

**NEITHER**

**AN INSIDER'S**

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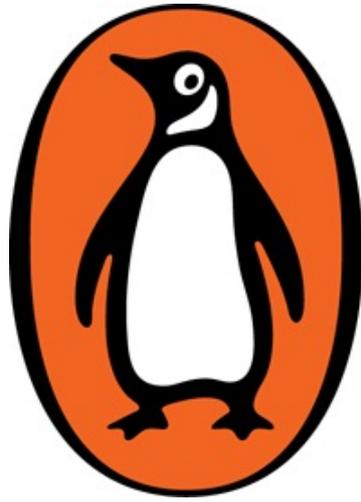
**NOR**

**PAKISTAN'S**

**A DOVE**

**FOREIGN POLICY**

**KHURSHID MAHMUD KASURI**



KHURSHID MAHMUD KASURI

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NEITHER A HAWK NOR A DOVE

*An Insider's Account Of Pakistan's Foreign Policy*



PENGUIN BOOKS

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###### *Acknowledgements*

###### *Follow Penguin*

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I dedicate this book to my parents, Mian Mahmud Ali Kasuri and Sahibzadi Roshan Ara Begum, who both helped mould my cosmopolitan bearings and taught me to become more tolerant towards opposing perspectives; To my wife Nasreen, one of Pakistan's most successful entrepreneurs in her own right; To my sons, Ali, Kasim, and Nassir; And to my brothers, Umar, Daniyal and Bakhtiar who have all been a source of strength for me in whatever I have endeavoured to do.

# Preface

I was the Foreign Minister of Pakistan during 2002–07, a most momentous time not just for Pakistan but for the world at large. This period covers events immediately following 9/11 as well as the Pakistan-India peace process that made great strides in those years. In fact, the two countries were on the verge of finalizing a historic framework of an agreement on the internecine Kashmir conflict, the cause of five wars between Pakistan and India, including three major ones in 1947–48, 1965, and 1971—Rann of Kutch and Kargil being the other ones. The period covered in this book is also when I was Foreign Minister for five years between 2002–07. It has been updated to late 2014 (and in some cases 2015), with an analysis of the latest situation based on experience and insights gained during my tenure. In order to do so, I have obviously used my experience to reflect on recent developments in our relations with India and other important countries. Unfortunately, no major positive developments have taken place since I left office, as far as relations with India are concerned, therefore, all that has been stated in the book as an insider's account is equally relevant today.

During my tenure as Foreign Minister, Pakistan's foreign policy remained focused on promotion of regional and global peace and security as well as on the country's economic and social development and the welfare of its citizens. Amidst turbulent times, Pakistan managed to improve its relations with all its neighbours and the major world powers. It is not possible to do justice to all of Pakistan's vital bilateral and multilateral relations as well as to major regional and international issues in a single volume. The book is largely about Pakistan's difficult relationship with India and attempts to normalize this relationship. It also deals with Pakistan's difficulties on our Western borders, particularly, following the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan. The events of 9/11 and the resultant problems in the trilateral relationship between Pakistan, Afghanistan and the US are also covered. This relationship can even be regarded as a quadrangular relationship, if we bring India into it, given its interest in Afghanistan. For this reason therefore, Pakistan's vitally important relationships with the Islamic world, particularly with Saudi Arabia and the GCC countries, Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan's closest ally China and near neighbours like Russia have not been adequately dealt with. I would have also liked to deal at greater length with our complex and emotional relationship with Bangladesh, once a part of Pakistan. To cover all this would require another book from me. It is, however, necessary to refer to these vitally important relationships, albeit briefly in this book.

I have primarily written this book to provide an authoritative and personal account of Pakistan's foreign policy at a time when it underwent major strategic shifts to conform to new and rapidly evolving global imperatives. I hope to offer the reader a candid analysis of Pakistan's historical and recent foreign policy formulations anchored in my experience as Foreign Minister.

Although foreign relations remain the cornerstone of the book, I also provide a brief account of my upbringing and education which together have profoundly shaped my world view that can neither be classified as hawkish nor dovish. Moreover, I also make this point that vide a concise account of Indo-Pak history as the existing mainstream accounts of history in both Pakistan and India have unfortunately been tampered with to conform them to the two states' national agendas and ideologies. Unless the youth of both the countries are taught an accurate and truthful version of history, their corresponding misconceptions about each other will continue to be fuelled by their distorted understandings of history, making it difficult to achieve enduring peace and stability in South Asia. This is particularly true of Pakistan, and, it is unfortunate that while Turks, Iranians, Egyptians and Muslims living in other parts of the world, despite being good practising Muslims, are proud of their heritage, in Pakistan there is little desire to make the younger generation aware of their great historical legacy—of course the great Islamic legacy—but also Mehrgarh, Indus, and Gandhara Civilizations. No wonder, the youth is developing such a myopic view of the world.

My analysis and my attitude towards things is inevitably informed by my upbringing and family history which have had a profound impact in moulding my viewpoints. My grandfather, Maulana Abdul Qadir Kasuri, besides being a successful lawyer took a very active interest in the freedom movement; he was also one of the top leaders of the Khilafat Movement in India and President of the Indian National Congress (Punjab) for ten years (between Lala Lajpat Rai and Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din). Unfortunately, it is not generally known to the younger generation in Pakistan that there were a large number of Muslims who were leaders in the Indian National Congress that included the founder of Pakistan, Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

One of my three Indian counterparts, the then Foreign Minister Pranab Mukherjee, now President of India, said that he had done some research for me regarding my grandfather; I was touched. According to him, my grandfather had a very important position in the Congress at that time and he said that Punjab, UP, and Bengal presidencies were considered almost as important as being President of the All-India Congress Committee. These were inter-changeable positions. He told me that Maulana Abul Kalam Azad became President of Bengal Congress after leaving the office of the Central President of the Congress.

I was subjected to opposing influences in my life from both my father and mother's side. All of us are affected by various influences, some of which may not be in harmony with

each other. As I was growing up, I started to understand my father's dilemma; he had many socialist and progressive friends who thought he was far too conservative because he was a practising Muslim. They were particularly surprised how he could be a practising Muslim and still be supportive of progressive causes especially in the context of the 1950s and 1960s when anti-colonialism was at its height in the developing world; when anti-Americanism had begun to rise because of Vietnam; and when it had become fashionable among the progressives and socialists to accept Karl Marx's view of religion as 'the opium of the people'. As a result of my father's eclectic company and his experiences, being myself has always come naturally to me (despite the contradictions in my paternal and maternal family's backgrounds—my mother came from a princely family).

The book is largely a '*Memoir*'; it is definitely not a political biography—politicians are only referred to in the first chapter that largely deals with their influences on me as I was growing up and with whom I developed close personal relationships. There are admittedly a few pen portraits of these people but I have consciously avoided any political analysis, since, that would have taken the focus away from the main purpose of the book, namely, foreign policy of Pakistan during my tenure.

The hostile nature of Pakistan-India relations has a strong bearing on regional security including the vital issue of enduring peace and stability in Afghanistan. This old rivalry between nuclear armed South Asian neighbours also creates grave concerns to the international community. Any move aimed at improving Pakistan-India relations, therefore, is of great importance to the world community at large.

This book provides a first insider's account of the progress made by both countries between 2002–07 and working towards improving their historically acrimonious relations. In fact, illustrative of the advancement in the level of trust between the two sides, at a critical stage, the Indian National Security Advisor, J. N. Dixit, stunned me by suggesting that President Pervez Musharraf should not take off his military uniform when most opposition political forces in Pakistan as well as major Western powers, and I myself, were trying to convince the President to relinquish his military office and contest the next election as a civilian. My relationship with President Musharraf was warm and cordial and yet complex as is explained in the book.

People often question whether the Pakistan Army would allow genuine peace between Pakistan and India. This issue has been addressed in the book based on my experience of dealing with the leadership of the Pakistan Army. They were on board on the framework of the Kashmir settlement on which both sides had made remarkable progress on the backchannel.

Although patchy published accounts are available, addressing the framework of a possible solution for Indo-Pak differences, this is the first definitive and comprehensive account of the much heralded peace process by someone directly and intimately involved with the process aimed at 'transformational and cleansing peace'. Significantly, this is the first

book by any former or current President, Prime Minister, or Foreign Minister of either Pakistan or India (who dealt with these issues) containing a detailed account of the outlines of possible solutions worked out between 2002–07 via conventional front-channel diplomacy and on the ‘backchannel’ behind closed doors. Whilst some political analysts have written about these matters, such accounts suffer from lack of crucial details and are naturally devoid of any conviction instilled by dealing first-hand with such matters.

As Pakistan’s Foreign Minister, I had the opportunity of dealing with three of my Indian counterparts, Yashwant Sinha, Natwar Singh, and Pranab Mukherjee, currently India’s President. With respect to providing an authoritative account of those times, I can say with humility that I am better situated than my three Indian counterparts simply because they served much shorter and staggered terms, whereas, I remained Foreign Minister for the entire five years. During this period unprecedented progress was made inter alia on the contentious issues of Kashmir, Siachen, and Sir Creek. But for the unfortunate and fortuitous turn of events following the removal of Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry by President Pervez Musharraf, the Indian Prime Minister was all set to visit Islamabad as a result of bold and imaginative steps towards peace to sign an agreement on Sir Creek which would have provided a further impetus to the nearly final draft framework on Kashmir. I wish Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had visited Pakistan in July or August of 2006 by which time Sir Creek was ready for signature. This would have given a shut-up call to all the Cassandras who kept on repeating that Pakistan and India were incapable of resolving any dispute bilaterally; his visit would have sealed the agreement on Sir Creek providing a huge impetus to resolving other disputes. We were told that delay in his visiting Pakistan in 2006 was due to domestic political compulsions related to elections in a few Indian states at that time. As a result, the peace process pursued with great courage by both the sides could not bear fruition at that time. Addressing the issue of non-state actors was also essential not just in the context of the peace process with India which was doing very well during our tenure, but for Pakistan’s own internal security. In this context, I refer in the book to camps established to wean away non-state actors from militancy and, as a result, a considerable reduction in violence (accepted by important Indians) across the Line of Control (LoC). I understand India’s pain after the Mumbai tragedy of 26/11 which occurred after we left office. Hopefully, this book will create greater understanding on both sides, including among those in Pakistan who find it difficult to forget India’s role in 1971.

I remain convinced that the elaborate and detailed diplomatic efforts made and the progress achieved during that time will not be wasted, and the two sides will have to begin from where we left rather than reinvent the wheel when times for earnest dialogue and engagement are again propitious. I also warn in the book that both Pakistan and India have major fault-lines which could be exploited by the other if they do not resolve their disputes in a fair and just manner. I suggest in the book that Prime Minister Narendra Modi, particularly, after the massive mandate that he has received from the people of India,

expend some of this political capital by thinking creatively and out-of-the-box although I have been disappointed by some of the rhetoric coming from the new government recently. I, nevertheless, strongly believe if Prime Minister Modi is to live up to the promise of development, which formed the major plank of his election campaign, he will, hopefully, sooner rather than later, realize that the experienced and wise Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee came to the conclusion regarding Pak-India relations after deep reflection.

I also argue in the book, based on my experience of dealing with the Pakistan Army for five years, that it is not averse to peace with India, provided it is a just peace—one which in my opinion is not only possible but for which both sides tried and were on the verge of ushering in a ‘cleansing and a transformational peace’. I have referred to my conversations in private with Indian leaders in which I have pointed out that terrorism knew no borders, and that India could not remain an island of tranquillity if the region around it was engulfed in terrorism. Indeed, India itself has experienced terrorism at the hands of Naxalites and secessionists. I have always felt that the best way to combat the wave of terrorism engulfing the region is for Pakistan and India to cooperate meaningfully. I hope that the newly elected Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi would use his enormous political capital and clout to pursue friendly relations with Pakistan to the great economic benefit of the citizens of both the countries, and not needlessly adopt a counter-productive and aggressive posture towards Pakistan, even if it entails slightly dimming his core constituency. Prime Minister Modi must rise to the leadership challenges awaiting him and elevate himself from a firebrand politician to a wise statesman. Luckily, in Pakistan there is a consensus among most major political parties that the Kashmir issue can only be resolved through a negotiated settlement, notwithstanding, the hard-line postures of those outside the political mainstream.

Befittingly, as the end-game in Afghanistan draws closer, I also deal with the difficult relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan covering my interactions with Afghan leaders including President Hamid Karzai who I remember engaging me, one on one, and earnestly trying to ask me, to my great horror, as to why Pakistanis look down upon the Afghans. As far as Afghanistan is concerned, it seems the more things change, the more they remain the same—*plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*. Nonetheless, I hope that Afghanistan would not slip into another cauldron of civil war when the US and its coalition forces depart. For its part, Pakistan must learn from its past mistakes. It does not have to look for favourites in Afghanistan; it doesn't really matter who rules Afghanistan. Any future rulers of Afghanistan will find it in their own interest to try and cultivate the best of relations with Pakistan in view of Pakistan's demonstrated capacity in the past to influence the situation in Afghanistan. This policy has not, however, brought Pakistan any dividends. In fact it has proved detrimental and generated more troubles for Pakistan than accruing any meaningful benefits. It is in Pakistan's interest to let the Afghans decide what they want with regard to their future political dispensation. The recent controversial

elections have luckily brought in a government of national unity, with Dr Ashraf Ghani as the President and Dr Abdullah Abdullah as the Chief Executive. I have a long experience of dealing with Dr Abdullah, since he was my counterpart, and feel that he is a pragmatic politician and realizes the need for good relations with Pakistan. Dr Ashraf Ghani is an academic and an economist who has piloted Afghanistan's economy as its Finance Minister. He should, hopefully, prove to be equally pragmatic (recent events prove that he is).

Any book on Pakistan's foreign policy would be seriously deficient if it fails to comprehensively address the complicated relationship between Pakistan and the United States. This book explores the reasons why Pakistan, from being the 'most allied ally', became the 'most sanctioned ally' of the US; and then once again a 'major non-NATO ally' while simultaneously being accused of playing a duplicitous double game. Perhaps it is fair to describe Pakistan and the US as the 'odd couple' of modern inter-state relations. According to a noted commentator, 'They can't even make love without insulting and abusing each other.' In that vein, I thus shed light on precisely what it is that makes the US and Pakistan come together again and again despite the great reservations on important issues entertained by them both.

When I assumed office, there was general disenchantment with what was regarded by many Pakistanis as the self-serving nature of Pakistan-US relations; many felt that the US only used Pakistan as a fair-weather friend when it suited its own interests. The truth, however, is more nuanced. Americans entertained misgivings of a different nature regarding Pakistan's policy and objectives because they suspected that the primacy of the Kashmir dispute in Pakistan meant that its government had an ambivalent attitude towards the 'jihadis'. It was in this background that our government attempted to bring about a degree of sustainability to Pakistan-US relationship. I address how this was achieved, including through efforts to restrain militant non-state actors and by broadening and deepening the relationship beyond its transactional nature in the sphere of counterterrorism.

With self-restraint on the use of force and a willingness to engage and help allies in counterterrorism, the two critical components of the evolving Obama doctrine, the US must be more sensitive to Pakistan's legitimate regional concerns and fully support its counterterrorism efforts. Luckily, in the recent past, the administration seems to have stopped repeating the 'do more' mantra, perhaps, realizing that the army had already started a major operation in North Waziristan, destroying hideouts of the terrorists and their infrastructure, killing hundreds and in the process also suffering casualties. For its part, Pakistan should ensure that its territory is not abused by non-state actors to launch cross-border terrorist attacks. This is how I see US-Pakistan relationship crystallizing into a long-term strategic partnership in the future.

I also cover Pakistan's extremely close ties with China. I vividly recall a conversation between Prime Minister Wen Jiabao of China and myself in which, as a mark of trust, he said to me that I will become the first non-Chinese leader ever to be taken to a top-secret Chinese space facility. During the Cold War period it was difficult for Pakistan to be closely allied to China and the US simultaneously (although it managed to do so), with the latter harbouring great misgivings about the nature of Pak-China relations. This uneasiness has never truly disappeared but was certainly somewhat lessened when Pakistan played a key role in bringing the US and China closer with Henry Kissinger secretly taking off for Beijing from Pakistan in a 'black hat, a trench coat and dark glasses'.

Apart from delving into the origins and milestones of Pak-China relations, the book details the growth in economic, political, and military cooperation during our government, as well as Chinese assistance towards peaceful uses of nuclear technology. In a prospective vein, the implications of the close relationship between Pakistan and China in the context of the emerging rivalry between the US and China are also examined.

Additionally, I briefly discuss Pakistan's close relationship with the Muslim world, in particular Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Iran, and the GCC countries. Sure to startle several quarters, the book also includes an account of (and the reasons behind) the bold, but politically risky, initiative regarding Israel; furnishing details of the meeting I held with my Israeli counterpart—the first ever at this level between the two countries.

One of the most challenging issues during my tenure was the Dr A. Q. Khan affair, involving his proliferation of nuclear materials, which inevitably led to an international storm of controversy. I distinctly remember the exact moment when I was initially informed about Dr A. Q. Khan's activities. I remember President Pervez Musharraf and I visibly perspiring in Kuala Lumpur, not because of humidity in that city, but because of what President Khatami of Iran had informed President Musharraf regarding the IAEA approach to Iran to explain traces of (almost) weapons-grade enrichment of contaminated parts during inspection of Iranian nuclear facilities and his sheepish efforts to connect Pakistan to it.

To bridge the perception gap in the aftermath of the A. Q. Khan affair, the several initiatives undertaken by our government in the area of non-proliferation, by dismantling his network in the country and making him apologize to the nation for his activities are covered in the book. Our government paid a heavy political price for this because A. Q. Khan was revered in Pakistan as 'the father of the bomb'. Our domestic political opponents often used to fling the fact at us that India had appointed its father of the bomb its president, we had humiliated ours and put him under house-arrest as part of a fanciful international conspiracy against Pakistan. The international community could not possibly recognize our dilemma but was nevertheless appreciative of our resolve when we acted firmly with the affair. Dealing with the fallout of this affair compelled the government to

take some of the most difficult decisions that any Pakistani government has ever had to take.

As it continues to do so till today, the Iranian nuclear issue remained a hot topic during my tenure. In the light of Pakistan-Iran relations based on close historical and cultural roots as well as geographic contiguity, I was urged by both the Iranians and the EU representatives that I should play a role on this issue. The Iranians also asked me if I could play a role in bringing them and the US closer. In this connection, Ali Larijani, the powerful Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council at the time (now Speaker), visited me in my office for a marathon meeting in which we drafted what was meant to be a message to the US that was conveyed to them; not much progress could, unfortunately, be made. The gulf in the positions of the Bush Administration and the Iranian government under President Ahmadinejad was far too wide. This, however, did not prevent US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, from attempting to send a message to Iran through me during the height of the Israeli war with Lebanon in 2006, urging Iran not to provide long-range rockets to Hezbollah lest they reach Tel Aviv. She said to me that if any rockets did reach Tel Aviv, it would have 'Made in Iran' written all over them. The book covers the aforementioned, in addition to explaining Pakistan's position on the Iranian nuclear programme as well as the efforts that it made to bring about a degree of understanding between the West and Iran on this issue.

I have peppered the book with several anecdotes to make it more interesting for the reader. It furnishes details of my interactions with many world leaders and global personalities including President Bush, Indian Prime Ministers Atal Bihari Vajpayee, and Manmohan Singh, President Karzai, King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, President Mohammad Ahmadinejad of Iran, Turkish President Abdullah Gul (then my counterpart), Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao, French Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin (then my counterpart), President Pranab Mukherjee of India (then my counterpart), Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw, German Vice Chancellor and Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer and Saudi Arabian Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al-Faisal amongst others.

Given the vast sweep and import of issues and crises analysed in the book, often in unorthodox undertones, are certain to ruffle certain people, the book should be of keen interest to a large number of Pakistanis and Indians. Additionally, I hope that Western audience would welcome a first-hand authoritative account of foreign policy and choices of a country perceived as 'the most dangerous place on earth', in the West. As much as possible, I have tried to write this book in an accessible style. The aim is that it should cater to the interest of any one curious about South Asia in general or Pakistan in particular.

**KHURSHID MAHMUD KASURI**



# Early Years

## THE CONTEXT

### A Hawk or a Dove?

‘Are you a hawk or a dove on India Kasuri Sahib?’ President Pervez Musharraf shot the question at me. Although not entirely taken aback, I wasn’t exactly expecting this question at our very first meeting after my assumption of the office of Foreign Minister of Pakistan in November 2002.

We were sitting across the main table in the banquet hall of the *Aiwan-e-Sadr* (President’s House), an imposing building on Constitution Avenue in Islamabad. Visiting the *Aiwan-e-Sadr* for the first time can be a daunting experience. With its liveried Army *Jawans* in starched turbans and impressive gilded uniforms standing like statues, the atmosphere reminds one of the heydays of both the British Raj and the Mughal Empire. I was, however, not particularly overcome by the surroundings or the circumstances. This could be because I had already been a Cabinet Minister in the Caretaker Government of Prime Minister Mir Balakh Sher Mazari in 1993, and thus had attended meetings at the Presidency before. Moreover, I belonged to a family of ‘rebels’—with my grandfather, my uncles, my father, and indeed myself—having spent time in prisons for our anti-establishment positions, beginning with my grandfather, Maulana Abdul Qadir Kasuri, a prominent leader of the Independence Movement. The membership of my father, Mian Mahmud Ali Kasuri, in Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto’s Cabinet was the first break with the family’s anti-establishment tradition. He nonetheless kept our antiestablishment tradition alive through his eventual and eventful resignation following serious differences with Prime Minister Bhutto on political and constitutional matters.

Coming back to my response to Musharraf’s question as to whether I was a hawk or a dove, I said to him, ‘Mr President, you will find out in due course.’ I was not trying to be reticent or evasive. I did not think it was appropriate for me to explain at length on that occasion that I was actually neither. I have always found myself in a minority in the company of both my liberal friends, some of who think peace simply has to be wished for, and my more traditional ones who think that all of Pakistan’s problems lie at the doors of India and, more recently, the United States. Liberals find me far too conservative and conservatives feel I am too much of a liberal for their comfort.

My father faced a similar situation. As I was growing up, I started to understand his dilemma: he had many socialist and progressive friends who thought that he was too conservative because he was a practising Muslim. They were particularly surprised at how my father, being a practising Muslim, could be supportive of progressive causes, especially in the context of the 1950s and 1960s, when anti-colonialism was at its height all over the developing world, when anti-Americanism was on the rise because of the Vietnam War, and when it had become fashionable among the progressives and socialists to adopt Karl Marx's view of religion as the opiate of the masses. I was, therefore, familiar with the problem and it never unduly upset me. I had learnt to be tolerant of all views and felt perfectly comfortable holding to my own. Hence, being *me* came naturally to me.

### **Family: Opposing Influences**

I grew up in the Lahore of the 1950s and 1960s, which was a most fascinating experience. Lahore is the cultural capital of the country—famous for its educational and literary institutions. It was home to a vibrant literary, artistic, and intellectual community, and a centre of political activity. People from Lahore's political and intellectual circles regularly visited our home on the then famous Fane Road, off the historic Mall Road. Thus, one of my earliest memories is growing up in a house where a variety of persons with differing ideas and viewpoints were not only routinely present, but also admired and cherished.

Significantly, I was raised under contrasting influences—with my mother belonging to a ruling princely family of northern India with pro-British leanings, and my father hailing from a family of anti-colonial nationalists as well as religiously disposed pan-Islamist Punjabis. These contradictions between the maternal and paternal sides of my family inculcated a greater than usual degree of tolerance in me, for I could not have otherwise preserved my sanity amidst the frequent exchange of the choicest epithets and the thoroughly derogatory opinions the two sides of my family held about one another. My family background was also perhaps responsible for, what was regarded at the Foreign Office as my non-conventional views on India.

## **MY PATERNAL FAMILY**

### **Freedom Fighters in the Anti-Colonial Movement**

The paternal side of my family were Punjabi-speaking in terms of ethnicity and Ahl al-Hadith\* by way of religious persuasion. My grandfather, Maulana Abdul Qadir Kasuri, was one of the top leaders of the Khilafat Movement in India and President of the Indian National Congress (INC), Punjab, for ten years after Lala Lajpat Rai's death in 1928. He was a successful lawyer, who gained immense respect from his profession.

He was so revered that many people from Kasur started adopting the surname Kasuri. <sup>1</sup>

My grandfather also served the Muslim community financially and through other welfare activities. He became a member of the Tehreek-e-Mujahidin and leader of the Ahl al-Hadith Movement. He sent one of his sons to Calcutta to start a newspaper and his younger son to Afghanistan.<sup>2</sup> He was one of the top leaders of the Khilafat Movement in India and was very active in national and pan-Islamic politics between 1919 and 1927. He joined the Congress Party and remained President of the Punjab Congress. Gandhiji offered him to become member of the Congress Central Working Committee.<sup>3</sup> However, he declined to go to the centre because he had developed differences with Gandhiji over the Mopla rebellion. He was the only Muslim in India who was offered a Ministership by King Ibn-e-Saud, after he founded the Saudi dynasty in the Arabian Peninsula, which henceforth became known as Saudi Arabia.<sup>4</sup> It was an offer that my grandfather had to decline due to his family's financial, social, and political responsibilities, which would not allow him to leave his law practice. He was told that he would not need to practise law because he would be paid handsomely as a member of the Saudi cabinet and could thus look after his responsibilities in India. More importantly, this would allow him an opportunity to serve Islam. He responded that, were he to accept a salary from the King, he would be serving the King and not Islam. He, however, offered to the family that if they wanted him to accept the offer of the Saudi King, which was indeed a great honour, they should between themselves raise at least 4,000 rupees per month. The family could not jointly raise this amount on a monthly basis since this was a veritable fortune in those days.

My grandfather served in the Congress Party for many years and was the President of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee.<sup>5</sup> When my Indian counterpart Pranab Mukherjee (now President of India) visited me in Pakistan, I was touched when he told me that he had done a lot of research regarding my grandfather. According to him, my grandfather had held a very important position in the Congress Party and that the Punjab, UP, and Bengal Presidencies were at that time considered as important as the Presidencies of the All-India Congress Committee. Thus, these were inter-changeable positions. He told me that Maulana Abul Kalam Azad became President of the Bengal Congress after leaving the office of Central President of the Congress.

My paternal side was strongly anti-imperialist. My grandfather and two of my uncles, Maulana Mohiuddin Ahmad Kasuri, father of caretaker Prime Minister Moinuddin Qureshi (18 July–19 October 1993), and Maulana Muhammad Ali Kasuri, who was appointed 'Foreign Minister' of the Government of Free India, formed in Afghanistan and recognized by the governments of Germany and Afghanistan in the early twentieth century,<sup>6</sup> were sentenced to death by the British for their anti-British and pro-Independence activities. This 'interim government', contained Raja Mahinder Partap as the President, Barkat Ullah as the Prime Minister, Ubaid Ullah Sindhi as the Interior

Minister, Maulvi Mohammed Bashir as War Minister, Muhammad Ali Kasuri as Foreign Minister, and some others.<sup>7</sup>

Maulana Muhammad Ali Kasuri, at that time, was declared by the British Governor of Punjab, Sir Michael Francis O'Dwyer, as one of the two greatest threats to the British Empire in the area, the other being Sardar Mangal Singh, a Sikh revolutionary.<sup>8</sup> My uncle seems to have been quite a unique character. People of his background at that time usually went into the Indian Civil Service (ICS), the highest echelon of bureaucracy in the subcontinent. Instead, after a triple first at Cambridge, he decided to join the court of the ruler of Afghanistan, Amir Habibullah, and tried to convince the Amir to join the Germans against the British. He wanted Afghanistan to attack British India so that India could be liberated with German help. Following his anti-British expeditions in Afghanistan, he, remarkably, returned home safe and sound, as a free man to lead a normal life, after the Congress managed to earn him reprieve from the British in return for help during the War.

My father, Mian Mahmud Ali Kasuri, had a major influence on my growth and development. He was one of the most respected politicians ever produced by this country, one of its leading lawyers and served as Pakistan's Law Minister. He played a major role in the drafting of the 1973 Constitution, in his capacity as the Chairman of the Constitution Committee of the National Assembly, which was entrusted with the task of drafting the constitution. He obviously had an important role in drafting major parts of the Constitution, but he did not agree with certain provisions that Zulfikar Ali Bhutto wanted incorporated. Those provisions in my father's point of view would result in a Prime Ministerial dictatorship. This was more so, because by that time my father had seen some of Bhutto's strong-arm tactics in dealing with his political opponents. He, however, ensured that the constitution would turn out to be relatively more democratic than Bhutto wanted when he resigned from his office after making his differences known. This caused a major political crisis in the country and Bhutto was put on the back foot. My father is generally regarded as the father of the Human Rights Movement in Pakistan. Educated in Kasur, Lahore, Bombay, and London, he became the first Asian to top the British Bar examinations.<sup>9</sup> In his career of fifty years (1935–1985) as a legal practitioner, my father not only lived by the law but also strove to bring it in accord with the highest ideals of civilized existence. Millions of his countrymen came to recognize him with pride as Pakistan's 'Mr Law'.<sup>10</sup> An obituary noted that he 'had an exceptionally sharp mind, a boundless capacity for hard work, an enviable record of professional honesty and a persistent devotion to the concept of the rule of law.'<sup>11</sup>

As a lawyer, he rose to the highest ranks in his profession. He was invited to serve on the Bench, which he turned down, choosing to remain a member of the Bar. No branch of law was foreign to him; he taught international law for years and his practice extended to all branches of civil and criminal laws.<sup>12</sup> He earned international recognition when he was

selected from Asia to sit in the Russell-Sartre International Tribunal on war crimes in Vietnam.

For many years he was the first choice as the counsel for people, whose basic freedom had been violated, including political leaders, trade union workers, and ordinary citizens. In his glittering legal career, he handled some very important political and civil liberty cases, including but not limited to Maulana Maududi's death sentence, Bhutto's detention case in 1968, and the Jamaat-i-Islami's 'Tarjumanul Quran' case.

Besides being an accomplished lawyer of local and international repute, my father also took a full and active part in national politics, underlining his multifaceted personality. He worked with a group of liberals close to Quaid-i-Azam in the 1940s and was instrumental in drafting the 1946 Muslim League manifesto. He stayed with the Muslim League until 1956, when he parted ways with the party, feeling that it was not living up to Jinnah's ideals. Along with Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din, Sardar Shaukat Hyat, Syed Ameer Hussain Shah, C. R. Aslam, and C. E. Gibbon, he founded the Azad Pakistan Party, the first Opposition party in Pakistan, which later merged with other parties to become the National Awami Party (NAP).

Disillusionment eventually set in when moderation gave way to the strong element of regionalism in the NAP. Interestingly, after Zulfikar Ali Bhutto fell out with Field Marshal Ayub Khan, my father tried to convince some leading members of the party to bring him into National Awami Party (NAP). There is an interesting anecdote related to this matter which I mention under the heading of 'Bhutto's "Interview" at our Fane Road Residence'.

My father joined the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) in 1970 and was made its senior Vice President. He was elected to the National Assembly on the PPP ticket in the 1970 elections and was appointed Law Minister in the first Bhutto Cabinet. As Federal Law Minister, he framed the Interim Constitution, which led to the lifting of Martial Law. Later, he became Chairman of the Standing Committee of Parliament and was the author of the 1973 draft Constitution. However, he resigned from the Cabinet on constitutional and political differences with Bhutto and joined the Tehrik-e-Istiqlal, a party led by Asghar Khan. The Tehrik-e-Istiqlal later emerged as Pakistan's major opposition party.

Significantly, he remained at the forefront in the formation of almost all the Opposition alliances since 1964, the Combined Opposition Party (COP), the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM), the Democratic Action Committee (DAC), the National Democratic Front (NDF), the United Democratic Front (UDF), the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA), which led to Bhutto's downfall, and the Movement for Restoration of Democracy (MRD) during General Zia ul-Haq's dictatorship. The most hectic phase of his career in politics was his opposition to the Ayub Khan regime. As a prominent leader of the COP, he worked energetically for Fatima Jinnah's election as President in opposition to the incumbent Ayub Khan. The all-powerful ruler honoured my father and others by putting them on trial for sedition, a trial that collapsed with the fall of Ayub.<sup>13</sup>

In February 1981, during the MRD my father was arrested from his residence. He was over seventy and extremely ill when he was detained in a cell. The arthritis in his knees would not let him walk, or even to stand up straight, without excruciating pain. His back kept him prostrate on a hard bed most of the time. But he never complained, neither of the conditions of his detention nor about the state of his own health. Throughout his political career, my father had been held in the highest regard as one of the most principled contemporary politicians. Despite his humility, he inspired awe even among his adversaries.

## **MY MATERNAL FAMILY**

### **Pro-Establishment Attitudes**

My mother came from the ruling family of Loharu, a princely state of northern India. The maternal side of my family were Urdu-speaking, Barelvi by religious persuasion and pro-establishment. My paternal and maternal families could not have been more different.

### **Princely States**

A brief reference to the Indian princely states may be in order here—more so because the current generation is unaware of the influence and the the unbridled power that the rulers of these states enjoyed, of the lifestyles they led, and of their idiosyncrasies. One can get a glimpse of their unreal lifestyles from *A Princess Remembers: The Memoirs of the Maharani of Jaipur* by Gayatri Devi. The entire annual calendar seems to have been marked by lavish parties, polo games, long vacations abroad, and, of course, various ‘shikar’ (hunting) expeditions. My mother’s cousin, Nawabzada Sher Ali Khan of Pataudi, in his book *The Elite Minority: Princes of India* has illustrated the same sort of lifestyle. Their eccentricities were phenomenal, as was their wealth and power.

Although the princely states were merged in India and Pakistan after Partition in 1947, the powers of their rulers were taken away in India within a matter of months after Independence, but this process took a further decade or two in Pakistan. There were approximately 570 princely states in undivided India, although the number varies a bit in different accounts, depending on categorization. These states were ruled by Maharajas or Nawabs, who were effectively like kings in their own areas for domestic purposes. They were nominally sovereign, subject to a subsidiary alliance recognizing the ‘paramountcy’ of the British Crown; foreign relations vested with the British. The princes ruled almost forty per cent of the land mass of India and at the time of Independence, the population of undivided India was about 350 million, of which they governed about 150 million.<sup>14</sup>

Unlike the European monarchy, which had its powers constrained over a period of history through evolution, experiencing over time the impact of the Renaissance (between 14th to 17th centuries), the Age of Enlightenment (late 17th century), the ‘Glorious Revolution’ (1688), the ‘French Revolution’ (1789–1799), and ‘Industrialization’ (18th and 19th

centuries), the Indian ruling princes had faced no such experiences or had constraints imposed on their powers. No wonder their idiosyncrasies knew no bounds. In their dealings with each other, they found it difficult to get over ‘imagined’ slights by co-rulers. The sizes of palaces, the numbers of retainers, and the royal jewel possessions, along with the number of gun salutes, determined their pecking order and importance.

At the time of Partition, the rulers were asked to choose between India and Pakistan and, although there was resistance by some princes to the annexation of their states into the Indian Union, it is fair to say that in all but three cases, the issue was settled seamlessly, with states deciding to join India or Pakistan based on geographic contiguity and religion. The three exceptions were Kashmir, with a majority Muslim population and a Hindu Raja, Hyderabad, and Junagadh, which had Muslim rulers but Hindu majority populations. These posed problems which I shall discuss later on.

The Loharus, according to elders in the family, originated from Andijan in the Ferghana Valley in modern-day Uzbekistan. Three brothers, Qasim Jan, Arif Jan, and Alam Jan, migrated to India about two hundred and fifty years ago. Ahmad Baksh Khan, who founded the princely state of Loharu in 1803, was the son of Arif Jan. Delhi’s famous *Gali Qasim Jan*, where the home of Nawab Mirza Asadullah Khan Ghalib, one of the greatest poets of the Urdu language, was located, is named after Qasim Jan. The third brother, Alam Jan, apparently stayed in Attock and married the daughter of the Governor of Attock. Lt Gen. Sahabzada Yaqub Khan, a cousin of my mother and whose mother also belonged to the House of Loharu, took a lot of pains to trace the origins of the family back to Khawaja Ahmad Yasavi, a well-known Sufi scholar. His mausoleum is among the most famous national monuments of 12th century architecture in Central Asia.<sup>15</sup> Khawaja Ahmad Yasavi’s most acclaimed book *Diwan-i-Hikmat* is considered to be a standard text in Sufi literature. A rare manuscript of the book exists in the library of the Academy of Oriental Sciences in Tashkent. Sahabzada Yaqub Khan saw the manuscript and did much research on the family’s roots while he was Pakistan’s Ambassador to the Soviet Union. He later became Pakistan’s Foreign Minister.

The founder of Loharu and Ferozepur Jhirka State, Nawab Ahmad Baksh Khan, was a Mughal. After the War of Independence of 1857, the then Nawab of Loharu, Nawab Amin-ud-Din Ahmad Khan, was hailed as an independent Nawab by the British. Later, the state became decidedly pro-British. Nawab Alla-ud-Din Ahmad Khan, who became the Nawab in 1870, was a favourite student of Ghalib, and was renowned for his governance. He was well known and respected in the British bureaucracy for his intellectual and literary activities.

**N**AWAB **S**HAMS-UD-**D**IN **A**HMED **K**HAN OF **L**OHARU AND **F**EROZEPUR **J**HIRKA  
**M**URDERS THE **B**RITISH **R**ESIDENT **F**RASER

The members of the ruling family of Loharu state could not forget that the state was originally much larger in size than it was when my mother and her cousins were growing up. A majority of the land area of the state had been confiscated by the British after Nawab Shams-ud-Din Ahmed Khan murdered Fraser, the British Resident at the Court of the King in Delhi, in 1857. Details of this incident are given further on. It will suffice to say here that this psychological factor encouraged many of the rulers to excel in different areas or to increase their influence through matrimonial alliances with other rulers, to compensate for the loss of size. A large number of the rulers and members of the ruling families became famous poets of Urdu and Persian; but His Highness Nawab Sir Amir-ud-Din Ahmad Khan, my mother's grandfather, unhappy with the diminished size of his state, actually abdicated in favour of his son, himself becoming the Regent of Malerkotla (where he arranged a marriage between his niece and Nawab Sir Zulfiqar Ali Khan). His four daughters were married off to all corners of India: to the Nawabs of Dera Ismail Khan, Mamdot, Pataudi, and Mangrol; and his nieces married off among other princely families. The Loharus were like the Habsburgs—through marriages, they were connected to the princely families of Mamdot, Malerkotla, Rampur, Dera, Pataudi, Bhopal, Bela, and several other Muslim princely states.<sup>16</sup> Many in the family used to joke that Nawab Sir Amir-ud-Din was following in the footsteps of the Habsburgs who, through marriage alliances extended their influence throughout Europe. From ancient times to the time of Napoleon Bonaparte, this was a common practice among European royalty. It was because of this that King George V once jokingly remarked to Nawab Sir Amir-ud-Din that if he carried on in this manner, '*I fear to lose my empire to you*'. He was reported to have made this remark when he invited the Nawab to watch the Derby with him.<sup>17</sup> Sir Amir-ud-Din, besides being an advisor to the British in Mesopotamia in World War I, devoted his time to arbitration among and settlement of differences between Indian princes. For example, he represented one of the two contesting sides over the issue of succession to the throne of Bhopal, a major Muslim princely state in India. This brought him closer to the British authorities.

Nawab Sir Amir-ud-Din Ahmad Khan was Loharu's most famous ruler whose aptitude for administrative work was apparent soon after his accession to powers, and he spared no pains to improve the state in every possible manner.<sup>18</sup> His state was however too small for him and soon he got tired of it and handed it over to his eldest son to take on the role of senior statesman and roving ambassador. He advised the British during the First World War. In October 1915, he was sent on a political mission to Mesopotamia (the area between the Tigris and the Euphrates Rivers that includes present-day Iraq, Kuwait, and north-eastern sections of Syria) in connection with the prosecution of the war.<sup>19</sup> He was considered for the kingship of one of the two envisaged kingdoms of Iraq or the Arabian Peninsula.<sup>20</sup> His nephew, Major General Nawabzada Sher Ali Khan of Pataudi (my mother's first cousin), who later on became a Cabinet Minister in Pakistan, has given a very interesting account of the Nawab's personality in his book *The Elite Minority: Princes*

of India. On the possibility of kingship, he says that ‘he [Nawab Sir Amir-ud-Din Ahmad Khan] was “advisor” to the British on Arab Affairs during the First World War.’ The British thought that the Arabian Peninsula looked far too big for one Arab ruler, and that a non-Arab ruler in a corner close to India would provide a foot in the door in the affairs of that vast wasteland that nature had provided as a camouflage for the wealth that lay in its belly in the form of a mineral—that liquid gold called Petroleum. But my *Nana* [maternal grandfather] was a shrewd person and I remember him telling me, ‘Son, I thanked them and told them that God was kind to me and I lived a happy and comfortable life and had no desire to have it ended by an Arab dagger in my back.’<sup>21</sup>

Considering what is happening in Iraq today, he seems to have been indeed a very wise and far-sighted individual. In fact, King Faisal II of Iraq was assassinated in 1958 in a *coup d'état* resulting in the overthrow of the Hashemite monarchy established by King Faisal I in 1921 under the auspices of those British authorities who had also played with the idea of installing Nawab Sir Amir-ud-Din Ahmad Khan (my mother’s grandfather) there as the king. According to the family grapevine, Sir Amir-ud-Din’s case was backed, among others, by His Highness Sir Sultan Mohammed Shah Aga Khan III, who thought he would be suitable for one of the two kingdoms that the British were thinking to carve out of the area which had been a part of the Ottoman Empire. According to Abdullah Malik, quoting the great author, scholar, and journalist of Delhi, Khawaja Hassan Nizami (a descendant of the great saint Hazrat Nizam-ud-Din Aulia) the name of His Highness Nawab Sir Amir-ud-Din was seriously considered for the kingship of Iraq following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, of which Iraq, then divided into three regions, was a part.<sup>22</sup>

The Loharu family also produced many Urdu and Persian poets over the last two hundred years—almost twenty well-known poets (details are given in a book published by the Ghalib Institute in New Delhi),<sup>23</sup> not counting Mirza Asadullah Khan Ghalib, who was married into the family, and Nawab Mirza Dagh Dehlvi, who are two of the greatest ever poets of Urdu (they also wrote in Persian). Other well-known poets include Nawab Mirza Illahi Baksh Maroof, Mirza Zain-ud-Din Khan Arif, Mirza Shuja-ud-Din Ahmed Khan Tabaan, Mirza Siraj-ud-Din Sa’il (known as Sa’il Dehlvi), Mirza Zainul-Abideen Khan Arif, Nawab Mirza Ala-o-Din Ahmed Khan Ala’ae, Nawabzada Mirza Jamil-ud-Din Aali (my mother’s uncle, who dropped the prefix Nawabzada after migrating to Pakistan) and many others.<sup>24</sup> It may be pertinent to mention that the word ‘Mirza’ was a title denoting ‘Prince’ or ‘Nobleman’ and was used by all the male members of the ruling family of Loharu.

