it was stated that in the history of Pak-Russia ties, the current scenario presented a great opportunity for the qualitative development of ties in the field of energy, defence collaboration and production, including the proposal of buying MI 35 Gunship helicopters from Russia. Other areas of mutual convergence included space technology and the peaceful use of nuclear energy for power generation. While deliberating about the future possibility of a strategic partnership between the two states, the discussants were of the view that while Russia was entangled in the Ukraine crisis, and Pakistan faced its own domestic and external pressures, both countries shared similar views when it came to fighting terrorism, regional challenges. In conclusion it was emphasized that although Indo-Russia ties in the past overshadowed Russia's ties with Pakistan, the current global scenario offered opportunities to both Pakistan and Russia to promote ties particularly in the wake of India's policy to diversify its sources and market for Indian arms, as well as Russia's policy of diversifying and expanding its arms market to other countries such as Pakistan.

Amina Khan, Research Fellow & Mian Ahmad Naeem Salik, Research Fellow

Session VI: Narratives on Trade, Security and Energy

Speakers: Professor Mahendra P. Lama, Dr. Ashfaque Hasan Khan,
Dr. Rashid A. Khan, Mr. Faraz Hameed

The session started off by shedding light on the regional connectivity in South Asia and it was stated that energy security is consciously a sustainable development perspective. To have energy distribution, South Asians should be closely cooperative with each other. The charter of the SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) also talks about energy cooperation among the member countries, and even the 18th Katmandu Summit would ask for substantive energy cooperation. South Asian States need to promote energy trade in South Asia. A large number of Indian states have borders with other countries and it could be useful source of inter-connectivity of energy sources.

There is strong commercialism in energy trade in India. India has been opening traditional trade routes with China that were closed after the border dispute in 1962, the Sikkim-Tibet route. India-Pakistan energy cooperation can be achieved quite easily, due to close proximity between Lahore and Amritsar. There was a mention of energy cooperation with Central Asia which will bring all these regions closer through KASA-1000 project by supplying electricity to India via Pakistan. Energy could also be obtained from Bhutan and Nepal to Pakistan via India. There was emphasis on security of transmission lines, as the cost of consequences would be very high and there would be a need of cross-border protection by all parties involved.

There was further discussion about national security and economy. Both concepts are inter-connected. A strong economy makes a strong defense and security. National Security is the requirement to maintain the survival of a State through the use of economic power. Economic power is absolutely essential to maintain power. Economy affects everyone including its defense and that is why it matters. A strong economy ensures political and social stability, which in turn makes the economy stronger.

Pakistan needs to strengthen its economy, with a 7-8 percent growth rate. Pakistan needs strong economy along with a strong defense. If economy grows by 3 percent with 2 percent population growth, it is a symbol of a weak economy. In Pakistan over 40 percent of young population is unemployed and there is rising poverty and social unrest, caused by fiscal indiscipline. Every year 3 million people join the poverty line because economy is growing at the rate of three percent. As a result, Pakistan is dependent upon IMF bailout packages. The panel suggested that strengthening of Pakistan's economy can take place through macro improvement, investment in people, and investment in infrastructure.

The discussion then moved on to the issue of the political economy of illicit trade in Afghanistan in the light of bilateral trade with Pakistan. Illicit trade has been fueling conflict between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The mobility of people and traditional trade cannot be controlled in the border areas between Pakistan and Afghanistan. People carry out poppy cultivation as they have no alternative means in the border areas. When borders are tightened, new routes would come up from Central Asia to Afghanistan and the Middle East. Taliban and war-lords gain benefits of this illicit trade by cultivating poppy and smuggling heroin. From top to bottom they are integrated and well-connected. Illicit trade is a source of power politics, which has been amplified due to War on Terror. To control illicit trade, policy must become textual.

At the end of the session there was discussion about people-to-people contact, which is not a new phenomenon between Pakistan and India. These imperatives emanated from the fact that both people belong to the same country prior to 1947. Such exchanges were more frequent between the people of both countries right after partition, but the 1965 war put restrictions on people exchanges. The leading Indian newspapers used to be available in public libraries in Pakistan but they were banned after the 1965 war, such was the level of interaction. The 1965 war transformed the image of India as an enemy State.

When Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in 1979, the Zia Government in Pakistan needed to have good relations with India. So the cricket diplomacy was started. Journalists visited both countries. The Cultural Agreement of 1988 was elaborative and it asked to establish cultural centers of both countries and to exchange artists, singers, poets, intellectuals, educationists, students, professors, and journalists. Both countries were asked to stop hostile propaganda. There was a diplomatic framework to extend cultural relations, but practically not much has been achieved. The visa regime is restrictive and it exists only on papers. For businessmen a new category has been created under the new visa agreement. Senior citizens should be given visa on arrival. India has given this facility to 180 countries but Pakistan has been excluded. The Srinagar-Muzzafarabad bus service should be more inclusive, he suggested. He concluded that although new imperatives have been emerging, there are serious impediments in cultural relations between the people of Pakistan and India. There is possibility that regional initiative would be taken to expand friendly exchanges across the international border.

Dr. Ahmed Rashid Malik, *Senior Research Fellow*

Session VII: Media and the Narratives on National Security

Speakers: Mr. Mosharraf Zaidi, Mr. Fahd Husain

Media has flourished as an institution in Pakistan over the past decade, carving out a niche for itself as a major power-broker and perception-setter in the wider society. In the current environment, when the country is fighting home-grown insurgency and other non-traditional forms of threats, media has a vital role to play in setting and defining narratives on national security in Pakistan.

The panel delineated how national security is constantly assessed from political and militaristic frameworks; however, there is increasing evidence that individual and collective human security also inform national security. In light of this observation, a crucial question arises whether Pakistan can ensure national security without a highly educated citizenry, and without promoting science and technology as a major element of the national discourse among its nascent youth- as these factors are lacking in Pakistan's extant policy discourse. Delineating the link between the need for education and the more practical reasons of progress and elimination of national security threats instead of the mere normative appraisal of such a development, the discussants shared dismal statistics about education service delivery in Pakistan. Ranging from issues of disinterested and under-qualified teachers to lack of basic amenities and facilities such as drinking water, boundary walls and roofs in schools, to problematic curricula and teaching methods, are the many impediments in the way of truly and effectively educating the largely young population of Pakistan.

Pakistanis are being crowded out in the international milieu, not just in the cricket pitches and hockey fields of the world, but also in board rooms and class rooms, as our nation does not prioritise adequately equipping its young ones for scholastic and technological advancements. PEC 2010 results for Sindh and Punjab showed a similar, alarming trend- grade 5 and grade 8 students perform abysmally in subjects such as maths and science, as compared to Urdu and Islamic Studies. There is a strong case for the improvement of teaching methods and syllabi for natural sciences at a formative level, as well as a larger need to invest as a nation in a discourse aimed at furthering quality education, rather than the present one which relies on anxiety-ridden anti-foreigner notions.

The panellists then spoke at length about the impact wrought by the media's discourses regarding national security on the larger society. The discussants asserted that the commonly held conception of media as a monolithic entity is problematic. Media does not have a uniform agenda, or a common platform through which it can make decisions. Moreover, the recent mushrooming of media outlets, including 90-odd privately owned TV channels and 115 FM radio station, and the penetration of media through greater access to internet and smart phones means that a large number of Pakistanis have now access to some sort of media.

However, this pervasiveness does not entail good quality- in effect, the media can be termed as mongering controlled chaos, and the various media outlets have minimum consensus on the stances they propagate, or the stories they end up narrating. There is a difference between the acts of thinking and doing- as many practitioners in the field of media do not think, they merely act, and mostly without prior or later reflection on the way their words have impacted the society, and whether this impact was positive or not. Explicating upon how and what goes into the news, four factors were shared that are commonly considered- personal preferences, commercial factors, political factors and ideological factors. There was stress on the significance of television as a tool of utmost power when it comes to

shaping perceptions of the people. In so far as national security is concerned, some issues were emphasised by the media as a general rule, more so than the others. Issues that do not garner the media's attention, or do not sell, are such that they may pertain to foreign policy, which is a no-go area. Another security concern of vital importance is terrorism, regarding which the media's coverage is completely one-sided, with their stances governed by the government and the military.

The panellists defended the Pakistani media by adding that the commercialisation of media which is often decried as a marker for the loss of quality reporting is not a phenomenon that is unique to Pakistan- in fact, this happens the world over. In light of this, it was stressed that the media should be appreciated and bolstered for its strength, i.e. its wide reach, instead of critiquing it for its weakness, i.e. its lack of depth. The media outlets were lauded for pushing for political reforms and democracy- however varied the approach of various media outlets and personalities may be. This is the point of minimum consensus for the Pakistani media.