Interestingly, Dagh Dehlvi was the son of Nawab Mirza Shams-ud-Din Ahmed Khan, the Nawab of Loharu and Ferozepur Jhirka who was hanged for murdering William Fraser, the British Resident in the Delhi Court. According to the family grapevine, one of the causes of Fraser’s murder was his falling out with the Nawab over a woman they both

fancied. The woman in question could have been Wazir Khanum, Dagh's mother. After the Nawab's hanging, Dagh's mother married Bahadur Shah Zafar's son.<sup>25</sup> The murder, its causes, and consequences are discussed later on. Shamsur Rahman Faruqi, one of modern Urdu's most celebrated critics, poet, and novelist has written a beautiful novel, *Kai Chaand They Sar-e-Aasman*, later translated into English as *The Mirror of Beauty*, which was chosen the Guardian Best Book 2013. This novel has been described by Mohammed Hanif, Pakistan's famous writer and novelist, as 'a true epic, the Koh-i-Noor of Indian novels: majestic, glittering, and mysterious'. The novel has been written about Wazir Khanum and depicts the splendour of imperial Delhi at the sunset of the Mughal Empire.<sup>26</sup>

As a result, according to some accounts, the Loharu family helped bring significant Muslim families of India closer.<sup>27</sup> It was generally believed that they were motivated in this by the confiscation of the bulk of the former princely state of Loharu and Ferozepur Jhirka after Nawab Shams-ud-Din Ahmed Khan murdered William Fraser. Percival Spear in his book *The Twilight of the Mughuls* mentioned a family feud as the cause, with Fraser taking the side of the younger brothers.<sup>28</sup> The British decided to set an example by executing the Nawab. This created quite a sensation and various accounts are given of the courage with which the Nawab faced death. He wore the martyr's coat of green, and the pious declared that the body swung towards Mecca at the last.<sup>29</sup> He was buried at the *dargah* (shrine) of Qutab Sahib at Mehrauli, the favourite burying place of the late Mughal kings. For some time, there was a vogue of pilgrimages to the tomb. A trace of the feelings aroused survived until the 'Mutiny' of 1857. When the mutineers plundered St. James's Church, they spared the tombs of both the Metcalfe and Skinner families, but destroyed Fraser's tomb beyond repair.<sup>30</sup>

### **My Schooling—Almost an Ideological Issue with My Parents**

No wonder my father was genuinely afraid that some of my mother's family's idiosyncrasies might be inherited by me and went to great pains to ensure that they were not; so much so that my schooling almost became an ideological issue between my parents. He took great interest in choosing the school which would not inculcate such values. The stark—nay—startling differences between the backgrounds of my maternal and paternal families affected the choice of school that I went to. My mother Sahibzadi Roshan Ara Begum of Loharu wanted me to join Aitchison College, Lahore (which at that time was also known as Chief's College), where her father and uncles had been students. Incidentally, her father Nawabzada Aizaz-ud-Din Ahmad Khan of Loharu had been among the earliest students at the Aitchison College in the 1880s–90s and he used to tell me stories of his friendship with Bhopinder Singh, later on Maharaja of Patiala, both of whom were good sportsmen. My father would not hear of Aitchison and refused to budge, declaring that, were I to go there, I might develop all the eccentricities and hang-ups of my mother's family.

At that time, there were two well-known boys' schools in Lahore that taught in the English language: Aitchison College and St. Anthony's. The latter was known for its high academic standards (this was much before the current mushrooming of English-medium private schools). This debate continued for some time and, as a compromise, they decided to send me to Bishop Cotton School at Simla, which was reputed to be a good school run along English public school lines. Before I could reach school-going age, the subcontinent was partitioned and it was decided to send my younger brother Umar and I to Lawrence College, Ghora Gali, a famous public school in Murree, run along the lines of English Public Schools. Umar stayed there for some time while I was brought back to Lahore at my mother's insistence. To cut a long story short, I was sent to St. Anthony's School, Lahore, which was then considered the best school academically. In due course, Abdul Wali Khan, son of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan (also known as the Sarhad Gandhi), was appointed Principal of Aitchison College and he convinced my father that Aitchison was no longer a 'Chief's' College but was being run along the lines of an English public school. He persuaded my father to send my younger brothers Daniyal Kasuri and Bakhtiar Kasuri to Aitchison College.

## **FANE ROAD RESIDENCE: AN OPEN HOUSE**

Our residence, 4-Fane Road, Lahore, belonged to one of Punjab's most successful lawyers before Partition, Amolak Ram Kapoor and after Partition, it became our home and acquired quite a reputation in Lahore among the media, the political circles and the legal fraternity. It was the centre of major political activity almost until my father's death in 1987. My father maintained an open house and was a generous and gracious host. Hence, I was brought up in a household where important political, legal, and media personalities of the day were in and out of our house on a regular basis.

The atmosphere at our Fane Road house greatly influenced my formative years; thus, references to some of the frequent visitors at our residence are in order. Almost anyone who had been in the opposition at one time or another, or was on the wrong side of the government of the day, found my father welcoming them. This included people as diverse as Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy (former Prime Minister of Pakistan from erstwhile East Pakistan), Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Maulana Abdul Hameed Khan Bhashani, Khan Abdul Wali Khan, Ata-ur-Rahman Khan (former Chief Minister of East Pakistan), Mahmud Ali (a prominent leader from East Pakistan who settled in Pakistan after separation of the Eastern Wing), Abdul Samad Khan Achakzai, G. M. Syed, Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din, Air Marshal (retd) Muhammad Asghar Khan, Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan, Malik Ghulam Jilani, Mazhar Ali Khan, Faiz Ahmed Faiz (famous poet and writer), Mirza Ibrahim (trade union leader), Habib Jalib (famous poet), and leading stalwarts of the socialist movement in

Pakistan, C. R. Aslam, M. Afzal Bangash, and Shiekh Muhammad Rashid (later on known as 'Baba-e-Socialism').

Leaders of politico-religious parties, including Maulana Abul Ala Maududi, Maulana Shah Ahmed Noorani, Maulana Mufti Mahmud, Maulana Abdus Sattar Khan Niazi, among others, had been associated with my father in various political movements for restoration of democracy and as his clients in 'habeas corpus' matters during their respective detentions by various governments. These visitors ranged from the extreme left to the extreme right of the political spectrum and belonged to all the provinces of Pakistan.

Although there were many important politicians, lawyers, and journalists who were close friends of my father, I would like to particularly mention a few, such as Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din, Air Marshal Muhammad Asghar Khan, Malik Ghulam Jilani (father of Asma Jahangir, Pakistan's most respected human rights' activist), and Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan. These were not only my father's friends but also displayed a lot of affection towards me personally and influenced me in different ways. In this category, I would also like to mention Colonel Syed Abid Hussain, father of Syeda Abida Hussain (later Federal Minister and Ambassador to the United States, and a close friend), and Mian Mumtaz Muhammad Khan Daultana, former Chief Minister of Punjab. All of them played a major role in Pakistan's politics.

I would like to stress that I am not making an attempt to assess or analyse their politics. This book is not about Pakistan's politics, but about its foreign policy. Hence a conscious effort has been made on my part to avoid politics and focus only on foreign policy. The references to politics are made in passing, are brief, and non-judgemental. The purpose of referring to these people and to my family in this book is to enable the reader to better understand the background I come from, since all of us cannot but be influenced by our environments, at least in some degree. My family has been part of the political life of the subcontinent for almost a century and a half. This aspect has been very ably covered in Abdullah Malik's book, *Dastaan-e-Khanwada-Mian Mahmud Ali Kasuri—Barre Sagheer ki Derh Sau Sala Tareekh* (The Story of the Family of Mian Mahmud Ali Kasuri—150 Years History of the Subcontinent).

**Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din:** I begin by mentioning Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din, not only because he was especially close to my father, but also because he had a major influence on the politics and media of our country immediately after Partition. Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din, like my father, belonged to the liberal and progressive wing of the Muslim League. He had been President of the Indian National Congress, Punjab, succeeding my paternal grandfather, before joining the Muslim League. Unfortunately, because of the distorted curricula being taught at our schools, most young people in Pakistan do not know today that there were a large number of Muslims in the top hierarchy of the Congress leadership in pre-Independence days and these included Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din, my own grandfather

Maulana Abdul Qadir Kasuri, and many others. Perhaps one of the reasons that brought my father and Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din closer is that they had both started their political careers in the freedom movement launched by the Congress.

My father was first arrested at the age of nineteen, as Secretary of the Bombay Congress during the 'Quit India Movement'. Although he was a liberal democrat by conviction, my father came from a religiously conservative background. Mian Iftikharud-Din was considered a 'fellow traveller' of the socialists and communists. In the Pakistan of the early 1950s, there was far more to unite them than to separate them. They later on founded the Azad Pakistan Party after they quit the Muslim League because of their opposition to the policies of the party following the death of Quaid-i-Azam.

The Azad Pakistan Party was the first opposition political party founded in Pakistan, with my father being elected its first President and Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din as leader of the Parliamentary Party. After Partition, Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din founded Progressive Papers Limited, which produced Pakistan's leading English newspaper *The Pakistan Times* as well as *Imroze*, a leading Urdu newspaper of the day. The editors of *The Pakistan Times* included such luminaries as Faiz Ahmed Faiz, the great Urdu poet, and Mazhar Ali Khan, father of Tariq Ali (the legendary student leader who, along with a few others, led a student revolt in many European countries in 1968, in Berlin, London, Rome, and Paris, reflecting a worldwide upheaval against capitalism and political repression. The rebellion also spread to the US, manifesting itself as opposition to the Vietnam War). Ahmed Nadeem Qasmi, the great poet and writer, was one of the editors of the daily *Imroze*. Faiz Ahmed Faiz and Mazhar Ali Khan were close friends of my father, as were Nisar Usmani, I. A. Rehman, and Hussain Naqi, all of them prominent journalists and intellectuals. *The Pakistan Times* and *Imroze* pursued a staunchly anti-imperialist policy at a time when Pakistan was a close ally of the West. After Ayub Khan took over in Pakistan, Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din's newspapers fearlessly opposed the military government's policies and ultimately had to pay the price of being taken over by the government.

Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din was very fond of my father and his son Sohail Iftikhar was one of my closest friends. Mian Iftikharud-Din was a land-owning aristocrat but, like Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, a socialist by inclination. Some regarded him as a bundle of contradictions, but I found him to be a very attractive personality. Professor Stanley Wolpert, the biographer of Pandit Nehru mentions,

Nehru's old Muslim comrade Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din came to visit him a few weeks later [when Nehru was in jail]. Long an ardent communist, Iftikhar-ud-Din was so confused by the swift changes in Europe, especially Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union, that he had lost faith in his socialist doctrine and came to seek illumination from Nehru.<sup>31</sup>

Wolpert goes on to quote Pandit Nehru:

Iftikhar—disillusioned Iftikhar—seeing no light except in a compromise with the Muslim League, which of course enrages me, and I shout at him till I am hoarse. It seems to me that those who have been backing a

Communist ticket ... are the most helpless today. They are losing the very foundation on which they stood so they clutch feverishly at every straw. ...<sup>32</sup>

Had Pandit Nehru lived longer, he would have found that such confusion and disillusionment was later on to become the fate of many leftists and progressives, at least in Pakistan, after the fall and dissolution of the Soviet Union in December 1991. I assume similar confusion prevailed in other South Asian countries where, earlier, Socialist and Communist parties were split between pro-Soviet and pro-Chinese camps.

**Air Marshal Muhammad Asghar Khan** was the founder President of the Tehrik-e-Istiqlal (TI). He was the first Commander-in-Chief of Pakistan Air Force (PAF). Many almost regarded him as the founder of the PAF and the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) along with Air Marshal Nur Khan. Both organizations made their mark—a testimony to Asghar Khan's leadership qualities and administrative ability. The PAF in particular played a decisive role in the 1965 war against India, where it was generally acknowledged that the PAF had the upper hand in the skies. However strange it may seem today, PIA was considered at that time one of the most efficiently run airlines in the world and it had helped set up many of the airlines in the Gulf countries and elsewhere, some of which are dominating the airline industry today. Asghar Khan, already considered a national hero for these reasons, further enhanced his stature by politically challenging Field Marshal Mohammad Ayub Khan, then President of Pakistan, who at that time was at the peak of his power.

Air Marshal Asghar Khan was one of Pakistan's most respected, courageous and principled politicians. A cynic would say that perhaps this was the reason why he never made it to the top of the Pakistani power structure. My father joined the TI after resigning from Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's PPP within a year of taking over as Law Minister, when Bhutto was at the height of his power, due to serious political differences with him. The TI can be appropriately regarded as the nursery for major politicians in Pakistan. At one time or another, it had included in its fold such people as Mian Nawaz Sharif; Nawab Akbar Bugti, the legendary Baloch leader and former Chief Minister of Balochistan; Malik Ghulam Jilani, one of Pakistan's most fearless Opposition figures; Gohar Ayub Khan, later Speaker of the National Assembly and Foreign Minister; Mian Manzoor Ahmed Wattoo, later Punjab's Chief Minister; J. A. Rahim, first Secretary General of the PPP; Makhdoom Javed Hashmi, later President of Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI); Chaudhri Aitzaz Ahsan, later Pakistan's Interior Minister; Nisar Ahmed Khuhro, later Speaker of Sindh Assembly; and literally scores of other former federal and provincial ministers and parliamentarians.

Ironically, Asghar Khan was imprisoned, as were my father and I, both by Bhutto and later by his nemesis General Zia ul-Haq. Air Marshal Asghar Khan remained in prison and under house arrest for five years. At one point prior to the elections envisaged in 1977 following Bhutto's ouster, Asghar Khan, as the most popular leader of the Pakistan

National Alliance (PNA) that had led the movement against Bhutto that led to his ouster, was considered as a potential Prime Minister.

Asghar Khan was invited by the then Shah of Iran, Mohammed Reza Shah Pahlavi, to visit Iran. Mushir Ahmed Pesh Imam, then Secretary General of Tehrik-e-Istiqlal, and I accompanied the Air Marshal to a meeting in Tehran at the Niavaran Palace, which lasted almost three hours, in which the Shah gave us a *tour d'horizon* of the international landscape, from the situation in Angola and Mozambique (which were in the news then) to an Afghanistan then not in the headlines. Surprisingly, he was totally ignorant of the situation right under his very nose in Iran, when even a visitor like me could assess from the lobby of the Intercontinental Hotel in Tehran that things in Iran were unstable. This meeting with Reza Shah Pahlavi gave rise to the rumour that, while Asghar Khan would be Pakistan's Prime Minister, I might be Pakistan's next Foreign Minister. The rumour led to some ironic situations in which I was actually approached for my intercession regarding certain appointments at the Foreign Office. I was very young then, in my thirties, and such rumours bolstered my ego. Paradoxically, instead of becoming Foreign Minister, I landed in the 'Camp Jail' in Lahore (the first of many times that I went to jail), where I remained in a condemned prisoners' cell for six months as a result of my opposition to General Zia ul-Haq's dictatorship. Interestingly, such rumours were floated at least a quarter of a century before I actually became Foreign Minister and eighteen years before I became a Federal Minister in 1993.

**Malik Ghulam Jilani** was a close friend of my father. He was very affectionate towards me and my wife Nasreen (Mona) Kasuri. When I was in prison, the house where she found maximum solace was that of Malik Ghulam Jilani. I used to feel sorry for his wife, because we used to encroach on her privacy by walking in at all odd hours. Malik Ghulam Jilani's house was always full of politicians, intellectuals, and journalists. Quite a few of them, including the founder of Bangladesh, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, used to stay at his house, as did Nawab Akbar Bugti during his visits to Lahore, and Begum Nusrat Bhutto when Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was in prison in a Lahore jail. Malik Ghulam Jilani was one of the most fearless opponents of Ayub Khan's dictatorship. He wrote an open letter to General Yahya Khan opposing military action and predicting that were such an action to occur, the two wings of the country would be separated. He was imprisoned on many occasions. His household provided the appropriate setting for the nurturing of young Asma Jilani who, later on, as Asma Jahangir, was to become a champion of human rights in Pakistan. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was a close friend of Malik Ghulam Jilani and wanted him to join the PPP, which he never did. Malik Sahib possessed a great sense of humour. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was very particular about the way he dressed to the point that his opponents considered him vain. I remember one day, when I was sitting with Malik Sahib, Bhutto entered his drawing room. While complimenting him on his clothes, Malik Ghulam Jilani said, 'and now enters the second best dressed man in Pakistan'. Bhutto and I were both surprised by the remark and after a dramatic pause, and in response to the

former's query as to who was the best dressed man in Pakistan, Malik Sahib pointed towards me. I realized in a jiffy that Bhutto would not take well to this remark. I remember, while at Oxford, my landlady asked me where I was from and, when I informed her that I was from Pakistan, she asked me if I knew of a certain Pakistani by the name of 'Bhutto' who had stayed in the same 'digs' (students' lodgings) many years earlier. I said everybody in Pakistan knew him, since he was the Foreign Minister of Pakistan. She said that, when he stayed in her lodgings 'he used to walk down the stairs like a swan'. I complained to Malik Ghulam Jilani later that these remarks of his were not likely to endear me to Zulfikar Ali Bhutto.

**Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan**, although leader of a relatively small political party, the Pakistan Democratic Party (PDP), has played a major role in the politics of Pakistan. He belonged to the old school and was usually to be seen clad in a *Sherwani* and a Fez cap of the Ottoman times; and he loved smoking Havana cigars. He had a razor-sharp mind and an unmatched gift for repartee and could be expected to destroy the arguments of an opponent by quoting an apt couplet in Persian or in Urdu just at the right time. He was the centre of many opposition alliances against governments of the day. He went to prison on several occasions due to his political activities. One could write on and on about his politics, but then this book is not about politics.

**Mian Mumtaz Muhammad Khan Daultana**, an Oxonian and a Barrister, was one of Pakistan's most well-read politicians. Like Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din, also an Oxonian, he was one of Punjab's largest *zamindars* (landowners) and possessed a huge library. He was one of Quaid-i-Azam's closest associates. Despite his feudal background, he, with my father, belonged to the progressive section of the Muslim League. He was considered by many to be one of the most important leaders of the Muslim League after the death of Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan. Despite much promise, he never managed to become Prime Minister of Pakistan, although many at one time felt that he would reach that office. He was one of the few who survived the PPP's political hurricane which destroyed all in its way in the Punjab in the 1970 elections. After the defeat of the Muslim League in 1970, both Bhutto and Daultana himself felt it prudent that he leave Pakistan to become Pakistan's High Commissioner in London.

**Danial Latifi** was one of my father's closest friends and my brother Daniyal is named after him. He was the son of Sir Alma Latifi, the first Indian Officer of the elite ICS (Indian Civil Service) to have been raised to the rank of Financial Commissioner of the Punjab. He was the grandson (maternal) of Badruddin Tyabji, one of the early presidents of the Indian National Congress. Uncle Danial was the nephew of Hatim B. Tyabji, the first Muslim to be raised to the bench in 1938 to the newly constituted Sindh Chief Court and who in 1947 became the first Chief Justice of the Sindh Chief Court.

Uncle Danial was educated at Rugby, one of Britain's best known public schools, and at Cambridge University. He was called to the Bar and started practising Law, largely to

defend the underdog or the oppressed. Despite such patrician lineage and educational background, he had become converted to the communist cause while still a student in England in the late 1930s. He dedicated his early life on his return from England to serve the communist cause and worked for 25 or 30 rupees a month for the Communist Party of India.

During his brief stint in the Muslim League, along with my father, Mian Mumtaz Muhammad Khan Daultana, Abdullah Malik, and other progressives in the Muslim League, he helped to produce the League manifesto for the 1946 elections in Punjab. He was very close to Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din, also a communist/socialist sympathizer. Later on, he went to Bombay (now Mumbai), where he started his legal practice. He died in India in 2000. He gifted his collection of invaluable paintings to my brother Umar before he died. Uncle Danial was indeed a unique and interesting character. My father and Begum Iftikhar-ud-Din used to narrate the story of his first marriage in Lahore to a Christian lady, a well-known educationist of Lahore who used to teach at the Kinnaird College. One day, out of the blue, he informed Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din's wife that he was going to get married. Begum Ismet Iftikhar-ud-Din was naturally thrilled and asked him when and where he proposed to get married. He responded in a matter-of-fact style that it would be 'today at 4 p.m.' at the Iftikhar-ud-Din's residence at Aikman Road, Lahore! She was naturally stunned and said that she needed more time for preparations. He responded that there was no need for any preparations and asked her to call a Maulvi to perform the *nikah* (marriage ceremony). Lo and behold, at 3:55 p.m., a woman came bicycling in and tried to enter the house of Mian Iftikharud-Din. When stopped at the gate by the *chowkidar* (guard), she angrily asked him to get out of her way since her *nikah* ceremony was going to be performed in the next five minutes! When the Maulvi asked her to repeat thrice whether she was agreeable to the marriage (as is required in an Islamic *nikah* ceremony), she told him to hurry up and not waste her time since she had her next class at 4:30 p.m.!

Later on in life, uncle Danial had settled down and become relatively more conventional and, after the death of his first wife, remarried rather late in life. His second wife, Pakeeza Begum, was a descendant of the last Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar. She now lives in Old Delhi.

**Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan:** Unlike most Punjabis, my father, although he had taken a very active interest in the Pakistan Movement, could still empathize with people like Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan who, like Maulana Abul A'la Maududi, founder of the Jamaat-i-Islami, the leaders of Jamiat-i-Ulema-i-Hind, and even some Barelvi Muslim leaders, had opposed the creation of Pakistan. This was perhaps because my grandfather, my uncles, and even my father (at the age of 19) had also taken an active interest in the Freedom Movement launched by the Congress Party, and a large number of Muslim leaders argued before the creation of Pakistan that it would not be in the interest of the Muslims of South Asia to be split up as they could be more effective, in their view, if they remained united in a Federal India. Indeed, Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah had accepted the Cabinet

Mission Plan, according to which India would remain united while the political and economic rights of the Indian Muslims would be fully safeguarded. Ironically, it was the Congress leadership that vetoed the Cabinet Mission Plan. This, of course, is another story and has been dealt with elsewhere in the book. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan was known as the *Sarhadi Gandhi* (Frontier Gandhi). He would dress modestly in *khaddar shalwar-kurta* (handloom cotton shirt and loose trousers) and, whenever he came to stay with us, he had very little luggage. If memory serves me right all his belongings fitted into a *potli* (cloth sack) that he used to carry himself. Along with my father and others, he was one of the founders of the National Awami Party (NAP).

**Khan Abdul Wali Khan** was the son of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. He was a tall, handsome man and warm and affectionate in nature. Like his father, he would also wear *khaddar shalwarkurtas*. I remember after his marriage to Begum Nasim Wali Khan, following the death of his first wife (mother of Asfandyar Wali Khan, current President of ANP), my parents, along with my brother Umar and I, were invited by them to spend time with them in Swat. It was indeed a beautiful vacation and it was there that I heard from my father that parts of Swat were even more beautiful than the Kashmir Valley. Swat was a small princely state and was very well governed. The bonds between our two families were of a personal nature, going beyond politics. Begum Nasim Wali Khan to date is very affectionate towards me. Khan Abdul Wali Khan became one of the major leaders of the opposition when Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was Prime Minister. After the NAP bifurcated along pro-Soviet and pro-China leanings, he became the leader of the pro-Soviet wing, while Maulana Abdul Hameed Khan Bhashani became the leader of the pro-China wing.

**Arbab Sikandar Khan Khalil** was a lawyer by profession and a seasoned political activist. He was a close friend of my father. He had taken part in the anti-colonial movement and continued to play an active role in various movements launched in Pakistan for the strengthening of democracy and civil liberties.

Arbab Sikandar was a member of the National Awami Party (NAP), and was appointed Governor of the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP, now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) after the NAP won the 1970 general elections in NWFP and Balochistan. He was a man of the people and retained his simplicity and humility while in office. I remember an occasion from when my father was Law Minister and Arbab Sikandar Khan Governor of NWFP, my father had gone on some official business to Peshawar and Arbab Sikandar invited him for lunch at his house in his ancestral village near Peshawar. When my wife Nasreen (Mona) Kasuri, who was in Islamabad at the time, came to know that I was accompanying my father, she insisted on coming along with us. When we arrived at Arbab Sikandar's home, she was immediately whisked away and taken to the women's section. It was customary in that region for the sexes to be segregated. The ladies only spoke in Pashto, and they communicated with my wife through exchanges of smiles. Arbab Sikandar Khan must have realized this and, despite the fact that strict segregation of sexes was followed, he invited my wife to join us for lunch. We were made to sit in a certain hierarchical order

at the dining table and, in the true egalitarian spirit of the area and of Pashtuns, our staff members and chauffeurs were also asked to join us for the lunch. This was very different from Punjab, where there is a strong pecking order depending on one's status in society. My wife was seated next to our driver, who was himself a Pashtun from Waziristan and was very uncomfortable sitting next to a woman. In short, neither my wife nor the chauffeur found the circumstances particularly pleasing or comfortable.

**Sardar Shaukat Hayat Khan** was one of those who, along with my father, founded the first opposition party of Pakistan, the Azad Pakistan Party. Along with Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din, he was a member of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan and represented the Azad Pakistan Party in Parliament. He was the son of Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, Chief Minister of Punjab, who, as leader of the Unionist Party in the Punjab Assembly, resisted Quaid-i-Azam's efforts to spread the Muslim League's influence in the Punjab. Later on, however, after concluding the famous Sikandar-Jinnah Pact (1937), he supported the Muslim League. His son, Sardar Shaukat Hayat Khan was very close to Quaid-i-Azam. After Jinnah's death he became disillusioned with the Muslim League and became a founding member of the Azad Pakistan Party. I cannot think of Sardar Shaukat Hayat without thinking of his dazzlingly beautiful, warm-hearted and affectionate wife, Begum Mussarrat Shaukat Hayat. She was particularly fond of me and, for some reason, used to call me 'John Macdonald'. As a child, I thought he was some sort of a heroic figure in British imperial history or may be a character from children's story books. It was only later I discovered that he was the first Governor General of Canada. Why Aunt Mussarrat would call me that, escapes me to this day. Maybe she actually had in mind Ramsay MacDonald, who had been Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, and had got confused with the first names. Aunt Mussarrat took active interest in the politics of Sardar Shaukat Hayat Khan. They were truly inseparable.

Later, he opposed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in the National Assembly of Pakistan and tried to work out an amicable settlement with the Awami League prior to the separation of the two wings of Pakistan.

**Syed Amir Hussain Shah** was one of my father's closest friends and political associates. He was the leader of the Azad Pakistan Party in the Punjab Assembly. He was a secular-minded politician with a great sense of humour. Unfortunately, he died very young.

**Maulana Abdul Hameed Khan Bhashani**, the legendary leader from the former East Pakistan, was a frequent guest of my father. He was both controversial and interesting at the same time. There is more on him in the section on Bangladesh in the last chapter.

**Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy** was one of the most interesting and colourful visitors to our Fane Road residence from East Pakistan. Prior to Partition in 1947, Suhrawardy, a Muslim Leaguer, was Chief Minister of United Bengal. He later on became Prime Minister of Pakistan in 1956.

Once, when he came to see my father, he saw me play as a child in our front lawn and asked about me. When my father told him who I was, he said mockingly to my father, ‘How can he be your son?’ He was comparing my relatively fair complexion to my father’s wheatish skin. In South Asia, there is a regrettable premium on fair complexions, reflected in South Asia’s film industry and advertisements of whitening creams. Interestingly, he himself was a shade darker than my father and must have possessed boundless confidence, or may be a special sense of humour, to comment on my father’s complexion. He had a European-looking son, which intrigued me no end, until I was informed that this son was from a Russian actress of Polish descent. His son Rashid Suhrawardy (aka Robert Ashby) is now an actor living in London who played Jawaharlal Nehru in the film *Jinnah*.

Suhrawardy was a very popular figure and, on one occasion, he took my father and me to see a film at the Regal Cinema in Lahore. To avoid being noticed, we sat in a box in the cinema. During the interval, when the lights went on, someone noticed that Suhrawardy was sitting with us. Before we knew it, almost the entire cinema started gazing in our direction.

Prior to Partition, he played a very courageous role, and risked personal danger, in preventing communal killing in Calcutta from getting further out of control. Hindus had been killed in the Noakahli riots in East Bengal and Gandhiji decided to go there to offer solace and support to the Hindus living there. Suhrawardy, however, wanted him to stay on in Calcutta, which also faced a terrible communal situation. Gandhiji, after some persuasion, agreed to stay on in Calcutta, but only on the condition that Suhrawardy stay with the Mahatma, living in the same ascetic manner as he did. Suhrawardy was known for enjoying life to the fullest extent possible and thus knew what Gandhiji’s condition would entail. As Begum Shaista Suhrawardy Ikramullah mentions in *Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy: A Biography*, he accepted Gandhiji’s condition for staying on in Calcutta.

Slowly, very slowly the atmosphere changed. Shaheed Bhai slept on a mat on the floor as Gandhi did, he ate the same food as Gandhi (ate) and everyone knows what Gandhi ate. He was a regular faddist in the matter of food, and poor Shaheed Bhai, who was something of a gourmet, had to put up with it. I think this was the hardest part for Shaheed Bhai, much more than the danger. Whenever he made a fleeting visit to me during this period (two and a half months), I asked, ‘How is it going?’ ‘It’s going fine but the food is awful!’<sup>33</sup>

As a result of the efforts he made with Gandhiji to prevent communal killings, the city remained relatively peaceful after 15 August 1947, when Calcutta became part of India.<sup>34</sup> During this period, whenever he approached Hindus along with Gandhiji, he faced their wrath as they held his government responsible for the Calcutta killings. To this, he responded, ‘We are all responsible.’<sup>35</sup>

**Abdullah Malik** was not only my father’s friend but he also became my friend over time. After the death of my father he often met me in connection with information related to my father and I am grateful that, despite other commitments, he was able to produce my

father's biography in Urdu titled *DastaaneKhanwada—Mian Mahmud Ali Kasuri—Barray Saghir ki Derh Sau Saal Tarikh* (The Family of Mian Mahmud Ali Kasuri—150 Years History of the Subcontinent). He was a prolific author and one of the leading journalists of his time.

**Habib Jalib** was one of my father's closest friends. A revolutionary poet, Habib Jalib is known as *Awami Shair* (Poet of the common People) and *Shair e Inqalab* (Poet of the Revolution). He was a frequent visitor to our house.

Jalib was often arrested for his outspoken verse. He was also a member of the National Awami Party (NAP), headed by Maulana Abdul Hameed Khan Bhashani, the famous religio-leftist leader. My father was the party's president from the West Wing. Habib Jalib gained immense popularity during the Ayub Khan era, when Ayub decided to hold elections in 1965 and Mohtarma Fatima Jinnah contested against Ayub Khan. Both Jalib and my father supported Fatima Jinnah. Jalib would attract and enthral the crowds with his anti-establishment poetry. Interestingly, as a sad commentary on our electoral system, Jalib could pull in the crowds but never succeeded in securing a reasonable number of votes for himself during elections.

One of Jalib's most famous poems was written when Field Marshal Ayub Khan promulgated the 1962 Constitution, by which Ayub Khan became the fount of all authority. The poem *Dastoor* (Constitution), which angrily condemns this kind of centralization, is one of Jalib's most famous poems and is included in *Sir-e-Maqtal* which is dedicated to my father Mian Mahmud Ali Kasuri. During the election campaign of Ms Jinnah against Ayub Khan, this poem became very popular.

*Deep Jis key Mahallaat mein Jalay,  
Chand Logon ki Khushiyon ko Ley Kar Chalay  
Woh Jo Sayee Main Har Maslehat key Palay,  
Aisay Dastoor ko, Subeh Bey-nur ko  
Main Nahin Maanta, Main Nahin Jaanta*

**Sheikh Rafiq Ahmed**, former Speaker of the Punjab Assembly, was particularly close to my father. He started his career in politics at a relatively young age as an active member of the Muslim Student Federation (MSF). He became Secretary General of the MSF, which gave him an opportunity of coming into contact with Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, while still a student. Sheikh Rafiq started legal practice and joined my father's law chambers when my father was one of Pakistan's top lawyers and also regarded as champion of civil liberties and human rights. He was very close to my father, whom he regarded as his 'political mentor'.<sup>36</sup> They remained together until my father left the Pakistan Peoples Party. Sheikh Rafiq became the Speaker of the Punjab Assembly in 1971, after the Party won the elections a few months earlier in 1970. Bhutto, in a last-ditch effort to prevent my father from resigning as Law Minister, Deputy Leader in the National

Assembly, as well as the Senior Vice Chairman of the PPP, asked Sheikh Rafiq Ahmed, then Speaker of the Punjab Assembly, to try and dissuade my father—although in vain.

**Sheikh Mohammad Rashid** was one of the most frequent visitors to our house. He was wedded to the cause of socialism. During the time the PPP government led by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto ruled Pakistan, he earned the title of *Baba-e-Socialism* (Father of Socialism). Sheikh Rashid was one of those who, along with Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din, my father, Sardar Shaukat Hayat Khan, Syed Amir Hussain Shah, and others, formed the Azad Pakistan Party, the first opposition political party in Pakistan. I found it interesting that, although my father and he had many differences in their political beliefs, they remained on very good functional terms. My father could be best described in today's terminology as a social democrat while Sheikh Rashid was a hardened socialist. In the political situation that prevailed in Pakistan following the death of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, when the Muslim League started moving more and more to the right of centre and away from Quaid-i-Azam's liberal and inclusive approach, people like Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din, a socialist by inclination, my father a social democrat, and, people like Sheikh Rashid, a hard-boiled socialist, and many others, were brought together as what may best be called 'fellow travellers' to form the Azad Pakistan Party, which could be considered in the context of the times as a liberal, left-of-centre Party. Sheikh Rashid, like many others, who had formed the Azad Pakistan Party or had remained members of it, later joined the Pakistan Peoples Party in the Punjab. Later, he became Senior Vice Chairman of the PPP. He was inducted as Minister for Health and laid a lot of stress on sale of medicines by their generic names in order to bring the prices of medicines down. This also earned him many enemies, particularly from the pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan. Later, he was appointed as Chairman of the Land Reforms Commission and, in view of the fact that many of the Party's top leaders, particularly, from Southern Punjab and Sindh, were big feudal landowners, like Zulfikar Ali Bhutto himself, his suggestions and efforts at land reforms met with a very lukewarm reaction and negligible results.

**Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti**, a colourful personality, was the *Tumandar* (Chief) of the Bugti tribe of the Baloch. He has also been Pakistan's Minister of State for Interior and Governor of Balochistan. Whenever, he came to Lahore, he would stay with Malik Ghulam Jilani and meet my father and have a meal with us. I developed a good personal relationship with him. The circumstances of his death were indeed tragic and mysterious. Quite a few army officers also lost their lives when they entered the cave where Nawab Akbar Bugti was found. There are conflicting accounts of the cause of his death which undoubtedly had a major backlash in Balochistan in stirring up the nationalist sentiment there.

I got to know Nawab Akbar Bugti well, not only because of his association with my father, but also when he was President of the Tehrik-e-Istiqlal (Balochistan) led by one of Pakistan's most upright politicians, Air Marshal Muhammad Asghar Khan. I was then very young but happened to be a central office-bearer of Tehrik-e-Istiqlal. The very fact

that Nawab Akbar Bugti joined the Tehrik-e-Istiqlal, which was a patriotic and pro-federation party, believing in Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's inclusive vision of Pakistan, is an indication of his state of mind and attitude towards Pakistan ... at least until sometime before his death, when matters began to deteriorate between the federal government and Nawab Akbar Bugti. After leaving the Tehrik-e-Istiqlal, he formed the Jamhoori Watan Party in Balochistan. He took along with him, Khudai Nur Khan, one of the senior office-bearers of the party, and nominated him as Secretary General of Jamhoori Watan Party.

I regard his death as tragic for various reasons. Apart from the state of mind reflected in his joining of the Tehrik-e-Istiqlal, he had supported the Pakistan Movement and, in fact, had welcomed Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah when he visited Balochistan. Some time before his death, a committee had been appointed by the Pervez Musharraf government to negotiate with the Bugti Chief so that the situation in the Bugti Agency could be calmed. The Committee seemed to be making progress. After a meeting of the Committee with Nawab Akbar Bugti, Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, President of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League (PML-Q) sounded optimistic about their discussions and said that the Nawab has reposed total confidence in Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed (a member of the government committee) 'who would represent both sides in the committee'.<sup>37</sup> Nawab Bugti in turn also said that the talks with Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain and Mushahid Hussain, in which recent incidents had come under discussion, were positive. He said it was a good beginning, although several things were still to be settled.<sup>38</sup> I even heard reports at that time that a meeting had been planned between President Pervez Musharraf and Nawab Akbar Bugti. It still remains a mystery why, despite all the progress that was being made by the Committee to resolve the issues peacefully, matters came to such a pass that Nawab Akbar Bugti lost his life, along with several army officers. His death was personally painful for me and, despite being a member of the government, I issued a press statement expressing my grief over his death and recalling his association with my late father.<sup>39</sup> I also found this incident doubly painful, because the wife of one of the officers who lost their lives on this occasion was associated with the Beaconhouse School System founded by my wife Nasreen (Mona) Kasuri. I knew my statement would not be liked by important members of our own government but I felt compelled to make my sentiments known.

Nawab Akbar Bugti did have a bee in his bonnet regarding the Punjab and Punjabis. I remember on one occasion, when he was having dinner in my house; I had given special instructions that red chillies be used in abundance in the food to be prepared for him since he was very fond of chillies in his food. During the meal, I asked him whether the chillies were strong enough for him. To my surprise, he responded negatively and said that they seemed to be like 'Punjabi chillies'. Later, when I told my wife about his response, she was not amused and said that the next time he ate at our house she would serve him 'Thai chillies', which are very hot. My wife wanted to test the Nawab's love for chillies by putting him to the ultimate test, which she did not think he would pass. I was by now used to such remarks from Nawab Akbar Bugti and from some of my father's friends and associates from smaller provinces. Hence I could take such remarks in my stride; my wife was, however, not particularly pleased.

The visitors to our house also included many foreigners: journalists, politicians, intellectuals, and parliamentarians from Britain, United States, and India in particular. Among the Indians, Inder Kumar Gujral, later Prime Minister of India, and eminent journalists Kuldeep Nayar and Rajendra Sareen, came often to meet my father. As a result, I also got to know them well. On one occasion, Rajendra Sareen narrated to me an interesting anecdote about Nawab Akbar Bugti. Sareen had come from Quetta after interviewing Bugti to meet my father in Lahore. After the interview was over, Nawab Bugti rather aggressively asked Rajendra Sareen whether he was a Punjabi. Rajendra Sareen, indeed a Punjabi from India, was taken aback by this question and asked Nawab Bugti how he had come to the conclusion that Sareen was a Punjabi. The Nawab's response was that only Punjabis, whether Pakistani or Indian, seemed to be obsessed with strategic and defence matters and that Sareen's interview had been full of questions about such issues.

**Khan Abdul Samad Khan Achakzai**, father of Mahmood Khan Achakzai (Chairman of the Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party) would stay at our house when he visited Lahore. He was known as Balochi Gandhi. Although I did not continue to practice law, much to my father's regret and despite having read law at Cambridge and having been called to the Bar from Gray's Inn, London, I can never forget Khan Abdul Samad Khan Achakzai, because his was one of the very few cases in which I actually appeared in court. We won the case. He was often arrested for his political activities both before Partition and after. Often, when he got into legal trouble for his political activities, he would seek my father's help. He used to dress very simply and in the same way as Bacha Khan (Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan) did. He was one of the important leaders of the National Awami Party before he left it to found the Pakhtunkhwa National Party and later on the Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party. My father and he were colleagues in the National Awami Party. My father understood Khan Abdul Samad Khan Achakzai better than most Punjabi politicians did, because of his own father's background in the Congress as well as in the Khilafat Movement, which was similar in some ways to that of Khan Abdul Samad Khan Achakzai's background.

**Abdul Hameed Jatoi**, one of the bravest Sindhi politicians, was a good friend of my father and met him whenever he came to Lahore. He often found himself on the wrong side of the government of the day for his fearless independence. In the section on Zulfikar Ali Bhutto further on, I have mentioned a PPP convention in which Bhutto made some remarks in response to my suggestions that he was fighting on too many fronts. I have also mentioned there that those present on the occasion applauded everything that Bhutto said, including his disagreement with me on my analysis of the political situation. There was, however, one exception to this adulatory attitude of the participants. That exception was an impressive, tall and well-built Sindhi leader, who always wore his trademark cap. I do not recollect what exact issue actually upset him at this convention, but I do remember that he got up in anger, banged the desk in front of him, threw his cap on it, and addressed

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto directly. He referred to some in the audience who had made speeches praising Bhutto to the skies and said that it was just such 'sycophants' who would lead him to his political destruction! He did this at a time when Bhutto had won the elections with a sweeping majority in West Pakistan and everyone knew that he would have an important political role in any future political dispensation. The image of Abdul Hameed Jatoi throwing his cap and banging the desk in front of him will remain etched in my memory.

My father and Abdul Hameed Jatoi got along beautifully. They had many traits in common. Jatoi revolted against Bhutto's policies and criticized him on the floor of the National Assembly. He was arrested on many occasions during Bhutto's government. He became disillusioned with the PPP government and was instrumental in the formation of the Sindh National Alliance, of which he was elected Chairman in the late 1980s. He had stopped taking active part in political activities after the death of his son, former senator Aijaz Jatoi. One of his sons, Liaquat Ali Jatoi became Chief Minister of Sindh and was at one time my Cabinet colleague. This is when I made a special effort to attend Abdul Hameed Jatoi's funeral in Dadu in 2004.

**Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo**, former Governor of Balochistan, was a familiar figure at my father's residence. They were colleagues in the National Awami Party (NAP). He is the father of Mir Hasil Bizenjo and Mir Bizen Khan Bizenjo (both have been parliamentarians at different times). Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo was a highly respected politician from Balochistan and despite the fact that he and my father sometimes disagreed on the country's issues, they remained close friends and had great respect for each other. Mir Ghaus Bakhsh later left the NAP to form the Pakistan National Party (PNP).

The NAP won in Balochistan in the 1970 General Elections. They formed governments in Balochistan and in NWFP (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, KPK). In NWFP it formed the government in an alliance with the Jamiatul Ulema-i-Islam with Maulana Mufti Mahmud as Chief Minister (this government was to resign in protest against the dismissal of the NAP government in Balochistan by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto). Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo was appointed Governor of Balochistan. Sardar Ataullah Khan Mengal was elected Chief Minister, with Mir Gul Khan Naseer as a Senior Minister in the government. Among those elected to the Provincial Assembly were eminent political and tribal leaders Nawab Khair Bakhsh Marri and Sardar Ahmed Nawaz Bugti, younger brother of Nawab Akbar Bugti.

Bhutto could not tolerate independent-minded governments in Balochistan and NWFP and soon found an opportunity to get rid of them. It was alleged that the NAP government was involved in some sort of an international conspiracy to undo Pakistan. An allegation was made regarding a discovery of Soviet-made weapons from the Iraqi embassy, meant to be used to destabilize both Pakistan and Iran, and further alleging that the NAP government was in cahoots with both Iraq and the Soviet Union to achieve these ulterior and anti-national objectives. Ironically, Bhutto was greatly aided in this by the stand adopted by

Nawab Akbar Bugti, who supported the allegation against the NAP leadership and was later appointed as Governor of Balochistan. The NAP leadership strongly repudiated these charges. A tribunal was ultimately set up (the Hyderabad Tribunal) to try the accused, who included, inter alia, Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, Sardar Ataullah Mengal, Mir Gul Khan Naseer, Mir Khair Bakhsh Marri, Khan Abdul Wali Khan, Khan Amirzadah Khan, Syed Kaswar Gardezi, Habib Jalib and others. My father, Mian Mahmud Ali Kasuri, defended the accused. The case was ultimately wound up after General Zia ul-Haq overthrew Bhutto in 1977.

**Shaikh Abdul Majeed Sindhi** was a kind and fatherly figure. He and my father would meet often. At a time when Zulfikar Ali Bhutto had begun to make waves as Foreign Minister of Pakistan in the Ayub government, it was often mentioned that Shiekh Abdul Majeed Sindhi, who belonged to the middle class, had defeated Sir Shahnawaz Bhutto, father of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, in the 1937 elections.<sup>40</sup> Shiekh Abdul Majeed Sindhi had played an important role in the Pakistan Movement. Sindh had been separated from the Bombay Presidency, one of the largest provinces of British India, after the Government of India Act 1935. It became a separate province with its own Legislative Assembly. After the Muslim League was reorganized in the province, the Sindh Provincial Muslim League held its first session at Karachi in October 1938 under the presidentship of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. This party conference adopted a resolution which recommended that the 'All-India Muslim League should devise a scheme of constitution under which Muslims may attain full independence'. Sindh was thus the first province to have moved a resolution for the creation of Pakistan and this resolution was moved by Shaikh Abdul Majeed Sindhi.<sup>41</sup> He was a great freedom fighter and had achieved singular distinction not only in politics but also in journalism. He created an awakening among the Muslims in Sindh through his articles and editorials.

**Prince Agha Abdul Karim Khan Ahmedzai of Kalat** used to meet my father when he visited Lahore. He had quite a reputation for defying state authority. The Prince disagreed with the decision of his brother Mir Ahmedyar Khan, the Khan of Kalat, to join Pakistan and decided to lead a separatist movement. To me, as a young boy, he did not look as ferocious as his reputation as a hard-line Baloch nationalist indicated. On the contrary, he seemed to possess a genial disposition. I am not aware whether his meetings with my father had more to do with his legal troubles or formed a part of the efforts to create an All Pakistan Party which could represent all the federating units and accommodate the aspirations of the people of smaller provinces (including some 'nationalist' elements).

Against the background of Prince Karim's activities in the aftermath of the independence of Pakistan, the current activities of some members of the ruling family of the former princely state of Kalat have a definite feeling of *déjà vu*. Luckily, there have been recent reports that efforts are being made to bring back the Khan of Kalat, Prince Mir Suleman

Dawood Ahmedzai, who is currently living in self-exile in London. I hope these reports are correct.

On a visit to Quetta a few years ago, I met with Governor Nawab Mir Zulfiqar Ali Khan Magsi. I also had an opportunity of meeting his wife, Shama Parveen Magsi, daughter of Prince Abdul Karim Khan. She remembered with fondness her father's friendship with my father and we talked about old times.

**Begum Naseem Jahan** (Begum Naseem Akbar Khan) was the daughter of Begum Jahanara Shahnawaz, one of the principal women leaders of the All-India Muslim League. She was married to Major General Akbar Khan of the famous Rawalpindi Conspiracy Case, which according to the prosecution was a conspiracy aimed at removing the government of Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan. It is generally believed that it was largely through Begum Naseem Jahan's indiscreet remarks that the Rawalpindi Conspiracy came to the notice of the intelligence agencies. Eleven military officers and four civilians were accused of being involved in the Rawalpindi Conspiracy case, the main accused being Major General Akbar Khan, the Chief of the General Staff of the Pakistan Army. General Akbar Khan was regarded as a hero during the Kashmir war with India in 1947–48. The civilians accused in the case included celebrated poet Faiz Ahmed Faiz, Sajjad Zaheer of the Communist Party, Begum Naseem Jahan (accused of abetting and motivating her husband to plot the *coup d'état*), and Muhammad Hussain Ata. The military accused included many senior and junior officers. In due course, all these people were rehabilitated. General Akbar Khan was subsequently appointed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's National Security Advisor.

I however remember Begum Naseem Jahan differently. She was a free-spirited soul and, although, married to a senior military officer, she held her own views and voiced them strongly. Her views were politically left of centre. For her time, she was quite unusual, to say the least. She would often come to our house to have discussions with my father on the latest political events. Her conversation would be animated and I remember her gesticulating furiously while making some political point.

I have yet other reasons for remembering Begum Naseem Jahan. For one, she was very fond of me and, for another, her daughter Jahanara ('Jinni'), named after her illustrious grandmother, was my wife's classmate and a close friend. Unfortunately, 'Jinni' died very young. It was at Begum Naseem's house that Mona and I first met. She used her oratorical skills with great persuasion on me and, no doubt, on my wife, to create a favourable opinion about one another. She exaggerated our respective virtues to both the families who knew her very well. I, therefore, owe her a debt of gratitude.

**Faiz Ahmed Faiz and Mazhar Ali Khan:** Readers will be surprised as to why I have lumped these two great personalities together. A great deal has been written about them and their achievements are known to most Pakistanis. But my father often used to speak about them in the same breath and, perhaps for this reason, their names always occur to

me together, although both were giants in their own fields. Faiz Ahmed Faiz was one of Urdu language's greatest poets and Mazhar Ali Khan was a legend in journalism. Their names come to me almost in unison, also, because I often saw them together with my father in our house. This was in the early days, when the Progressive Papers Limited (PPL) had been founded by Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din, and Faiz Ahmed Faiz and Mazhar Ali Khan were both associated with *The Pakistan Times*, then one of Pakistan's most prestigious English dailies. Both had been its editors at different times. My father was the legal advisor to the Progressive Papers Limited (PPL). *Imroze*, a leading Urdu daily was also taken out by PPL. Both *Pakistan Times* and *Imroze* were often on the wrong side of the governments of the day. They would, therefore, be with my father whenever his help was needed, which was very often. Moreover, they all belonged to the liberal and progressive brand of Pakistani politics. All three had strong political views and, although there were some differences in their political views, my father being a social democrat, and Faiz Ahmed Faiz and Mazhar Ali Khan were both associated with the Communist Party in the past. But in the political milieu of the times, they had a lot in common.

**Begum Tahira Mazhar Ali Khan** is a truly exceptional woman. In fact, I saw aunt Tahira more often in our house than I even saw her husband. She is the daughter of Sir Sikander Hayat Khan, former Chief Minister of united Punjab, wife of Mazhar Ali Khan, and mother of the famous student leader, political activist, and author, Tariq Ali. Despite all this, she is truly her own person.

Her politics was very much to the left of centre.

Later on in life, my wife and I got to know Faiz Ahmed Faiz's daughter Salima Hashmi extremely well. We are associated with the Beaconhouse National University (BNU), which is Pakistan's first Liberal Arts non-profit University. Salima Hashmi has served as Dean of the School of Visual Arts and Design at the BNU. She is an acclaimed cultural writer and painter.

Some of the political and social activists whom I got to know when they would come to meet my father were Mohammad Afzal Bangash, Abid Hassan Minto, C. R. Aslam, Major Mohammad Ishaq, Syed Kaswar Gardezi, Rabia Sultan Qari (the first woman President of the Lahore High Court Bar Association), Professor Eric Cyprian, Raza Kazim, and 'Comrade' Sobho Gianchandani, among many others. All of them have made a contribution in the development of Pakistan's political culture. Those among them who did not join mainstream political parties and did not achieve political office played perhaps an even more important role in humanizing our society. Life is but a collection of memories and I, therefore, felt a sense of obligation to mention some of my father's colleagues whom I came across and who consciously or unconsciously may have impacted my upbringing. Memory, however, unfortunately, plays many tricks. I must apologize in advance for forgetting to mention some who ought to have been mentioned.

To sum up, our Fane Road residence in Lahore welcomed those in the early days of Pakistan whose political views were opposed to the sitting governments and included leaders from smaller provinces like Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Khan Abdul Wali Khan, and Abdul Samad Khan Achakzai, who were not particularly popular in Punjab at that time. They regularly stayed with my father in Lahore, as did Zulfikar Ali Bhutto after he resigned from Ayub Khan's government.

**Zulfikar Ali Bhutto** was the most charismatic politician produced by Pakistan since Independence, matched perhaps only by his daughter, Benazir Bhutto. Since the Bhuttos have played a very important role in Pakistani politics and left a deep imprint on the psyches of many Pakistanis, it is in order to make a detailed reference to my interactions with them. I have no desire to go for a political analysis here. For reasons already indicated, I am merely giving pen portraits here.

On one occasion, when Bhutto was staying with us, Ghulam Mustafa Khar (later to become Governor of Punjab) accompanied him and also stayed with us. Although a member of the National Assembly, Khar was relatively unknown at the time. He convinced me that since he knew very few people in Lahore as he belonged to the rural back-lands of Muzaffargarh, he would be obliged to me if I were to introduce him into the social circles that I moved in so that he could get to know some people. As a result of some broad hints, I realized that he was interested in meeting a young, sophisticated, and educated lady who was of marriageable age. He managed to convince or dupe the good Samaritan in me to introduce him to her. When Bhutto found out about this, he showed a surprising degree of curiosity and insisted on accompanying Khar and me to the Coffee Shop of the Intercontinental Hotel in Lahore, where I had agreed to introduce Khar to the lady. Mustafa and the young lady sat on one table while Bhutto Sahib and I sat on a table nearby.

Since Bhutto and I had to kill time, we began to talk about various issues. Bhutto asked me about my estimate of the number of seats that the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) was likely to win in the general elections due in December 1970. Despite the fact that one could see a lot of enthusiasm and support for the PPP on the streets, the general feeling was that it had no 'electable' candidates. Going by the small number of electable candidates that the party already had, there was a feeling among political 'pundits' that it might end up with three or four. Not wishing to sound pessimistic, I said, 'Sir, I think we will get eight seats.' He was very upset at hearing my response and almost jumped out of his seat. He started to wave for the waiter. It was only then that I realized that everyone there was looking at Bhutto. The moment he beckoned for the waiters, there was a mad rush towards him; Bhutto asked for a piece of paper. All the waiters wanted to lay their hands on the first available piece of paper and the first to get towards us managed to get an envelope rather than a piece of plain paper. Bhutto took the envelope and wrote on it, 'We will get at least 21 seats,' and gave the envelope to me. He said to me that it was a bet, and whoever lost would take the other out to dinner.

When I came home, I handed the paper to Mona, my wife, and we had a good laugh. We thought that either Bhutto was daydreaming or just wanted to raise my morale. Mona and I thought that he would soon be entertaining us to dinner after the elections since we could not in our wildest dream believe that PPP could get 21 seats. I asked Mona to keep the envelope in a safe place.

When the election results were announced, there was a massive, landslide victory in favour of the PPP in the then West Pakistan (present-day Pakistan). Bhutto and I were both very embarrassed with our respective projections and did not mention this matter again to each other.

Coming back to my foolish initiative in trying to introduce Mustafa Khar to the young lady for purposes of matrimony, when my father found out, he was very angry with me and said, '*Bewakoof! uski to pehly shadi hue hue hai.*' (You foolish man! He is already married!) Mustafa Khar later on developed a reputation for being the, 'most married man in Pakistan'. He married approximately ten times, although serially. One of his former wives, Tehmina Durrani, wrote a book titled *My Feudal Lord*, an exposé of sorts on Mustafa Khar. In it she has recorded details about her unhappy marriage to Khar and her subsequent divorce, as well as revealing the dismally weak position of women in Pakistani feudal society. The book caused quite a sensation at the time of its publication.

My father developed differences with Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and eventually resigned in 1972. The differences grew serious and, in order to intimidate us, police cases were registered against us. My father actually never wanted to become the Law Minister but was prevailed upon by Bhutto, through me, since Bhutto wanted his name associated with a Cabinet, whose members, many of whom had been thrown up by the electoral tide from relative obscurity, were by and large not well known at that time. In fact, the swearing-in of the Cabinet took place very late at night due to my father's repeated refusals to join the government. He was already apprehensive that he could develop differences with Bhutto, owing to their completely different temperaments and backgrounds, and was soon proven right.

On a later occasion, Bhutto commented in a speech at Lahore that his relationship with my father was fine but the real cause of mischief was the sons, who were misleading Mian Mahmud Ali Kasuri. This is not true and in fact I had jeopardized my own political career by advising my father to leave (finally), unlike on two earlier occasions in the past, when he was prevailed upon by his colleagues to stay after he had tendered his resignation. My brother Umar Kasuri and I just could not bear to see our father so unhappy. In fact, I had rather a special relationship with Z. A. Bhutto, and on many occasions he tried to influence my father through me, the first time when my father was refusing to join the Cabinet. Although I was not formally a member of his party, Bhutto was more comfortable with me than with my father, with whom he had a relatively formal relationship, although my father was the Senior Vice President of the PPP. Perhaps there

was more in common between us than between Bhutto and my father. I had recently returned after my education at Cambridge and Oxford. Bhutto was also an Oxonian and we used to talk about our Oxbridge days although I followed him there almost two decades afterwards.

The nature of my relationship with Bhutto can be judged by an anecdote narrated to me by my friend Habibullah Tarar of which I had only a vague recollection. He told me that his father, the late Chaudhry Ataullah Tarar, had narrated this story to him in a humorous vein. He said that his father happened to be sitting with my father in Islamabad at the official residence when my father was Law Minister and Deputy Leader of the House (National Assembly). Apparently, I had expressed a desire to accompany my father to Murree at a function for Judges of the Superior Courts and senior Lawyers that President Bhutto had hosted at the Government House in Murree. My father was not particularly encouraging since this function was really for Supreme Court and High Court Judges and senior practising lawyers. I must have inquired from Bhutto's staff if I could accompany him to Murree since my father had not taken me along. Habib's father remembered that there was consternation all around when Bhutto's car arrived at the Government House, Murree, and Bhutto emerged in full glory from one side of the car and I from the other, basking in his reflected glory. I have a vague memory of this incident because I distinctly remember Justice Bashir Ahmad Sheikh of the Lahore High Court, who was a friend of my father, saying to me in Punjabi, '*Oye tu kidroun aithay aa gaya aein?*' (What on earth are you doing here?), implying that since I was not a practising lawyer I had no business to be there.

### ***Bhutto's Charisma and Telepathic Connection to the Masses***

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto had a special rapport with the crowd. I recall an election rally in 1970 during General Yahya Khan's regime in Lahore at the Gol Bagh Gardens (now known as 'Nasser Bagh', after President Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt). The crowd at the meeting was so large and the Nasser Bagh so packed that some people climbed on trees to get a better view of Bhutto. The crowd started protesting that, because of those who had climbed the trees, they (those on the ground) could not see Bhutto. He said in Urdu '*Utro! Utro Utro!*' (Come down! Come down! Come down!), adding for good measure, '*Utaar ke chorain gaye.*' (We will make sure that we bring them down!). There was such chemistry between him and the crowd that, the moment he uttered these words, people were electrified and concluded that he was referring to General Yahya Khan's regime, whose government he intended to bring down, although he had not even once mentioned General Yahya's name. The moment he mentioned these words, there was consternation and the crowd went into a rapture, instinctively understanding his real meaning. There was such empathy that it could almost be called telepathic.

I would like to refer to another incident illustrating Bhutto's bond with the people. I was travelling with him to Karachi in his car, on the way to a party workers' convention. On

arrival at the meeting, he said, 'My young friend Khurshid [referring to me] was telling me in the car just now that I should not fight on two fronts. He gave me examples from European history, particularly from the time of the Napoleonic wars and the Second World War, and advised me not to over-extend myself by fighting on too many fronts as Napoleon and Hitler had done.' I knew that Bhutto's library at his Clifton residence contained a large number of books on European history, particularly on Hitler and Mussolini. I had therefore thought that he would understand my meaning. Bhutto was at that time attacking all established political parties and politicians almost in the same manner that Imran Khan has been doing during the Azadi March. Bhutto told the meeting, 'I am not fighting on two fronts; I am fighting on all fronts.' To this day, I do not completely understand what he meant by this but the entire house stood up to applaud him rapturously. Perhaps he was trying to say that it was easier to fight with everybody in the political arena so that the public can distinguish him from the rest, much as Imran Khan is perhaps trying to do now. Perhaps I am oversimplifying and can still not fathom what Bhutto really meant, nor perhaps did the others in the meeting. It did not really matter; they wanted to applaud at whatever Bhutto said. And applaud they did, with great gusto, making me look foolish indeed for having advised Bhutto to the contrary. After the landslide victory in the 1970 elections, Bhutto invited only a handful of people to *Al-Murtaza*, his residence in Larkana, for the celebrations. I was one of those few. The Bhutto family had large landholdings and in the true feudal style there was a singer by the name of *Dilbar* singing in Sindhi and going around Bhutto and gesturing to him very respectfully and bowing repeatedly. I could not understand the exact meaning but it appeared that he was singing paeans of praise for Bhutto. A brother of Mirza Nasir Ahmed, the head of the Ahmadiyya (Qadianis) community (I cannot recollect the brother's name), who had brought a message of goodwill for Bhutto from Mirza Nasir Ahmed, had also been invited. In retrospect, I find this quite ironic, since it was in Bhutto's time that the Qadianis were declared non-Muslims.

Another person I met at *Al-Murtaza* was Peter Hazelhurst, who, Bhutto informed me, was an important British journalist (perhaps editor of *The London Times*) and who was travelling all over Pakistan to cover the general elections. Later in the day, Hazelhurst interviewed Bhutto. This was published under the headline 'I am the last bastion against communism in Pakistan— Bhutto'. The interview created quite a sensation in Pakistan. The socialist members of the PPP, led by the veteran Sheikh Rasheed Ahmad, later Minister for Health, and known in the Pakistan Peoples Party as *Baba-e-Socialism* (Father of Socialism), were outraged. The newspapers and political segments opposed to Bhutto were gleeful and said that Bhutto's hypocrisy had been exposed, showing him to be a true feudal. Bhutto was most upset at the reaction and rang me at Lahore, where I had returned. He said '*Khurshid kuch karo!*' (Khurshid, do something!), requesting me to contact Peter Hazelhurst to either retract the story or explain away his remarks.

Having returned from Britain not long ago after completing my studies and conscious of the traditions of British journalism, I thought that it would be foolhardy to make any such efforts. But I promised to contact Hazelhurst nonetheless. Hazelhurst would obviously not even hear of it and was in turn outraged at how such a request could be made. I was cautious enough to tell Hazelhurst that I was only passing on Bhutto's message. In retrospect, I do not think that Bhutto was wrong when he made that statement, since by injecting the germs of socialism into the bloodstream of Pakistani politics (conveniently labelling his party's message as 'Islamic Socialism'), he was perhaps building an immunity against communism, which was then associated with the system in the former Soviet Union and Maoist China. Regardless, the statement proved to be a storm in a teacup and very soon Bhutto's socialist colleagues thought it prudent to control their outrage since they could see the advantages of remaining in Bhutto's good books—destined as he was to become Pakistan's Prime Minister following the landslide victory in the general elections.

### ***Bhutto's 'Interview' at our Fane Road Residence***

Prior to the formation of the PPP, in the days when my father was President of the National Awami Party (NAP), West Pakistan (current-day Pakistan), he was keen that Bhutto be asked to join the NAP. He felt further that, in view of Bhutto's political stature, it would be appropriate to have him elected as the Secretary General of the NAP. He felt that the NAP had little popular support in the Punjab, or indeed in the mainstream politics of Pakistan as a whole, and that Bhutto's entry would give a boost to the NAP. The NAP was a coalition of people with views ranging from left-of-centre liberals and social democrats, to socialists and outright communists. My father tried to persuade his colleagues regarding Bhutto, but some of them were suspicious about Bhutto's 'progressive', 'leftist', or 'socialist' credentials and thought that he had adopted this political stance as a matter of convenience and was at heart a die-hard Sindhi feudal. My father convinced them to meet Bhutto at our residence in Lahore so that, as he hoped, their objections may be reduced. Nothing of the sort happened and, in fact, some of the more socialist-minded members of the NAP became even more convinced that Bhutto should not be invited to join the NAP.

To cut a long story short (reasons have been explained elsewhere), my father joined the PPP and became its Senior Vice Chairman. Ironically, an overwhelming majority of members of the NAP in the Punjab joined the PPP either just prior to or just after the general elections of 1970. This meeting at our 4-Fane Road residence was often referred to by my father and others who attended the meeting, humorously, as 'Mr Bhutto's interview at Fane Road'—an interview that he flunked in the eyes of those who regarded themselves as full-blooded socialists but who, nevertheless, joined the PPP following the huge public response that Bhutto received everywhere in West Pakistan, but particularly in the Punjab.

*Mission to the US:* After the 1971 debacle, East Pakistan separated from West Pakistan and the new state of Bangladesh came into existence. Pakistan's image suffered a huge blow. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto decided to send me along with Dr Javed Iqbal (son of Allama Iqbal), Kamal Azfar, later Governor of Sindh, and two or three others, to the United States of America to burnish Pakistan's image. The others, whose names I do not remember, included a member of the Jamiatul Ulema-e-Islam (JUI), then led by Maulana Mufti Mahmud, father of Maulana Fazal-ur-Rehman. We were required to meet members of the Congress, representatives of the business community, officials of the State Department, as well as to interact with the media and to go on a lecture circuit of different American universities to influence academia. I was asked to deliver lectures at the American University, Washington, George Mason University, University of Pennsylvania, and Duke University. Different members of the delegation were sent to different campuses.

As it chanced, the representative of the JUI was asked to lecture at the University of California, Berkeley campus, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's alma mater. Apparently, in response to a question regarding the punishment for theft in Islam, he blandly responded, 'hands have to be chopped off', without explaining the finer details, including the fact that at the time of Hazrat Umar (RA), the second Caliph, this sentence was suspended in times of famine. In the view of many scholars, the prerequisites for the imposition of this punishment are so stringent and detailed in nature that they render this punishment almost impossible to be applied in this day and age. His response, bereft of any background, nuance, explanation or context, created huge outrage, not just at the Berkeley campus but spreading like wildfire to other campuses as well. Bhutto was criticized for sending a representative who did not fully understand the sensitivity of the matter. Bhutto's primary objective in sending the delegation had been to burnish Pakistan's image (and his own); hence, he was devastated that such a response, without explaining the context, should have been given, of all places, at his own former alma mater.

I received an 'urgent' call from the Foreign Office that I should proceed to Berkeley immediately and deliver a lecture there on Pakistan at the same campus, and try to undo some of the damage done to Islam, Pakistan, and Bhutto's image at Berkeley and elsewhere. I was told it was very urgent. I do not remember which part of America I was in at that time, since there are many time zones in that huge country. Sultan Mohammad Khan, a veteran and respected diplomat, was Pakistan's ambassador in Washington DC at the time. In view of the urgency of the matter, I decided to ring the ambassador instantly, perhaps not even looking at my watch. It was clear from the tone of his voice that he was not particularly pleased to receive my call and I could not understand why until he asked, '*Kasuri Sahib, kya apko ilm hai keh iss waqt yahan kya waqt hai? Iss waqt subah keh teen bajay huay hain!*' (Mr Kasuri, do you know what time it is here? It is 3 in the morning!) I am certain I must have told the operator that it was a message from Bhutto; otherwise, I see no reason why he would wake up the ambassador at this unearthly hour. I apologized profusely. Needless to say, despite my absent-mindedness and the ambassador's obvious

annoyance, everyone at the embassy, realizing that Bhutto was personally interested in the matter, made urgent arrangements for me to proceed to Berkeley. I did so the very next day.

His charisma notwithstanding, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto remains one of Pakistan's most controversial political personalities. His supporters almost worshipped him, while his detractors entertained hugely negative sentiments about him, particularly for his high-handedness in dealing with political opponents. For the purpose of this book, however, it is sufficient to say that, whatever his shortcomings, he has left a lasting legacy and a deep imprint on the minds of a large segment of the Pakistani population, especially the poor. His contribution towards Pakistan's nuclear programme, the opening of positive relations with China (for which he and Field Marshal Ayub Khan deserves equal credit), as well as his efforts to raise the morale of Pakistanis after the dismemberment of the country following the emergence of Bangladesh, are widely recognized. He also played a significant role in concretizing the emotional bonds of the people of Pakistan with the rest of the Muslim world through the holding of the historic OIC (Organization of the Islamic Conference) meeting in Lahore in 1973. This, in turn, further raised Pakistan's status in the Muslim world. While I have not dealt with his shortcomings in this book—they have just been alluded to above—I have referred to his contribution in the realm of foreign policy in appropriate sections of this book.

**Begum Nusrat Bhutto and Benazir Bhutto:** As far as the Bhutto family is concerned, there was a break in our political and social interaction after my father resigned from the Cabinet and from the PPP. However, a few years later, when General Zia ul-Haq delayed the promised elections, various political parties forged alliances, including the Movement for Restoration of Democracy (MRD) and the Pakistan Democratic Alliance (PDA). I played an important role in both the MRD and the PDA movement and was jailed several times. Our social and political relationship with Begum Nusrat Bhutto resumed. She was a gracious lady indeed and underwent a lot of suffering, both politically and at a personal level. She used to say to me that she really wished that my father had not resigned, although I think she understood the reasons very well. When Bhutto was under arrest in Kot Lakhpat Jail in Lahore during the tenure of President Ayub Khan, I accompanied her to her engagements whenever she visited Lahore.

As Secretary General of the PDA, of which all major opposition parties including the PPP and Tehrik-e-Istiqlal, were members, I worked closely with Benazir Bhutto. We became good friends and she would often visit my wife and me at our home in Lahore, whenever she wished to escape from the humdrum of political routine. There must have been very few houses in Lahore where she could genuinely relax; one reason why she was comfortable with me was because I did not belong to her party and, therefore, she could afford to be off-guard. I remember her saying to my wife and me on one occasion, 'May God save me from my enemies and Asif from his friends.' There were lots of stories circulating about the state of their marriage. It is apt to refer to an incident quoted by

former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in her autobiography *Living History*. Clinton has written:

At the luncheon she [Benazir Bhutto] hosted for me, Benazir led a discussion about the changing roles of women in her country and told a joke about her husband's status as a political spouse. 'According to newspapers in Pakistan,' she said, 'Mr Asif Zardari is de-facto Prime Minister of the country. My husband tells me, 'Only the First Lady can appreciate that it's not true.'<sup>42</sup>

It is difficult for me to know how much actual influence Asif Ali Zardari wielded on his spouse, but newspapers in Pakistan continue to blame him for most of the shortcomings of her government.

Benazir Bhutto was a courageous woman and I remember her bravely risking bodily harm at the hands of the police during a wild *laathi-charge* (baton charge) on our Long March to Islamabad in 1993. Some of us managed to escape the *laathi-charge* and reached our vehicle. Unfortunately, Sardar Farooq Ahmed Khan Leghari, later President of Pakistan, had to face the wrath of the police during the *laathi-charge* and was injured. After breaking out of the police cordon around the house in which Benazir Bhutto was staying in Islamabad, we tried to reach Liaquat Bagh, the venue of the public meeting, by going through circuitous routes and lanes (since the police had blocked all major roads leading to the venue of the public meeting) when we found ourselves confronted by a huge police squad. When we tried to move, a tear gas canister hit the screen of the four-wheeler we were sitting in. Luckily, the vehicle had a shatterproof windscreen, which caved in but was able to prevent the shell getting through, I was on the front seat while Benazir Bhutto, Air Marshal Asghar Khan and, if my memory serves me right, former Prime Minister Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi, were sitting in the back seat. If the canister had pierced the windscreen, I was directly in the line of fire and the consequences would have been grave indeed. We were all arrested and detained in the State Guest House before the Nawaz Sharif government could decide what to do with us. Under police custody, we were separated, and sent off in different directions, with Benazir Bhutto being forcibly put on a PIA flight to Karachi. On this occasion, we were not imprisoned.

Although Benazir Bhutto and I were never in the same party, I was the Secretary General of the opposition alliance, the PDA, of which her party was the strongest member. In the 2008 general elections, we were on opposing sides. Towards the end of the election campaign, I was about to begin a very important public meeting to round off my own election campaign, when I heard the tragic news of her assassination. I just could not continue and abruptly ended the meeting. I asked all those present at the meeting to raise their hands in prayer for her.

Benazir Bhutto was, if anything, even more charismatic than her father, at least on the world stage. She was educated at Oxford and Harvard and was the first Asian woman to have been elected President of the Oxford Union. She was the first Muslim woman to become Prime Minister of a country. She paid a big price for her political opposition and

was incarcerated for long periods. Outside the country, she had become Pakistan's symbol for many years. Her charisma was such that according to news reports, the then Governor of Arkansas, Bill Clinton, and his wife Hillary, on a private visit to London, waited among the crowd to gain a glimpse of the young Prime Minister of Pakistan as her motorcade passed through the streets of London. Perhaps referring to the same time but to a different incident. Hillary Clinton in her book *Living History* says,

Bhutto was the only celebrity I had ever stood behind a rope line to see. We noticed a large crowd gathered outside the Ritz Hotel, and I asked people what they were waiting for. They said Benazir Bhutto was staying at the hotel and was soon expected to arrive. Chelsea and I waited until the motorcade drove up. We watched Bhutto, swathed in yellow chiffon, emerge from her limousine and glide into the lobby. She seemed graceful, composed and intent.<sup>43</sup>

Coming back to my father's house, the last major political event that I remember there was the police *laathi-charge* (baton charge) of all the inmates. Those who are aware of the history of the Freedom Movement of the Indian subcontinent and of the nature of political movements in Pakistan, as well as of the measures that different governments employed to suppress such movements, are aware of the *laathi-charges* which were (and are even now) resorted to, to disperse an anti-government protest or a mob. It stands to reason that a *laathi-charge* by its very nature could be used only in a public place, whether on a politically sensitive or an important road, or a big public ground where demonstrators could gather to protest. I do not recollect another instance where the inmates of a private residence were subjected to a *laathi-charge*. This is precisely what happened at our residence when Begum Nusrat Bhutto, clad in a 'Burqa' (head-to-toe covering worn by conservative Muslim women) to hide her identity, was smuggled into the house to lead a demonstration in Lahore against General Zia ul-Haq's regime. A large number of political workers had been surreptitiously smuggled in earlier, so that, before Begum Bhutto arrived, she would have a crowd to follow her prior to emerging on the road outside the house to lead a demonstration. This was at a time when my father, some other members of the family, and I had already been imprisoned during this Movement. However odd this incident may seem, it may well have been in the fitness of things that even this sort of a thing should happen at Fane Road. I began this section by describing our residence as an open house; how 'open' it had in fact become should be clear from this example of the *laathi-charge*.

Only briefly did my parents shift to the new home they had built in Gulberg Colony in the late 1950s, where I still live. They returned to Fane Road immediately after I left for Cambridge University for higher studies. Their memories of the Fane Road residence were far too strong for them to live anywhere else, although, with the passage of time, the area had become very crowded. My father lived there until he passed away in 1987.

It will be clear from the above narrative, that I have only mentioned my father's friends and colleagues so as to describe the socio-political atmosphere of the time, and of the influences impacting upon me while I was growing up. I have not mentioned any of my

own political associates after I actively joined politics by becoming a member of the Tehrik-e-Istiqlal (TI), which was then the biggest and the most important political party in opposition to Bhutto's government. The TI was led by a national hero, Air Marshal Muhammad Asghar Khan, about whom I have spoken earlier. Mian Mohammad Nawaz Sharif obviously does not fit into the category of people who were either my father's colleagues or who could influence me while I was growing up. I am, however, mentioning him in this section, since he joined the TI when I had just started my active political career and, at that time, I did not have the most remote idea that he would emerge in the manner that he did on the political landscape of Pakistan. If anything, I was senior to him in the party. He is being mentioned in this section, because he played such an important role in Pakistan's politics and still continues to do so.

**Mian Mohammad Nawaz Sharif:** The memory of my first meeting with Mian Mohammad Nawaz Sharif is still fresh in my mind. I remember, in the mid-1970s, sitting in the head office of the Tehrik-e-Istiqlal along with Malik Wazir Ali (father of Shahnaz Wazir Ali, later on a minister in the PPP government) and Secretary General of the party. We saw from the window of the office what appeared to us to be a slightly odd sight. We were used to seeing political workers coming to the party office in vans or on motorcycles and leaders in their motorcars when they visited the party office. Suddenly we saw a Mercedes Benz sports car (convertible) arrive at the office and a young man with a very fair complexion emerge from it. He entered the office and, after formal greetings, informed Malik Wazir Ali and me that he wanted to join the party as well as work for it, since (as he informed us) he had great faith in the leadership of Air Marshal Muhammad Asghar Khan, the founding President of the Tehrik-e-Istiqlal. We welcomed him and were told that he was the son of an industrialist of Lahore, Mian Mohammad Sharif, and belonged to the Kashmiri *biradari* (literal English translation is 'brotherhood' but in practice it means a kinship group based on ethnicity, origin, cultural mores, etc.). Nawaz Sharif became an ardent supporter of Air Marshal Asghar Khan and, whenever the Air Marshal visited Lahore, Nawaz Sharif would place his chauffeur-driven car at his disposal. He would ensure his own presence throughout the Air Marshal's Lahore visits.

The politics of Lahore has been dominated traditionally since before Independence by two main *biradaris*: the 'Arains' and the 'Kashmiris'. The TI awarded Nawaz Sharif a ticket from an inner city constituency dominated by the 'Kashmiris'. These elections were never held since General Zia ul-Haq postponed the general elections, promised within 90 days after Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's removal. I was then, although very young, considered an influential leader of the Tehrik-e-Istiqlal. My father was one of the senior-most leaders of the party and I was personally considered by party members to be very close to the Air Marshal and was its Central Information Secretary. Mian Nawaz Sharif, a newcomer to politics, was a gracious host from the very beginning and my wife and I were recipients of that hospitality on quite a few occasions at his residence in Model Town.

Following the postponement of the promised elections by General Zia ul-Haq, the Tehrik-e-Istiqlal along with other parties, formed the MRD (Movement for Restoration of Democracy). Most of us landed up in prison, but Nawaz Sharif decided to switch over to General Zia ul-Haq's side. Since that day, his career in politics has advanced dramatically. I have referred elsewhere in the book to my later differences with him on the Fifteenth Constitutional Amendment (also known as the Shariat Bill) by virtue of which he would effectively have become the *Amir al-Mumineen* (Commander of the Faithful). I strongly opposed that Bill and in fact tendered my resignation from the National Assembly in a stormy meeting of the Parliamentary Party. At a personal level, there was an unexpected, although very pleasant, consequence of my resignation. I received countless letters, messages and telephone calls from all over the country assuring me of support for the stand that I had taken. Included among those was Wajid Jawad, then Federal Minister of State and Chairman, Export Promotion Bureau. I did not know him personally but he sent a beautiful letter of support, in which he quoted a couplet by Faiz Ahmed Faiz.

*Raushan kaheen bahar ke imkaan huye to hain,  
Gulshan mein chaak chand garebaan huye to hain  
Ab bhi khizaan ka raaj hai, lekin kaheen kaheen,  
Goshe rah-e-chaman mein ghazal-khvaan huye to hain.*

His letter added, 'Your illustrious father's soul would be delighted and proud for your bold and upright stance on this issue of great national importance.' He recollected that 'on the eve of passage of the 2nd or 3rd Amendment to the Constitution, when our elder senior and respected politicians were physically dragged out of the Assembly, I happened to be travelling between Lahore and Islamabad seated next to your great father, the late Mian Mahmud Ali Kasuri, who was extremely perturbed ... you have followed in his footprints —BRAVO.' In course of time, our families got to know each other, resulting in the marriage of my son Kasim with his daughter Sophia.

**Imran Khan:** In this section I have given pen sketches of people I came across as I was growing under the influence of my father and his friends. Imran Khan obviously does not fall in this category. A brief reference to Imran will be in order here, not only because I am a member of the Core Committee of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Party, but also because Imran Khan and the party are bound to have an impact on Pakistan's foreign policy even before coming to power. The PTI has already demonstrated massive public support, both during the last general elections as well as during the recent dharnas (protest sit-downs) against electoral rigging.

I would also like to point out that Imran Khan and I have fairly similar views on how the issue of J&K (Jammu & Kashmir) has to be resolved. Imran Khan undoubtedly stands for close and friendly Pakistan-India relations. In response to a question in a prestigious American publication, Imran said,

We will definitely try to work our way around our relationship with India. India is indeed our closest and most familiar neighbour. We would love to improve trade and other interactions ... the only problem with India is that there has to be a road map. Once we figure that out, we will know how to go about it too. We will try to work on the Kashmir issue with whatever mutuality allows us to. But it is very important to note that we cannot ignore Kashmir. Or else, if another Mumbai happens, we will be back to square one.<sup>43</sup>

In another interview, he remarked,

I do believe that there has to be a resolution on Kashmir but I don't believe in any military solution, I don't believe in any militancy. I believe it should be political solution, and should be done on the table. There should be a political roadmap. I do believe that the Indian Army should not be there because in twenty years what it hasn't solved by six or seven hundred thousand Indian troops, it's not going to solve in the future too.<sup>44</sup>

Imran Khan has also indicated that he would like to see a Canada-US type of relationship between Pakistan and India, which would be beneficial to both the countries as well as to South Asia.<sup>45</sup>

Imran Khan asked me to provide him an outline of the framework agreement that we had been working on during my tenure as Foreign Minister. It is now a matter of common knowledge that the framework that we worked on during 2004–07 is widely regarded as the most successful attempt at finding a solution to the Jammu & Kashmir dispute, which, according to many scholars, was the best that could be achieved and would have ushered in 'transformational peace'. We also felt that this framework could be accepted by a vast majority of Kashmiris, Pakistanis, and Indians. Naturally, therefore, Imran Khan was interested in knowing from me first-hand the contours of the settlement during that period.

Interestingly, this was on a journey to Azad Jammu & Kashmir, on our way to a PTI rally in Mirpur in 2013. Since both of us were together in the car on the long drive to Mirpur, I had the opportunity to brief him at some length. Not only did he agree with my points regarding the framework agreement, he even referred to it in his speech at the Mirpur rally, where he told the crowd that I had briefed him about the possible solution for Jammu & Kashmir, indicating that he agreed with it.

Although everybody knows about Imran Khan, since he has been a cricketing legend from the age of eighteen, he also built a reputation as the founder of the Shaukat Khanum Cancer Hospital, Lahore, and the Namal University (both non-profit institutions). Since I had played a prominent role in politics for years, Imran Khan obviously knew of me. We did not, however, know each other personally.

Imran and I met for the first time prior to the 1997 elections, when I approached him for an alliance with the PML-N. The PML-N was apprehensive of Imran Khan's popularity and thought that, although he could not win, he still had the potential of acting as a spoiler by dividing the right-of-centre vote, which would otherwise go to Mian Nawaz Sharif. Imran Khan had been a friend of my younger brother Daniyal, whose wife Fauzia Kasuri is one of the founding members of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf. Daniyal and Imran have known each other since their Aitchison College days. I carried a letter from Nawaz Sharif

offering him 30 seats in the National Assembly. I had assumed that this was an excellent opportunity for Imran Khan to make a mark in national politics. I was surprised, however, when he informed me that the deal was not acceptable because it would compromise his ability to bring about the type of reforms that he felt was necessary.

The Sharif government was removed by General Pervez Musharraf, in whose government I served as Minister, and who encouraged the formation of the Pakistan Muslim League (Quaid-i-Azam)— PML-Q. After President Musharraf's departure, the PML-Q split up because of failure to agree on the modalities regarding the party elections that were due soon, as well as its inability to agree on major party offices, which were at that time monopolized by Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi, and other members of their family. Some of those who split away from the PML-Q sought an alliance with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf. Many meetings were held at my residence with the top leaders of the PTI, including Imran Khan himself. I was assured by Imran that he supported an alliance with the PML-Q; the Core Committee of the party, however, turned this proposal down. I anyhow, had a preference for the PTI and my younger brother Bakhtiar Kasuri, who had no political affiliations earlier, had joined the party much before the historic public meeting of 30 October 2011 at the Minar-e-Pakistan which established the PTI as a serious political player in the elections of May 2013. It goes without saying that, since Bakhtiar works at the grass-roots level in my constituency, there was a huge presence of our supporters at the public meeting.

The decision to join Imran Khan was not easy. My constituency supporters wanted me to join the PML-N, not only because I had been a member of that party in the past, as most of my supporters had been, but also because of electoral considerations, since they felt that the PML-N was stronger in rural constituencies such as mine (although by that time the PTI had emerged as a major force in urban areas). The PML-N leadership had approached me fairly vigorously, both directly at the highest level, as well indirectly, to join the PML-N. I however had other considerations. I have already mentioned about my differences with Mian Nawaz Sharif over the 15th Amendment to the Constitution (dubbed as the 'Shariat Bill' to garner support by exploiting religious sentiments). I had felt that the spirit behind the Bill was completely contrary to the inclusive and modernizing vision of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. The details regarding the tendering of my resignation from my National Assembly seat in a stormy meeting of the Parliamentary Party has been mentioned elsewhere and need not be repeated here.

Importantly, corruption had emerged as a major issue in Pakistani politics and there seems to be a widespread consensus that, unless the government, and the entities under its control, are made to run completely transparently, the country will find it impossible to grapple with the formidable challenges that it faces. Not even the worst enemies of Imran Khan can attack his financial integrity and this provided a strong motivation behind my decision to join the PTI.

A large number of my liberal friends objected to Imran Khan's perceived support for the Taliban. After I joined the PTI, I did have occasions to disagree with Imran in the Central Executive Committee of the party as well as its Core Committee. In most cases, I found that there were lengthy discussions and an open debate on the pros and cons of the issues under discussion. I remember on one occasion Imran Khan said to me, 'Khurshid Bhai, I am very surprised at your liberal friends. Most of the liberals in Europe are anti-war, and there were major rallies in London and other Western capitals in opposition to their governments' decision to support the American attack on Iraq, whereas, the liberals in Pakistan call me a Taliban supporter, just because I want a negotiated settlement with the militants who have picked up arms against the state. I think I am more liberal than they are because I oppose the use of force as long as the issue can be resolved peacefully.'

This is, however, a complicated affair and, without going into further analysis, I thought it pertinent to mention this, since the issue of terrorism is of a very high priority in Pakistan. It is also apt to mention that Imran Khan has supported the Pakistan Army after the failure of the negotiations with the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and the decision by the Pakistan Army to launch a military operation in North Waziristan.

As a member of the Core Committee of the party, I have seen that on most issues there is a long debate before these are thrashed out and final decisions taken. I have also mentioned above that we have very similar views on Pakistan-India relations and how the Kashmir dispute needs to be resolved. There have, however, been instances where we have disagreed, as I have indicated above but, I never felt that he nursed a grievance on that account.

There was great deal of support for Imran Khan prior to the 2013 general elections and massive election rallies were held during the campaign. Most party leaders felt that it would either sweep the polls, or emerge as the largest party. The results surprised not just the party leadership but most neutral observers, who had expected the party to win many more seats. The rest is contemporary politics and, without going into details, it is pertinent to point out that Imran Khan had repeatedly asserted immediately after the election results were announced that unless a complete audit was done of at least four specified seats, the party would have no option but to launch a movement against electoral rigging. Members of the PTI went from pillar to post to obtain justice. Nobody took serious notice and the party felt aggrieved because of the attitude of the election tribunals, the election commission, as well as the courts. Thus, the PTI decided to launch a movement against electoral rigging in the 2013 elections. Most political pundits agree the PTI has made tremendous progress in garnering public support and in getting the party's message to all corners of the country. The need for a just and fair society and issues relating to electoral reforms, corruption, education, health, women, and minority rights have been raised as never before.



# Pakistan's Security Dilemma: Quest for Strategic Balance

## SECTION I

### THE WOUNDS OF PARTITION

The context of Pakistan-India relations can never be completely explained without recalling August 1947, when Pakistan and India emerged as independent nation states. Many still outstanding bilateral issues between India and Pakistan date back to Partition.

The partition of British India in 1947 was one of the bloodiest events in modern history. It had an extremely negative impact on future relations between India and Pakistan. Too many people suffered and the traumatic memories on both sides colour their attitudes towards each other. The arrival of Lord Louis Mountbatten as India's last Viceroy in March 1947 had brought with it an agenda to transfer power as 'quickly and efficiently' as possible. The resulting negotiations saw the deadline for British withdrawal brought forward from June 1948 to August 1947. Contemporary and subsequent historians have criticized this haste as a major contributory factor in the chaos that accompanied Partition.