Aimen Saleem Bajwa, *Managing Editor* & **Ahmed Saffee**, *Research Fellow*

Session VIII: National Issues and National Security: Lessons from the Region

Speakers: Dr. Moonis Ahmar, Dr. Ajay Mehra, Dr. Najeeb Azizi, Ms. Salma Malik

The session VIII covered very significant National Security issues being faced by Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India. The first important national security challenge highlighted in Pakistan's context was the examination of demand and movement for redrawing provincial map of Pakistan. The demand to create new provinces in Pakistan was viewed from an Intra-National Security perspective, as matters and issues relating to different regions of Pakistan located in its provinces can at best be understood in terms of intra-national security. Pakistan as a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-cultural and multi-religious state facing many intra-national security challenges and it can effectively deal with issues of security if intra-national security accepted as a reality and beyond the scope of national security. The debate was initiated on the following questions that what is the basis of debate to create new provinces in Pakistan? How intra-national security can have positive and negative transformation if new provinces in Pakistan are created? Why there exists lack of consensus on creating new provinces in Pakistan, and how delay in redrawing the provincial map of the country can augment national security predicament? And can new provinces in Pakistan be created by upgrading existing divisions?

On the basis of above set of questions, it was argued that there are two schools of thoughts exist in Pakistan on the issue of creating new provinces. The alarmists, favouring a centralized administrative structure, viewed that the demand to redraw the provincial map of Pakistan will opens up a Pandora's Box and will unleash violent conflicts in the country by promoting ethnic identities. However, it was important to note that Pakistan as an ideological state cannot permit the promotion of ethnic identities and create provinces on ethnic grounds. The realists, favouring decentralized administrative structures, argued that recognizing the sub-provincial identities will have a positive impact on transforming the country's age-old conflicts related to lingual, ethnic and cultural groups. This argument was supported by examples that the demand for a Hazara province in Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa (KPK), Seraiki and Bhawalpur province in Punjab and province of southern Sindh composed of Karachi and Hyderabad divisions reflects the undercurrents in Pakistani society which will have far reaching implications on intra-national security. It was also pointed out that the division of Balochistan on Baloch and Pashtun lines was another issue causing friction and conflict in the volatile political landscape of Pakistan.

To support the main argument of intra-national security in Pakistan it was highlighted that since it focuses on issues within different provinces emanating from ethnic, lingual, cultural, sectarian and religious contradictions, therefore threats to intra-national security, if new provinces are formed, cannot be undermined. While the National Finance Commission (NFC) did try to allocate funds to provinces according to their requirements, yet, grievances among the smaller provinces of Sindh and Balochistan remain. Second, sharing of information by provinces with each other on terrorism, crimes and smuggling can help tackle security threats but in practice there exists not much cooperation among provinces in this regard.

It was emphasised that following factors should be taken into account for redrawing of provincial map of Pakistan. First, there was a need to exercise tolerance and peaceful coexistence by different stakeholders; both representing minority and majority sides will help unleash positive thinking in order to address unresolved security issues. Second, intra-national security will become a source of cooperation rather than conflict, if will of the people, instead of the interests of various political parties and groups, was taken into consideration. Holding of referendum to determine whether the voters

belonging to a particularly region in a province wanted a separate provincial identity will also go a long way in inducting a sense of ownership if a new province was created. Third, the transition from centralization to de-centralization by creating provinces on administrative grounds will cause minimum security threats than provinces established on ethnic or lingual basis. Intra-national security will be highly threatened if a de-centralized power structure was not established in new provinces. Fourth, institutions like Council of Common Interests (CCI) which presently represent four provinces will play a better role to promote intra-national security if more provinces were created through a democratic process. Issues which trigger insecurity leading to violence can be properly handled when there are autonomous federating units interacting with each other without fear of domination. It was further suggested that in order to avoid conflict on the basis of race and language there was need to upgrade 29 Divisions in Pakistan to provinces status. However, it was suggested that a cautious approach should be adopted before considering up-gradation of divisions into provinces.

The second important national security narrative was presented from India's perspective. The main argument was based on a premise that in a national security discourse prominence should be given to human development by fine tuning a balance between state's security and human security. It was argued that national security cannot be achieved when the majority of the population were suffering from poverty, hunger, and lack of social development. Furthermore the national security in South Asia region were inter connected as the national security challenges of the 21st Century can no longer be defined by a single prominent threat. All regional states had defined their national security threat perceptions and making hard choices to deal with different emerging threats like terrorism. However, there is need to identify and balance out between state's security and human security. The regional states should not simply rely on hard power by investing more on defence sector. They regional states should take into account wider aspects of sustainable national human security. It was highlighted that states in South Asian region were far behind in international human development and governance indicators. There was a need to focus on people security which includes effective public security architecture encompassing, economic security, employment security, food security, health, education, environmental security and assurances of basic livelihood.