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It seems that Mountbatten was far more interested in cutting and running than in saving the lives of the inhabitants who had been entrusted to his custody. Historians have come down very hard on Lord Mountbatten's lack of depth. It is said of him that he spent a lot of time on discussing his regalia of when he would arrive in India,<sup>2</sup> whilst the subcontinent was engulfed in terrible rioting and killing. It is widely believed that Lord Mountbatten, under Nehru's influence, even changed Radcliffe's Partition Plan (Sir Cyril Radcliffe was Chairman of the Boundary Committee set up to demarcate the borders of India and Pakistan at the time of Partition) by handing over Ferozepur and Gurdaspur Districts to India in violation of the trust reposed in him.<sup>3</sup>

Radcliffe was given the chairmanship of the two boundary committees set up with the passage of the Indian Independence Act. He was faced with the daunting task of drawing the borders for the new nations of Pakistan and India in a way that would leave as many Hindus and Sikhs in India and Muslims in Pakistan as possible. Radcliffe submitted his

partition map on 9 August 1947. The new boundaries were formally announced on 14 August 1947—the day of Pakistan’s independence and the day before India became independent.

Radcliffe’s efforts saw some fourteen million people—roughly seven million from each side—fleeing each way across the border when they discovered the new boundaries left them in the ‘wrong’ country. It is estimated that 1.5 million died in the violence that accompanied Independence, and millions more were injured. After witnessing the mayhem that occurred on both sides of the boundary that was created by him, Radcliffe refused his salary of 40,000 rupees (then 3,000 pounds). He was made a Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the British Empire in 1948.

The earliest slogan that I remember from when I was a child was: ‘*Hindu Muslim Sikh Essai*<sup>4</sup> *apas mein hai bhai bhai*’ (Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Christian are brothers). Reflecting on it later, it seems very strange to me, since it bore no resemblance to the ground reality that prevailed at that time. Perhaps, I had heard this slogan from some of my father’s progressive and liberal friends. It was obviously uncharacteristic of the times because old neighbours were turning upon each other, in some cases even killing them, especially in the Punjab—where the maximum violence took place. Mutual and organized ‘retributive genocide’<sup>5</sup> took the lives a million and a half people.<sup>6</sup> Rather than being *bhai bhai*, Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs were brutally slaughtering each other. In fact the popular slogan on the street was: ‘*Lay Kay Rahain Gey Pakistan, Bat Key Rahay Ga Hindustan*’ (We will create Pakistan and divide India), and ‘*Pakistan ka matlab kya? la ilaha ilallah*’ (What is the meaning of Pakistan? There is no God but Allah). Hindus were being pejoratively referred to as ‘*lalas*’ and Muslims as ‘*musslas*’. Historians are still uncertain on the number of dead men, women, and children.<sup>7</sup> At least 7,500 women were abused.<sup>8</sup>

## **Murree**

As a child, oblivious to the mayhem around me, I was in Murree with my family in the summer of 1947. Perhaps a little recollection about Murree—an idyllic vacation spot in a child’s eyes—will better illustrate the way Partition ripped life asunder in the summer of 1947 almost suddenly and without notice, since it was originally proposed to be brought about gradually and in a disciplined manner.

Murree, a hill station at an altitude of 7,500 feet was built by the British as ‘little England’. It began to develop in 1851 during the British Raj. It is located 50 kilometres northeast of Rawalpindi which was the Headquarters of the British Indian Army at the time and a twin city to the current capital of Pakistan, Islamabad. Rawalpindi was chosen as the Army Headquarters because it was strategically located and aimed at preventing Czarist expansionist designs on Britain’s Indian possessions, the ‘Jewel of the Crown’, in the ‘Great Game’. In order to get to Murree, one had to go on the ‘Grand Trunk Road’ and pass through Rawalpindi. Rawalpindi evokes great romance in the Anglo-Indian military

literature because it was the Headquarters of the Northern Command of the British Indian Army. Rawalpindi has remained the Headquarters of the Pakistan Army since Independence.<sup>9</sup>

Murree was the most favoured hill station in Pakistan. It was Punjab's summer capital until 1876, when the British moved its offices to Simla. This pristine hill station used to be the hub of tourist activity. Murree's famous Mall Road was the centre of all activity and in the 1950s and 1960s was referred to as 'the biggest drawing room in Pakistan'. It was so described because half of the ladies and gentlemen, clad in their 'Sunday best', sat sipping tea at Sam's and Lintott's, the two fashionable restaurants, while the other half went strolling up and down the Mall between the General Post Office building and the intersection leading up to the road where three famous hotels—Cecil's, Brightlands, and Lockwood's—were situated. It was said that Murree during the summer season truly represented the 'Who's Who' of Pakistani society at that time.

Murree has now changed, as have many other things in Pakistan. I believe Simla on the other side in India has changed similarly. With greater social and economic mobility, Murree has become very congested. Over the years I have heard many a lady or gentleman reminisce about the 'good old days' of Murree.

During my childhood vacations at this hill station, one of my favourite pastimes was to eagerly wait for the *pastry-wala* (the confectionery man),<sup>10</sup> who used to carry a tin box on his head, full of pastries, freshly baked cakes, and cream rolls. One day, much to my dismay, before the arrival of the *pastry-wala*, my father told us that we had to pack up and leave for Lahore. I was most upset and could not understand for the life of me why that would be necessary. Our summer vacations had just begun and I had been eagerly looking forward to spending them in Murree. He said to me that Amolak Ram Kapoor wanted him to come back to Lahore immediately. I was very angry with Amolak Ram Kapoor, whoever he may be. We packed in a hurry. I later learnt that Amolak Ram Kapoor was a noted Hindu lawyer in Lahore and a close friend of my father's. He rang to inform my father that his house was under attack and looters were on a rampage; hence, he wanted my father to come back to Lahore as soon as possible. Amolak Ram was leaving Lahore and wanted that my father should look after his house in his absence. At that time both he and my father thought it would be a temporary arrangement. They could not be more wrong! Millions crossed the border into India just on the Punjab side looking for safety; quite a few thought that they would be back soon.) As events unfolded, it was clear that Amolak Ram was never coming back to Lahore.

When we reached Lahore, we found a house built on top of a hill. This was 4-Fane Road. It was situated near the High Court and was one of the largest houses on Fane Road, testifying to the success of Amolak Ram's legal practice. The servants' quarters were littered with broken crockery; whatever the looters could not take, they had broken. Unfortunately, such scenes were very common on both sides of the border. Hindu,

Muslim, and Sikh properties were looted, ransacked, and abandoned. My father had to bring friends and family to protect the house. He had an old gun, used more to scare people off than for destructive purposes. It was normally used for duck-shooting that my father was fond of.

When Amolak Ram realized that his temporary absence would be permanent, my father began to pack Amolak Ram's belongings, his furniture, clothes, and, more importantly, his vast legal library. These were sent by trucks to Simla, where he had gone, for what he thought would be a short-term refuge.

One day, my father received a letter from Amolak Ram Kapoor. He read it aloud to us. Amolak Ram had written that he and his family had been shivering in the cold of Simla<sup>11</sup> without any warm clothing. And when the trucks carrying his possessions, that included warm clothes, arrived in Simla, Amolak Ram had prayed for my father's well-being. He had written in the letter, '*Aap kay liyee dil say dua nikaltee hai*' (I pray for you from the bottom of my heart).

Amolak Ram Kapoor's house, 4-Fane Road, was ultimately allotted to a refugee from India and was subsequently bought by my father. The house served as his office-cum-residence for almost forty years.

Some years after Partition, Amolak Ram Kapoor invited us to Simla. He wanted to express his gratitude to my father for saving and sending his belongings and his vast legal library to him. My younger brother Umar and I accompanied my parents and we all went to Simla. One day, Amolak Ram Kapoor announced to his young son that they would soon be visiting Lahore on our invitation. Much to everyone's consternation his son replied with great anger, '*Mein musslon kay paas nahi jaon ga* (I will not go to stay with any '*Musla*'). The word '*Musla*' at that time was used pejoratively for a Muslim by sections of Punjabi Hindus and '*Lala*' was used pejoratively for Hindus by sections of Punjabi Muslims. Everybody in the room pretended that they had not heard him. Amolak Ram was hugely embarrassed. It was quite clear that the boy was at school with people who did not have a very good memory of their exodus from Lahore or other parts of Punjab. I have no doubt that similar sentiments would be shared by Muslims who had migrated from India to Pakistan as was the case with my maternal relatives.

Following the bloodshed and mayhem in mid-1947, Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs migrated in opposite directions by whatever means available: trains, trucks, buses, carts, or on foot. A few lucky ones also managed to escape by air. Those who migrated by train had to face the ordeal of the threat of attack and murder.<sup>12</sup> My mother's parents lived in Delhi and we had heard gruesome tales of trains being stopped and men, women, and children being murdered brutally or burnt alive. It was only natural that the entire family was praying for the safe arrival of my grandfather, grandmother, and other relatives.

One night I remember being woken up by a commotion in the house. I still remember I was in my little *masehri* (cot). There were excited cries of ‘*Abba mian bach gaye*’ (Father has been saved). The relief and happiness expressed on that occasion was unforgettable. My grandfather, Nawabzada Aizaz-ud-Din Ahmad Khan of Loharu, my grandmother, and my uncles were among the few lucky people who had managed to escape from being slaughtered on the way to Pakistan.

Unfortunately, in the 20th century, perhaps the bloodiest century in recorded history, territorial partitions and ethnic cleansing were not limited to South Asia. After World War I, it was believed that the main cause of war was ethnically heterogeneous populations; therefore, the ‘un-mixing of populations’ was considered an appropriate means of resolving conflicts. In 1923, the Greeks and the Turks exchanged populations, and ethnic Germans were segregated in East and Central Europe during 1944–49.<sup>13</sup> It was also ‘the chosen solution’ in Ireland in 1922, in Palestine in 1948, and in Cyprus in 1974, and of course, in South Asia in 1947. The 1990s witnessed ethnic cleansing in the Balkans. Same was seen in Iraq, and particularly in Baghdad.

Historically, partitions have hardly ever been painless. However, the partition between India and Pakistan was unique in its savagery. There were many factors that led to this tragedy. The last British Viceroy to India, Lord Louis Mountbatten, was in too much of hurry to leave, unfortunately without realizing the consequences of his actions. Law and order had completely broken down in India in the forties. By 1946, the British feared a total collapse of the administrative machinery. Mountbatten, however, ignored the advice of experienced British administrators, who warned him against this haste. Governor Jenkins, the then Governor of Punjab had also warned against the hastiness of the partition process.<sup>14</sup>

Patiala, a princely state in the province of Punjab, now in present-day India, became a site of disgraceful incidents. Muslim men were slaughtered and Muslim women were dishonoured in large numbers by the Sikh community.<sup>15</sup> Maharaja Bhopinder Singh of Patiala was a class-fellow of my maternal grandfather Nawabzada Aizaz-ud-Din Ahmad Khan of Loharu at Aitchison College, Lahore. He was reputed to be a just and fair ruler. I find it painful to record that all this savagery took place in Patiala after he had passed away.

There were stories of long-time neighbours turning on one another. But there were also stories of total strangers coming to the rescue of people belonging to different faith from them. The best and the worst of human nature were on full display at the time of Partition.

Partition occupies an important place in Urdu and Hindi literature. A number of movies as well as short stories have dealt on the subject. Goodness of nature has been juxtaposed with the evilness that human beings can resort to. Stories depict how, alongside the tragedy, there were glimmers of human compassion and kindness. There are many tales of people murdered but also of people saved by both Muslims and Hindus. It is this aspect of

the human nature that holds hope for the future. There is a story of Hindu *Jats* (a particular caste) from Multan in Pakistan, who were warned by Muslims of the coming slaughter. Muslim landlords were helpful and some Muslim officers helped Hindus and protected them.<sup>16</sup> A former Muslim President of India, Zakir Hussain, owed his life to a Hindu and a Sikh.<sup>17</sup> Recent research explains that, ‘acts of mercy were common and violence was not all encompassing’.<sup>18</sup>

An admirable exception to the killings in the Punjab was in the state of Malerkotla. The Muslim population of Malerkotla were spared by the Sikhs because two centuries earlier, during Mughal rule, the Muslim Nawab of Malerkotla, Sher Mohammad Khan, had opposed the harsh treatment ordered by the Mughal Governor of Sirhind towards the children of Guru Gobind Singh.<sup>19</sup> He had declared that the Holy Qur’an did not sanction the killing of innocent children.<sup>20</sup> The Guru was pleased and had blessed the Nawab. His blessing has endured until today. ‘Malerkotla even now has a large Muslim population.’<sup>21</sup>

Many people opened the doors of their homes for the refugees pouring into Pakistan. Our home at 4-Fane Road, Lahore, also became a refuge for relatives and acquaintances fleeing India. I remember my father sheltered not just immediate relatives but also extended family. Some of them ended up staying on for years; quite a few of them have been successful in their professions. All these details are an important backdrop to the way Indians and Pakistanis related to each other after Partition, the effects of which still overhang.

## **D**IMENSIONS OF **P**ARTITION

None of the founding fathers who struggled for Independence and later accepted and promoted Partition could foresee the tragedy and the killings, and certainly did not envisage the level of hostility that would erupt amongst neighbours. According to Begum Ismat Iftikhar-ud-Din, wife of Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din, the Minister for Refugees in the Punjab at that time, Quaid-i-Azam could not control his tears when he saw the plight of the refugees in a refugee camp at Lahore. Large-scale transfer of population was neither foreseen nor expected by the planners and leaders of the time. In fact, under Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah’s original plan of Pakistan, Bengal and Punjab were not supposed to be partitioned at all, and he thought that the presence of large minorities on both sides would deter each side from discrimination against its own minorities. He did not fear communal riots and felt that estrangement would disappear after independence.<sup>22</sup> It was, however, the creation of the ‘moth-eaten Pakistan’ emerging from a partition of Punjab and Bengal that resulted in this unforeseen savagery and bloodshed.

In fact, Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah thought that relations between the two countries would be similar to the ones between the United States and Canada.<sup>23</sup> I remember Begum Ismat Iftikhar-ud-Din once narrated a story to me of Mohtarma Fatima

Jinnah, sister of the Quaid. After Partition, Fatima Jinnah had asked Begum Iftikhar-ud-Din to find a cook for them for their home in either Delhi (or Bombay). Since Mian and Begum Iftikhar-ud-Din were gracious hosts, and maintained a large staff, and their house at 21-Aikman Road had been a hub of pre- and post-Partition political activity, Mohtarma Fatima Jinnah presumed that Begum Iftikhar-ud-Din would be able to find a cook for them. Begum Iftikhar-ud-Din expressed her surprise at the request and queried why Fatima Jinnah was looking for a cook for their Delhi or Bombay homes. Miss Jinnah's response was that the Quaid and she were planning to spend a month every winter in India. Quaid had never envisaged the hostile nature of relations that were to emerge immediately after independence. He had hoped that the two countries would be friendly and expected a 'multi-religious Pakistan to be counterpoised against a predominantly Hindu India, with both possessing significant minorities', <sup>24</sup> whose presence would guarantee friendly relations between the two countries.

Hostilities and bloodshed were expected in Bengal and Punjab; therefore, Mr Jinnah was opposed to the partition of both provinces. 'When Hindu, Sikh, and Congress leaders proposed the partition of Bengal and Punjab, neither Jinnah nor the Punjab and Bengal Leaguers were pleased. In April 1947, Jinnah pleaded with Mountbatten not to play with the unity of Bengal and Punjab which have 'national characteristics in common: common history, common ways of life', and where 'the Hindus have stronger feelings as Bengalis or Punjabis than they have as members of the Congress'. <sup>25</sup> Much of the killing and bloodshed in Punjab and Bengal that ensued during and after Partition, which led to the ongoing hatred and mistrust between India and Pakistan, could have been averted had Jinnah's proposals been accepted.

Congress Party leaders such as Jawaharlal Nehru did not anticipate such bloodshed and hatred either. An account of a meeting addressed by Pandit Nehru at the residence of Bheem Sen Sachar, later Chief Minister of Indian Punjab and Governor of Orissa and Andhra Pradesh, in Lahore is revealing. Nehru did not fear that communal tensions would get completely out of control and was reported to have said so at a meeting in response to statements made by Hindu notables, that Hindus would find it difficult to stay in Lahore after Partition. He reportedly questioned the statement and had stated, '[After all] Hindus had lived under the Mughals in the past; they can do so now under the Muslim rulers of Pakistan.'<sup>26</sup> One of those present questioned Pandit Nehru's logic and said, 'Panditji, at that time, Hindus lived in an undivided India and the Mughals ruled in an undivided India. They could not have thrown out all Hindus from such a state. Now the situation is completely different. You are completely cutting off a part of India and giving it to Pakistan. Here, they want to establish an Islamic state, and not simply a Muslim kingdom. In such a state Hindus will never be safe and they will not be wanted. You should not have agreed to the division of India.' Panditji showed visible signs of irritation and replied, 'You people don't understand anything. You do not want the British to leave.'<sup>27</sup>

The princely states occupied a lot of cultural and strategic significance in British India. In the early days after Independence there was immense resentment at the popular level in Pakistan—that India had been grossly unfair to forcibly take over Hyderabad and Junagadh, the two princely states with Muslim rulers and a predominantly Hindu population, as well as Kashmir, with a Hindu ruler and a predominantly Muslim population.

Unfortunately, the exchange of populations and the spate of killings that followed was not the only legacy of Partition. The dispute over the princely states made it more difficult for the achievement of Jinnah's vision of peace and harmony between the two newly independent states. These princely states, which were about 565 in number, came under the direct sovereignty of the British Crown from 1612 to 1947.<sup>28</sup> When the British left India they allowed the princely states which were still at that time more or less autonomous, except in foreign policy and external defence, to choose between India and Pakistan. They were also advised to take geographical contiguity into consideration.

Junagadh was a small maritime princely state located on the southwestern end of Gujarat. The Nawab of Junagadh, Mohammad Mahabat Khanji III, chose to accede to Pakistan. India refused to accept the accession, claiming that the population was overwhelmingly Hindu, and forcefully occupied the state.<sup>29</sup> India also occupied the princely state of Hyderabad by resorting to 'police action'.<sup>30</sup>

The state of Jammu & Kashmir was also one of the princely states under dispute. 'The Kashmir region in its contemporary form dates from 1846, when, by the treaties of Lahore and Amritsar at the conclusion of the First Sikh War, Raja Gulab Singh, the Dogra ruler of Jammu, was appointed Maharaja, the ruling prince, of an extensive but somewhat ill-defined Himalayan kingdom "to the eastward of the River Indus and westward of the River Ravi".'<sup>31</sup> 'A combination of adept military conquests and astute financial deals enabled him to create one of the largest princely states in the subcontinent.'<sup>32</sup> In 1947, Maharaja Hari Singh was the ruler of Kashmir. The Maharaja had to make his choice, like all the other rulers of the princely states. He delayed signing the crucial Instrument of Accession, believing that by delaying his decision he could maintain the independence of Kashmir.<sup>33</sup> 'In the 1947 provisions it was possible for a state, which was either deliberating accession or acceding with certain issues unresolved to sign with one or both of the Dominions what was termed as "Standstill Agreement": this would permit the continuation of various essential services even if their constitutional basis was now uncertain.'<sup>34</sup>

Before Independence, the Northern Areas including inter alia Gilgit and Baltistan, were part of the princely state of Jammu & Kashmir. The region was of great strategic importance because of its contiguity to Central Asia and China. In 1947, the people of the area successfully rebelled against the Maharaja and 'supported full integration into Pakistan'.<sup>35</sup> Following rebellion within Kashmir and pressure exerted by India and Lord

Mountbatten, the Maharaja signed an Instrument of Accession to the Indian Union in October 1947.<sup>36</sup> That Instrument is still contested for its validity. India's forceful control of Junagadh, Hyderabad, and Kashmir became a major source of Pakistani grievances against New Delhi.<sup>37</sup>

The Kashmir dispute's intractable nature is linked primarily to the Hindu-Muslim paradigm, wherein 'India's secular credentials are at stake on one side and Pakistan's founding Two Nation principle on the other.'<sup>38</sup> However, 'Kashmir's fate was not decided on ideological grounds; it was an outcome of the political battle fought between the Indian National Congress (INC) and the Muslim League, with certain extraneous factors, such as the British Army commanders and the "raiders" attacks, playing an important role.'<sup>39</sup> This conflict has 'institutionalized in a microcosm' the historical problems between the two neighbours.<sup>40</sup> Communal conflict became international, and continues to remain so, resulting in ballooning military expenditure and the denial of social and economic development opportunities to millions in the region. Equally importantly, Jammu & Kashmir dispute concerns the aspirations of the people of Jammu & Kashmir.

## **TROUBLED RELATIONS WITH INDIA**

Over the years, Pakistan's foreign policy has been shaped by two constants: India and the West, in particular, the United States. The seeds of discord and distrust between India and Pakistan were sown as a result of the Kashmir war of 1947–48. Relations further soured when India withheld Pakistan's share of cash balances and assets as well as military supplies and equipment, and stopped the flow of waters in April 1948 from the two headworks under its control. Moreover, the devaluation of the Indian rupee in 1949, following devaluation of the British pound, and Pakistan's decision not to devalue its currency, led to Indo-Pak trade coming to a standstill. In 1950, the Korean War gave Pakistan an unexpected and welcome boost with the rise in the price of raw materials including cotton and jute produced and exported by Pakistan. However, this permanently affected the pattern of trade between the two neighbours. India took measures to become self-reliant in cotton and jute and stopped exporting to Pakistan the coal necessary for running its industry and its railways. Consequently, Pakistan's erstwhile insignificant trade with China started to increase: the export of cotton was diverted from India to China, and import of coal that was denied to Pakistan by India began to take place with China.

In order to fulfil its security needs and address the asymmetric imbalance with India, Pakistan was in need of a powerful friend and the choice at the time was between the USA and the USSR. Several people at the helm of affairs in Pakistan, including Foreign Minister Sir Muhammad Zafarullah Khan and Foreign Secretary Mohammad Ikramullah, were ideologically averse to Communism and disliked 'Godless Communists'. Therefore, Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan's visit to Washington in May 1950, despite an earlier invitation to visit Moscow, was largely driven, inter alia, by the ideological preferences of

Pakistan's policymakers. Moreover, Pakistan recognized and appreciated American support on the Kashmir issue in the early years as a significant gesture promoting Kashmir's cause.

Although India's Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru was a Fabian Socialist, he was also pro-West by upbringing, education, and connections. Thus, while advocating non-alignment, he also favoured remaining in the Commonwealth and sought friendly relations with the Western Bloc to procure defence technology and equipment. Nehru's attitude, however, began to change when the USSR emerged as a more reliable and cheaper source for military equipment. Moscow's attitude towards India also changed as Pakistan gravitated to the West. USSR's public support of India on the Kashmir issue during Prime Minister Nikita Khrushchev's visit to New Delhi in 1955 cemented India-Russia friendship.

## **ASSESSING LIAQUAT ALI KHAN'S WESTERN TILT**

In 1950, in the light of persistent threats of war from India, Liaquat Ali Khan sought a guarantee of Pakistan's territorial integrity from the USA and Britain. Although this Western tilt was challenged only by a small minority of 'leftists' and 'progressives' at the time, in later years, with the benefit of hindsight, it has increasingly been questioned.

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto echoed the sentiments of the majority in the following words:

[T]o be fair to all those who managed the nations' affairs at that time, the motive force was quest for security because Pakistan was threatened as early as two months after its establishment with the prospects of paralyzing the new born state. No wonder that the overriding consideration was the security of Pakistan and at that time United States not only promised a firmer military underpinning than could be obtained from any other quarter, but it also provided a large and generous economic assistance. <sup>41</sup>

Although Liaquat Ali Khan has increasingly been accused of having made the wrong choice by picking Washington over Moscow, it is unfair to judge his actions today with the advantage of hindsight. Rather, it would be more useful to describe the situation that existed at that time.

Liaquat Ali Khan could not have ignored the close ties between Nehru, and his pronouncedly Marxist advisor Krishna Menon, and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. In the light of Pakistan's dire need for external support, he may have concluded that, for strategic reasons and as a result of its economic strength, the US could be a more forthcoming and generous ally. Moreover, Muslims of that generation were very conscious of the repression that Muslims in Central Asia had suffered under Stalinist rule and of the waves of migration of the Central Asian Muslims to Northern India that started during the Czarist era, continued under Communist leadership, and reached their climax under Stalin. I remember my grandfather's blood-brother was married to one such refugee from Bokhara. As a child, I used to be quite impressed when told that she was the sister of the

Khan of Bokhara. The Muslims of my father's generation were troubled and upset by the stories of the atrocities brought by these émigrés and refugees. Liaquat Ali Khan could not have remained immune to this background.

There are other factors which would have, in any case, tilted the Pakistani establishment towards the West. The Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College, later Aligarh University, which produced the core leadership of the Pakistan Movement, was modelled on Oxbridge; Pakistan's civil and military bureaucracies were Westernized, and looked up to Oxbridge and Sandhurst for education and training. The leadership of the All-India Muslim League and later the Pakistan Muslim League, particularly in Punjab, was largely of a feudal background and their mental predilections were conservative, pro-West, and anti-Communist. Additionally, the upper- and the lower-middle classes in Pakistan became increasingly conservative during the Pakistan Movement and regarded Communism as a Godless ideology.

I was brought up in a household where endless debate raged between my father's leftist friends, who thought Liaquat Ali Khan should have first gone to Moscow, and the more conservative ones, who approved of his choice of going to Washington. This choice has had far-reaching consequences for Pakistan, both positive and negative. On the positive side, Pakistan was able to develop its physical and industrial infrastructure and modernize and strengthen its armed forces against threats of Indian aggression, which greatly concerned Pakistan's founding fathers. Furthermore, Pakistan received technical assistance from the US under the 'Atoms for Peace' Programme, and the first nuclear reactors for peaceful purposes were built in Pakistan and Iran by the US.

## **PAKISTAN-US ALLIANCE: AN INTRICATE BALANCING ACT**

Owing to its security concerns, Pakistan has had to contend with a series of trilateral relationships prompting intricate balancing acts and diplomatic manoeuvring by the countries involved to safeguard their respective national interests. Pakistan has had to leverage its strategic position in the face of security concerns posed by a much larger and stronger India; some of these relationships such as Pakistan-US-India, Pakistan-Afghanistan-India, Pakistan-China-India, and even Pakistan-US-Afghanistan involve efforts by Pakistan to strengthen its security and avoid encirclement.

To redress its defence vulnerabilities and cope with India militarily, Pakistan sought and obtained military and economic assistance from the US in return for membership in a Western alliance system in 1954–55. In September 1954, Pakistan joined the Cold War collective defence treaty, the South East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), comprising Pakistan, Thailand, the Philippines, the USA, the UK, France, Australia, and New Zealand. It signed a Proclamation of General Principles entitled the 'Pacific Charter'. Significantly, following India's lead, Sri Lanka and Burma refused to attend the conference. Indonesia under Sukarno did not attend either. After some hesitation, Pakistan

sent Foreign Minister Zafarullah Khan, who signed the Pact upon persuasion by the American Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, and wrote at the top of the treaty document: 'Signed for transmission to my government for its consideration and action in accordance with the constitution of Pakistan.'<sup>42</sup> It is noteworthy that these words do not appear on the published version of the treaty. Whereas Pakistan was pleased to have been invited, it harboured doubts about SEATO's usefulness in case of Indian aggression since the US maintained that treaty obligations were only applicable in the event of Communist aggression. On his return, Zafarullah Khan was criticized in the Cabinet for exceeding his mandate in signing the treaty without proper authorization. He offered to resign. The Cabinet, however, reviewed its position and, following Dulles's oral assurance that the US would not remain 'disinterested or inactive in the event of a non-communist aggression against Pakistan',<sup>43</sup> the treaty was ratified after hesitating for four months. In 1955, Pakistan also became a member of the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO), another US-backed Cold War alliance against Communism comprising Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Turkey, and the UK.

During a visit to the US in July 1957, Prime Minister Suhrawardy informed President Eisenhower of Pakistan's agreement to the establishment of a secret intelligence base at Badaber for use by US aircraft. Ayub Khan, who was the Defence Minister at the time, reportedly made this decision based on his assessment of Pakistan's security imperatives and the need to obtain US military and economic assistance, including B-57 bombers. The base was used for aerial reconnaissance over the Soviet Union and enjoyed extra-territorial rights that exempted it from the jurisdiction of local laws; it was operated by 1,200 American military and technical personnel from the United States and no Pakistani was allowed access to it. Moscow was outraged when, in May 1960, the USSR shot down a high-altitude American U-2 spy plane, which had taken off from Badaber, and arrested its pilot Francis Gary Powers. Pakistan was warned 'not to play with fire',<sup>44</sup> but Ayub Khan ignored the Russian warning and the agreement naturally lapsed in 1968.

In return for becoming a part of the Western alliance system, the US provided military equipment and training to Pakistan's Armed Forces. In 1959, the two countries signed a bilateral Defence Cooperation Agreement whose Article (i) stated that the 'US regarded as vital to its interests and to world peace the preservation of the independence and territorial integrity of Pakistan. In case of aggression against Pakistan, the US would take appropriate action including the use of force as may be mutually agreed.'<sup>45</sup> This agreement was supplemented by a formal note by the American Ambassador to Pakistan's Foreign Minister, Manzoor Qadir, which stated that the 'US would promptly and effectively come to the assistance of Pakistan if it were subjected to armed aggression.'

Although Pakistan considered this agreement as a sheet anchor of its foreign policy, the US did little for Pakistan either in the 1965 or in the 1971 wars.<sup>46</sup> Given the importance of India to the US, it did not pay much heed to Pakistan's efforts to enlist the support of

CENTO against India. In response to Pakistan's complaints, the Johnson Administration privately conveyed that, notwithstanding Dulles's verbal assurances in 1955, in its view, the assistance to Pakistan was only meant to thwart a Communist attack. The UK also stressed the point that CENTO and other defence alliances could not be employed against a Commonwealth partner. American neutrality and unfulfilled expectations during these two wars created a feeling of betrayal and a sense of unreliability regarding American support in the minds of most Pakistanis.

Pakistan had to pay a heavy political price for leaning towards the West. Many in the Muslim world alleged that Pakistan was a party to Western moves to divide Arab solidarity; its relations with India and Afghanistan deteriorated further. Gradually, Pakistan came to be perceived as escaping its geography by seeking close relations with the US which was thousands of miles away, and was urged to pay greater attention to improving relations with China, Russia, and the Muslim world generally. Pakistan's estrangement with the Muslim world and sentiment peaked during the Suez Crisis in 1955 when Pakistan's Prime Minister Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy (1956–1957) disregarded popular sentiment in Pakistan against the Anglo-French invasion of the Suez Canal and disparaged broad Muslim support for President Gamal Abdel Nasser (1956–1970) as 'zero plus zero plus zero is after all equal to zero'. Increasingly, India started to criticize Pak-US alliance by terming it as an 'intervention' in Indo-Pak affairs.<sup>47</sup> Pakistan however, at least until 1962, continued to view this alliance not as a bulwark against Communism but primarily as a means to bolster itself against India.

## INDIA AND AFGHANISTAN

When Pakistan was admitted as a member of the United Nations, Afghanistan cast the only negative vote and, although Kabul changed its mind after a few weeks, its stance on the border has remained ambiguous over the years. Another dilemma faced by Pakistan in its early years was the Afghan government's decision to question the validity of the Durand Line boundary with Pakistan. According to the perception in Pakistan, Afghanistan's decision-makers were led astray by leaders of the Indian National Congress (INC) who believed that it was not economically viable for Pakistan to survive for long. Many in Pakistan believed that India wanted to use Afghanistan to ensure Pakistan's early demise since Pakistan was 'born' out of the 'womb' of India, and it was only a matter of time before it was reunited with 'Mother India'. To this day a section of Pakistanis continue to harbour this belief.

Afghanistan thus launched a territorial claim in the guise of 'Pashtunistan' against Pakistan and subsequently used Soviet support to advance this claim. During a visit to Kabul in 1955, Soviet Prime Minister Nikita Khrushchev announced support for 'Pashtunistan',<sup>48</sup> while extending credit and assistance to the Afghan government.

According to the Afghans, the Durand Line is a result of an unequal treaty accepted by them under duress. Drawn in 1893 by the British, it cuts through the Pashtun tribes and, to a lesser degree, the Baloch tribes. The Durand Line has been a source of periodic friction between Pakistan and Afghanistan. As a successor state inheriting treaty obligations from British India, Pakistan however regards the Durand Line as a recognized international border and naturally rejects Afghanistan's claims.

In the eyes of many in Pakistan and even elsewhere, India's Afghan policy has been Pakistan-centric and is aimed at keeping Pakistan engaged on both fronts by exploiting differences between Afghanistan and Pakistan. In this context, although India is traditionally not a donor country, it has provided economic assistance to Afghanistan over the years, maintained a proactive diplomatic presence in Kabul, and tried to forge close diplomatic and political ties through regular high-level visits. Although Afghanistan did not support India against China or Pakistan during the 1962 Sino-Indian war and the 1965 Indo-Pak war, India continued its policy of political engagement and economic cooperation with Afghanistan. Interestingly, during one of my visits to Kabul, the late Afghan King Zahir Shah took pains to emphasize that Afghanistan never exploited Pakistan's difficulties and that it faced no problems from Afghanistan during the 1965 and 1971 wars.

During the peak years of the Pak-US alliance (between 1954 and 1962), the Soviet Union, and initially even China, expressed displeasure at Pakistan's policies. However, the Prime Ministers of Pakistan and China had exchanged cordial visits and, in 1956, noting that there was no conflict of interest between the two countries, and despite Pakistan's membership of SEATO, felt there was no reason why China and Pakistan could not be friends. Moreover, in 1961, Pakistan accepted credit from the USSR for oil exploration. In this regard, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto who was then Pakistan's Minister for Natural Resources had to overcome powerful lobbies.<sup>49</sup> He visited Moscow to conduct negotiations with the Soviet Union for an agreement which led to some thaw in relations between the two countries.

## **WARMING OF RELATIONS WITH CHINA: 1963–1971**

In the early 1960s, the Kennedy Administration felt that Communism could best be contained by forging closer relationships with developing world countries possessing strong economies. Even attitudes towards non-alignment shifted and it began to be seen more favourably. Pakistan was alarmed at American support for India during the Sino-Indian conflict, when Nehru declared that a settlement with Pakistan would not be possible while the war with China continued.<sup>50</sup> In this altered context, the US began to see the Jammu & Kashmir issue in a different light, and support for the UN Security Council Resolutions faded into the background as Washington now considered the Kashmir issue an obstacle in realizing its plans to encircle China.<sup>51</sup>

Various developments in the backdrop of the Sino-Indian conflict, in particular the successful Boundary Agreement talks between China and Pakistan in 1963, began affecting Pakistan's perspective towards its alliance with the US. On the other hand, Pakistan found China's attitude cooperative. The inconclusive Bhutto-Swaran Singh talks on Kashmir were aggravated by Washington's increasing tilt towards India, particularly during the Johnson Administration. It took a tough stance on the part of Pakistan to develop close relations with China, which led to a painful reappraisal of Pakistan's foreign relations in Islamabad. Senior diplomats at the Foreign Office felt that the speed with which the US rushed to India's support and the assistance it provided after the Sino-Indian border war in 1962 led to American apathy during the 1965 and 1971 Indo-Pak wars. It was Pakistan's experience of American fickle-minded friendship during the 1965 war that forced it to reappraise its relations with the United States and begin forging relations with other major powers, particularly China.

The depth of Sino-Pak relationship is reflected in the fact that even at the height of China's Cultural Revolution and its relative isolation in the 1960s and early 1970s, when it withdrew its ambassadors from several countries, the two countries still maintained diplomatic relations. From the very beginning, it was clear that the leadership of the two countries had a long-term vision regarding the relationship. During my tenure at the Foreign Office, it was widely believed that China never made false promises and always delivered on its commitments.

Although Nehru was one of the top leaders of the Non-Aligned Movement and Pakistan was a member of the Western alliance system, it is significant that China took care not to make any partisan statements on India-Pakistan relations. Even at a time when the slogan '*Hindu Chini Bhai Bhai*' (Indians and Chinese are brothers) was very popular in India, Chinese Premier Zhou En-lai was careful not to criticize Pakistan during his official visit to India in 1954. Thus, clearly even then the Chinese leadership did not try to improve relations with India at the cost of Pakistan.<sup>52</sup> There was understanding from the Chinese side even when Pakistan joined SEATO. China instinctively understood that joining of Western security alliances by Pakistan was not aimed against China but was an attempt by Pakistan to redress the asymmetric balance of power with India. This was in stark contrast to the Soviet Union's highly critical stance towards Pakistan's membership of different Western security pacts.

Initially, China was reluctant to discuss the issue of a boundary settlement with Pakistan because it felt it might get it involved in another argument with India.<sup>53</sup> However, President Ayub insisted. China was convinced of Pakistan's intentions in this regard and, once convinced, showed a generosity of spirit on issues which could have gone either way, for example, the ease with which the question of grazing grounds, which covers several miles on the other side of the Shamshal Pass in the Hunza Valley, was settled once

Pakistan was able to prove that this area had been traditionally used for grazing by people on its side. In Ayub Khan's words,

This agreement on border demarcation was the first step in the evolution of relations between Pakistan and China. Its sole purpose was to eliminate a possible cause of conflict in the future. But as a result of this agreement the Chinese began to have trust in us, and we also felt that if one was frank and straightforward one could do honest business with them.<sup>54</sup>

The border agreement with China was subsequently signed by Foreign Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in March 1963 from the Pakistani side. Subsequent progress in relations followed in quick order, including the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) becoming the first foreign airline to land in Shanghai on 2 April 1964, and the building of the Heavy Mechanical Complex, Heavy Forge and Foundry Factory, and the Karakoram Highway.

In 1971, Pakistan became the bridge for normalization of relations between Beijing and Washington. As a result, Henry Kissinger's visit to Beijing via Islamabad in July 1971, and the subsequent invitation to US President Nixon to visit China next year, altered the global balance of power. India raised the bogey of a Pakistan-US-China axis and effectively abandoned its policy of non-alignment. The Indian decision to sign a Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation with the USSR in August 1971 was principally a response to the shift in the global balance of power and the regional fallout in the wake of Kissinger's trip to China.<sup>55</sup> This treaty encouraged India in its aggressive moves in East Pakistan that ultimately led to the break-up of united Pakistan. Relations with China have been discussed in greater detail elsewhere in the book.

## **VIGOUR AND NEW VISION IN FOREIGN POLICY: 1972–1977**

Pakistan's badly shattered confidence following the events of 1971 was revived during 1972–77 as a result of astute diplomacy under Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's leadership, which shaped a new self-image for Pakistan. Although politically, Bhutto was a controversial figure, it is undeniable that he imparted vigour and new vision to Pakistan's foreign policy.

One of Bhutto's early priorities was to restore relations with India and secure release of the Prisoners of War (POW). Thus, under the Simla Agreement of 1972, Indian and Pakistani forces were withdrawn to their sides of the international border.

Traumatized by the experience of 1971, Pakistan's quest for greater security began. In foreign relations, it manifested itself through a desire for a more independent course of; in defence, it was manifested by Pakistan's desire for developing a nuclear capability, which began in earnest after India's first nuclear test explosion in 1974. Bhutto had already stated in 1965 that 'if India makes an atomic bomb, then we will also do so, even if we have to eat grass, an atomic bomb can only be answered by an atomic bomb.' However, the decision to pursue the path of acquisition of nuclear fuel cycle capability was taken in

1972 after Bhutto became President and India's 1974 test compelled Pakistan to embark upon restoring strategic balance with India by developing nuclear capability. Diplomatically, Pakistan proposed a resolution in the UN General Assembly for the establishment of a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in South Asia; in this manner, it acquired a certain degree of moral high ground which helped it in shaping its self-image and facing India on a more equal footing.

When elections for non-permanent members of the UN Security Council were held for 1976–77, India had already declared its intention to contest and obtained a formal endorsement of its candidature from the Arab League. Nevertheless, Pakistan threw its hat in the ring. At the time, India was also seeking an endorsement from a summit meeting of the members of the Non-Aligned Movement in Lima. Although Pakistan was not a member of the Non-Aligned Movement, it was able to block India's endorsement through its lobbying outside the conference. What followed was a difficult election involving intense lobbying by the two sides and the General Assembly holding several ballots between India and Pakistan to choose a non-permanent member of the Security Council with a two-thirds majority. Eventually, India withdrew in the face of Pakistan's continuing lead in many ballots.<sup>56</sup> This was a welcome triumph and boost for Pakistan's diplomacy; the country had come a long way since 1971.

## **THE 1974 ISLAMIC SUMMIT IN LAHORE**

Among the main thrust of Bhutto's foreign policy was the focus on Pakistan's position as a leading member of the Muslim world and a leading Third World country. He knew that, apart from strengthening Pakistan's relations with some of the OPEC countries that had recently acquired great influence following the rise in the price of oil, the move to host the Islamic Summit in Lahore would be hugely popular with the people of Pakistan and particularly those of the Punjab who had long been imbued by feelings of pan-Islamism espoused by Jamal ud Din al-Afghani, Allama Iqbal, and Maulana Mohammad Ali Jauhar. Bhutto was dead right as there was immense enthusiasm among the people and his choice of Lahore as venue for the Summit reinforced the city's status as the centre of pan-Islamic sentiment in undivided India. Although the Lahore Summit was the second such event after the Rabat Conference (1974), which had been called specifically to deal with the aftermath of the fire at the Al-Aqsa Mosque that was set ablaze in Jerusalem, and the issue of Palestine, the Summit had a broader agenda and was the focus of the Islamic world and even beyond.

Pakistanis were delighted to see in their midst so many important and almost legendary leaders from the Muslim world, including Saudi Arabia's King Faisal, Egypt's President Anwar al-Saadat, Syria's President Hafez al-Assad, Libya's Leader Muammar Gaddafi, and PLO's Chief Yasser Arafat. Moreover, Bangladesh's (former East Pakistan) President Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's presence at the Summit also provided an opportunity for Bhutto

to restore goodwill between the two men and use it as a catalyst to normalize relations with Bangladesh. This meeting created the right atmosphere for a resolution of the thorny and highly emotional issue of the trial of Pakistan's 195 senior military personnel whom Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had threatened to try as war criminals.

The Lahore Summit placed its emphasis on a number of issues including the problem of Palestine, the desire of Muslim leaders to reclaim Jerusalem and enhanced economic cooperation among Muslim countries. A cardinal principle of Pakistan's foreign policy in those days which has since remained by and large unchanged was its strict impartiality in all inter-Arab disputes which further strengthened its relations with the Muslim world. Pakistan signed defence cooperation protocols with several Muslim countries including the Gulf States where Pakistan took the lead in training their armed forces. The Summit conveyed a powerful message that the Muslim world could not be taken for granted and its success encouraged Bhutto to plan on convening the Third World Summit with a focus on a new international order based on justice and equity in international relations.

Pakistan's active role in the 1974 UN special session on a new international economic order and in the North-South Dialogue in Paris between a select number of countries reflected Pakistan's proactive diplomacy and its growing profile on the international scene. As a result, issues central to the developing world took precedence in foreign affairs and, in 1976, Bhutto stated that the guiding principle of his policy was development of relations with each of the great powers on a bilateral basis. This implied neutrality in the Cold War, while aiming at a balanced and proactive engagement with all the major powers, including the USA, the Soviet Union, and China.

Bhutto wanted the Muslim world to use its clout and acquire greater influence in international relations. He also saw himself as a spokesman of the Third World and he aimed at moving Pakistan away from dependence on America for its security. Bhutto's efforts to transform the regional environment and seek a different relationship with the United States, than was cultivated previously, were eventually absorbed by Pakistan's Foreign Service and the Army, once the most pro-American institutions in the country. In this, an eminent scholar sees the roots of the present-day anti-US sentiment in Pakistan.<sup>57</sup>

## **REVIVAL OF PAKISTAN-US ALLIANCE OVER AFGHANISTAN: REPERCUSSIONS**

Pakistan faced international isolation following the overthrow and hanging of Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in 1979. There had been appeals for clemency from all over the world including US President Jimmy Carter. During his visit to India in 1977, President Carter flew over Pakistan to go to Iran. By not stopping over in Pakistan, he gave a clear message, that the US perceived the coup against Bhutto as a setback to democracy. Later, in April 1979, Washington cut off assistance to Pakistan for developing its nuclear enrichment programme under the Symington Amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 because of the renewed emphasis by the Carter Administration on

a non-proliferation policy. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979, however, changed everything. Friendly relations between the Pakistan Army, Pentagon, Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), and the CIA were once again renewed. Suddenly, General Zia ul-Haq became a darling of the West by proudly proclaiming that Pakistan was the frontline state in the war to reverse the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was unpopular in Pakistan, where there was a lot of sympathy for the Afghans. The governing classes feared the Soviet Union's historical desire to reach the warm waters of the Arabian Sea. However, the manner of Pakistan's response served the fleeting interests of the Zia regime and not the long-term interests of Pakistan. The prevailing extremism and violence plaguing Pakistan are a direct result of Zia's policies.

Zia ul-Haq exploited the Soviet intervention to promote his own brand of Islamization by inviting militant fighters from all over the world to Pakistan and then allowing them to stay in Pakistan after the Soviet withdrawal, setting up madrasahs as training grounds, not only for Afghan but also Pakistani jihadis. Afghan refugees were free to roam all over Pakistan. Many of them were granted Pakistani citizenship. Most important, Zia turned a blind eye to Mujahideen activities, such as the sale of arms in Pakistan's market and drug trafficking to finance their jihad.<sup>58</sup> By remaining unnecessarily involved in Afghanistan after the completion of the Soviet withdrawal and subsequently jumping onto the bandwagon of the Taliban, Pakistan lost the opportunity to provide important alternative routes for Central Asian trade and supply of fossil fuel to South Asia and the rest of the world.<sup>59</sup>

Since its involvement in Afghanistan under Zia, Pakistan has drifted away from its founding father Muhammad Ali Jinnah's vision of an inclusive and tolerant state. The extremism spawned by Zia's policies has resulted in the persecution of minorities and exacerbated sectarian tensions among Muslims. Several attacks on mosques and *imambargahs* (congregation hall for Shia commemoration ceremonies), the escalating violence in Karachi, and targeting of the Hazara Shia minority in Balochistan are directly linked to Pakistan's involvement in Afghanistan. The growing violence and instability in Pakistan has negatively impacted its economy. Investors are discouraged, and Pakistan has acquired a bad name all over the world.

Coupled with the United States' rapid departure from the region following the Geneva Accords, 1988, the US imposed sanctions against Pakistan's nuclear programme in early 1990s, leaving Pakistan with the daunting task of dealing with millions of Afghan refugees and thousands of Muslim militants trained by the CIA and ISI to force Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. This cold shoulder by the US, after using Pakistan for its strategic goals in Afghanistan and then sanctioning it because of a nuclear programme it had conveniently forgotten in the 1980s, provided another cause of heartache and tension in Pak-US relations.

## **T**HE **1990**s: **A** **D**ECADE OF **M**ISSED **O**PPORTUNITIES

The 1988–99 civilian governments led by Prime Ministers Benazir Bhutto and Mian Nawaz Sharif failed to command a grip over the country's foreign policy. In this period, polarization between the two main political parties, poor governance, rising corruption and the resulting instability of the civilian governments shifted focus away from critical foreign policy issues. Consequently, the establishment's grip on issues relating to India, Afghanistan, and the USA strengthened as Pakistan increasingly came in the eye of the storm, particularly after the Kargil episode.

The 1990s was a decade of strained relations between Presidents, Prime Ministers, and Chiefs of the Army Staff, with the ISI showing an increasing Islamist tilt.<sup>60</sup> During this period, there was renewed focus on terrorism and there were fears that Pakistan might be declared a terrorist state by Washington which took a negative view of Pakistan's support for the Kashmiri militants. The Pakistan-US relationship also suffered because of Pakistan's determination to proceed with its nuclear programme despite the Clinton Administration's concerns over it.<sup>61</sup>

## **T**HE **F**ALLOUT OF **N**UCLEAR **T**ESTS BY **I**NDIA AND **P**AKISTAN

India's decision to conduct five nuclear tests in May 1998 drastically altered the strategic balance in South Asia. The hostile statements made by BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) leaders following these tests reflected the Indian mood and convinced Pakistan that the tests were an attempt at establishing India's hegemony in the region. There was thus near unanimity in Pakistan that it ought to respond, which it did by conducting six nuclear tests in late May 1998 and thus restoring regional strategic balance. Pakistan resisted immense international pressure not to respond to India's tests; it paid a heavy economic price as a result of the sanctions that followed.

Just a few days after Pakistan's tests, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1172 criticizing both countries for conducting nuclear tests and urging them to defuse tensions in the region by finding 'solutions that address the root causes of these tensions including Kashmir'. Pakistan was satisfied that after a long time the UNSC had again referred to Kashmir as a root cause of tension between the two nuclear neighbours. In order to meet the expectations of the international community, Pakistan announced a moratorium on further tests and participated in the negotiations for a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT).

Western paranoia regarding the Muslim world was at its pinnacle following Iran's Islamic Revolution and Pakistan was slapped with US sanctions on more than one occasion because of its nuclear ambitions. In fact, the US had gone so far in its opposition of Pakistan's nuclear programme that it compelled France to cancel an agreement with Pakistan for the sale of a reprocessing plant. Therefore, it was no surprise that Pakistan's

nuclear tests attracted greater attention and were subjected to far more fierce criticism in the West than India's tests. On the other hand, there was general satisfaction and even jubilation in the Muslim World that a Muslim country had at long last become a nuclear power. Therefore, it is not surprising that some, particularly in the West, refer to Pakistan's bomb as the 'Islamic Bomb', an appellation that in turn has been a cause of added scrutiny and censure of Pakistan's nuclear programme.

Following South Asia's nuclearization, several events such as the Kargil war, attack on Indian parliament in 2001, and the mobilization of nearly a million troops on both sides of the border with threat of a possible nuclear exchange, focused world attention on this region and raised several questions and issues in the minds of policymakers worldwide.

Unfortunately, the A. Q. Khan affair provided an opportunity to traditional opponents of Pakistan's nuclear programme to raise questions about the security of its arsenal. Both the A. Q. Khan affair and the measures adopted by Pakistan for the safety, safeguard, and security of its nuclear assets are described elsewhere in the book.

In violation of the principles of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and despite major criticism from the non-proliferation lobby, the US entered into an agreement with India on peaceful uses of nuclear energy and later had it ratified by the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG). Naturally, Pakistan protested even if it has been able to continue its own programme for peaceful uses of nuclear energy as a result of certain agreements with China.

Pakistan responded to these developments by objecting to certain details during FMCT negotiations. India and Pakistan are both upgrading their nuclear inventory, developing new types of nuclear-capable ballistic and cruise missiles, and increasing their fissile material production capabilities. Accordingly, NSG must establish fair and non-discriminatory criteria for legitimate nuclear trade to meaningfully achieve non-proliferation objectives.

## **PAKISTAN'S TROUBLED RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION/RUSSIA**

The legacy of Pakistan's Cold War alliances and its crucial role in the defeat of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, which ultimately led to its break-up, continue to cast a shadow over Pak-Russia relations.

There was a new phase of relations in the early 2000s marked by high-level visits and cooperation on counterterrorism. Pakistan's objectives of promoting relations with Russia and forging cooperation in various fields have remained unrealized. Opportunities for cooperation between the two countries exist in such sectors as oil and gas, expansion in the steel mills capacity, satellite technology, and even in the defence sector, but have not been concretized, while bilateral trade has also not realized its potential. High-level visits between the two countries have taken place including that of the Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov in April 2007, when Pervez Musharraf was President of Pakistan.

Pakistan recognizes Russia's role and influence in maintaining international peace and security, as a permanent member of the UN Security Council and as an important player in the end-game in Afghanistan. Relations with Russia have been dealt with in detail in a separate section.

## THE 9/11 AND ITS AFTERMATH

The attack in the United States on 11 September 2001 (now referred simply as 9/11), transformed the world and has been befittingly described as 'a crack in time'.<sup>62</sup> The twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York were destroyed when commercial aeroplanes were deliberately crashed into them; simultaneous attacks were carried out in Washington DC. These crashing of aeroplanes on US power symbols resulting in several deaths shocked the world. The US put the blame of these attacks on Al-Qaeda led by its leader Osama bin Laden. Subsequently, the US declared war on Afghanistan.

Although some critics might disagree with President Pervez Musharraf's account of Pakistan's response to 9/11 as self-serving, his policies were widely supported by the politicians and the media at the time.<sup>63</sup> Over time, the enormous price paid by Pakistan in terms of its polity, economy, and stability, continues to mount.

To understand the situation from the perspective of those making immediate decisions, it is worth quoting the then Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar, one of Pakistan's most seasoned diplomats, at some length:

[O]ver a period of about two weeks, the president held lengthy and interactive discussions with dozens of groups of prominent people from various walks of national life, including leaders of political parties, the intelligentsia, media luminaries, *ulema* (religious scholars) and *mashaikh* (religious advisors), influential persons from areas adjoining Afghanistan, labour leaders, women, youth and minorities. He gave them a candid analysis of the costs and benefits of the policy options. Their response was reassuring. They were realistic in their assessment of gravity of the situation and the need for circumspection. Most, some 90 per cent, agreed with the President's conclusion.<sup>64</sup>

He adds that the foresightedness of Pakistan's analysis and Musharraf's decision to cooperate with the US was soon borne out by events as the world rallied in US's favour. A day after the terrorist attacks, the UN General Assembly and Security Council adopted unanimous Resolutions condemning the attacks, sympathizing with the US, and calling for bringing the perpetrators to justice. NATO invoked the treaty provision for joint defence; Turkey and the states of Central and South Asia, including India, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka, as well as several Arab countries, offered logistical support and facilities. In a restricted meeting chaired by President George Bush on 11 September, US Secretary of State Colin Powell said that the US had to make it clear to Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Arab States that the time to act was now.<sup>65</sup>

After attacking Afghanistan, when the US went on to attack Iraq it started to lose support and sympathy. Its policies began to be questioned both at home and abroad, and it is now

generally recognized that the American response to 9/11 badly hurt its economy and diminished its global influence.

Pashtuns have been the dominant ethnic group in Afghanistan ever since the inception of the Afghan State. There are however more Pashtuns in Pakistan than in Afghanistan and there is sympathy among the Pakistani Pashtuns for their brethren across the border. This is particularly true of those living in the tribal belt. The suffering of Pashtuns in Afghanistan following the American invasion generated sympathy for them, not just among the Pakistani Pashtuns, but generally among Pakistanis, who started viewing US policies in a negative light. Additionally, Pakistan had to host 4.5 million Afghan refugees following the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan, the civil war following Soviet withdrawal, and finally following the US bombing and invasion of Afghanistan, which created massive security problems for Pakistan. Naturally, therefore, Pakistan government's support to the US-led 'War on Terror' became increasingly unpopular domestically and even its security forces became targets of those who regarded government policies as servile to American interests.

Pakistan has paid a heavy price for supporting the US since 9/11. It has suffered 40,000 casualties in terrorist attacks on its civilians and security forces by those opposed to the government's support of the 'War on Terror'. Its economy has been severely debilitated because of violence and instability. Its social fabric has been negatively impacted. Its population has been radicalized. The high collateral damage in Pakistan's Tribal Areas related to US drone strikes, supposedly targeting safe havens of Al-Qaeda and Taliban militants, has led to sustained and widespread criticism of the United States' drone policy by a large majority of Pakistanis, who blame their own government of complicity in light of Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gillani's remark: 'I don't care if they do it as long as they get the right people. We'll protest in the National Assembly and then ignore it.'<sup>66</sup> There is a general perception in Pakistan that the US military strategy in Afghanistan is counterproductive and has failed to create appropriate conditions for a negotiated political solution to the conflict. Since Pakistan's governments were largely seen as acquiescent to US policies in the region, its stock with its own people continued to plummet.

Pakistanis are particularly upset and hurt that, instead of appreciating their sacrifices in terms of blood and treasure, the US views Pakistan as a suspect partner in counterterrorism, and routinely accuses it of duplicity and short-sightedness. Consequently, Pakistanis have started regarding the US as an unreliable partner and a fair-weather friend. There is an obvious need to bridge this trust deficit as a lot is at stake for both Pakistan and the US. However, even if the Pakistan Government wished to cooperate with the US, it would be able to do only as far as domestic public opinion would permit. The blocking of NATO ground supply routes in November 2011 for over six months is the most glaring reminder of this. While there is convergence of interests with respect to a peaceful and stable Afghanistan, there is a need for them to bring harmony in their

approaches on how to achieve this shared objective. What is required is a candid and sustained dialogue between the two countries to reduce their divergences and increase areas of convergence.

During 2002–07, Pakistan tried to build a more stable, broad-based and a sustainable relationship with the US. However, suspicion and distrust could not be removed because of negative perceptions in Pakistan of the manner in which the US was conducting its ‘War on Terror’ and its blowback on Pakistan. The US continued to accuse Pakistan of ‘running with the hare and hunting with the hound’ by not giving up its policy of support to the Afghan Taliban. The situation was further complicated by the US-India civil-nuclear agreement, which was viewed negatively by Pakistanis and left all of us at the Foreign Office and in the government deeply disappointed.

Pakistan and India were on the verge of resolving some outstanding disputes, including Kashmir, before these efforts were stalled by the judicial crisis in Pakistan. I believe that, were we to succeed there could well have been a paradigm change in the manner in which the two countries view each other and the world outside. An improvement in Pakistan-India relations will help create more stable conditions in Afghanistan by allaying Pakistan’s suspicions about India’s intentions in Afghanistan.

In the final analysis, Pakistan’s troubled relations with India have had a major impact on its relationships with USA, China, Russia, and Afghanistan. The nuclear parity in South Asia has prevented wars and provided a prolonged period of relative peace. However, since we live in an age of regional economic cooperation and global interdependence, my experience confirms my belief that Pakistan’s interests are best served by promoting regional peace, security, and development.

Another major determinant of Indo-Pak relations is the memory of the wars that the two countries have fought. These wars were responsible for further solidifying the animosity of Partition, and creating a particular psyche and mindset towards the other. This bred ill-will and exacerbated feelings of mutual mistrust. The most important ones to be mentioned in this connection include the Kashmir War fought between 1947 and 1948. Then there was the tank battle in the Rann of Kutch, where Pakistan had the upper hand and as a result some Indian POWs were captured. This however enraged the Indian Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri to the point that he stated that India would respond appropriately and choose the time for action against Pakistan. The 1965 War was fought for seventeen days between the two countries and brought to an end on 23 September 1965 by the intervention of the great powers that feared being dragged into it. The ceasefire was sealed by the Tashkent Declaration, signed between President Ayub Khan and Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri on 10 January 1966 under the auspices of Soviet Prime Minister Alexei Kosygin. Unfortunately, Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri died the very next day. Even his death was politicized in Pakistan and interpreted differently by those in favour of Ayub Khan and those opposed to him. At the popular level it was

believed in Pakistan that it had the upper hand, and this was particularly true of the performance of the Pakistan Air Force, leading to the emergence of two new national heroes on the Pakistani horizon: Air Marshal Asghar Khan and Air Marshal Nur Khan. The 1965 War gave rise to a lot of popular folklore and many *Quami Taranas* (patriotic songs and martial music).

The 1971 War, when India took full advantage of the political differences between the two wings (East Pakistan and West Pakistan) of the country following the 1970 elections, led to the break-up of Pakistan. The almost 1,500 miles distance between East and West Pakistan, with Indian mainland adjacent to both wings was also to the benefit of India. India was in a position because of its contiguity to East Pakistan to provide effective help to the Mukti Bahini fighting for the separation of East Pakistan. India's intervention in the 1971 War convinced not just the Pakistan Army but also a large number of Pakistani populace that India was a mortal enemy of Pakistan. India on the other hand justified its intervention because of the pressure of refugees seeking asylum in India.

Additionally, there has been a period of almost perpetual tension and incidents that can be described as near-war crises. The most important crises include: 'Operation Brass Tacks' (1986–1987); the (next) major build-up following massive disturbances in Indian Administered Kashmir (IAK) in 1990, followed by the Kargil War fought between the two countries in the summer of 1999; and the most recent one was the 2001–02 Indian troop mobilization on Pakistan's borders following the attack on the Lok Sabha (Indian Parliament) in Delhi. Almost a million soldiers from both countries stood eyeball to eyeball for about a year. All these wars and near-war situations have been described in detail in the chapter on the Pakistan Army.

## **SECTION II**

### **ASSUMING OFFICE: SOME BACKGROUND**

At the time of assuming office as Pakistan's Foreign Minister, I had strongly felt that there needs to be some connection between foreign policy objectives and ground realities. I also realized that unless Pakistan and India resolved their differences on the basis of a just peace, both countries had developed major fault-lines which could be exploited by the other. I felt that Pakistan-India relations had a strong bearing on the status of Indian Muslims. I strongly believed that Pakistan had been unable to leverage its strategic importance and consequently failed to realize its actual potential. Thus, I had compelling reasons to opt for the portfolio of Foreign Minister despite being asked to provide three options of preferred portfolios. I refused to do that and indicated that I was only interested in the Foreign Office portfolio.

### **Guiding Principles**

To define my approach towards Pakistan's foreign policy, I would like to refer to Henry Kissinger, for whom a realist does not reject the importance of ideals or values, but insists on a careful, even unsentimental, weighing of the balance of material forces, together with an understanding of the history, culture, and economics of the societies comprising the international system. Realists judge policy by the ability to persevere in the pursuit of an objective in stages, each of which are imperfect by absolute standards, but would not be attempted in the absence of absolute values. Above all, realists seek equilibrium in international relations.<sup>67</sup>

The purpose of a foreign policy is not to provide an outlet for sentiments of hope or indignation, but to shape real events in a real world. Moreover, the strength or weakness of foreign policy of any country is directly related to its domestic political and economic situation. In this context, nineteenth-century British Prime Minister William Gladstone aptly commented, 'Here is my first principle of foreign policy: good government at home.' In a democracy, no foreign policy can succeed unless it enjoys popular support. Therefore, it is the prime duty of a government to truthfully convey the realities to the people and galvanize national consensus around it.

It was clear to me that Pakistan's long-term interests mandated foreign policy with India, which could honourably resolve the Kashmir issue and promote cooperation in multifaceted areas. Moreover, I felt that Pakistan-India relationship could be made more predictable and less crisis-prone by complementing governmental efforts with much greater people-to-people interaction.

I realized that anything that might be construed as 'change' in our policy towards India would inevitably come in for criticism. Although thankfully unrepresentative of the majority viewpoint, certain powerful constituencies in Pakistan favoured the status quo and I knew that it would be quite convenient for them to continue mouthing the old clichés. As a politician, I was aware of the political risks involved in supporting normalization of relations between the two countries. Fortunately, the situation changed significantly due to the work done during our tenure. Nevertheless, I firmly believed that Pakistan's existing policy could not advance or safeguard the interests of Kashmiris and Pakistan in the foreseeable future.

The pursuit of a foreign policy seeking normalization of Pakistan-India relations can be explained with reference to Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's vision of this bilateral relationship. Responding to a question about whether Pakistan and India could join hands for defending their borders and cooperating against external aggression, Jinnah said,

[P]ersonally I have no doubt in my mind that our own paramount interests demand that the Dominion of Pakistan and the Dominion of India should coordinate for the purpose of playing their part in international affairs and the developments that may take place, and also it is of vital importance to Pakistan and India, as independent sovereign states, to collaborate in a friendly way jointly to defend their frontiers both on land and sea against any aggression. But this depends entirely on whether Pakistan and India can resolve their own differences and grave

domestic issues in the first instance. In other words, if we can put our house in order internally, then we may be able to play a very great part externally in all international affairs.<sup>68</sup>

Accordingly, Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan pursued a policy seeking normalization of relations with India; Prime Minister Feroz Khan Noon favoured a negotiated settlement on Kashmir after agreeing with Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in 1958 to resolve all outstanding issues; President Ayub Khan also wanted a negotiated settlement on Kashmir and had agreed with Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in New Delhi in 1960 to resolve mutual disputes on the basis of fairness; the Z. A. Bhutto–Swaran Singh talks in 1962–63 centred on a partition line in Kashmir and not on plebiscite; President Zia ul-Haq proposed a ‘No War Pact’ to India in 1981; Prime Ministers Nawaz Sharif and Atal Bihari Vajpayee agreed in 1999 to intensify efforts to resolve all issues including Kashmir.

Prior efforts aimed at peaceful settlement of the Kashmir issue had involved a flexible approach and I appreciated that negotiations between Pakistan and India could only succeed if the two sides were mutually flexible. However, I was conscious that no settlement unacceptable to the people of Kashmir could survive, as any solution rejected by the Kashmiris will not be acceptable to the people of Pakistan.

While President Ayub Khan, Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, and President Pervez Musharraf have their detractors, no one can seriously question their patriotism. There are robust reasons why, despite their vastly different backgrounds, all four of them made serious attempts at a negotiated settlement on Kashmir. It is important not to disparage their policies based on political considerations, but to assess them on their intrinsic merit.

Clearly, one needs to take risks in the quest for peace and be prepared to face criticism from interested quarters. If that were the price to be paid for long-lasting peace and stability in South Asia, I was prepared to pay it. No wonder then that although my very first statement as Foreign Minister on the strong need for normalization of relations with India drew a volley of criticism from expected quarters, there was also an encouraging response in some sections of the media describing my statement as a good gesture towards a new beginning.<sup>69</sup> A leading newspaper carried the headline that better ties with India will be the new government’s first priority, adding that India must also play its part and calling on the Indian leadership to reciprocate in the same spirit.

I had stated that Pakistan would stand for ‘Peace with Honour and Justice’ while emphasizing that the solution of the Kashmir issue would have to take into account the aspirations of the Kashmiri people. I also highlighted promoting and protecting the strategic relationship between Pakistan and China, improving ties with Afghanistan, developing even closer relations with the Gulf States, and enhancing ties with the US, the EU, and the Muslim world. In retrospect, I can state that Pakistan made progress on most of these objectives during my tenure as Foreign Minister. Of course, this happened because all the stakeholders were on the same page.

I gradually concluded that armed non-state actors were damaging the Kashmir cause and hurting Pakistan's national interests. After 9/11, the international community had little tolerance for activities of non-state actors and Pakistan was paying a heavy price in terms of blood and treasure as a result of these activities.

I felt that the zero-sum game that had developed in Pakistan-India relations needed to change, and that a mere repetition of declaratory statements obscured a sense of direction. It was clear to everyone that India's ten-month-long mobilization in 2002 was by all means an act of war which failed to achieve its objectives. Therefore, I felt that it was the right moment to think about new policy options towards India which could not be construed as emerging from a position of weakness.

I also felt that it was important to present a new face of Pakistani diplomacy in which there was articulation of hope rather than a continued reference to the bitter past. In this context, Pakistan must also recognize that sometimes its objectives surpassed its capabilities and economic constraints, and that its military strategy and foreign policy goals were not always in sync with each other. One of the perennial challenges faced by Pakistan is the disconnect between its security objectives and economic realities. The need for avoiding such mismatches and achieving better coordination between resources and foreign policy objectives cannot be stressed enough. <sup>70</sup>

### **Historical Distortions and Lessons**

South Asia has been home to great civilizations, but unfortunately, very little of this finds mention in our history books. Moreover, the relationship of various communities living in this region cannot be cast in black and white; it rather lies in the grey region. To understand the India-Pakistan relationship as it is today, it is critical to appreciate the historical processes that have shaped both nations.

It is important to note that there has been historical revisionism on a massive scale in both Pakistan and India following Partition in 1947. This revisionism has been greater in the case of Pakistan, for which we have accordingly paid a bigger price. But it is important to refer to historical revisionism in both the countries because it makes understanding each other that much more difficult.

History as a subject receives very low priority in Pakistan. Either very little is taught to Pakistani children about the early history of the subcontinent or it is grossly misrepresented. It is very difficult to find an unbiased account of history anywhere in the world, since the biases of the narrator consciously or unconsciously seep into the narration.

It is unfortunate that, while the Turks, Iranians, Egyptians, and Muslims living in other parts of the world, despite being practising Muslims, are proud of their legacies, in Pakistan there is little desire to educate the younger generation about the Mehrgarh civilization which flourished on the Kacchi Plain next to the Bolan Pass in Balochistan

(7000–3200 bc), the Gandhara civilization, located in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province (500 bc–ad 500), or the great Indus Valley Civilization that flourished in what is now Pakistan and parts of Northern India. Similarly, Ranjit Singh’s rule over large parts of what now constitutes Pakistan including not just Punjab but also Northern Pakistan is glossed over. This was not the case in the past. For example, people of my father’s generation, among educated Muslims used to say that Punjab has produced two great rulers: Porus and Ranjit Singh because as my father used to say they were amongst the few Punjabi leaders to resist foreign invaders—Porus resisted Alexander the Great’s invasion and Ranjit Singh kept the British at bay for a fairly long time. My father was a practising Muslim and he found no contradiction between his faith and his regard for Porus and Ranjit Singh as heroes of the Punjab.

I do not think it serves any purpose if we keep the younger generation blinkered and myopic about the past. Such an attitude unnecessarily leads to a crisis of identity among sections of Pakistani population. Not many among the younger generation in Pakistan would know today that it was Allama Iqbal who wrote in his famous poem *Saare Jahan Se Acha Hindustan Humara, Hum Bulbulain Hain Iss Ki, Ye Gulistan Humara*, at a time when Pakistan and India were the same country. In a similar vein, not many know that Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah was a very important leader of the Indian National Congress and was regarded as an ‘ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity’. It is because of such a narrow-minded attitude towards history that we witnessed the unfortunate controversy over the naming of the Fawwara Chowk in Lahore as Bhagat Singh Chowk, named after the great freedom fighter Bhagat Singh, amidst great controversy, following the district government of Lahore’s decision to rename it. Talking of Bhagat Singh, I would like to narrate an anecdote. I was arrested during General Zia ul-Haq’s period for opposition to his rule and was sent to Camp Jail in Lahore (built during the British times) to be lodged in a condemned prisoner’s cell. I saw ten little cells meant for condemned prisoners with a dirty drain passing through all of them. I quickly realized that anybody in the first or the second cell would be better off than the one in the last cell who would have to bear the worst stench possible. I knew that Bhagat Singh was also kept here before he was hanged. As the jailers were taking me towards the cells, exercising very quickly my presence of mind, I indicated my preference for the first cell and said I would like to be detained there because Bhagat Singh had been detained in the same cell. The jailor looked at me strangely, not having the foggiest idea who Bhagat Singh was, but luckily accepted my request without questioning my motives, thinking I was some sort of an oddball.

Historical distortions, especially in the Pakistani narrative, must be highlighted and addressed since the current state of intolerance in Pakistani society is deeply linked to this narrative. The problem in Pakistan is further aggravated by the fact that not only have conscious efforts been made to tamper with history but also to infuse ideology in the curriculum. This has halted the process of critical thinking and led to an emphasis on mindless rote learning.

It is a reflection of the manner in which history is taught in Pakistan and also to an extent in India, that negative feelings persist in both the countries about the two great leaders of the Independence Movement: Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Mahatma Gandhi. The positive side of Gandhiji's contribution unfortunately does not find much mention in Pakistani textbooks. He is ubiquitously painted as a scheming Hindu nationalist who said one thing and meant another. What is sadly not widely known even among the educated youth of today is that he actually went on a hunger strike to secure for Pakistan its entitlements under the Partition settlement, at a time when a section of the Congress leadership believed that Pakistan would soon collapse like a house of cards. As a consequence of Gandhiji's hunger strike, Pakistan's share was transferred without further ado. Hardly anyone in Pakistan is aware that he was assassinated by an extremist Hindu, Nathuram Godse, who admitted in court that he killed Gandhiji because he thought that Gandhiji was sympathetic towards the Muslims and towards Pakistan. Hardly any prescribed textbook in Pakistan mentions the fact that at one stage, according to some historians, Gandhiji had proposed that Quaid-i-Azam be made the Prime Minister of United India. <sup>71</sup>

In India, Jinnah and his colleagues in the Muslim League are depicted as British agents. For example, in the text book for Grade VIII, *A Textbook of History and Civics*, Jinnah is named as the principal agent responsible for the break-up of India by starting a campaign against Congress ministries and propounding the 'Two Nation Theory' on the basis of the supposed ill-treatment of the Muslims in Congress-dominated provinces, which destroyed once and for all any hope of Hindu-Muslim unity and keeping India united.

There could not be a greater distortion and over-simplification of history. The fact that Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah was once an important leader of the Indian National Congress, that he was considered an Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity, not just by Sarojni Naidu but also by Gandhiji, is conveniently glossed over. It is important to note that religious sentiments were first introduced into politics by Gandhi and not Jinnah. In this context, S. M. Seervai states, 'Until 1937, Jinnah made no appeal to religious sentiments in order to consolidate the position of the Muslim League. But when, after the 1937 election, Nehru proclaimed that there was no such thing as the Hindu-Muslim question or the minority question in India, and when Gandhi cried in vain for divine help to solve the question of Hindu-Muslim unity, Jinnah responded with a speech at the session of the All-India Muslim League in October 1937.' <sup>72</sup>

It is also pertinent to point out that in 1946 Jinnah had in fact accepted the Cabinet Mission Plan and that a large number of eminent Indian politicians and historians, including Abul Kalam Azad, agree with this. It is utterly ignored in India that former Indian Foreign Minister, Jaswant Singh, has in fact held Nehru responsible for the failure of the Cabinet Mission Plan. Western historians, like Stanley Wolpert, have held the then leadership of the Congress Party responsible for the Plan's failure. <sup>73</sup> However, there is

such an entrenched negative stereotype of Jinnah in India that any deviation from this historical fallacy is considered intolerable. India's former Deputy Prime Minister, L. K. Advani, was forced to resign when he praised Jinnah for being secular, and Jaswant Singh was expelled from the BJP for voicing opinion contrary to what was considered to be the established truth in India.

Regrettably, scant attention is paid to the teaching of history as a subject at schools these days. The twin processes of revisionism of history and neglect of history and social sciences generally has had the effect of producing a new generation in Pakistan and India unaware of their historic origins, and of the fact that there have been long periods in the history of the subcontinent when Muslims and Hindus have lived peacefully together under humane rulers who promoted tolerance and harmony.

The Mughal legacy illustrates how different religious communities amicably existed side by side in the subcontinent. The Mughal Empire was founded by Zahir-ud-din Muhammad Babur, who emphasized culture and not just religion. When Jalaluddin Muhammad Akbar (also known as Akbar the Great or Akbar-e-Azam) ascended the throne, he tried to reconcile with the Hindus through various measures. Jahangir was also of a liberal and inclusive disposition, although this inclusive attitude of the Mughal Emperors did change during Aurangzeb's rule. In the Mughal era, relations between Sikhs and Muslims also improved. In Punjab, for instance, there was a close affinity between Muslims and Sikhs despite the unfortunate incident regarding Guru Gobind Singh's sons that is referred to elsewhere in the book.

The tolerance or intolerance of Muslim emperors or Hindu rulers in India is a subject of much debate and discussion. There are examples of both persecution and magnanimity by both communities. Nevertheless, we need to take inspiration from times of coexistence rather than of conflict in order to move forward. History demonstrates that intolerance thrives under intolerant rulers and fairness under tolerant rulers. It is primarily up to the rulers to encourage the people to tolerate differences within a region. Such a message was transmitted from the very top in the case of rulers like Jalaluddin Akbar, who tried hard to inculcate a unifying spirit in a diverse community. On the other hand, we have the example of Aurangzeb and later the British colonists whose policies, for religious or political reasons, encouraged resentment and hostility among various religious cohorts.

Countless people spent their lives and offered their blood and sweat for the creation of Pakistan. Nevertheless, three individuals must be distinguished from the rest: Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, Allama Muhammad Iqbal, and Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Their lives and ideas must be properly studied and understood to appreciate not only their struggles for the creation of Pakistan, but also their vision for the future state. We must ask ourselves: do the philosophical planks upon which Pakistan was built by our founding fathers still exist? The situation in Pakistan which was once envisioned as a great emerging nation has sadly gone haywire. So we must question where we went wrong.

Have we failed to fulfil our promise due to poor leadership or because our leaders have simply been unable to uphold the principles set by our founding fathers?

### **Cultural and Artistic Fusion**

The great land of South Asia is bordered in the north by forbidding mountainous ranges and in the south by the vast Indian Ocean. In between lie multifarious deserts, grasslands, forests, plateaus, and plains that are cut short by river bodies. On this land, even a few miles apart, it is possible to find a different set of dialects, customs, cultures, religions, and traditions, which nevertheless are organically bound. The culturally dissimilar people of the subcontinent are united by the shared experiences of being burned by the summer sun, the sheer joy of monsoon rains breaking the summer heat, and memories of various foreign invasions. Cultural practices and food are also shared across the border; especially common foods that include *roti* (homemade bread), *daal* (legume-based dishes), plain yogurt or *raita*, rice dishes and many others. People of the two nations have a joint passion for *qawwalis* (devotional music) and *ragas* (classical music) and share musical instruments such as the harmonium, *tabla*, and *dholak*.

The two countries share sports, especially field hockey and cricket, which have, increasingly, become an opportunity for diplomatic relations between them. Even Indian and Pakistani cinema share similar themes of ‘star-crossed lovers and angry parents, corrupt politicians, kidnappers, conniving villains, courtesans with hearts of gold ... dramatic reversals of fortune, and convenient coincidences.’<sup>74</sup> Civilizations, kingdoms, and cultures in South Asia have not been restricted by the boundary lines that separate them today. The vast Himalayas and the raging monsoons do not and never have recognized the limitations of national sovereignty.

Many geographical occurrences are particular to South Asia. Rain is a discomfort in many parts of the Western world; in South Asia it causes the land to acquire a life of its own, and is a season to celebrate. Poets and musicians generate a string of melodies about the magic of the rainfall, the elderly order steaming cups of *chai* (tea), and those obliged to stay indoors gaze dolefully outside their windows wishing to be part of the celebrations while stunned foreigners gape at the locals, taken aback by the extent of their elation.

Great rivers have been central to the development of great civilizations. In ancient history, we have seen the relevance and glory of rivers to people. Rivers in India and in Pakistan have remained significant throughout history, whether as barriers to invading armies, as sources of water for agriculture, or as locations of religious worship. They have determined the culture and behaviour of the people that have populated this region, or even as causes of disputes, as for example, the water issues that persist between India and Pakistan today); for instance the Indus River that now runs from the Himalayas all the way to the Arabian Sea, has been described as one of the ‘unifiers’<sup>75</sup> of the subcontinent as well as a magnet to foreign invaders. Because the land around the Indus is so fertile and

obedient, it has attracted many culturally disparate people to settle in this region.<sup>76</sup> The Indus Valley Civilization was built around this river to sustain its people, and ironically, the river eventually flooded and wiped out an entire civilization (destruction of the Mohenjo-Daro period). The Indus River is sacred in Hinduism, along with the River Ganges, named after the Hindu Goddess Ganga,<sup>77</sup> which travels from the Himalayas to the Bay of Bengal. Indeed rivers such as the Indus and the Ganges have spawned entire civilizations.

The beautiful arches, with elaborate motifs, delicate stone masonry, slender marble columns, rich calligraphy, well-designed gardens, elaborate fountains, and ornate palaces are also characteristics of the historic fusion of Indo-Muslim culture.<sup>78</sup> The Muslim architecture came in contact with the Indian architecture resulting into a new Indo-Muslim architecture. The distinctive features of Muslim architecture were massive and extensive buildings, impressive domes, tall minarets, lofty portals, open courtyards, and massive walls bereft of sculpture.<sup>79</sup> After Muslim conquests, the practitioners of ‘Sufism’ arrived in India for the purpose of spreading Islam. Eminent Sufis among them were Moinuddin Chishti, Fariduddin Ganjshakar, Khwaja Nizamuddin Auliya, Baba Bulleh Shah, Khwaja Ghulam Fareed, and Waris Shah. They all preached a message of love, brotherhood, harmony, and peace, and through this message they were responsible for a number of conversions to Islam. The *dargah* (shrine) of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti in Ajmer Sharif attracts pilgrims from different religions and is an excellent example of intercommunity harmony. According to the great Sufi poet Baba Bulleh Shah from Kasur,

*Har mazhab vich oh disda*  
(I see the same God in each religion)  
*Under bahar jalwa disda*  
(The one who lives without and within)<sup>80</sup>

Sufi music is also marked by the synthesis that was initiated under Amir Khusrau’s (1253–1325) auspices between Indo-Islamic musical traditions which have grown steadily, thus producing a lasting feeling of cultural kinship between major communities of the subcontinent irrespective of religion.<sup>81</sup> Amir Khusrau produced the instrument Sitar, when he combined the Indian *veena* and the Iranian *tambura*.<sup>82</sup>

It must be understood and emphasized that cultural fusion was not restricted to the arts in the subcontinent; rather that it touched almost every aspect of a person’s life. An astute understanding of South Asian history includes understanding all the features of a person’s life that this culture has influenced: Meat and vegetable dishes, rice, and puddings were all part of Indo-Muslim culture and so were scents, jewellery designs, and, most of all, the traditions of romance, poetry, plays, and musical instruments.<sup>83</sup>

## **Fault-Lines between Pakistan and India**

I strongly believe that it serves Pakistan's national interest to normalize relations with India; animosity with India has cost Pakistan both economically and politically. I also personally know many Indians who believe that it serves India's national interest to befriend Pakistan. In fact, I have known many Indians, and not just Indian Muslims, who believe that secularism, a cornerstone of the Indian constitutional and political dispensation, remains under threat if relations with Pakistan remain perennially hostile.

It is however no secret that there is a lunatic fringe in India as there is one in Pakistan. Neither country has a monopoly on extremist views. This fact is critical to understanding Pakistan-India relations as they have unfolded over time.

Over the years, fault-lines in Pakistan and India have emerged largely due to the neglect of the social sector in both the countries. Pakistan has had to deal with threats from various categories of Taliban for several years now, while India has been beset by insurgencies of varying natures in different parts of the country, particularly in the North East, and which are not related to the situation in Kashmir. In Pakistan, the poor sections of society have turned to the Taliban, inter alia, because of their claim to represent some form of social justice; in India, the desperately poor in remote states have turned to Maoist insurgency. In many ways, the situation in the remote areas of the two countries is similar, but unless they can resolve their differences, these fault-lines could be exploited by Pakistan and India to each other's detriment.

In order to defeat the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Pakistan and the US decided to support the Mujahideen. For this purpose, young men from all over the Islamic world were invited to fight the 'Godless Soviets' in much the same manner as Europe's idealist youth participated in the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939). The Islamic freedom fighters, who had succeeded in driving the Soviets out of Afghanistan in 1989, were emboldened to replicate the same techniques in Kashmir with the support of Pakistan's intelligence agencies, in resentment over manipulated elections and human rights violations in Indian Kashmir and of Pakistan's grievances of India not taking serious steps to resolve the issue of J&K by negotiations.

Notwithstanding the initial romance surrounding the Mujahideen activities, the West, and particularly Pakistan, continue to pay a heavy price for this jihad. Both are still suffering from its blowback. Over time, the West and Pakistan have had to contend with increasing linkages between terrorist groups of different orientations. The US cruise missile attack on Osama bin Laden's camp in Afghanistan in August 2000, following American suspicion that Osama bin Laden and Al-Qaeda were behind the attacks on their embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, and the attack on USS Cole further highlighted such perilous linkages. In the attack, over thirty people died including a number of Afghans belonging to Kashmir-related Harkatul Ansar and some Arab nationals, the mix pointing to the close linkage of the jihadi groups in the region with Al-Qaeda. It also lent credibility to the charge that the ISI was training militants for Kashmir in camps inside Afghanistan.<sup>84</sup>

Pakistan also discovered, to its horror, that some of the groups fighting in Kashmir could just as easily attack its own civilians and military. In many cases, the intelligence and law enforcement agencies were also targeted. Public opinion in Pakistan began turning against

the activities of violent groups for whatever cause. There was a rising recognition among the middle classes and major sections of the media that Kashmir and other issues with India could not be resolved by resorting to violence by non-state actors, and although their activities definitely attracted a lot of international attention, it was equally clear after 9/11, that the international community had lost any appetite for such activities. It came to be realized that Pakistan and India would have to find a negotiated settlement to Kashmir and other outstanding issues between them.

I do not wish to convey the impression that, at the time when I assumed office, the support for jihadi groups had evaporated among all sections of public opinion. Due to the staunch commitment of Pakistan to the Kashmir cause, there will always be a minority opinion sympathizing with the activities of the jihadis. If that were not the case, there would be no willing recruits to the jihadi cause among the public at large. However, among influential sections of public opinion and in the corridors of power, it was openly discussed and suggested that Pakistan's policy of support to non-state actors had actually boomeranged against it.

I firmly believe that if Pakistan is to meet the rising expectations of an ever-growing population, it needs to make peace both within the country as well as with its neighbours. Over the years, this opinion has gained traction among major political parties in Pakistan and their leaders, who all now support a negotiated settlement of Kashmir. For instance, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) Chairman, Imran Khan, recently said, 'We have learnt that proxy policies don't work. To keep militant groups is not the idea we should follow, and is certainly not the strategy I support or will follow.'<sup>85</sup>

Unless Pakistan and India holistically tackle the menace of terrorism by addressing it comprehensively and by settling disputes between them, their future relationship will be badly compromised despite visible signs of progress in different areas. The situation would be greatly exacerbated if the two countries foolishly exploit each other's fault-lines.

## **Indian Muslims**

I quite understand that the minority issue is a very sensitive one. As a Pakistani, I know that our own minorities have huge complaints regarding their status. I am also aware that unfortunately in recent years, many Hindus have migrated from Sindh to the adjoining areas in India. As a Pakistani, I am, therefore, in no position to pontificate. The purpose of raising this issue is my belief that an improvement in Pakistan-India relations will have a positive impact on the position of Muslims in India, who form 14 per cent of the total Indian population. For that matter, although the number of Hindus in Pakistan is relatively small (confined largely to Sindh and some parts of Balochistan and a few in Punjab), their position in Pakistan will improve if relations between the two countries are less strained and begins to move towards normalization.

I have always been sensitive to the fact that the Muslims of India, who constitute one-third of the Muslims of South Asia, have paid a heavy price for the Partition that occurred in 1947. Perhaps because, like many other Pakistanis, I also have relatives from my maternal side still living in India, I can understand their feelings at times of heightened tensions between Pakistan and India. In such times the Indian Muslims become doubly suspect. Also, economically and socially, they have paid an enormous price. Although largely in the context of increasing radicalization of the Indian Muslims, this subject has started getting highlighted by the Indian media relatively recently. I firmly believe that the condition of Indian Muslims would improve significantly if Pakistan-India relations were normalized. I know that this is a sensitive subject but I hope that, since I am mentioning it in a constructive spirit, it would be understood in that light both in Pakistan, and more so in India.