It was argued that there are many dimensions of security ranging from geopolitical security to regional and national security and the traditional concept of national security was too narrow to define sustainable human security. Therefore there was a need to broaden the scope national security to comprehend the real meanings of the security for the peoples of South Asia. It was emphasised that a shift in focus of traditional notion of security will help to address the real issues of national security in this region. There is a need to qualitatively improve public security aspects. South Asian states should make their national security guiding principles based on human and public security. It was concluded that despite spending huge national resources on armaments there was a need to invest in social and human development indicators in this region to achieve the objectives of comprehensive national security.

In the third theme of the session, challenges and prospects of security and stability in Afghanistan" were highlighted. It was argued that the US played an important role in Afghan national security in terms of political normalization, economic growth, and development. Identifying instability, insecurity, and terror as the main challenges present day Afghanistan was facing, attention was drawn to the importance of eradicating extremism, violence, poverty and corruption in attaining national security. Threats to national security were further accentuated by inadequate structures of the rule of law, fragmented sub-national governance, established networks of terror and an increasing level of human insecurity. The security problem in Afghanistan has for too long been interpreted narrowly as the security of the state

from internal and external aggression, or as the protection of the interests of fragmented groups claiming political legitimacy, or from the perspective of global and regional interests. It was human security needs of the population at large that have often been neglected. It was suggested that the end of insecurity lies not in short term military solutions, but in a long term comprehensive strategy which should target the root causes of conflict and promotes human rights.

As a way forward, a strategy to decrease Afghanistan's dependence on external sources of aid was presented. It was argued that the national security framework of Afghanistan recognizes military power and eclectic non-military aspects and therefore, it should comprise a number of interrelated components including military and defence security, border security, as well as political and strategic security. Since Afghanistan was in a crucial phase therefore there is a need to act responsibly and ensure service delivery not only at Kabul level but also at the grassroots level. The government should focus on to deliver to afghan people otherwise it will face the problems of legitimacy. A strong optimism was expressed that Afghanistan and Pakistan should write a new history of their future relations and not let the troubled past as a hindrance in progress.

The last national security narrative was based on arguments to develop a discourse on security sector reforms and governance. Various theoretical dimensions of security sector reforms were discussed in detail. The security sector was defined as "a broad grouping of institutions, state and non-state alike which embraced a variety of unarmed and non-uniformed actors beyond the traditional understanding of armed and uniformed security sector practitioners. Giving an overview of the existing security sector institutions of Pakistan, four categories were identified such as the core security actors, those related to justice such as law enforcement agencies, security management and oversight bodies, and lastly non-statutory forces. A disagreement was debated over the narrow definition of security sector reforms. It was argued that security sector reforms should not be restricted to armed and uniformed forces, and it was suggested that it also includes political and governance oriented activity. However the level of involvement by the actors mentioned in these categories may differ widely from country to country depending on respective political systems.

An added dimension to these agents of security sector was the role played by donor agencies, their stakes and interests which may range from the fringe to the mainstream. These dynamics have made security sector and its reform agenda much complex. Therefore the main thrust of any successful security sector reform was the ownership and building up of local capacity. This may occur at two levels; retrospectively and prospectively, where the former deals with supporting and strengthening pre-existing structures and institutions, reforming and equipping them with new tools of knowledge and otherwise to deal with newly emerging threats; and the latter with encouraging and creating new spaces and bringing in new practices and tools to deal with the growing and developing security challenges.

Other than the external military threat faced by the country, the biggest challenge for effective governance and proper security sector implementation has been the warped civil military relationship. As a solution and way forward, it was suggested that the donors should adopt a first do no harm approach. Furthermore, a parliamentary and judicial oversight on security sector institutions for enhancing sustainability, and for there to be an integrated approach where the participating bodies have complete acceptance and ownership of the reforms. It was emphasised that a critical need for Pakistan was to realize the importance of an integrated, consolidated approach to deal with the multipronged problems that the sector entails.

The two day international conference on **Narratives of National Security** came to an end with an optimistic note that there were wide ranging internal and external aspects of national security, and only a consolidated and integrated national security policy can help to address challenges of security and stability of that particular state and region. At the end of the conference, the Director-General, ISSI, thanked USIP and HSF for their support and funding, but also for conceptualizing this conference in a manner that was different from past trends. The underlying thought process at the conference was appreciated which was to promote the good of society and that of the country. The international community wants Pakistan to succeed and it is the spirit of human good will which explains the international community's interest in such endeavours.

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