After Partition, whereas the Muslims in Pakistan (and in Bangladesh) enjoyed the fruits of independence and made rapid progress economically, the Muslims of India felt disadvantaged and were the object of taunts and ridicule by extremist elements. As a result, many migrated to Pakistan. Indian Muslims are deeply aware of their historical and cultural roots and for some years after Partition, were confused and bewildered about their own identity. A large number of their relatives had migrated to Pakistan and many continued to do so in large numbers until at least the mid-1960s. Pakistan was doing very well economically and enjoyed a lot of respect and prestige in the international community and the new arrivals were easily assimilated.

When growing up, I often heard a story that captures the dilemma faced by the Indian Muslims who did not migrate to Pakistan at the time of Partition. This story is about a delegation of Muslims from the Muslim minority provinces that went to see Maulana Abul Kalam Azad soon after Partition. They asked him what they should do now that Pakistan had been created. Maulana Azad apparently replied that they should have thought of it earlier when they were supporting the demand for Pakistan in full knowledge that their areas could never become a part of Pakistan. I will not delve into the reasons why the Muslims of undivided India supported the demand for Pakistan; the above story does, however, highlight the quandary in which those Muslims who did not migrate to Pakistan found themselves. I believe that, in recent years, certain sections of Muslims have started to economically do better and are getting more integrated.

The Muslims of the subcontinent are extremely proud of their glorious past and nostalgically remember their rule over it for almost a millennium. The glittering Mughal Empire, founded in 1526, remained vibrant and strong for almost two centuries, until the death of the last of the six great Mughals, Emperor Aurangzeb Alamgir, in 1707. Although largely at a titular level, the Mughals remained in power up to the time of the Mutiny of 1857 and the subsequent imprisonment of the titular Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar, who was proclaimed by the mutineers as their commander and Emperor of India. The cruel execution of his sons and grandsons by the British evoked sympathy among

Indians of all creeds, and horror, outrage, and hatred towards the British among the Muslims of India. Bahadur Shah Zafar was exiled to Rangoon (Yangon), where he died five years later, in 1862. He was an accomplished poet and the pathos in his poetry affected the consciousness of Indian Muslims immensely. It is movingly reflected in his famous couplet,

*kitnaa hai bad-naseeb 'Zafar' ... dafn key liye  
do gaz zamin bhi na mili kuu-e-yaar mein*

(How unlucky is 'Zafar' ... For burial even two yards of land were not to be had, in the beloved land)

With the arrival of the British and the imposition of English as the official language, Muslims, proud of their own cultural heritage, initially resisted learning the English language, for which they suffered more than the Hindus. They fell behind in acquiring administrative jobs in various departments of British India. They also fell behind the Hindus in business and commerce. Forced into a retreat, the Indian Muslims began reflecting and introspecting about the moderate versus the traditional (such as the Darul Uloom Deoband) approach to education and life. The moderate approach was symbolized by the Aligarh Muslim University, an institution set up by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan to encourage Muslims to educate themselves in the various fields of the sciences and in the English language. For a time, it seemed as if the issue had been settled in favour of the more modern approach. Many Muslims feel the 'Aligarh Movement' was a forerunner to the Pakistan Movement, and Aligarh students had played an important role in it.

However, division over whether Islam should embrace modernity or revert to its fundamental origins has manifested itself all over again in the Islamic world in the first decade of the twenty-first century. This is largely in reaction to what is regarded by Muslims as the unfair and discriminatory foreign policies of the West towards Muslims. This trend has led to the current deep divide within Islam; a sense of injustice has permeated various strata of society and forms the basis of rising Islamic radicalism in Pakistan and India.<sup>86</sup>

Hostile and tense relations between Pakistan and India have had a negative impact on the status of Muslims in India. It is a fact that Indian Muslims today are less educated, have a shorter average lifespan, and are economically more backward than other segments of India's populace.<sup>87</sup> Sections of the media and human rights activists in India have played a positive role in this respect and have highlighted these hard facts.<sup>88</sup>

I remember reading a news item according to which the famous actress Shabana Azmi complained that she and her equally illustrious husband, Javed Akhtar, were finding it difficult to buy or rent a flat in Mumbai, simply because they happened to be Muslims. This does not of course mean that there are no successful Muslims in India. Indeed,

Shabana Azmi and Javed Akhtar are both very successful. There are also many successful Muslim film stars in Bollywood; the three Khans: Shahrukh Khan, Salman Khan, and Amir Khan have become legendary. There are of course plenty of successful Muslims in India, including Bollywood stars, cricketers, politicians, and businessmen. These success stories are, however, not the norm and do not reflect the grim realities faced by Indian Muslims, which have been highlighted, not just in Pakistani or Western media but, as pointed out earlier, by the Indian media itself. It is also no secret that Muslims suffer the most in various communal riots and also have to carry the double burden of being labelled as 'anti-national' and as being 'appeased' at the same time.<sup>89</sup> Although it is sometimes considered impolite to discuss the issue openly, if you talk to an Indian Muslim privately, he will tell you that the suspicion by some elements doubting his patriotism or the tendency by the extremists to dub them as 'antinational' will definitely change for the better if relations between Pakistan and India are normalized. Sometimes, the extremist elements in India even brand them as ISI agents. A leading commentator recently warned that unless Pakistan and India can resolve their differences, Muslims in India will pay a very high price indeed.<sup>90</sup> Similarly, an Indian Muslim writer based in the United States has stated rather emotionally, 'If Pakistan settles its quarrels with India, it would be as much for the benefit of its own people as, also, a way to make restitution to the Indian Muslims.'

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I can think of no better ending to this section than to narrate an anecdote recounted to me by Saeed Mehdi who has been my class fellow and a friend for a long time and who was Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister at the time of the Kargil War between India and Pakistan in May 1999. According to Saeed, one day he was sitting with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif when the telephone bell rang and the ADC informed the PM that the Prime Minister of India Atal Bihari Vajpayee wished to speak with him urgently. PM Vajpayee expressed his grievance that he had been shabbily treated by the PM after having invited him to Lahore. According to Saeed Mehdi, PM Nawaz Sharif looked surprised at the words of the Indian Prime Minister. The Indian PM complained that while he had been received in Lahore with such warmth, Pakistan had wasted no time in occupying Kargil. PM Nawaz Sharif said that he was not aware of what PM Vajpayee was saying to him and promised to get back to him after talking to the Chief of the Army Staff, General Pervez Musharraf. Before the conversation could end, Vajpayee told Nawaz Sharif that he would like him to speak to somebody who was sitting next to him during their conversation. PM Nawaz Sharif was astonished when he heard the voice of Dilip Kumar (Yousuf Khan, originally from Peshawar), the legendary film star who has won the hearts of generations of Pakistani and Indian film lovers, telling him, 'Mian Sahib, we did not expect this from you since you have always claimed to be a great supporter of peace between Pakistan and India. Let me tell you as an Indian Muslim that in case of tension between Pakistan and India, the position of Indian Muslims becomes very insecure and they find it difficult to even leave their homes. Please do something to control this situation.' I rest my case, if

even the great icon Dilip Kumar, as an Indian Muslim, felt insecure in case of tensions between India and Pakistan.

## **Pakistan's Geostrategic Significance**

Since its creation, Pakistan has remained in the headlines because of its geostrategic location at the junction of South, Central, and West Asia. In fact, even before Partition, there was talk of the geostrategic importance of a future Pakistan and the role of its armed forces, with the last British Viceroy to India, Lord Mountbatten, famously stating,

The American object in India was to capture all the markets to step in and take the place of the British, that their aim might even be to get bases in India for ultimate use against Russia. In fact, backed by the British and American arms and technique, Pakistan would in no while, have armed forces immensely superior to that of Hindustan. ... Places like Karachi would become big naval and air bases. <sup>92</sup>

During the Cold War, Pakistan's geostrategic significance cemented its role as a frontline ally of the West against the Communist bloc, particularly the Soviet Union.

Pakistan's location confers on it major advantages. Pakistanis are fond of saying that they are a bridge between South, Central, and West Asia. Given the bitter state of relations with India, we have been a bridge to nowhere so far. Nearly half of the world's population surrounds Pakistan, which borders India, China, Central, and West Asia. There are vast opportunities for attracting investment to Pakistan if it chooses to become a trade corridor; it could also become an energy corridor with the development of the Gwadar Port proximate to Western China and several Central Asian countries. During my tenure as Foreign Minister, there was talk of extending Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline to China and of bringing Turkmenistan's gas via Afghanistan to Pakistan and India. Unfortunately, because of the state of Pakistan-India relations, Pakistan has so far failed to leverage its geostrategic advantage. It can maximize its potential by normalizing relations with India.

## **Pakistan's 'National Interest'**

There is a debate in Pakistan about what constitutes true 'national interest'. Although Pakistan has a very strong case on Jammu & Kashmir, it needs to take account of the changing international situation so that it can press the cause of Kashmiris effectively by political means. Unfortunately, Pakistan's foreign policy has often been based on sentiment and incorrect assessment of the ground realities and the international situation.

I felt that a resolution of the Kashmir issue was absolutely vital for normalizing relations with India. Of course, this would have had to be in accordance with the aspirations of the Kashmiris which was the real spirit behind a series of UNSC Resolutions. It was clear to me that, in whatever manner the dispute is resolved, the envisioned solution would have to be acceptable to the Kashmiris as well as the governments and peoples of Pakistan and India. There were two approaches to this issue. One could either give up in despair or take the road less travelled and accept the challenge of finding an acceptable solution to the

Kashmir dispute. During my time as Foreign Minister, Pakistan undertook the latter course through painstaking backchannel efforts over a three-year period, and formulated a credible and workable proposal, which one hopes Pakistan builds upon in the future. Although, as a politician, I am aware that subsequent governments may put a different spin on our proposed package in order to take credit for the Kashmir solution, I would not hold any grudge as long as their efforts lead to lasting peace in South Asia even if they repackage our proposed draft framework with a different name tag.

I am mindful that, besides the state, civil society, the media, trade associations, and various NGOs have acquired much greater global importance. It would help the peace process to allow them to make their contribution in this respect. I felt that encouraging people-to-people contacts between the two countries would enlarge the constituency of peace and prove invaluable during crises when bureaucracies of both countries often resist moving out of their grooves. Following the Mumbai attacks, the civil society and sections of the media in both the countries made critical efforts to help revive the peace process.

Often to the dismay of some old Foreign Office hands, I encouraged all non-official contact as much as possible during my tenure as Foreign Minister. I also interacted widely and regularly, not just with the Pakistani media but also with the Indian and international media. I felt that a paradigm shift could not occur without the cooperation of important non-governmental actors, particularly the media. In this regard, I made myself available to even the most hawkish Indian journalists and felt that Pakistan had a good case that I could articulate and defend well. Moreover, I spent a fair amount of time addressing the international media's criticism of Pakistan's foreign policy stances. This was all the more necessary since I assumed office at a time of great turmoil for Pakistan, when it happened to be in the eye of the storm.

I was not unmindful of the 'soft power' factors, including economic diplomacy, the requirement for a proactive foreign policy approach, the articulation of Pakistan's narrative, and the need to provide access to information to journalists so that our narrative could be propagated. Increasingly, the focus on people-to-people contact in this relationship was becoming important and I pleasantly realized that very often consciously indoctrinated hatred over a period of decades in the minds of people on both sides could be overcome.

I was convinced that peace could not be achieved simply by wishing for it, or equally, through a policy of appeasement towards India. That is why Pakistan's Minimum Credible Deterrence Doctrine in the nuclear as well as conventional fields was essential and maintained during our time, and as Pakistan's Foreign Minister 'I never negotiated out of fear but never feared to negotiate'.

**'Peace with Honour'**

The phrase 'Peace with Honour' has been used from the time of Cicero to Benjamin Disraeli to Richard Nixon. Although poets, philosophers, and statesmen have used the phrase in different contexts, it is nonetheless clear that all of them have considered it as an expression of a very lofty ideal worth striving for. I have always desired peace with all our neighbours on equitable terms. In the context of the troubled Pak-India relations, with its deep historical roots, it is only 'Peace with Honour' that can help heal the wounds which continue to cast a protracted shadow. It goes without saying that such peace has to be based on justice, particularly for the people of Kashmir, since the Kashmir dispute has made the situation worse and added to the trust deficit between the two countries.

Soon after taking up the Foreign Minister's portfolio, I started reiterating the need for 'Peace with Honour' with India in my speeches and interaction with the media. I have always believed that 'Peace with Honour' should guide the way forward in relations with India. I did not support a military solution to the Kashmir issue and felt that eventually all the stakeholders would have to find a negotiated solution. The general mood in the country favoured improving relations with India as well. 9/11 had transformed the world and nuclear tests had given Pakistan parity with India in this respect. Notwithstanding the legacy of mutual suspicion and hostility, I was convinced that the two countries had to move forward and that war between the two nuclear neighbours was not an option. Accordingly, the guiding spirit of my approach to relations with India was that peace had to be achieved with honour and could not be negotiated from a position of weakness. What guided my stance at the Foreign Office remains my position even today.

While the regional situation remained tense and difficult overall, Pakistan was passing through turbulent and changing times. After 9/11, Pakistan was in the eye of the storm and the shadow of the war in Iraq was looming large. The aftermath of the 2001–02 mobilization of troops on the border had made it clear that Pakistan could not be coerced by India. Jaswant Singh, former Minister for External Affairs of India, also agreed with this assessment.<sup>93</sup> In response to a question on the decision to build up troop deployments on the border, he said that 'he certainly would not defend Operation Parakram'. The major powers were also concerned about a confrontation between the two nuclear neighbours. With Iran, Pakistan desired a cooperative relationship. Pakistan's decision to join the international campaign against terrorism and the removal of the Taliban from power in Afghanistan created grounds for a new understanding with Tehran. We were also conscious that instability in Afghanistan would have a deleterious effect on Pakistan, since a stable Afghanistan, at peace with itself, was also in our interest. While we had supported the Bonn Process, we were beginning to see patchy implementation of the agreement, denying representation to significant groups and giving a disproportionate role to the Northern Alliance. A warm handshake with Washington was rapidly leading to normalization of relations with the US after a prolonged period of multi-layered sanctions. In essence, it was a time of change and challenge.

Pakistan's relations with India are laced with suspicion and mistrust, and pose a serious challenge to peace and stability in South Asia. At the heart of this mistrust lie the unresolved disputes, which not only adversely affect regional peace and security, but also hinder economic development and efforts to eradicate poverty, illiteracy, and disease in the two countries. It is, therefore, no coincidence that Pakistan and India have some of the worst social indicators in the world. I strongly believe that normalization of relations with India is in the best interest of Pakistan, and I know a large number of Indians who have similar sentiments about peace with Pakistan. From my daily dealings with people from all walks of life, I have no doubt that a large majority of Pakistanis desire 'Peace with Honour' with India. No wonder that almost every leader of mainstream political parties has had the confidence to advocate a negotiated peace with India.

In the wake of 9/11, India unleashed a campaign to project itself as a long-standing victim of terrorism and tried to convince the world of links between Osama bin Laden, the Taliban, and the freedom struggle in Indian Administered Kashmir. It is extremely unfortunate and most unfair that the Kashmir freedom struggle began to be assessed in a different light internationally. Even before 9/11, President Bill Clinton emphasized this point by stating, 'this era does not reward those people who struggle to redraw borders in blood. It belongs to those with a vision to look beyond borders, for partners in commerce and trade.' Increasingly, Pakistan's stance that the Kashmir freedom struggle was indigenous and that Pakistan extended only political, diplomatic and moral support was losing international acceptance and, after 9/11, even Pakistan's closest friends advised it to think of an alternative way of achieving its objectives. It was thus becoming clear amongst a large section of the influential decision-makers and the intelligentsia in Pakistan that we needed to adopt a different strategy on Kashmir.

Moreover, the successes of regional organizations like ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and the EU were beginning to evoke a positive response in Pakistan. ASEAN's example was particularly inspiring because, despite the suspicions and tensions between the members of ASEAN, considerable progress in regional cooperation had been achieved by overcoming history. There was a feeling that the world was moving away from a period of tension and hostility, and inching towards an era of cooperation, understanding, and peace.

There were also broader realizations on both sides that called for a new direction in Pakistan-India relations. India realized that it could not impose a decisive war on Pakistan and its leadership concluded that regional tension had a negative impact on its economy, which had sharply declined following tensions with Pakistan during 1999–2003. Travel advisories by major Western countries advising their citizens to avoid travelling to India and Pakistan had a major effect on the business community, particularly in India. Thus, a popular sentiment in favour of peace gradually began to emerge in both the countries.



## India: 'A Road Less Travelled'

### RETURN FROM THE BRINK

#### The Beginning of the Normalization Process with India

The years 1999–2002 witnessed a high level of tension between Pakistan and India, owing to the Kargil conflict in 1999, the inconclusive Agra Summit of 2001, and the attack on the Indian Parliament in 2001. This last incident led to the mobilization of a million troops on our border, a mobilization which ended in 2002. At the time, the BJP government found it expedient to blame the Pakistani government out of domestic and political compulsions. The objective of its strategy was to have Pakistan declared a terrorist state.

The Indian invitation to President Pervez Musharraf was a complete reversal of the policy pronouncements of the Indian government since October 1999 of not dealing with a military government in Pakistan. Therefore, the question arises as to why there was a change of heart. According to L. K. Advani, it was he who, in the presence of Jaswant Singh, suggested to Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to invite President Musharraf to India for talks. Upon being impressed that his invitation would be welcomed as an act of statesmanship, Prime Minister Vajpayee accepted Advani's suggestion.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the situation in Kashmir remained troubled and Pakistani intrusions into Indian Administered Kashmir continued; the Indian government felt that the resumption of the dialogue would result in easing the situation in Kashmir.<sup>2</sup>

I have always been intrigued as to why President Musharraf, who had been demonized by the Indian media after Kargil, was lionized by the same media when he was invited to visit India by Prime Minister Vajpayee in July 2001. There can be quite a few reasons. First, it had been quite a while since talks between the two nuclear neighbours had completely stopped. Second, there was growing realization in the wake of nuclear tests by the two countries that war was no longer an option and there was no substitute for talks. Third, India was experiencing fast economic growth and its rising middle class wanted greater global prestige and engagement, which was difficult as long as the confrontation with Pakistan continued. In fact, Prime Minister Vajpayee conceded in a newspaper article that two factors were preventing India from playing a major role on the international stage: the continuing hostility with Pakistan due to the Kashmir dispute, and the fallout of the Babri Masjid (mosque).<sup>3</sup> This article was welcomed in Pakistan and is important for

understanding India's thinking at the time on the Kashmir issue and also for Prime Minister Vajpayee's reflection on the demolition of Babri Masjid on 6 December 1992, which had outraged Muslims all over the world. (Interestingly, Prime Minister Vajpayee also quoted Pakistan's national poet Allama Iqbal in connection with Iqbal's praise of Rama as symbolizing the pluralistic ethos of India.) Fourth, President Musharraf was very articulate and media savvy, and despite Kargil he had managed to spread positive feelings in the intervening period about the need for peaceful relations with India. In his article, Prime Minister Vajpayee had expressed a desire to resume dialogue with Pakistan. Three to four months later, President Musharraf received the official invitation to visit India.

### **The Agra Summit**

Speaking to the press before the Agra Summit (14–16 July 2001), Indian External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh said that Kargil was a part of history and spoke of India's readiness to forget the bitterness of the past and move towards lasting peace and amity with Pakistan.<sup>4</sup> When questioned about President Musharraf's efforts to make Kashmir the focus of the Agra Summit, Singh said that India has never shied away from discussing the issue and was prepared for a substantive discussion on the issue at Agra, adding that India had its own core concerns to take up, including cross-border terrorism.<sup>5</sup>

A massive media build-up followed the announcement of President Musharraf's visit to India and all the major Indian channels extensively covered the impending visit. They highlighted the fact that President Musharraf was born in Delhi. The ancestral home of President Musharraf was commented upon with great interest and the media even managed to dig out a very old *ayah* (nanny) with an excellent memory, who reminisced about the time she had spent looking after baby Musharraf. For a few days, the *ayah* became a celebrity, much like the camel driver Bashir in 1961, who was famously invited to Washington by Vice President Lyndon Johnson during a visit to Karachi.<sup>6</sup>

According to former Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar, who participated in the Agra Summit, the two leaders held several exclusive meetings and recognized the need to transform the fifty-year-old confrontation into robust neighbourly cooperation. To achieve this, President Musharraf urged honest efforts to resolve the Kashmir dispute.<sup>7</sup> Prior to his second meeting with Prime Minister Vajpayee in Agra, President Musharraf met with leading media personalities at a breakfast meeting. Once again, his articulation and forthrightness made him an instant darling of the media. Although the media exchange was supposed to be off the record, it was telecast later on during the day and caused consternation in the ranks of the hard-line members of the BJP as President Musharraf came out effectively advocating the need for a resolution of the Kashmir dispute and of it being the core cause of tension between the two countries.

The breakfast exchange with the media ended around 11:30 a.m. and President Musharraf called on Prime Minister Vajpayee at 1 p.m. The two Foreign Secretaries had met the night

before and produced a joint communiqué.<sup>8</sup> President Musharraf and Prime Minister Vajpayee instructed the two Foreign Ministers, Abdul Sattar and Jaswant Singh, to produce a joint declaration. This was done without much difficulty and the 'square brackets' signifying differences in an otherwise agreed draft of the communiqué produced by the two Foreign Secretaries were deleted in less than half an hour and a joint declaration was ready. According to Sattar, President Musharraf instantly approved it and Singh felt that he would get the approval from Prime Minister Vajpayee shortly. Musharraf and Sattar patiently waited in their hotel rooms for about three hours when Singh returned to say that the 'Principals' wanted one paragraph amended. This was also done without much ado and Singh informed Sattar that he would be able to get approval within fifteen minutes. The hotel started making preparations for the signing ceremony and tables and chairs were all laid out. Meanwhile, Pakistan's President and Foreign Minister continued to wait until 9.30 p.m., when the message was finally conveyed that the joint declaration could not be signed. President Musharraf was prevented from even talking to the gathered media.

Much has been conjectured regarding the reasons for the Agra Summit's failure. It has been suggested that Prime Minister Vajpayee's health was deteriorating and L. K. Advani wanted to replace him, for which he needed to please the hawks in the BJP and the RSS. In the opinion of Advani's critics, the failure of these talks would boost his stature as a hardliner, whereas their success would have elevated Vajpayee's stature at home and abroad. Interestingly, when Prime Minister Vajpayee visited Pakistan later on in January 2004, he felt politically strong enough to sign the Joint Statement, because by that time the next elections were due, and the NDA partners had expressed their preference for a consensus builder like Vajpayee to lead them in the next general elections.

According to Advani, the inconclusive draft which Singh brought from his meeting with Sattar was discussed at an informal meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security that the Prime Minister convened in his suite in the evening. It was unanimously rejected by all present in the room as there was no reference to cross-border terrorism in it.<sup>9</sup> Sattar, however, disputes Advani's account and maintains that terrorism was indeed included among the subjects for subsequent discussion at the political level.<sup>10</sup> Despite President Musharraf's press talk, Sattar also did not notice any change in Prime Minister Vajpayee's attitude when they met in the afternoon. One or two conclusions are thus inescapable. First, that perhaps the reaction to the President's breakfast meeting with the journalists was not initially that of 'consternation'; in fact, there are reports to suggest that the first reaction of the media was positive. Perhaps what happened is that, with the passage of time, the spin doctors, particularly on the rightist fringe of Indian politics, had the opportunity to exaggerate the impact of the President's talk. Second, it can be surmised that the BJP leadership started getting affected by this reaction after the passage of some hours and thus Prime Minister Vajpayee, who was very serious in carrying on the dialogue, was pressurized against his own best instincts. According to Sattar, Singh was

satisfied with the amended draft; it is obvious he could not have been satisfied if Indian concerns had not been taken into consideration. It is quite clear from the Agra draft declaration that it had included a reference to Jammu & Kashmir in 3 (a) and to terrorism and drug trafficking in 3 (c).<sup>11</sup>

It is also pertinent to provide Jaswant Singh's own account of the Agra Summit. According to Singh, the view amongst his Cabinet colleagues, who had accompanied Prime Minister Vajpayee to Agra, was that 'without sufficient and clear enough emphasis on terrorism, also accepting categorically that it must cease, how could there be any significant movement on issues that are of concern or are a priority only to Pakistan? And none that are in the hierarchy of priorities for India?'<sup>12</sup> Thus, in Singh's viewpoint, the summit failed not because there was no reference to terrorism but the reference was ambiguous as perhaps a clear reference to cross-border terrorism would have implied an acceptance of guilt which Pakistan was not ready for.

In my opinion, one should not expect miraculous results from any summit meeting unless proper preparations are made beforehand. Perhaps this was the reason for the failure of the Agra Summit. My own experience tells me how difficult, painstaking, and time-consuming our preparations used to be on the eve of various high-level meetings. An obvious example was the backchannel negotiation process, spread over a period of almost three years in which many meetings were held at different locations on the globe. The Agra Summit's failure also highlights the importance of bipartisan support for resolving major Pakistan-India disputes.

This is the reason why, during my visits to India as Pakistan's Foreign Minister, I used to meet the top leaders of the opposition parties as well as leaders of the coalition parties in the ruling alliance. In the same spirit, after leaving office, I took the initiative to invite former Foreign Ministers of Pakistan and India belonging to different political parties in an effort to go beyond partisanship on issues of great national importance to the two countries.

The third significant setback in Pakistan-India relations during 1999–2002 was the largest mobilization of troops by India since World War I, following a terrorist attack on the Parliament House in New Delhi in 2001, when a million soldiers stood eye-to-eye for almost a year. Unfortunately, there were casualties among security forces guarding the Parliament House but mercifully no ministers or members of the Parliament were among the casualties. The alleged perpetrators were tried and Afzal Guru was sentenced to death. He has since been hanged. This sentencing created a major controversy and many believed that Guru was innocent of the charges levelled against him. Interestingly, there were more Indian casualties during this massive mobilization in which not a single bullet was fired in anger than in the fierce encounter in Kargil.

What brought the two countries back from the brink and ushered in a phase of Confidence-Building Measure (CBMs) between the two countries was Prime Minister

Vajpayee's announcement at a rally in Srinagar on 18 April 2003 that India was willing to extend a 'hand of friendship' to Pakistan.<sup>13</sup>

Pakistan had of course always called for a peaceful resolution of all outstanding issues, including Jammu & Kashmir. On 2 May 2003, following the Indian Prime Minister's statement, a session was held to develop our response in which all stakeholders were present at the Presidency. Various policy options were considered and probed.

It was generally recognized that, after 9/11, the international community was not prepared to accept militancy regardless of the justness of the cause and there was a general aversion to changing the status quo through violence. Therefore, without compromising on our principled position on Kashmir, we reached realistic and pragmatic conclusions.

Considering the support that the Kashmir cause enjoyed all over Pakistan, we felt we needed to be far more proactive diplomatically to emphasize the centrality of the Kashmir issue and assure the world that, while Pakistan would do all it could to control militancy, it would be impossible to completely seal the border. After all, India had also been unable to do so despite fencing the border and maintaining a 24-hour vigil. Furthermore, we felt the need to have a purposeful dialogue with India on Kashmir because if Pakistan's government was not perceived as serious and sincere in resolving this dispute, some of the militants would turn their guns on the state.

A few days after this meeting, I issued a statement welcoming Prime Minister Vajpayee's announcement relating to the appointment of the Indian High Commissioner to Islamabad. I was pleased that the constructive thrust of our policy regarding India was now beginning to receive a positive response. I reiterated our position that Pakistan desired to have friendly relations with India and wished to hold meaningful discussions on all outstanding issues, particularly Kashmir, so that South Asia could focus on economic and social development of its people and realize its full potential.

It was also decided that Pakistan would offer a series of CBMs to India to initiate the dialogue. Accordingly, in a telephone call to his Indian counterpart facilitated by US Secretary of State, Colin Powell. Prime Minister Zafarullah Khan Jamali welcomed the announcement of 18 April 2003 and invited Prime Minister Vajpayee to visit Pakistan. On 6 May 2003, Jamali offered a resumption of train and bus services with immediate effect, restoration of air links between Pakistan and India, immediate release of all Indian fishermen, and some other prisoners, resumption of sporting ties between the two countries, and restoration at full strength of the diplomatic missions in the two capitals.<sup>14</sup> Pakistan thus initiated a process of CBMs to engage India in a dialogue and there was generally a positive reaction in both countries to these proposals.

### **I Favour Civil Society Interaction**

As various CBMs between Pakistan and India were being announced, a major conference was organized by the South Asian Free Media Association (SAFMA) on understanding,

confidence-building, and conflict resolution. Several Indian members of Parliament belonging to different political parties attended this conference in Islamabad in August 2003. The Foreign Office point of view was that it was important to maintain a clear distinction between official and informal Track-II processes. It was argued by the Foreign Office that an official presence in Track-II would elevate this process and constitute a setback to the Kashmiri cause. It was therefore recommended by the Foreign Office that neither the Prime Minister nor any Cabinet Minister should attend the SAFMA conference.

However, I did not agree with this viewpoint and argued that the conference presented a good opportunity for the government to engage with parliamentarians representing different political parties of India. I felt that the people-to-people contact would prove useful to Pakistan, more so since India is a status quo power, and it was only through engagement at the people-to-people level that Pakistan could hope to bring about flexibility in the official Indian position. I also felt that through interaction with the Indian media and parliamentarians, Pakistan's message would be more effectively conveyed to the people of India. Since India is a pluralistic society with a diversity of opinions, Pakistan could win over moderate elements through engagement. Further, I believed that such contacts would not disappoint the Kashmiris because if our views were expressed in their presence and in front of the Indian and Pakistani media, they would in fact be encouraged and comforted. Therefore, I recommended that not only should the President receive the SAFMA delegation, but I should, also, meet them and host a dinner in their honour. The President and the prime minister agreed with my recommendations and thus started a new trend of thinking in the Foreign Office that there is a need to engage not only with officials but also with important members of the civil society in Pakistan and India.

The interaction of the parliamentarians, representing the entire spectrum of Indian politics with President Musharraf arranged by SAFMA through its office bearers, including its Secretary General Imtiaz Alam, lasted approximately two hours. He spoke for about thirty to forty minutes and the rest of the time was taken up in a question-and-answer session as well as efforts by various parliamentarians to be photographed with President Musharraf. I was quite surprised how successfully and persuasively President Musharraf, despite his role in the events of Kargil, managed to change the perception about him even among Indian parliamentarians. This interaction had a positive effect in Pakistan, and I believe, more so in India. The importance of this interaction lay in the fact that it was composed of major politicians from almost all political parties in India. I was further pleased when, after President Musharraf's forceful advocacy of the need to resolve the issue of Jammu & Kashmir, the parliamentarians from all political parties lined up to be photographed with him. To me the general atmosphere conveyed the feeling that leading Indian parliamentarians in their hearts believed in the necessity of resolving the Jammu & Kashmir issue and were moving away from India's repetitive assertion of the whole of Kashmir being an 'Attoot Ang' (integral part) of India.

## **A BREAKTHROUGH IN 2004**

### **Vajpayee's Second Visit to Pakistan in Five Years**

Given the troubled relations between Pakistan and India, the SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) Summit meetings have rarely been convened on time. Unfortunately, SAARC has been hostage to Pakistan-India relations and its fortunes have fluctuated with the state of relations between the two countries. The Islamabad Summit took time to be organized. It took a while to change the mood for the announcement by the two sides towards an early agreement on the dates for the holding of a SAARC Summit in Islamabad. At the time, the US, the European Union (EU), and other mutual friends of India and Pakistan were also quietly nudging them to make progress towards normalizing their relations.

While Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee had agreed to come to Islamabad, the decision to hold bilateral talks between the two countries was taken at the last minute. Vajpayee arrived in Islamabad on 3 January 2004, to attend the 12th SAARC Summit. It was not clear whether he would request a bilateral meeting with President Musharraf before leaving Islamabad on 6 January as scheduled. It is a normal custom in SAARC meetings that the visiting dignitaries request courtesy call on their host counterparts. It was, therefore, assumed that all heads of delegations would request to call on President Musharraf. Given the state of relations between Pakistan and India, the request by Prime Minister Vajpayee to call on President Musharraf came after he landed in Islamabad; it was preceded by some meetings between important officials of the two countries and aides of the two leaders to prepare the grounds for bilateral meeting.

### **'The Handshake that Changed History'**

The important meeting, which was highlighted in the media as a make-or-break for determining the future relations between Pakistan and India was preceded by Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's courtesy call on Pakistan's Prime Minister Zafarullah Khan Jamali. This half-an-hour interaction convinced the two sides that a meeting with President Pervez Musharraf could be fruitful and thereafter Foreign Minister Yashwant Sinha contacted me to formally request for a call on the President and to settle the modalities. The meeting was scheduled for the morning of 5 January at the Presidency. The stakes were high and neither side could afford failure. Memories of Lahore and Agra lingered.

I was at the presidency with the President prior to the meeting between the two leaders when last minute informal consultations between the Indian National Security Advisor Birjesh Mishra, COS to the President, General Hamid Javed, and Secretary National Security Council Tariq Aziz, were taking place in another room. Mishra had also earlier met the Director General of ISI, General Ehsan-ul-Haq. The discussions concerned last

minute changes in the language regarding 'terrorism' in the text of the proposed Joint Statement. Unfortunately, the media in both the countries walked away with the false impression that Foreign Office officials of Pakistan and India were sidelined. In fact last minute changes were made in the draft at the presidency after it had earlier been shared with officials from both sides. Lt General Hamid Javed, Chief of the Staff to President, told me that Foreign Secretary Riaz A. Khokhar has been informed of the last-minute changes.

President Pervez Musharraf greeted the Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee with a warm handshake and several newspapers all over the world later published the picture of the two leaders as the 'handshake that changed history'. President Musharraf and Prime Minister Vajpayee were assisted by the two Foreign Ministers and other senior officials during the meeting. President Musharraf told the Indian Prime Minister that Pakistan was pleased with the ongoing steady momentum towards normalization of relations. This sentiment, he felt, was shared by the public at large in Pakistan and India. Prime Minister Vajpayee, while agreeing with the President, added that there should not be any setbacks to the momentum of the normalization process, and that during the course of the process, different issues would come under discussion but the two sides should not allow one issue to block the resolution of all other issues. The President reiterated that there was a strong relationship between the dialogue process, including the Kashmir issue, and the forward movement on various CBMs. Prime Minister Vajpayee responded by stating that discussions on Kashmir had been held in the past as well; in fact, whenever talks were held, whether at Lahore in 1999 or earlier at Simla in 1972, the Kashmir issue had been discussed. However, he added that India was now faced with the new problem of terrorism. He said, 'Let us deal with it first since Pakistan was also faced with this problem,' and added that there should be simultaneous discussion of all issues, while positively referring to an article in that morning's local newspaper about the need for adopting flexibility.<sup>15</sup> The President stated that there was no doubt that terrorism should be eliminated and added that the root causes of terrorism needed to be addressed.

He said that implementing CBMs and postponing discussion on the Kashmir issue was not a practical course of action and that bold steps were needed to address this complicated issue. Prime Minister Vajpayee lamented that past discussions on Kashmir had only led to deadlocks. The draft of the Joint Press Statement that was being prepared was also discussed. Initially, Prime Minister Vajpayee felt that the time was not ripe for such a Joint Statement and that India needed more time before starting the dialogue process. He felt that incidents like the recent Jammu railway station terrorist attacks, killing six and injuring sixteen, had made signing such a statement difficult in an election year in India, when he would be answerable to the electorate. President Musharraf assured Prime Minister Vajpayee that his government had taken all possible measures against extremist militant organizations and listed various details in that regard. However, he emphasized that he could not guarantee that such incidents would stop entirely as there were

‘freelancers’ engaging in militant activities and no assurances regarding them could be given.

Once it was decided that both countries would in fact issue a joint press statement, the atmosphere improved very perceptibly. I recall that President Musharraf warmly bade farewell to Prime Minister Vajpayee. As they were walking to the elevator at the conclusion of the meeting, the President wished Vajpayee luck in the forthcoming Indian elections. The mood of the moment was also reflected by the fact that the Indian Prime Minister expressed his admiration for Pakistani dress designers and ordered two *sherwanis*. He even gifted a couple who were designers, his book of poetry, a CD, and an autographed photograph. Shaukat Aziz, then Pakistan’s Finance Minister (Vajpayee’s Minister-in-Waiting, during his visit to Pakistan), while responding to what Prime Minister Vajpayee had taken back with him, quipped, ‘Besides the joint declaration and good wishes, we gifted him CDs of singers like Noor Jehan, Mehdi Hasan, Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, Iqbal Bano, Nayyara Noor, and Ghulam Ali and we have ordered a pair of *sherwanis*. He will soon get these *sherwanis* with Kashmiri embroidery on them.’<sup>16</sup>

### **India-Pakistan Joint Press Statement of 6 January 2004 in Islamabad**

India and Pakistan issued a Joint Statement at the end of the 12th Summit Meeting of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) in Islamabad on 6 January 2004. In view of the importance of this Joint Statement, the text is provided below.

The President of Pakistan and the Prime Minister of India met during the SAARC summit in Islamabad. The Indian Prime Minister while expressing satisfaction over the successful conclusion of the SAARC summit appreciated the excellent arrangements made by the host country. Both leaders welcomed the recent steps towards normalisation of relations between the two countries and expressed the hope that the positive trends set by the CBMs would be consolidated.

Prime Minister Vajpayee said that in order to take forward and sustain the dialogue process, violence, hostility and terrorism must be prevented. President Musharraf reassured Prime Minister Vajpayee that he will not permit any territory under Pakistan’s control to be used to support terrorism in any manner. President Musharraf emphasized that a sustained and productive dialogue addressing all issues would lead to positive results.

To carry the process of normalization forward, the President of Pakistan and the Prime Minister of India agreed to commence the process of the Composite Dialogue in February 2004. The two leaders are confident that the resumption of the composite dialogue will lead to peaceful settlement of all bilateral issues, including Jammu & Kashmir, to the satisfaction of both sides.

The two leaders agreed that constructive dialogue would promote progress towards the common objective of peace, security and economic development for our peoples and for future generations.

### **Reactions to the Statement**

The Joint Press Statement of 6 January 2004 in Islamabad generated a degree of optimism and contributed to the lessening of tension between Pakistan and India. Indian Foreign Minister at the time, Yashwant Sinha, said, ‘There has never been such promise and support for peace in both countries as there is now.’ It was hailed by the international community and both the leaders were given credit for their vision in breaking the impasse.

US Secretary of State, Colin Powell, telephoned President Pervez Musharraf and lauded the leadership of Pakistan and India for taking forward the process for lasting peace in the region and making their contribution to it. The State Department spokesman also noted that ‘we have seen the leaders themselves, put a lot of effort into getting to this point. We have seen them take concrete and practical steps. We have seen them create a momentum.’ He concluded, ‘We have been very supportive of that process and look forward to working with them and helping them as they go forward into a dialogue.’<sup>17</sup>

I received a flurry of congratulatory telephone calls from my counterparts everywhere. The UN’s Secretary General welcomed the meetings in Islamabad and the Joint Statement, and urged the two countries to continue efforts towards a serious and sustained dialogue. Amidst the newfound bonhomie between the two nuclear neighbours, it was not just South Asia buzzing with speculation that President Musharraf and Prime Minister Vajpayee might be awarded joint Nobel Peace Prize.<sup>18</sup> The international media heaped praise on the leadership of the two countries for unleashing several CBMs including the Eid-ul-Fitr LoC ceasefire announced by Pakistan on 24 November 2003 which endured until 2013. I had personally taken keen interest in this.

The reaction to what I truly consider to be a historic point in the relations between the two countries was generally positive in Pakistan but it had its important detractors as well. One of the few important political leaders who opposed the agreement was the head of the Jamaat-i-Islami, Qazi Hussain Ahmad, who criticized the two governments for not discussing the core issue of Kashmir, and concluded that the entire exercise was futile. He also repeated that unless key disputes were resolved, no movement towards normalization and cooperation could begin.<sup>19</sup>

Reaction was also negative among the Kashmiri militants with Sayeed Salahudeen, Chairman of the United Jihad Council and leader of Hizbul Mujahideen, stating that ‘unrealistic conducive atmosphere was created through cosmetic measures’ and adding that all this is happening in a ‘controlled, artificial atmosphere under immense pressure and in the guise of secrecy’. Sayeed Salahudeen also remarked that merely ‘signing a piece of paper cannot convince us to lay down our weapons’.<sup>20</sup>

Significantly, the veteran hard-line Kashmiri leader Syed Ali Shah Gillani, who later opposed the outlines of the proposed agreement on Kashmir, and had earlier been sceptical about the Musharraf-Vajpayee Islamabad meeting, eventually supported the Joint Statement and felicitated both President Musharraf and Prime Minister Vajpayee for their statesmanship.<sup>21</sup> It is, however, ironical that, while the most hard-line pro-Pakistan Kashmiri leader did not find faults with the language of the Joint Statement on Kashmir, a few in Pakistan criticized the words in the Joint Statement that the two governments would try to find a resolution to the Kashmir dispute ‘to the satisfaction of both sides’, and wrongly inferred that the Kashmiris had been overlooked. No government in Pakistan can be oblivious enough to ignore or disregard the wishes and sentiments of the Kashmiris

while trying to find a settlement of the Kashmir issue, and in fact I said on the spot as the Joint Statement was being read that Pakistan will not be satisfied until the Kashmiris are satisfied.

In various resolutions of the UN Security Council on Kashmir, the Council calls upon the Government of India and the Government of Pakistan to refrain from taking any measures which might aggravate the situation. The point to remember is that the UNSC Resolutions refer to the early restoration of peace and security in Jammu & Kashmir and that 'India and Pakistan shall do their utmost to bring about an end to all fighting'. In all these resolutions the reference is to India and Pakistan. In the Simla Agreement both the governments agree that: (i) Indian and Pakistani forces shall be withdrawn to their side of the international border; (ii) In Jammu & Kashmir, the Line of Control resulting from the ceasefire of 17 December 1971, shall be respected by both sides without prejudice to the recognized position of either side. Neither side shall seek to alter it unilaterally, irrespective of mutual differences and legal interpretations. Both sides further undertake to refrain from the threat or the use of force in violation of this line.<sup>22</sup> In the Lahore Declaration the two Prime Ministers agreed that their respective governments shall intensify their efforts to resolve all issues, including the issue of Jammu & Kashmir; shall refrain from intervention and interference in each other's internal affairs; shall intensify their composite and integrated dialogue process for an early and positive outcome of the agreed bilateral agenda.<sup>23</sup>

In other words, all these documents make a reference to the two states including the Islamabad Joint Statement of 6 January 2004. It refers to the resumption of the dialogue which will lead to peaceful settlement of all bilateral issues including Jammu & Kashmir (to the satisfaction of both sides). This will only be possible in the context of a solution in accordance with the aspiration of the people of Jammu & Kashmir.

Differentiating between the Lahore Summit and the Islamabad Joint Statement, the young and dynamic Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, former President of the Hurriyat Conference in Indian Administered Kashmir (IAK), remarked that the two sides had made much more serious and responsible statements in the Joint Statement. He added that hope had been generated and the people of Jammu & Kashmir have reason to be hopeful that something good will happen.<sup>24</sup>

The then President of Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK), Maj. Gen. Sardar Muhammad Anwar, the Prime Minister, Sardar Sikandar Hayat Khan, and the Opposition Leader, Barrister Sultan Mahmood, all welcomed the outcome of the Musharraf-Vajpayee Islamabad meeting, calling it a significant move towards resolving all outstanding issues including Kashmir and establishing a durable peace in the region. Interestingly, there was a significant difference in the response of the two pro-independence leaders in IAK and AJK. Yaseen Malik, President of the pro-Independence Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), expressed cautious optimism.<sup>25</sup> In response to various questions, he said that

while there was hope, the Kashmir issue had to be resolved by involving the Kashmiris in any peace process and making them the principal party in the peace discussions. On the other hand, Amanullah Khan, JKLF's leader in Pakistan, 'denounced the accord'.<sup>26</sup>

In IAK, the mood of the moment was befittingly described by a leading Indian magazine as 'the wine after hemlock'.<sup>27</sup> Ordinary Kashmiris were mesmerized by the television images beaming from Islamabad, and hope and optimism abounded everywhere. The then Chairman of the Hurriya Moulvi Abbas Ansari, was upbeat and remarked that 'it has been our proclaimed stand that there can be no forward movement towards the resolution of the Kashmir problem unless India and Pakistan show fortitude and maturity. It is now clear that Vajpayee and Musharraf have agreed to jointly brave all odds and exhibit that crucial fortitude without which Kashmiris continue to stew in their own soup.' Former Chairman of the All-Parties Hurriyat Conference, Professor Abdul Ghani Bhat, similarly endorsed the Joint Statement in the following words: 'I feel leaders in India and Pakistan have started seeing the hearts and minds of their people, instead of just the geographical boundaries. Once there is the sincerity and the will to discuss issues, even the most difficult problems throw up solutions. I am confident that the defining moment in the history of the two countries has come. No, this in itself is a historic moment.' Hope had also injected a new and healthy competitive element between mainstream and separatist parties with leader of the National Conference, Omar Abdullah, welcoming the Joint Statement and declaring that the proposal to open the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad road link was mooted by his party decades ago.

IAK's Chief Minister Mufti Mohammed Sayeed's grin was the widest as the previous week's breakthrough could considerably ease his task of governance. The Mufti preened that 'for me it has been a matter of faith. I've always said there's no escaping from the fact that we must talk. I've said the road links must be opened so that divided hearts and minds are united. I've always said that *Bandook se na goli se, baat banegi boli se* (It shall neither be through guns or bullets, matters can only be resolved through dialogue).' Master Habibullah, the leader of the Jamaat-i-Islami in IAK, remarked, 'India has a stand on Kashmir. Pakistan has a stand on Kashmir and the people of Kashmir have a stand on Kashmir as well. It's not impossible to find a (political) point where all the three apparently irreconcilable stands must melt into an amicable solution.'<sup>28</sup> This is an astonishing remark given that the Jamaat has had a hard-line position on Jammu & Kashmir.

There was also guarded criticism of Prime Minister Vajpayee from some sections in India. It was pointed out that embracing Pakistan would not be naturally welcomed by the rank and file of the BJP with one of its senior leaders commenting that 'we know that peace with Pakistan is an obsession with Vajpayee. We have to go along with his line as we have no choice in the matter.'<sup>29</sup> Prime Minister Vajpayee was accused of pushing for results in Islamabad against the advice of his own party colleagues.<sup>30</sup> A top leader of Vishwa Hindu

Parishad (VHP) described the entire effort as '*bakwaas*' (rubbish), saying, 'Our time is wasted in such efforts. Since the days of Mohammad Ghauri we have been trying to talk reason to these people. But it is of no use.'<sup>31</sup>

Notwithstanding the widespread support for the Joint Statement from the public at large and important sections of media in South Asia, not everyone at the Foreign Office (FO) was a supporter, with some finding fault with its style and substance possibly because they had not been fully associated with its drafting as they normally should have been particularly in the last twenty-four hours before its finalization and release to the press due to last-minute changes in the language.

The dissenters in the Foreign Office essentially advanced three arguments. First, that by agreeing to state that Pakistan would not allow territory under its control to be used to support terrorism in any manner, President Musharraf had actually conceded that Pakistan had been supporting cross-border movement of militants. Second, the Joint Statement only spoke of a resolution satisfactory to both sides while making no mention of the people of Kashmir. Third, that President Musharraf had unnecessarily and hastily marched towards the Kashmir settlement at a time when Pakistan could not expect to get the most favourable bargain.

As to the first objection, it is clear that, in the absence of an explicit commitment to eliminate cross-border terrorism, there was no way that any Indian Prime Minister, let alone one from the BJP, would agree to talk meaningfully with Pakistan on Kashmir. In fact, the President had stated much earlier (January 2002) that 'no organization will be able to carry out terrorism on the pretext of Kashmir',<sup>32</sup> and further that 'whoever is involved with such acts in the future will be dealt with strongly whether they come from inside or outside the country.'<sup>33</sup> There was not much criticism to this statement at that time, in fact, there could not have been one as non-state actors pose a major threat to Pakistan itself with thousands of Army Jawans laying down their lives in the last few years to protect the state from their activities. Furthermore, in the radically changed international environment after 9/11, Pakistan could not seriously employ militancy as its foreign policy instrument and had already committed itself to various UNSC Resolutions, international treaties and conventions on combating terrorism. Significantly, the wording of the Joint Statement was merely an expression of Pakistan's existing declaratory and legal position.

The second objection can more aptly be characterized as a point scoring attempt. UNSC Resolutions recognize Pakistan and India as parties to the dispute, but crucially grant Kashmiris the right to determine their destiny. India had repeatedly emphasized that it was not prepared to include any other party besides Pakistan. Pakistan disagreed with Indian assertion and felt that too much time had passed; the Kashmiris had rendered great sacrifices in the intervening period; Kashmir could not be treated just as a territorial dispute between the two countries; some mechanism accommodating the aspirations of the

peoples of Jammu & Kashmir had to be found. I made this point explicitly while addressing a joint press conference with my counterpart, Yashwant Sinha. When queried that the Kashmiris had not been explicitly mentioned in the Joint Statement, I instantly replied that what one considers 'to the satisfaction of both sides', assumes that Pakistan would not be satisfied unless the people of Jammu & Kashmir were also satisfied with the envisaged solution. The Joint Statement was read by Sinha and me in back-to-back press conferences. Both of us underlined that the Joint Statement should not be considered as a victory for either side. Sinha added he was optimistic that talks would lead to an agreement on Kashmir. I also expressed my optimism in this regard and hailed it as a triumph of common sense, moderation and statesmanship.<sup>34</sup> In general, the upbeat ambience of the press conference was reflected in the tone of the questions asked.

Subsequently, Pakistan continued insisting that Kashmiris should be included in the talks and notwithstanding India's assertions to the contrary, Pakistan did succeed, at least as a first step, in a compromise solution whereby it convinced India to allow the Kashmiris on both sides to travel to the other side as well as Islamabad and Delhi to enable them to consult with each other and the Pakistani and Indian authorities. Accordingly, India allowed Kashmiri leaders of different backgrounds to travel to Muzaffarabad and Islamabad while Pakistan allowed leaders of various political parties in AJK to visit IAK and Delhi to discuss the issue and formulate their inputs.

In my opinion, the formulation that Kashmir be resolved to the satisfaction of both India and Pakistan was a major development because the Congress Party and, more particularly, the BJP had adopted extremely hawkish positions on Kashmir referring to the whole of Jammu & Kashmir including AJK as its *Atoot Ang* (integral part) and asking Pakistan to quit AJK.<sup>35</sup> Over the years, India has also said that Kashmir's Instrument of Accession was valid at the time of Pakistan's creation and that the state of Jammu & Kashmir constituted an integral and inalienable part of India. Of course, this claim has never been accepted by Pakistan or the UN. Nonetheless, during tense times between the two states, as in 2000–03, India has traditionally highlighted this position. Therefore, Prime Minister Vajpayee's statement about the need for resolving Kashmir to the satisfaction of *both sides* was highly significant. It may be pertinent to point out that a response to the criticism of our policy has also been dealt with at length in the next chapter, 'Interrupted Symphony: Contours of a Backchannel Settlement on Kashmir'.

Some critics might argue that placing so much emphasis on the use of the words 'solution of Kashmir' acceptable to 'both the sides' is mere quibbling. However, I believe that diplomacy is the management of nuances. While contrary and opposite arguments are advanced in any formulation, document or agreement, the words remain constant. For example, Pakistan and India continue to interpret various agreements between them differently, including the implementation and sequencing of the measures preparatory to the holding of a plebiscite under UNSC Resolutions, even if the moral and legal

arguments in favour of Pakistan are overwhelmingly strong. The importance of words can be judged by the fact that to this day India has found it difficult to completely repudiate the spirit behind the use of the word 'plebiscite' in the UNSC Resolution for determining the aspirations of the Kashmiris.

In my opinion, the words 'to the satisfaction of both sides' altered the terms of the debate in South Asia, and a growing chorus of Indian and international experts are now calling on India to settle the Kashmir issue with Pakistan. It would, however, be naive to suggest that simply because of these words, India has modified its position on the issue. Of course, India also had been influenced by the unstable situation in Kashmir and changing international environment coupled with a realization that it cannot achieve its full potential without resolving its disputes with Pakistan.

The critics in the Foreign Office gave no concrete reasons why passage of time would make the resolution of the Kashmir issue more likely on Pakistan's terms. They speculated about a stronger Pakistan in the future better able to secure a just settlement of the Kashmir issue. Even assuming and hoping that Pakistan becomes relatively stronger in the future, it does not necessarily follow that India would also become relatively weak and hence more amenable to a solution more acceptable to Pakistan. Contextually mismatched analogies were drawn to China waiting for one hundred years for Hong Kong's return to get the solution it wanted. Although there have been periods during which Pakistan's economic growth has outstripped India's, and the economies of both countries were rapidly growing at the time. We cannot, however, overlook that in terms of sheer size, India's economy will always remain much bigger than Pakistan's. More important, we felt that delaying a just resolution of Kashmir would strengthen militancy for which Pakistan had already paid an enormous price. We, therefore, concluded that following India's failure to impose its will on Pakistan by mobilizing its troops during Operation Parakram, establishment of nuclear parity in South Asia, Pakistan's economic success at the time, as well as its increasing diplomatic influence and outreach post-9/11, the time was just ripe to resolve the Kashmir issue with India; we felt that the time had arrived when we could find a just resolution to this dispute—a solution which we believed would be acceptable to an overwhelming majority of the people of Kashmir, Pakistan, and India. The progress made later during the Composite Dialogue and on the backchannel did not belie our expectations.

President Musharraf and Prime Minister Vajpayee also agreed to commence the process of Composite Dialogue in February 2004, hoping that it would lead to a peaceful settlement of all bilateral issues. During the following days, I received telephone calls from my counterparts from all over the world who welcomed the Joint Statement, our intention to resume the Composite Dialogue, as well as the conclusion of the SAFTA at the 12th SAARC Summit.

In the subsequent Foreign Secretary level talks held in Islamabad and New Delhi, it was agreed to resume the Composite Dialogue process in the agreed format of 23 June 1997. It was also decided that expert-level talks would also be held on nuclear CBMs. The agreed format and agenda of the Composite Dialogue remained the same as in 1997 and 1998, which focused on peace and security, Kashmir, Siachen, Sir Creek, terrorism and drug trafficking, Wullar Barrage, economic and commercial cooperation, and promotion of friendly exchanges in various fields. Pakistan repeatedly stressed the need to associate the representatives of the Kashmiri people with the peace process; we repeatedly stressed that this was necessary for the final settlement of the Kashmir dispute.

### **America's Role in Pakistan-India Peace Process**

The US's role in defusing tensions between Pakistan and India during 2001–02 should not really cause surprise as the great powers have always been involved in the region due to its geostrategic significance. When I assumed the Foreign Minister's office, the Americans were working behind the scenes to ease tensions because of a nuclearized South Asia and their interests in Afghanistan. They, thus, had a fundamental interest in maintaining regional stability while simultaneously highlighting their concerns about the strained Pakistan-India relations and tensions over Kashmir.

In an effort to dispel tensions, the US handed a paper to Pakistan on 'Possible CBMs for South Asia', offering itself as a possible facilitator to deal with complaints of cross-border terrorism. On 17 October 2002, US Secretary of State, Colin Powell, observed in New Delhi that the problem of terrorism was not limited to Afghanistan and that the USA and India were united in the fight against terrorism, including that directed against India.<sup>36</sup> We were clear that the US was likely to use Pakistan's condemnatory statement on terrorism to remind us of the need to match our words with action. By asking Pakistan to reduce violence in IAK, the US had clearly implied that Pakistan somehow controlled the militants, provided them training camps in Pakistan and facilitated their infiltration into IAK. In the emerging scenario, Pakistan's resumption of support for the militant struggle in Kashmir would have been untenable, as it would have damaged the Kashmir cause and created a serious rift on this issue with the USA.

Early in my tenure, it was decided that I should visit the US. The visit was prolonged as Prime Minister Jamali asked me to visit a few days earlier than the already planned visit to the US in response to the French government's repeated requests to Pakistan to send its Foreign Minister to an important meeting of the UNSC regarding the possibility of a new resolution on Iraq. My maiden visit to the US as Pakistan's Foreign Minister lasted from 19 January to 6 February 2003, and was the longest I ever undertook during my tenure.

My immediate concern was to address the issue of the registration of Pakistanis in the US through the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System (NSEERS) which threatened to adversely affect thousands of Pakistanis in the US whose applications were

pending with American authorities. When I raised the issue with American officials, I was told that, although the US appreciated Pakistan's concerns, Washington's own security needs necessitated NSEERS. Attorney General John Ashcroft told me the system had been mandated by the Congress and was irreversible. However, I was assured by the administration officials that the deadline for the registration will be extended and that relatively few Pakistanis would be deported.

The prevailing trust deficit between Pakistan and the US meant that Pakistan's denials of cross-border activity into India were no longer credible in Washington. Accordingly, one of the central aims of my visit was to restore lost trust and credibility between the two states. During President Bill Clinton's visit to India in 2000, the US had already picked India as its long-term strategic partner. Thus, while we were trying to bring greater flexibility to the US position, we were also legitimately concerned that the US could not deal with India and Pakistan even-handedly. Moreover, we worried that the US typically preferred and practised crisis management and not the conflict resolution that was needed to settle outstanding disputes between Pakistan and India. Nevertheless, moving into 2003, the Americans kept up their contacts with both Pakistan and India to facilitate their peace overtures.

In a meeting at the State Department, US Secretary of State Colin Powell informed me that the US was deeply concerned that infiltration across the Line of Control (LoC) had not decreased despite Pakistan's assurances. He added that there was a growing fear that, if the infiltration did not sufficiently decline, it would increase greatly and lead to a negative backlash in India as soon as the spring snow melted and travel across the LoC became easier. Powell feared that if India took any action, Pakistan would retaliate and then 'there would be a real mess on our hands'. He also suggested that perhaps with regard to movement across LoC, the intelligence and law enforcement agencies were not following President Musharraf's instructions in letter and spirit. Condoleezza Rice, US National Security Advisor at the time, wanted both Pakistan and India to take hard and difficult decisions to avoid a repeat of the previous year's tensions. Rice emphasized that American regional interests were linked to stability in South Asia, and upon being reminded by me conceded that President Bush had indeed promised to play a helpful role on Kashmir issue.

The unprecedented joint US-UK statement on Kashmir issued on 27 March 2003 condemned all acts of terrorism as unjustifiable. Further, it was stated that violence was not the solution to the Kashmir dispute; the LoC should be respected until the resolution of the dispute; Pakistan must fulfil its commitment to completely stop and end infiltration across the LoC; the two countries should consider implementing a ceasefire and taking various other steps to reduce tension, including moves through the SAARC framework, as differences between Pakistan and India could only be resolved through peaceful means and engagement. The statement concluded by expressing the readiness of US-UK to help

Pakistan and India start a process aimed at building confidence, normalizing bilateral relations and resolving outstanding differences, including Kashmir.<sup>37</sup>

While Pakistan welcomed the statement's emphasis on resolving differences through peaceful means and engagement, the Indian Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) termed it as inappropriate, adding that the statement regrettably shifted focus from the basic problems between the two countries and that the problem was not a lack of dialogue but continuing sponsorship of terrorism by Pakistan which was being overlooked.<sup>38</sup>

The Bush Administration facilitated and supported the peace process between Pakistan and India. Prime Minister Vajpayee's Srinagar speech in April 2003 'extending a hand of friendship to Pakistan' was followed by Prime Minister Jamali's call to him to visit Pakistan. US Secretary of State, Colin Powell, facilitated this ice-breaking telephone conversation between the two Prime Ministers in May 2003. He had spoken with me on developments leading to Prime Minister Vajpayee's speech, and I have no doubt that he made similar efforts on the Indian side. In his conversations with President Musharraf and me, Powell pushed for normalization of Pakistan-India relations. Tacit American support for the peace process during regular personal and telephonic exchanges with leaders and Foreign Ministers of Pakistan and India continued. Importantly, the Americans pushed for regional stability and better Pakistan-India relations in an unobtrusive manner. The US keenly followed and welcomed developments nudging the two South Asian rivals closer; US Secretary Colin Powell called me several times to inquire about the ongoing Pakistan-India talks. I believe that, after 2004, the process became self-sustaining. Nevertheless, the Bush administration's support to the Pakistan-India peace process continued over the years even after Rice succeeded Powell as US Secretary of State.

### **Generating a Momentum for Peace**

Unfortunately, excessive partisanship of political parties in both Pakistan and India on Indo-Pak relations prevents the two states from settling their outstanding disputes. There are of course liberal and progressive elements in politics and media in both countries with a more positive approach to Pakistan-India rapprochement. Although these elements are not robust enough in either country to bring about a paradigm shift, they must be credited for advocating a cause yielding no immediate political dividends to them. In India, outside the two major parties, the BJP and the Congress Party, I found the CPI and the CPM as consistent voices of sanity regarding relations with Pakistan. As expected, the BJP and the Congress in India and factions of the Muslim League and the PPP in power in Pakistan did try to improve Pakistan-India relations when in power, but unfortunately the changes in their attitudes were more than just nuanced when these parties were not in power. There was a great desire to take credit for improving relations when in power and an equally strong impulse to deny the other party the credit when no longer in power. To me, Pakistan-India relations are far too vital and complex to be subjected to a partisan approach. I have always, therefore, believed that Pakistan-India relations could not be

improved simply by the governments of the two countries; major opposition parties had an equally important role to play. Accordingly, I always made efforts to meet with top opposition leaders during my visits to India.

In this context, I was slightly taken aback when top opposition leaders of the BJP advised me to go slow on the peace process during one of my trips to India in 2007. I asked Brajesh Mishra why he was advising me in this manner when he was confident when he was in power that Pakistan and India could resolve outstanding disputes in six to eight months. With a twinkle in his eye, he responded, '*Kasuri Sahib—woh to humain karna tha aur karain gay—aap zara dheeray dheeray chalin*' (Kasuri Sahib—it was we who were supposed to do that and we will when we are in power next time—please go slow). Unfortunately, this phenomenon is equally true of Pakistan's political parties. For instance, although it is privately admitted by most politicians in Pakistan that what was achieved during our tenure with regard to improved Pakistan-India ties was unprecedented, none of the major political parties has thus far publicly acknowledged this.

In 2004, I could sense some positive change on the Indian side. In this regard, I recall a meeting with Brajesh Mishra in March 2004 at a private dinner in Lahore—which coincided with a Pakistan-India cricket match—which lasted for about two hours. Although there were many guests, including leading Indian and Pakistani businessmen and industrialists, we decided to sit separately. It is instructive to mention some significant points of our discussions. In response to my emphasis on the importance of an early resolution of all outstanding issues, particularly Kashmir, on which I told him that delay would provide an opportunity to the elements opposed to the rapprochement to derail the process, Mishra reminded me of our meeting in Munich on the margins of the Annual Security Conference in February 2004, during which he had told me that he could not think of a more favourable situation to break the impasse when there was a Muslim League government in Pakistan, backed by the President and the army, and a BJP government in India enjoying broad support. Both governments were thus capable of taking bold initiatives to resolve all outstanding issues. I remarked that, due to Prime Minister Vajpayee's declining health and the fact that he had a sense of history, we should take advantage of the current context and make progress. Mishra agreed and appreciated the importance of leaving behind a legacy of peace and tranquillity by resolving the Kashmir dispute in a peaceful manner. He further said that India was prepared for an early resolution of the Kashmir issue and called upon Pakistan to take the necessary steps to mobilize public opinion for a solution involving a compromise. He was confident about the BJP being able to sell the compromise to the Indian public. I did not probe him about the kind of compromise solution he had in mind since we, in Pakistan, had not yet discussed our possible compromise solutions on Kashmir. However, from his conversation, I got the clear impression that the Indian leadership had some kind of a compromise formula in mind. We also discussed the Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline. Mishra said India could announce its acceptance of the project if Pakistan conveyed its

willingness to grant MFN status to India. When I pointed out that SAFTA granted MFN plus, Mishra was concerned that SAFTA would take time to materialize. My meetings with Mishra in Munich and Lahore were significant as they clearly signalled to me that Prime Minister Vajpayee's government was keen to resolve outstanding issues, including Kashmir, with Pakistan.

Largely based on media reports, there was a sense in Islamabad in 2004 that the BJP would win the upcoming Indian elections. During campaigning, the BJP's slogan 'Shining India' seemed to resonate with the electorate, which is why a large number of commentators, including some leading ones in India, were puzzled by Congress's electoral victory.

Notwithstanding the new Congress government's commitment to continuing the dialogue process with Pakistan, we knew after the hard work poured into the Joint Statement in Islamabad that the devil is in the detail; a lot of effort might well be required before we reached the point we were at with the last government. In fact, Congress's manifesto claimed to base relations with Pakistan on the Simla Agreement of 1972 and subsequent declarations up to 1996. A nuanced change was reflected in the new government's repeated emphasis that there could be no territorial adjustment in Kashmir except minor modification of the LoC. The Congress leadership's main focus remained autonomy. K. Natwar Singh, the new Indian Foreign Minister, remarked that the plebiscite promised by India under a series of UNSC Resolutions was 'a dead issue'. Subsequent developments, however, bore out that the new Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh, and the Congress Party carried forward the peace process started as a result of the Islamabad Joint Statement with the same, if not greater zeal and commitment than the BJP government.

## **OUT-OF-THE-BOX THINKING**

While Pakistan continued its policy of maintaining a principled position on the Kashmir issue and seek a peaceful resolution in accordance with UN Security Council Resolutions, President Musharraf in an interview said that both the governments of Pakistan and India needed to approach the Kashmir issue with flexibility. He further stated, when parties come to a negotiating table, they cannot afford to hold on to maximalist positions and 'no unilateral action can be taken. I have been saying that we must go beyond stated positions and show flexibility. But it can't be done unilaterally by Pakistan. So, there is reciprocity involved.'<sup>39</sup> During the interview he said something along the lines, 'were Pakistan to set aside the UNSC Resolution for the sake of discussion even then the Kashmir dispute would need to be resolved'. I had anticipated that all hell would break loose and that a section of Pakistan's hardliners on India would accuse him of staging a U-turn on Kashmir. Without even telling the President, I issued a press statement; immediately it was brought to my notice that the situation had to be clarified immediately, and I gave an interview to APP, the official news agency, in which I clarified that what President

Musharraf actually meant by stating that Pakistan could set aside UNSC Resolutions for the sake of discussion for finding a resolution to J&K dispute was that these resolutions had thus far never been implemented, and also that it in no way signified Pakistan having unilaterally dropped its demand.<sup>40</sup> Further, I noted that the President had reiterated what had by now famously become his four-point proposal of (a) initiating a dialogue, (b) accepting the centrality of Kashmir, (c) eliminating whatever is not acceptable to Pakistan, India, and the Kashmiris, and (d) arriving at a solution acceptable to all the three stakeholders. I also emphasized that Pakistan had always mentioned flexibility based on reciprocity and it was inconceivable for it to agree to a solution that did not reflect the aspirations of the people of Kashmir. I maintained that geographic neighbours had no choice but to live in peace which is not an isolated event but a sustained process, which needs to be nurtured with political will, determination, and sincerity. Moreover, trust between the two countries must be established and, once established, channels of communication must not be breached. Lastly, I emphasized that Pakistan and India must make strides towards a Composite Dialogue, full engagement, and the definitive resolution of all disputes, as the ultimate goal should be sustainable peace and security and not just transient stabilization measures. My interview clearly reflected that it was high time that Pakistan and India moved towards conflict resolution and away from being singularly focused on conflict management.

It was critical to widen the constituency of peace in the subcontinent. I strongly feel that we should keep everybody engaged, which is why I used to interact with members of all major political parties. During my time as Foreign Minister, we worked hard to engage with the media and civil society in both the countries and facilitated cross-border interaction between them. Consequently, there was an appreciable rise in the number of analysts, academics, research scholars, and policymakers in both countries advocating that outstanding Pakistan-India issues should be resolved through peaceful negotiations and not by coercion and confrontation.<sup>41</sup> I was glad to note that this constituency kept expanding. Further, I always felt that it was vital to develop public opinion in support of the peace process to make it more acceptable and that the intractable nature of the bilateral relationship demanded much greater ownership than the usual involvement of the two countries' Foreign Offices. To me, this was the only way to ensure that the peace process survived changes of government and circumstances in both countries.

## **MY FIRST VISIT TO NEW DELHI**

As I was getting ready to visit India in September 2004, for a ministerial review of the first round of the Composite Dialogue, we realized that not much progress had been made. Fortunately however, the two sides remained keen and committed to sustain the peace process. Given the way it was constituted, in a coalition set-up, the Indian government was unable to make concessions or unwilling to take bold decisions. By then, however, it was

also clear that the failure to solve the Kashmir dispute had sapped both the countries' resources and encouraged violent elements within their societies. In the various strategy sessions held before my visit, it was clear that, in the aftermath of 9/11, militancy was both counterproductive as well as unacceptable to the international community. Importantly, we had committed ourselves to ensuring that Pakistan's territory would not be used for terrorist activity in its neighbourhood.

Before the trip to New Delhi, I made a series of calls to Foreign Ministers of leading Western and other countries with friendly relations with both Pakistan and India, including US Secretary of State Colin Powell, British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw, German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, EU Foreign Policy Chief Javier Solana, Dutch Foreign Minister Bernard Rudolf Bot, and Japanese Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi. I informed them that, although Pakistan's commitment to the peace process with India remained undiminished, in the absence of forward movement on various contentious issues, it would be difficult for Pakistan's government to carry the support of its people. I emphasized that the success of the dialogue depended on India's willingness to engage in a substantive dialogue on Kashmir and reminded them that Pakistan had also agreed to talk bilaterally with India pursuant to the Joint Statement of 6 January 2004, which specifically mentioned that the two countries would resolve all issues, including Kashmir, to the satisfaction of both Pakistan and India. I also conveyed to them that Indian allegations of cross-border terrorism were a contradiction of earlier statements made by their military officials, and were aimed at mounting pressure on Pakistan on the eve of my talks with Foreign Minister Natwar Singh. Also, it was vital to reduce hopelessness amongst the Kashmiris in order to eliminate the influence of the extremists. Further, I requested my counterparts to use their influence to prevail upon India to show the political will and maturity to move forward since the progress made in the Composite Dialogue and on the Kashmir issue had thus far been minimal. I urged them to advise the Indian government to purposefully work towards settling the Kashmir issue and to impress upon India the need to associate the representatives of the Kashmiri people with the process of working out a settlement of the Kashmir dispute. Moreover, I highlighted the importance of undertaking visible steps to improve the human rights situation in Kashmir as well as the need for withdrawing Indian Armed Forces from Kashmir's population centres.

To my counterparts from the European Union (EU), I highlighted the Report of July 2004 issued by the European Parliament, which had described Indian Administered Kashmir as 'the most beautiful prison on earth'. I tried to impress upon them that the Report would provide the EU with a useful basis for considering the Kashmir dispute in a comprehensive manner. This, I thought, would hopefully enable the EU to initiate serious discussions with India which, in turn, would help generate the right atmosphere for resolution of the Kashmir dispute.

Although I attached great importance to the settlement of disputes with India, and the comprehensive preparations made for my visit to New Delhi included briefings by the

Pakistan Army on Siachen and by the Pakistan Navy representatives on Sir Creek, as well as an in-depth study of past negotiations with India on Kashmir, it was clear on the eve of my visit that India's position on Kashmir remained rigid and that it was unlikely to modify its strategy on the issue of terrorism. India wanted to calibrate the dialogue process in accordance with its own priorities and its government was not taking bold decisions. I sensed that India considered Pakistan a deeply divided polity with no consensus on basic issues amongst the government and the opposition, resulting in political instability and weak state institutions. Unfortunately however, some in India mistook our flexibility as a sign of weakness.

During my visit, besides Foreign Minister Natwar Singh, I also met with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, National Security Advisor J. N. Dixit, leader of the opposition L. K. Advani, former Prime Minister I. K. Gujral, former Foreign Minister Yashwant Sinha, former National Security Advisor Brijesh Mishra, Secretary General Congress Party of India Harkishan Singh, and socialist leader Abani Roy. Significantly, a day prior to my meeting with Foreign Minister Singh, I received informal messages from the Indian government that I should not meet the Kashmiri leaders, particularly Syed Ali Shah Gillani, as this could adversely impact our bilateral talks the following day. However, I remained convinced that there could be no acceptable resolution of the Kashmir dispute without taking the Kashmiri leadership on board. Accordingly, I decided to go ahead with my planned meetings with the Kashmiri leaders; prominent among those I met included Syed Ali Shah Gillani, Mirwaiz Omar Farooq, Yasin Malik, and Syed Shabbir Ahmad Shah.

Even before my one-on-one meeting with Foreign Minister Singh in Delhi, the two of us had already developed a level of confidence and trust during our maiden meeting in China, when we became the centre of international media's attention on account of our meeting for the first time, in a country strongly allied to Pakistan but not on such friendly terms with India. Even our travelling together on the same plane in China generated headlines such as 'Kasuri and Natwar in the same plane in China'. We purposefully sat next to each other on our way to Qingdao where Foreign Minister Singh hosted a lavish lunch in my honour.<sup>42</sup> Fortunately, Foreign Minister Singh and I were equally interested in carrying forward the peace process started during the previous BJP government. We both agreed to 'provide continuous political guidance' to those already engaged in the current process of bilateral parleys under the matrix of a composite dialogue.<sup>43</sup>

Although plenty of hopes and expectations were generated in the aftermath of the Summit Meeting in Islamabad on the sidelines of the SAARC Conference in January 2004 and the issuance of the Joint Statement by the leaders of Pakistan and India, it was not certain that the incoming Congress government would continue the peace process initiated in Islamabad. As the new government's Foreign Minister and I met for the first time, I suggested going for a stroll around the lawns of the Conference Centre to Foreign Minister

Singh, in order to get to know each other better. It did not take the two of us much time to break the ice; in fact, I felt an instant chemistry between us. Both of us felt that the time had arrived for Pakistan and India to resolve all their disputes, including Kashmir.

I sensed that Foreign Minister Singh was sincere in his desire for peace. He even wittily remarked that, as he was much older than me, he was in a greater rush to normalize Pakistan-India relations, by resolving all outstanding issues during his lifetime. Although our first meeting in China was meant to be a 'get to know you' meeting, it turned out to be far more useful, resulting in much greater trust between us and reassuring all concerned that the Pakistan-India peace process would continue under the new Congress government.

As a result of the level of trust created between the two of us during our maiden meeting in China, I decided to speak frankly in my one-to-one meeting with Foreign Minister Singh in India. During this meeting, which took place on 5 September 2004, at the Hyderabad House, I reiterated Pakistan's commitment to the dialogue process. In the same spirit of candour, Foreign Minister Singh said that India would discuss Kashmir in all its aspects. I informed him that I had the mandate to carry forward the discussion on Kashmir. While responding to a question about what Pakistan wanted with regard to Kashmir, I told my counterpart that, although the Kashmir issue could not be decided in one meeting, the two countries must take steps to provide relief and hope to Kashmiris. Referring to my meetings with Syed Ali Shah Gillani and other Kashmiri leaders a day earlier, Foreign Minister Singh informed me that these meetings had created an awkward situation for the Indian leadership. However, I maintained that the Kashmiris had a role in the resolution of the dispute as it directly impacted their future. Hence, it was vital to acknowledge their role. Foreign Minister Singh was of the view that a deadline for the resolution of the Kashmir dispute was not feasible. Even assuming that Pakistan adopted a position on Kashmir deemed reasonable by India, Foreign Minister Singh felt that the solution to the problem would still entail the lengthy process of building trust and confidence, starting with the implementation of the Kashmir-related CBMs. He suggested that Kashmir, since long a source of conflict, could become a bridge for further understanding and cooperation. However, I bluntly told Foreign Minister Singh, 'You have lost Kashmir and you have to compromise on Kashmir. You cannot continue repression forever in Kashmir. You don't have many options since you are a democratic and pluralistic society and will not find it feasible to keep Kashmiris under bondage for all time.' Moreover, I suggested that India would find it extremely difficult to continue its occupation as it would be a constant embarrassment and an affront to India's democratic credentials.

Foreign Minister Singh also highlighted India's position that progress could only be made if cross-border infiltration by Pakistan was brought to an end. On this point, I told him that I had assurances from the highest levels in Pakistan that infiltration did not enjoy official support. In response to the Indian suggestion of establishing contacts between the ISI and RAW, I felt that the ISI would be reluctant to establish such contacts at the stage at which

we were as it would feel that RAW might exploit these contacts for propaganda purposes. On Siachen, I referred to the 1989 agreement stressing that the two countries revert to the same understanding and seek an unconditional settlement. In response, Foreign Minister Singh promised to discuss the matter with the Prime Minister. We also discussed the Pakistan-Iran gas pipeline and, on the question of initiating the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus service, I held firm that no passports or visas would be acceptable to Pakistan. The foregoing exchange reflects the measure of understanding and trust that had developed between Foreign Minister Singh and me, and which crucially enabled us to say things to each other privately in a frank and a forthright manner.

After the conclusion of our official talks, External Affairs Minister Natwar Singh and I held a Joint Press Conference, where Foreign Minister Singh announced a number of decisions taken by the two of us during the course of our two days of talks, including holding meetings to discuss conventional and nuclear Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs), carrying out a joint survey of the boundary pillars in the horizontal segment of the internal boundary in the Sir Creek area, and starting the Munabao-Khokhrapar Railway link. A number of other measures and exchanges, including a bus service between Amritsar and Lahore, were also agreed upon. Foreign Minister Singh further highlighted that diplomacy provided hope and not salvation; the two countries had made vital progress and established rapport and mutual trust. Singh also emphasized that cross-border infiltration remained a serious concern and reminded everyone of the January 2004 reassurance given by President Musharraf of not allowing Pakistan's territory to be used to support terrorism in any manner. He critically pointed out that the two sides were committed to maintaining the ceasefire enforced since 4 November 2003, and concluded that the first round of the Composite Dialogue had ended positively.<sup>44</sup>

The outcome of the meeting led to the exchange of various CBMs. Additionally, the following points are worth highlighting:

1. My response to Indian insistence on the need to stop Line of Control (LoC) infiltration, that it had decreased and was not officially supported.
2. A proposal floated by us regarding the need to establish a mechanism with the appointment of a High Representative with a defined mandate to promote a peaceful settlement of the Kashmir dispute in my meeting with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. I was pleasantly surprised when the Prime Minister positively started thinking aloud with me and found him to be genuinely interested in exploring our idea. The Prime Minister, while supporting the dialogue process, favoured a step-by-step approach on Kashmir. I was astonished to see the Indian newspapers the following day with a headline report on my meeting with the Prime Minister titled, 'Prime Minister rules out China type talks on Kashmir, says Pak must stop cross-border terrorism'. (It may be mentioned here that India and China

conduct negotiations on the boundary question through a Special Representative and the press report referred to that.) The report negated my impression about the Prime Minister's positive response to our proposal and conveyed a different impression of our meeting. At that time, I was upset by what I read in the Indian media since it was at variance with the content and spirit of the discussions with the Prime Minister. I concluded that this was a calculated leak by hard-line elements in the Indian establishment unhappy at the proposal and what I considered to have been the Prime Minister's reaction. Little did I realize then that the process that we would ultimately agree upon, namely the 'backchannel', would prove far more fruitful in generating fresh ideas for resolving the Kashmir dispute.

3. India's NSA, Dixit, mentioned to me that India would welcome Pakistan's suggestions on Kashmir and that the two countries may well have to think of an out-of-the-box solution to the dispute, which crucially provided a clear inkling by a representative of the new Congress government that India was serious in discussing the Kashmir issue and was moving away from its oft-repeated mantra of Kashmir being its '*atoot ang*' (integral part).
4. During this visit, the former National Security Advisor, Brijesh Mishra, who became friendly with me during the earlier BJP tenure, came to see me at the hotel. He told me that a move on disengagement at Siachen would also make the Pakistan Army happy, implying thereby that it would thereby become more amenable to the Pakistan-India peace process. He added that there could also be border delineation in Sir Creek. These moves, he said, were easily doable. He said he regretted that it did not happen during the tenure of the BJP government. If truth be told, it is fair to say that it was not just the BJP which was expecting to win, but that we in Pakistan actually wanted them to win, since we had started getting along with them. We were fearful at the time that a new Congress government might disown the peace process started during the tenure of the BJP government. It took some time before we were able to establish our rapport with the new government.
5. My interaction with Kashmiri leaders was spread over several hours. Syed Ali Shah Gillani's tone was aggressive as he criticized Pakistan's policies on a number of counts, including the proposal to start a bus service between Muzaffarabad and Srinagar. He described President Musharraf's four-point agenda as vague and criticized the President's statement on the UNSC Resolutions' relevance to Kashmir. To my surprise, Gillani commented on Pakistan's foreign policy generally, and was also critical of the Wana Operation, a purely internal matter of Pakistan. He was generally inflexible in his approach to resolving the Kashmir dispute. Fortunately, other Kashmiri leaders I met recognized the need for unity in the ranks of Kashmiris; they were more pragmatic and by and large unwilling to go

along with Gillani's rigid approach.

6. My meeting with my Indian counterpart evoked a positive global response. On 8 September 2004, Secretary Powell hailed my meeting with Foreign Minister Singh as a positive development and commented that Kashmir was a very difficult issue that would take time to resolve. He added that, nonetheless, both sides realized that Kashmir needed to be resolved, and also expressed satisfaction that the two countries had agreed to extend the ceasefire enforced on the LoC.

After my visit, it became clear that President Musharraf's close aide Tariq Aziz and India's National Security Advisor, Dixit, would begin to seriously discuss various options on Kashmir.

By the end of 2004, a host of positive developments in Pakistan-India relations had taken place including the commencement to a second round of Composite Dialogue, an Experts' Meeting on nuclear and conventional CBMs, and an exchange of proposals about CBMs relating to LoC in Kashmir, such as promotion of regular contacts on local level at designated places, the continuation of the ceasefire agreed by the two countries in November 2003, the visit of Kashmiri leaders to Pakistan, and the initiation of a bus service between Muzaffarabad and Srinagar. The hope was that these CBMs would go a long way towards creating a peaceful environment in the region. The meeting between President Musharraf and Prime Minister Singh on 24 September 2004, on the sidelines of the UNGA session in New York, generated further hope, with some press reports quoting the two leaders as describing their meeting as 'a good omen' and a 'historic day'.<sup>45</sup>

The statement issued on the occasion emphasized the need for 'a peaceful negotiated settlement' of the 56-year-old dispute, a phrase Indians had strongly objected to in the recent past while insisting that Kashmir was their internal problem.<sup>46</sup>

## **NATWAR'S PRODUCTIVE VISIT TO ISLAMABAD**

### **Agreement on Allowing Kashmiri Leaders to Travel to Pakistan**

#### *Commencement of Muzaffarabad-Srinagar Bus Service*

The enthusiasm for peace was waning because of the increasing divergence over the water issue between the two countries as well as lack of progress on other outstanding issues. Moreover, since Kashmir was being dealt with on the backchannel, at least at the early stage, progress made on the Kashmir issue could not be publicly articulated. Therefore, in the eyes of the public, the Composite Dialogue was only generating CBMs and, however important these underpinnings were to the ongoing peace process, Pakistan acted proactively by taking up issues of concern with India in order to sustain both the dialogue and the public interest in it.

In this backdrop, when Indian Foreign Minister Natwar Singh visited Pakistan in February 2005, I was of the opinion that, at least in my one-on-one meeting with him, I should forthrightly express Pakistan's concerns over matters plaguing our minds and that of the public at large. Following a dinner hosted by the Indian High Commissioner at his residence, my third one-on-one meeting with Singh took place on 15 February 2005, and lasted for an hour.

We discussed the following issues:

- i. Association or inclusion of Kashmiris in the dialogue process;
- ii. Commencement of the bus services between Muzaffarabad and Srinagar;
- iii. Pakistan's strong reaction to the Baglihar Dam issue, based on the fact that the gates being installed in the dam were in breach of the IWT (Indus Waters Treaty); moreover, Pakistan felt vulnerable since India could choose to fill the dam exactly when Pakistani farmers downstream would be harmed by this;
- iv. Pakistan's commitment to elimination of extremism at home and its dedication to the peace process with India; and
- v. Opening of Pakistan's Consulate at Jinnah House in Mumbai. Foreign Minister Singh informed me that he would take up this matter with Mrs Sonia Gandhi and seemed optimistic that this could be done.

My third one-on-one interaction with Natwar Singh merits further explanation. On Kashmir, I informed him, that it would be difficult to find a resolution to the dispute without the involvement of the Kashmiri leadership. He responded that India would oppose the direct participation of the Kashmiri leadership as, in his view, the Kashmir issue was purely a bilateral matter between Pakistan and India. As a compromise, I felt that at least the top Kashmiri leaders should be permitted association in some form or manner with the dialogue process. Therefore, I suggested that, in the first instance and as a compromise, top Kashmiri leadership should be allowed to travel freely in both countries and meet with officials in Islamabad and Muzaffarabad, and in Delhi and Srinagar. I told Foreign Minister Singh that Kashmiri leaders invited to visit Pakistan would also include Ali Shah Gillani, a vocal critic of our government's policies. I strongly felt that, by associating Kashmiris with the peace process, a large part of the critics' sting would be neutralized. Foreign Minister Singh assured me that he would request his government to permit the visit of APHC leaders to Pakistan, which also marked the first indication by India that Kashmiri leaders would be allowed to travel to Pakistan in the future. Subsequently, leaders of both IAK and AJK travelled both ways.

### **Backchannel Established**

I expressed my disappointment to Foreign Minister Singh that the promise generated by the start of the dialogue between Pakistan and India had not materialized. I told him that, in view of the confidence that the two countries had developed in one another, I felt let

down. I stressed that both countries must try to make a difference to the lot of their people as soon as possible. In the spirit of the confidence that had developed between us, I urged Foreign Minister Singh to go beyond articulating the respective positions of the two countries and thereby contribute to the making of history. Foreign Minister Singh remarked that he was equally interested in taking the process forward and, in this connection, while speaking about the appointment of Ambassador Lambah as India's backchannel negotiator, assured me that he was his nominee who would work under him. We also agreed on the date of announcement for the commencement of the Muzaffarabad-Srinagar bus service, which was formally launched on 7 April 2005. I must commend Foreign Minister Singh for taking my forceful comments graciously and in the right spirit. This happened because we had developed mutual respect.

On the issue of postponement of the SAARC Summit in Dhaka at Delhi's insistence, Foreign Minister Singh expressed unhappiness at Pakistan's strong reaction. Although India justified its non-participation on security grounds, in the backdrop of the political assassination of Shah A. M. S. Kibria, a former Finance Minister in Awami League's government, it was widely believed that India was generally unhappy with the BNP government. On the situation in Bangladesh, Foreign Minister Singh commented that 'Bangladesh is slipping into chaos and Muslim fundamentalism is on the rise and this is a threat to all of us.' I responded that Bangladesh's government was understandably unhappy as all its preparations would end up as wasted effort. Significantly, I also explained that India must understand the reasons behind Pakistan's sharp reaction over its insistence to postpone the summit. At the time, Pakistan's government was already being assailed by its critics for showing excessive flexibility vis-à-vis India, and this latest let down would only add to the chorus of voices opposed to a peace settlement with India.

I also spent some time briefing Natwar Singh how the situation had changed and why President Musharraf was committed to rooting out extremism. I informed him that the President and the government meant business as far as this issue was concerned, and that India must not waste this window of opportunity, especially when other major political parties of Pakistan, including the PPP and PML-N, also favoured detente with India. Reiterating the sentimental value of the Jinnah House in Mumbai to Pakistanis, I informed my counterpart that Pakistan's government was committed to opening Consulates General in Mumbai and Karachi on a reciprocal basis. I concluded by urging India to respond positively.

A positive and long-awaited outcome of Foreign Minister Singh's visit included reaching an agreement on the commencement of the Muzaffarabad-Srinagar bus service from 7 April that year. I read out the following while announcing the initiation of the bus service at a joint news conference:

Both the governments have agreed to allow travel across the LoC between Srinagar and Muzaffarabad by bus. Travel will be by an entry permit system, once identities are verified. Application forms for travel will be

available with designated authorities in Srinagar and Muzaffarabad. The bus service is expected to commence from April 2005.

Subsequently, Foreign Minister Natwar Singh read out his statement and termed his discussions with me as extremely useful and intensive.<sup>47</sup> He further declared: ‘My visit has reinforced in me the determination to continue working for expanding cooperation and understanding between our two countries. The people of both our countries clearly desire it.’ He also stated that the two sides had agreed to consider undertaking measures to alleviate the situation of civilian prisoners and detained fishermen. Noting that the two countries had come a long way over the past one year or so, Foreign Minister Singh asserted, ‘I am convinced that cooperation between our two countries is not just a desirable objective; it is an imperative.’ Acknowledging the differences between the two countries as normal, given the history and complexity of Pakistan-India relationship, Foreign Minister Singh nonetheless emphasized that it was incumbent upon the leaderships of the two countries to find ways to enhance trust and cooperation in order to productively address their differences. He concluded his statement by emphasizing that the peace process could only be sustained in an atmosphere free from terrorism and violence, and in the framework of implementation of the commitment made in January the year before.

In my follow-up statement, I remarked that the two sides had agreed to continue the Composite Dialogue process in a positive spirit for constructively addressing all outstanding issues, including Kashmir, peace and security, conventional and nuclear CBMs, trade, and people-to-people contacts. On the core issue of Kashmir, I added that Pakistan had impressed upon India for an early and final settlement of the dispute in accordance with the aspirations of the Kashmiris. I also highlighted that Pakistan and India had agreed to direct their Defence Secretaries to take up the Siachen issue in a friendly and cooperative manner, which would hopefully promote strategic stability in South Asia. Regarding India’s Baglihar and Kishanganga Dams projects, I called upon my Indian counterpart for an early resolution according to the terms of the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT).

Following my latest interaction with him, I felt that Foreign Minister Singh was more confident than before, which also confirmed the assessment of our High Commissioner in Delhi that Singh was calling the shots after the death of National Security Advisor, J. N. Dixit, in 2005. Importantly, it appeared that the dialogue process was making good progress and the two South Asian nuclear neighbours were moving away from conflict management towards a more serious and appropriate conflict resolution process.

## **MUSHARRAF VISITS DELHI IN A CARNIVAL ATMOSPHERE**

**‘Great Leap Forward’—Sonia Smiles at Last!**

Since the issuance of the Joint Statement of January 2004, greater confidence, understanding, and trust had developed between the leaders of the two countries, which fortunately continued even after the Indian elections led to a new Congress government. As reflected in my meetings with Natwar Singh, personal rapport between the leaderships of the two countries had also blossomed and provided a vital push to the peace process. Against this backdrop, President Pervez Musharraf and Begum Sehba Musharraf visited Delhi between 16–18 April 2005, on the invitation of India's Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and his wife Gursharan Kaur. I accompanied the President on this trip.

During our visit, we had the opportunity to witness the last one-day match of the India-Pakistan cricket series in Delhi. When we arrived at the Ferozeshah Kotla Ground, Sonia Gandhi and Foreign Minister Natwar Singh were already present. A carnival atmosphere prevailed in the stadium, with a fair Pakistani presence loudly cheering Shahid Afridi in full swing. I had the odd feeling that his shots were aimed in our direction. Foreign Minister Singh light-heartedly commented, '*Aap Afridi ko bhee apnay sath hee lai jaen*' (Take Afridi back home with you). However, unlike the cheering Pakistani crowd in the general stands, the Indians and Pakistanis in our enclosure were polite and restrained in their reactions. As the match entered an interesting stage, President Pervez Musharraf expressed his desire to delay leaving the stadium for his meeting with Prime Minister Singh (who was sitting next to him). While leaving for his meeting, President Musharraf lamented to the press reporters about having to leave the match at such an exciting stage. Like the rest of the delegation, I was also keen to return to the match. The President suggested to Prime Minister Singh that they should return to the stadium at the end of their scheduled meeting at the Hyderabad House. Before long however, President Musharraf and I received chits informing us that the match had ended earlier than anticipated, with Pakistan not only winning the match hands down but also clinching the series.

During this visit, I remember receiving Sonia Gandhi, President of the Congress Party. She seemed rather reserved when she came to call on President Musharraf. I received her in the waiting room prior to the meeting with the President. She was accompanied by Natwar Singh. I thought I could cheer her up and mentioned that while I was at Cambridge, I remember strolling with Sohail Iftikhar (son of Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din, who had been a prominent Congress leader and a friend of both Gandhiji and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru), and seeing a handsome young man walk from the opposite direction on the King's Parade. When I asked Sohail who this young man was, he whispered to me that his name was Rajiv and that he was the grandson of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. The moment Sonia heard me refer to Rajiv as a handsome young man, she broke into a broad smile and said good humouredly, 'That is why I married him.' Tahir Jahangir, who was our contemporary at Cambridge (and is married to Asma Jahangir, the famous human rights activist) wrote a piece in the *Friday Times*: 'Rajiv and Sonia: love at first sight—How a chance encounter in a Cambridge restaurant made an Italian language student the most powerful woman in

India'.<sup>48</sup> I sent her a copy of that magazine through Mani Shankar Aiyar, knowing that it would please her to read the contents.

### **Irreversibility of the Peace Process**

At the end of the visit on 18 April 2005, a Joint Statement issued by the leaders of the two countries unequivocally stated the irreversibility of the peace process and pledged that terrorism would not be permitted to impede or scuttle it. This marked a watershed moment, which made the peace process and backchannel diplomacy sustainable, and the progress made here proved invaluable during the testing times that were to follow. At that time we felt that in making the peace process irreversible, we would not be handing over a veto to the terrorists over the peace process. We felt that this will make the peace process sustainable. I call it a defining moment because, instead of remaining fixated in the past, the leaderships of the two countries had started looking towards the future. This moment could also be described as a public celebration of the peace process in which not just the leadership but important media groups as well as influential sections of the civil society in both the countries felt that regional cooperation would follow regional peace, and that finally SAARC, which had been crippled by Pakistan-India tensions, would be able to realize its potential as a robust regional organization.

The Joint Statement reflected the growing optimism in both countries and, while endorsing the decisions of the Foreign Ministers in February 2005, decided on a number of issues, including reactivating the Joint Commission after a fifteen-year break. President Musharraf was extremely happy with the outcome and told me that the two sides had achieved much more than he had expected. He later repeated this to senior editors at a breakfast meeting. Prime Minister Singh, known to be generally guarded, returned the compliments by stating that he had also enjoyed his talks with President Musharraf which certainly marked a forward movement.<sup>49</sup> Describing his talks with President Musharraf as positive and fruitful, the Prime Minister also expressed India's readiness to deal with all contentious issues.<sup>50</sup> With regard to India's Baglihar Dam project, Prime Minister Singh expressed India's commitment to adhere to the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) and reasserted that Delhi had no intentions or designs of hurting Pakistan's interests and was ready to discuss the technical details of the dam in order to resolve any disputes arising out of it. Suffice it to say, the outcome of the talks between the two leaders in February 2005 was aptly heralded as 'a great leap forward',<sup>51</sup> and was also positively received and appreciated by the people of Pakistan and India.

### **Crossing the Rubicon: The Bus Service across the LoC Compared to Fall of the Berlin Wall**

The commencement of the bus service across the Line of Control (LoC) in April 2005 was no ordinary event. It was historic. A large number of people instinctively compared it to

the fall of the Berlin Wall. For example, author and eminent journalist, Zahid Hussain, writing for the *London Times* under the title, 'Day of joy in Kashmir as peace buses end 57 years of division', compared it to the fall of the Berlin Wall.<sup>52</sup> Notwithstanding objections from some hard-liners, the overwhelming majority of people in Pakistan, Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK), India, and Indian Administered Kashmir (IAK) strongly welcomed this initiative. I instinctively discerned the immense political as well as psychological importance of permitting travel across the LoC, which essentially amounted to crossing the Rubicon and irrevocably committing both sides to a negotiated solution to the Kashmir dispute.

It was equally significant that the two sides had agreed that travel would be permitted without passports and visas, so as not to prejudice Pakistan's position on Kashmir as a disputed territory. Although I had anticipated opposition from hard-line elements in the Indian bureaucracy on this issue, it was ironic that there was opposition from some of our own elements, who wanted to run the bus service under UN supervision, which would almost certainly have killed the proposal as there was not a chance that India would have agreed to such an arrangement. In an effort to break the stalemate over this issue, I spoke with Foreign Minister Natwar Singh and Indian High Commissioner Shiv Shankar Menon, and urged them to accept Pakistan's proposal of permitting travel without passports and visas if the bus service were to start. After being informally told by late Ambassador Niaz A. Naik (who was involved in Track-II talks at that time) that India was likely to accept Pakistan's proposal, I was thrilled when the Indians formally informed me of their acceptance. Perhaps the principal reason why India accepted our proposal was that the peace process was going on rather well with plenty of progress being made both on the Composite Dialogue and the backchannels.

When the bus service actually started, there was high drama across the LoC accompanied by enthusiastic send-offs and welcomes in Srinagar and Muzaffarabad for those travelling in either direction. The sense of drama was further heightened after a concerted effort was made to prevent the bus from taking off on the eve of its commencement, when some militants attacked the tourist centre in Srinagar, causing casualties. However, since plenty of trust had developed between the two governments as a result of the giant strides in the peace process, it was decided that, notwithstanding the inherent dangers in the enterprise, as dramatically highlighted by the terrorist attack, the bus service would commence on the scheduled date. Most of the passengers travelling to Srinagar were elderly men and women who were reuniting with their family members after more than five decades. They were largely undaunted by the threats of attacks. In the words of the Prime Minister of AJK, Sardar Sikandar Hayat Khan, 'The restoration of the bus service was a historic step.'

<sup>53</sup> A retired High Court judge, Sharif Hussain Bukhari, returning after fifty-five years to meet his sister and cousins, was overwhelmed when he saw his sister and a niece at the post. He hugged them and could not stop his tears from flowing. 'I have seen my niece for the first time,' he said in a voice choked with emotion.<sup>54</sup> 'There is a risk but I am taking

the risk so that this bus is the first step towards a resolution of Kashmir. The Line of Control could fall like the Berlin Wall.’<sup>55</sup> Shahid Bahar, a lawyer from Muzaffarabad, whose father crossed over in 1949, sentimentally proclaimed, ‘I am coming here for the first time to meet my blood relations. It was my dream. It is unbelievable. Everyone is here.’<sup>56</sup> Such was the momentousness of the event that not just the passengers but even the hordes of national and international journalists who were gathered to cover the maiden bus journey were overwhelmed by the emotions witnessed on both sides of the LoC. An eminent journalist began his newspaper article the following day by recounting the unbridled emotions of a grandmother as she returned in a wheelchair to the land where she had been born and raised, and expansively describing the scenes of joy at the border post as the first buses crossed the LoC since the division of Kashmir in the aftermath of Partition in 1947.<sup>57</sup>

In Pakistan, there was a broad political consensus in support of the bus service and also generally for the peace process. Echoing the dominant political sentiment in the country, former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto welcomed the bus service and hoped that it would alleviate the sufferings of the divided Kashmiri families, in addition to promoting the prospects of safe and open borders in South Asia, without prejudice to the Kashmir dispute. Significantly, for the first time in Pakistan’s history, a broad political consensus on normalization of relations with India had emerged.

The commencement of the bus service was seen as a model for guiding the future of Pakistan-India relations. Although the BJP had criticized the UPA government in the Indian Parliament for not requiring passports for travel, the bus service did not become the issue that it could have because of the obvious goodwill that it was expected to generate. Moreover, I had repeatedly emphasized that the peace process had actually been initiated during the tenure of BJP’s Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, and had never forgotten to praise him for it.

While speaking to the press on the commencement of the bus service and the visit of APHC leaders to Pakistan, President Pervez Musharraf remarked that their visit was a very important CBM, of great political significance, as they had travelled without requiring Indian passports or Pakistani visas. He added that it marked the recognition of the disputed status of occupied Kashmir by both the countries.<sup>58</sup> I was also sanguine that this would help the divided families on both sides, noting that the people of Kashmir who had suffered so much would see it as a positive development, and that it would create the right atmosphere for ultimately resolving the Kashmir issue.<sup>59</sup>

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, who witnessed the launch of the bus service, noted that ‘this is the first step on a long road of peace. There are more challenges in the road ahead. But I am sure that the way the governments of the two countries respected the aspirations of the people, we will easily find solutions to problems in an environment of friendship and trust.’ Further, he exclaimed, ‘What can we not achieve if we work together!’<sup>60</sup> Prime

Minister Singh added, ‘Pakistan, and especially President Musharraf, has helped us open this door and without their support, the door would not have opened. This is the beginning of a new phase.’<sup>61</sup>

I am aware that this bus service has not lived up to its promise or the great expectations it had generated on its launching. So long as the political leadership remained strong and steady in the two countries, the bureaucratic opposition to the bus service was successfully resisted. However, after the launch of the lawyer’s movement in early 2007, President Musharraf’s government could no longer adequately focus on this issue, nor the peace process in general. Equally unfortunately, after the formation of the PPP-led government in Pakistan, the Mumbai terrorist attacks derailed the entire peace process, which was only tentatively resumed in mid- 2011. Nevertheless, for the record, I wish to state that despite all the setbacks, it was noted on the 6th anniversary of the launching of the bus service in April 2011 that over 15,000 Kashmiris had availed the services: 9,581 from Pakistan; and 6,395 from India.

After the launch of the Muzaffarabad-Srinagar bus service in April 2005, another bus service between Rawalakot and Poonch was added in 2006, which also helped thousands of divided families on both sides of the LoC. Admittedly, the figures reported above are not very impressive but I have no doubt that the direction set by the peace process was right and if 1.5 billion people of South Asia are to achieve their potential, the setbacks suffered in the wake of the Mumbai attacks need to be reversed. This is the challenge faced by the political leaderships of both countries. Hence, I was extremely satisfied when the process we started was carried forward. The Foreign Ministers of the two countries, Hina Rabbani Khar and S. M. Krishna, in a Joint Statement issued in New Delhi on 27 July 2011, decided to expand cross-LoC travel and trade to include visits for tourism and religious pilgrimage. Additionally, it was decided that the cross-LoC bus between Srinagar-Muzaffarabad and Poonch-Rawalakot would now run every Monday, and that six-month multiple-entry cross-LoC travel permits would be issued to facilitate travel. With regard to cross-LoC trade, a list of twenty-one items would be permitted, with the number of trading days enhanced from two to four. It was also agreed to strengthen the existing telephone facilities, and according to the decisions announced, the working groups on cross-LoC travel and trade would meet biannually to review the existing arrangements and suggest additional measures to promote cross-LoC travel and trade.<sup>62</sup>

## **The Drama of L. K. Advani’s Visit to Pakistan**

### ***I Invite Advani to Recognize BJP’s Role in the Peace Process***

I was very pleased with the progress made in Delhi and the Joint Statement talking of the irreversibility of the peace process. I, however, felt that in order to further strengthen this process, we needed to have the BJP completely on board. For this to happen, we had to

recognize that this process had started during the BJP rule under the leadership of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

L. K. Advani was now the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha after the elections which had been won by the Congress Party. Advani was supposed to represent the hard-line faction of the BJP and was blamed by critics in Pakistan for the failure of the Agra Summit. I also felt that even President Musharraf might nurse a grievance against him on this count. I believe that the nature of Pakistan-India relations required the support of all the major political parties in both the countries. I felt, now that the BJP was in the opposition, we needed a reaffirmation of their commitment. Without this happening, and without the ownership of the peace process being assumed by all major political forces, the ongoing peace process would remain fragile. I, therefore, decided to invite him to Pakistan. I consulted President Musharraf and was happy to note that he agreed with my reasoning.

In order to add a personal touch, I invited Mrs Shweta Advani and their daughter, Partibha, who, I was told, was particularly close to Advani. In response to my invitation, Advani visited Pakistan on 30 May–6 June 2005. It created a stir of a kind not expected. Advani met me at the Foreign Office. During the visit he also met the President and the Prime Minister and a large number of leaders from different political parties. In our meeting, after welcoming him, I started by stating that I wanted to improve relations with all our neighbours, including India. Further, I felt that we were not destined to live in acrimony forever. I went on to express the hope that his visit would prove helpful in this regard. He endorsed my views and thanked me for the invitation. He told me that after the 6th January statement, a plan had been drawn to proceed with the dialogue by the BJP and that his meeting that morning with the President had resulted in strengthening that understanding. He said that the process initiated then had brought about peace. He felt that peace, though tentative, should be made irreversible.

Advani informed me that, before coming to Islamabad, he had called on Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and discussed all issues with him, and that he had also spoken with former Prime Minister Vajpayee and Foreign Minister Natwar Singh. He went on to say that even though there were differences on domestic issues between the Congress and the BJP, his visit was meant to send a message to the Pakistani people that there was a unanimous desire in India to move forward.

I responded by telling him that major political parties in Pakistan were also supportive of the peace process with India, that neither India nor Pakistan could inflict their will on the other and that prudence and common sense demanded that neither party take advantage of the other's weaknesses. I added that, as far as Kashmir was concerned, we had to find a solution that was acceptable to the people of Kashmir as well as to the governments and people of Pakistan and India. This I thought required statesmanship and compromise from both sides. Advani agreed with this and went on to add that he was talking about

reconciliation with Pakistan and resolving outstanding issues at a time when the relationship between the ruling Congress Party and the BJP was not particularly good. As I had expected, he went on to take credit for the peace process with Pakistan and said that the current policy adopted by the Congress was in fact a continuation of the foreign policy of the last BJP government. He quoted former Prime Minister Vajpayee as saying that 'we can change our history but cannot change geography'. He added rather meaningfully that, as far as the India-Pakistan relationship was concerned, the BJP had a special responsibility, adding for good measure that the Congress was not in a similar position. I understood quite clearly from this statement that he was alluding to what was often mentioned privately that the BJP, representing the hard-line towards Pakistan in India's domestic politics, was far better placed to make peace with Pakistan. This, I thought, was not a totally unfamiliar proposition and seemed to be similar to that of the hard-line anti-communist Nixon taking the initiative to make peace with China.

I was pleased to hear from him that the possibility of peace being disrupted was an issue of the past. He added rather enthusiastically that the process was irreversible and that his visit confirmed this. I told him that, given the fact that the BJP was supporting the peace process in India, and currently, the Muslim League government, backed by the Pakistan Army (with both the PML and the army considered to be hard-liners on India), was supporting the peace initiative with India, we ought not to miss this opportunity. I agreed with him that his visit would provide a positive momentum in this direction.

I regarded L. K. Advani's visit as important for all the reasons mentioned above. His visit, although the BJP was not in government at that time, was an important step in taking the peace process forward. Of course, all this had been possible because both the governments had been taking concrete action in different areas of mutual concern. It is a measure of the change that had occurred since the 6 January 2004 Joint Statement, the ground work that followed various meetings between Natwar Singh and myself at Qing Dao in China, New Delhi, Islamabad, and elsewhere, interspersed of course with the famous meeting between President Musharraf and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in New Delhi in April 2005. It was determined at the meeting that the peace process was irreversible, and now even the hard-line leader of the BJP was indicating to me in Islamabad that the peace process was indeed irreversible.

On 3 June, L. K. Advani visited the Mausoleum of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah in Karachi. There he was given special protocol, a guard of honour was presented, the Pakistan National Anthem played, and the event was covered by all the national channels. What he wrote in the guest register of the Mausoleum is significant.

There are many people who leave inerasable stamp on history but there are very few who create history. Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali [Jinnah] was one such rare individual. In his early years, Sarojini Naidu, a leading luminary of India's freedom struggle, described Jinnah as ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity. His address to the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan on 11 August 1947 is really a classic, a forceful espousal of a secular state in

which, while every citizen would be free to practice their religion, the state shall make no distinction between citizens on grounds of faith. My respectful homage to this great man.

It is appropriate to quote here from L. K. Advani's book, *My Country, My Life*:

When I decided to visit Pakistan, on the invitation of Pakistan's Foreign Minister, Khurshid Mahmud Kasuri, I was confident that I would be able to reinforce the efforts of Vajpayee's government and strengthen Indo-Pak ties further, but I could not have imagined that this visit would enable me to sub-serve three other valuable, but totally unintended, objectives, namely: (a) by recalling the Pakistan founder's 11 August speech, remind the Pakistan rulers that they owed it to the memory of their own founder to ensure that the Hindus in Pakistan are guaranteed equality before law, and full freedom of faith and worship; (b) prompt the Pakistan government to think seriously in terms of renovating ancient Hindu temples, I should also make reference of Hinglaj temple in Baluchistan; (c) in just six days of interaction with important personalities in government, political parties, media, intelligentsia, and with the common people, I feel I was able to convey very convincingly to everybody in Pakistan, that although my party and I are proud of Hinduism, we are not anti-Pakistan, and certainly not anti-Islam, or anti-Muslim.<sup>63</sup>

It was also during this trip that Advani took part in a ceremony for the restoration of the famous Hindu temple 'Katas Raj' near Rawalpindi.

Advani's tribute to Jinnah was astonishing, coming as it did from a top leader of the hard-line BJP, and was effusively welcomed in Pakistan. With this tribute, he gave the peace process a big boost. In India, however, it unleashed a storm and a controversy. Posters were put up at the airport on his return to New Delhi with the words: '*Jinnah Samarthak Pakistan Premi Advani Vapas Jao*' (Jinnah supporter, Pakistan lover Advani, go back).

He was forced to resign as the BJP President for his remarks that Pakistan's founder was a secular person. The argument in India was also joined by the Congress Party, whose spokesperson, A. M. Singhvi said that at Jinnah's behest the subcontinent was divided into India and Pakistan on religious lines. Hence, how could somebody supporting that be a secular person? He also referred to Jinnah's support for separate electorate on communal lines as not being a secular act. There is no doubt that the visit of L. K. Advani to Pakistan and the tributes that he paid to the Quaid-i-Azam will always be remembered here, notwithstanding the controversy generated during his visit. It is clear that, despite his image of a hard-line leader, his commitment to the promotion of normalization of relations, peace, and cooperation between the two countries did further support the peace process. We in Pakistan, therefore, were very unhappy at the price he had to pay on his return.

On a subsequent visit to India, I met L. K. Advani and said that I was sorry for the controversy generated as a result of his visit to Pakistan on my invitation. He said he had no regrets. He then dramatically got up and handed me an autographed copy of his book, which has a chapter, 'I Have No Regrets' (referring to his visit to Pakistan and the controversy it generated). In his book he refers to a quote by Eleanor Roosevelt, 'When you have decided what you believe, what you feel must be done, have the courage to stand alone and be counted.'<sup>64</sup> I could empathize with Advani since in my earlier days as

Foreign Minister, I was often attacked by a section of the media for being a dove on India, when all I was doing was in the interest of Pakistan and peace, stability, and prosperity in South Asia. I am sure that Advani was motivated by similar sentiments when he wrote his sentiments in the register at the Quaid's Mausoleum.

### **Kashmiri Leaders' Visit to Pakistan—A Tentative Beginning to a Dialogue between Pakistan, India, and the Kashmiris**

India had been resisting Pakistan's insistence on the involvement of Kashmiri leadership in the ongoing dialogue on Kashmir between Pakistan and India by highlighting the bilateral nature of the Kashmir dispute. However, as a result of discussions between the two sides and practical considerations, it was agreed that the Kashmiri leadership could travel in both directions across the LoC while meeting with leaders in Islamabad and Delhi as well as in Muzaffarabad and Srinagar. We had fruitful discussions with Kashmiri leaders who visited us as we sounded them out about the contours of a possible agreement over Kashmir along the lines to be ultimately discussed on the backchannel.

Unfortunately, despite our best efforts, Syed Ali Gillani was not allowed to travel to Pakistan on flimsy pretexts. Nevertheless, I made it a point of meeting with him during my visits to India. His unwavering commitment to Kashmir joining Pakistan was quite moving. While I understood and sympathized with his approach, I was aware that the Kashmir issue could only be resolved through a negotiated settlement.

The coinciding of the All-Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) delegation's and Advani's visits in the same week reflected the positive change in Pakistan-India relationship. The delegation's visit was a vital opportunity for getting Kashmiri leadership on board before Pakistan initiated substantive talks on Kashmir, and generated great enthusiasm among the Pakistanis. In addition to others, the delegation included Mirwaiz Omer Farooq, founding President of APHC, Yasin Malik, President of JKLF, Professor Abdul Ghani Bhat, Maulana Abbas Ansari, and Bilal Ghani Lone. According to an editorial in one of Pakistan's leading dailies, 'Several APHC leaders wanted to push for the economic integration of Kashmir via soft borders, which they thought would help clear some of the cobwebs and push the process further down the road to a resolution. Such an approach would also help increase the comfort level to enable all the stakeholders to begin to tackle the difficult issues.'<sup>65</sup>

The delegation's visit came in the backdrop of the commencement of the bus service between Muzaffarabad and Srinagar. During their two-week stay in Pakistan, the Kashmiri leaders held meetings with AJK's leadership as well as with the President, the Prime Minister, and me. The visit provided a unique opportunity to Kashmiri leaders from both sides of the LoC to discuss with Pakistan and with each other, the framework of a possible solution to the Kashmir dispute which would be in consonance with their own aspirations as well as be acceptable to Pakistan and India. Such deliberations were necessary because Pakistan and India approached the Kashmir issue from totally different perspectives.

Historically, India has sought to engage Pakistan to legitimize the territorial status quo by finding some means of formalizing the LoC as a legal border. Thus, for India, the status quo has been the basis for a solution to the Kashmir dispute. In contrast, Pakistan has sought to engage India over revising the status quo. Therefore, cynicism in Pakistan and India regarding prospects of a resolution of the dispute was rampant despite the ongoing backchannel attempts by the two countries to resolve the dispute.

As backchannel mandated secrecy, it took a while before the people and the media started contemplating on the possibility of some resolution of the Kashmir dispute based on reciprocal flexibility. This happened because I continued dropping broad hints that the two countries were in fact making good progress. Ironically, my statements in this regard were not always welcomed in either Pakistan or India. In any case, powerful lobbies in both countries, except those in the loop, were wedded to entrenched positions and could not countenance any change. Even those in the loop were not always happy that I continued not only with my peace efforts but also continued to talk about it. President Musharraf was perhaps the lone exception, since not only was he aware of the happenings at different fronts, backchannel and international, but perhaps also because he was able to see why I was persisting despite objections from circles in India and Pakistan. In fact, the President also continued to publicly expound the outlines of a possible solution involving demilitarization, self-governance, and a joint mechanism, and took halting steps towards the codification of his proposal in the form of the famous Four-Point Formula.

I persisted, out of my belief that the intractable and difficult nature of Pakistan-India disputes necessitated constant moulding and injection of optimism in public opinion in order to fend off the backlash from vested interests in both the countries upon a possible sudden announcement of a framework for a resolution of the Kashmir dispute. In this context as well, the visit of these leaders was crucial as it helped counter the entrenched cynicism and pessimism regarding the impossibility of the Kashmir solution through bilateral talks. It brought upon the realization that since India had allowed Kashmiri leaders to travel, it might also be seriously contemplating a compromise solution.

To me, the visit provided another opportunity to infuse optimism in the air. Through experience, I had found Indian leadership to be reticent by nature. This was affirmed by the Indian media who often complained to me that their leaders were not prepared to share anything with them for inexplicable reasons. Since India had historically adopted a status quo approach towards Kashmir and also occasionally insisted that Pakistan vacate even the area under its control, I could understand their reasons as far as Kashmir was concerned. Managing a shift from this rigid position was never going to be easy. The maximum India had sometimes indicated was willingness to accept the status quo. Moreover, a near- consensus in the Indian polity over India's position on Kashmir had emerged over a period of time. Therefore, even as we began making progress on the backchannel, the Indian leadership found it difficult to admit to its people that progress

was in fact being made, as that would have amounted to admitting that India was altering its historical stance since Pakistan would not accept a status quo solution.

Regardless, I saw no option but to continue raising the morale of the people and persisting with my line that progress was being made. In the larger interest of keeping people informed, I was prepared to accept that this may cause some embarrassment to the Indian government and also irk hard-line elements in Pakistan. On one occasion, in response to my remarks about the ongoing progress towards resolution of the Kashmir dispute, L. K. Advani as Leader of the Opposition moved an adjournment motion in the Lok Sabha complaining that, while Pakistan's Foreign Minister was claiming progress on Kashmir, the Indian Prime Minister was keeping the Indians in the dark.

As with the launching of the bus service, the visit of the Hurriyat leaders elicited wide support from the international media as well as major sections of the media in Pakistan and India. The *Guardian*, for instance, called the visit 'another landmark day along the cautious road to peace'.<sup>66</sup>

The Kashmiri leaders who visited Pakistan stated that the process of dialogue would be meaningless without taking into account the aspirations of the Kashmiris, and added that their dialogue with Pakistani authorities had helped them understand the principles and framework of the Pakistani leadership's thinking, and would also help them evolve their own strategy of finding a solution that would not only meet the Kashmiris' aspirations but would also be acceptable to the people of Pakistan and India. JKLF's leader Yasin Malik enthused that though he had crossed the LoC eight times previously, he openly walked over the friendship bridge across the LoC on this visit.<sup>67</sup>

President Musharraf described the visit of the Kashmiri leaders as a great leap forward and was positive that it would help promote understanding among the parties. Highlighting the fact that these leaders had not come on Indian passports or visas issued by Pakistan, the President added that the visit marked the recognition 'by both India and Pakistan of the disputed status of Kashmir'.<sup>68</sup>

Subsequent to this visit, the Indian Prime Minister held his first meeting with a five-member Hurriyat delegation in 2005 in New Delhi. Commenting on this development, *The Economist* stated that although Prime Minister Singh's gesture was unpopular among some of his advisors, and others felt that he was prepared to take risks to be remembered as a peacemaker, a tentative dialogue between India, Pakistan, and Kashmiris had started.<sup>69</sup> Although many Kashmiris continued doubting Indian intentions, there is no doubt that such meetings and 'proximity talks' represented the most practical manner of involving the Kashmiri leaders in the peace process.

Several Kashmiri leaders began realizing that economic integration via soft borders with regular visits from the two sides across LoC without passports or visas would enhance the comfort level of all sides so that difficult issues related to the resolution of the Kashmir

dispute could be effectively tackled. It was hoped that the increasing contact of the Kashmiris with Pakistan and India and between themselves through travel and trade would generate an environment where India would recognize the importance of accommodating the aspirations of the Kashmiri people and be prepared to create the necessary space for this to happen. Suffice it to say here that our interaction with the Kashmiri leaders from IAK enabled us to better understand and appreciate their point of view which proved invaluable to us while formulating the contours of a possible solution to the Kashmir dispute which began to be discussed seriously on the backchannel.

### **Indo-Pak Showdown in New York**

President Pervez Musharraf was expected to deliver his speech at the annual session of the UNGA in September 2005 and a meeting on the sidelines between the leaders of Pakistan and India had also been arranged. As President Musharraf and I entered the meeting room along with the rest of the delegation, I was expecting a lot of warmth and was surprised instead to notice a coldness in the attitude of the Indian delegates. After formal greetings, both Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Foreign Minister Natwar Singh avoided eye contact with President Musharraf. A long silence ensued and the atmosphere was so tense that one could cut through it with a knife. Since I had developed a degree of understanding and rapport with Foreign Minister Natwar Singh during our earlier interactions, I decided to break the ice and ask him why the Indian delegation was so tense. Holding President Musharraf's speech in his hand, he replied that the President had delivered a hard-hitting speech in the UNGA session which was different in tone and tenor from his recent speeches. The sort of language used was at variance with the ones that Indians and Pakistanis had adopted in international forums vis-à-vis each other since the beginning of the peace process following the issuance of the Joint Statement in Islamabad in January 2004. The President's speech in September 2005 was indeed different from the one he had delivered at the UNGA Session in 2004. In that he had referred to the progress in CBMs (Confidence-Building Measures) and Composite Dialogue, and the need to resolve the Kashmir dispute. He had also highlighted the progress made in the dialogue with India and had expressed a desire to seek a resolution of Kashmir that was equitable and acceptable to Pakistan, India, and the people of Kashmir. Pakistan had started adopting this formulation: *The need to find a solution which would be in accordance with the aspirations of the people of Kashmir and be acceptable to Pakistan and India.* He had also spoken of the initiation of the backchannel on Kashmir and the general progress that was being made under the Composite Dialogue. On the other hand, the President's 2005 speech was in the language and spirit of speeches made prior to the commencement of the peace process. It devoted almost one page to Kashmir and included paragraphs such as 'I am glad that India has stepped back from its dangerous and failed experiment in coercive diplomacy last year. Despite some improvement in tensions, India continues to suppress the legitimate struggle of the Kashmiri people to exercise their right to self-determination in accordance with the UNSC Resolutions. It refuses Pakistan's offers of dialogue to

address and resolve the Kashmir dispute.’ This was followed by another hard-hitting paragraph which stated, ‘India cites cross-border terrorism to refuse a dialogue. It knows full well that the Kashmiri struggle is indigenous. India seeks to exploit the international anti-terrorist sentiment after 9/11, to delegitimize the Kashmiri freedom struggle. On the contrary, it is India, which violates international law by refusing to implement UNSC Resolutions and perpetrating gross and consistent violations of human rights in Kashmir.’ Interestingly, however, the very next paragraph was expressed in a language more in sync with last year’s speech at the same forum and amicably noted ‘... Once again, from this august rostrum, I invite India to join Pakistan in a sustained dialogue to resolve the Kashmir dispute. I am convinced that with goodwill we can find a just solution, which is acceptable to India, to Pakistan, and above all, to the Kashmiri people. I also invite India jointly with Pakistan to observe a complete ceasefire along the LoC in Kashmir.’

The obvious differences in the two speeches made in 2004 and 2005 and within the same speech in 2005 reflect an interesting story of the intense debate going on in Pakistan’s Foreign Office as well as within its establishment. If truth be told, the fact is that neither the President nor I had seen the draft prepared by the Head of our Permanent Mission in New York, Ambassador Munir Akram, one of our most outstanding diplomats and an expert in UN affairs, but a hardliner on India. It was customary for the President and me to read our briefs comprehensively and make changes to the drafts given to us. As a matter of fact, it had almost become a joke in the presidential entourage that the moment the presidential plane took off, the President’s Military Secretary would bring his file and I would open mine and continue working on our papers until almost the time of landing. However, during this journey, our minds were preoccupied with several important matters. On the flight to New York, not only was there a lengthy discussion on the state of Pakistan-India relations, but also on some of the initiatives that the President was thinking of taking with regard to Palestine as well as on UN reform.

President Pervez Musharraf’s New York schedule was fully packed. It included a keynote speech at former President Clinton’s ‘Global Initiative’, with back-to-back meetings with various heads of state and government. Although all the briefs were read, I cannot for the life of me explain to this day how the draft of the President’s speech at the UNGA escaped our attention.

I vividly recall sitting next to the President in the UNGA Hall as he quickly went through the draft of his speech while another head of state or government was delivering his address. Naturally, under the circumstances, President Musharraf could not fully concentrate on the draft of the strongly worded speech before him. Later, when portions of his delivered speech were read aloud by Foreign Minister Natwar Singh and another member of the Indian delegation, President Musharraf and members of Pakistan’s delegation felt a bit cornered and awkward because we obviously did not want to share with the Indians the actual reason behind Musharraf’s speech. In his book, *In the Line of*

*Fire*, Musharraf refers to this tense meeting and the efforts by the two Foreign Ministers to cool the situation down.<sup>70</sup>

At the meeting, I tried my best to break the ice by engaging the Indian Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister in small talk. I started to reminisce about our pleasant meetings in the past and waxed lyrical about the progress of the dialogue process between the two uneasy neighbours. I must confess that the Indians were nonplussed by the sudden change in the tone of the speech as it was at variance with the President's UNGA speech of 2004 and, more importantly, because it followed the famous Joint Statement on the 'irreversibility of the peace process' issued in New Delhi earlier in the year in April 2005.

Just as the ice was beginning to melt and I had started to relax, the Indian Prime Minister suddenly looked in my direction and, training his guns on me, said to me in Urdu-Hindustani-English, typical of the sort of language Pakistanis and Indians use while interacting, '*Kasuri Sahib aik to aap Pak-Bharat taluqaat ko improve karne ki koshish kar re hain, lekin doosri taraf aap tu khud bari koshish kar rahay hain, Hindustan ko bahar rakhney ki UNSC say,*' (Mr Kasuri, you are trying to improve Pak-India relations, but on the other hand you are trying your best to keep India out of the UNSC). As I was not expecting this onslaught in my direction, I first composed myself and responded, '*Nahin jee, main Hindustan ko bahir rakhney ki koshish nahin kar raha, yeh tu matter of principle hey because of the sovereign equality of nations.*' (No Sir, my efforts are not directed at keeping India out of the Security Council; my objections are based on the principle of the sovereign equality of nations).

The sudden exchange between the Indian Prime Minister and me reflected the ongoing debate at the time regarding the UNSC's reform. In this context, Brazil, India, Japan, and South Africa were making a pitch for their inclusion in an enlarged UNSC. Along with some other member states, Pakistan opposed this step as it violated the principle of sovereign equality of nations by aiming to create new centres of privilege within the UN system.

Pakistan, along with Italy, Mexico, Argentina, Spain, and some other member states, effectively blocked such efforts.

It is hackneyed to state that all is well that ends well. Nonetheless, following the meeting in New York, the two sides decided to go further with the ongoing peace process in the spirit of the Joint Statements of Islamabad and New Delhi. However, the showdown in New York amply reflects the intricate and tinder-box nature of Pakistan-India relations which even in the best of times involves both a spirit of cooperation and competition.

### **I invite Natwar to Nathiagali, Where Ayub Khan had Invited Nehru**

The Indian Foreign Minister was due once again in Islamabad in October 2005. I had found him a warm-hearted and sophisticated person with a deep sense of history. We had been meeting each other regularly, not just in our respective capitals but also on the

sidelines of various international conferences. On one such meeting on the sidelines of the ARF in Indonesia, both of us were once again at the centre of media attention. Later, the conference's host, Indonesia's Foreign Minister, Dr N. Hassan Wirajuda, sent both of us a signed photograph of Natwar Singh and I entering the hall together. It was captioned: 'The ARF is nothing more than a talking shop, some say. But if this picture represents what talking can achieve, I think together we have made quite a progress.'

Prior to Foreign Minister Natwar Singh's visit, I had concluded that we needed to go beyond bonhomie and CBMs. To that end, it was desirable to hold a confidential one-to-one meeting with him in pleasant environs where both of us could open up to each other and express ourselves in frank terms that just a few months ago would have been difficult. I felt that the Himalayan hill-station of Nathiagali that was two hours away from Islamabad and famed for its scenic beauty, hiking trails, and pleasant weather, would provide an ideal backdrop for our meeting. I especially decided on the venue because I have not forgotten the impact of the enchanting view from the back lawns of the Nathiagali Government House, where I had stayed many years earlier, when my father was in the Cabinet. To highlight the sort of personal care and interest that the British Governor Sir George Cunningham had taken in the choice of location and upkeep of the mansion, legend has it that the Governor had planted every blade of grass himself. I also remembered an old retainer of the mansion who used to refer to President Ayub Khan as '*Badshah Sahib*', and had told me that he was present during Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's visit. Nehru had apparently remarked to Ayub Khan that, although he had travelled and seen lots of places, the view from Nathiagali's Governor House's back lawns were incomparable and simply breathtaking.

The Governor House also made global headlines during Henry Kissinger's covert visit to China. As a decoy, people were made to believe that Kissinger was staying at the Governor's House when, in fact, he was staying elsewhere and had boarded the plane to Beijing from Rawalpindi. Kissinger's historic visit paved the way for President Nixon's landmark visit and meeting with Chairman Mao, which laid the foundations of a new US-China relationship and led to a new balance of power in the world at a time when the USSR's relations with both the US and China were restrained. I thought that the choice of venue of the talks would make Natwar, who possessed a sense of history, realize how much importance we attached to the peace process.

I thought Natwar Singh, who has a sense of history and comes from a princely family and is married to the daughter of the Maharaja of Patiala, would like the setting for our meeting. I decided to take Natwar Singh on a helicopter from Islamabad to Nathiagali on a lovely sunny day. It proved to be an excellent ride. We had a panoramic view of the beautiful pine forests which are typical of the Himalayan mountain ranges. Protocol demanded that I inform the Governor of the Frontier Province, now KPK, where Nathiagali is situated and is in fact the summer capital of that province. Commander Khalil, regarded by some as the founder of the Bahrain Navy and its former Commander

after retirement from the Pakistan Navy, who was then the Governor, cut a dashing figure, full of vigour and flamboyance. Just as Natwar Singh and I had finished our talks, Governor Khalil, with his perfect sense of timing, landed in his helicopter after hovering over us for quite some time in a scene which could have come straight out of a Hollywood movie.

It was in these serene surroundings that I conveyed a sombre and candid message to Foreign Minister Singh. I told him that unless concrete progress towards resolution of the Kashmir dispute was made, the moderate forces in Pakistan would be discredited and extremist forces opposed to the peace process would be strengthened and emboldened. Moreover, some hard-line elements in India might gloat at the rise of extremism among some of Pakistan's Muslims and might erroneously perceive that it might be advantageous for India since Pakistan would suffer as a result of the activities of Muslim militants. In my opinion, India could no longer remain an island of tranquillity in the area as Muslims in Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh shared the same roots. In fact, I reminded Foreign Minister Singh that the founder of Jamaat-i-Islami, Maulana Abul A'la Maududi, migrated from India to Pakistan, and that Deoband and Bareilly, the centres of the Sunni Deobandi and Bareilvi schools of thought, were also located in India, and that the Shias were still nostalgic about the Sultanate of Oudh. I added for good measure that the Khilafat Movement in undivided India was so strong that even Mahatma Gandhi found it politically prudent to embrace it. Therefore, in the present context, it was naive to assume that Muslim militancy and terrorism would remain confined only to Pakistan. At the time of our meeting, reports of militancy among Indian Muslims had not yet made headlines. I pointed out to him that the global wave of Islamic radicalism was not just restricted to South Asia, and expressed my fear that unless Kashmir and other disputes were resolved soon, this increasing radicalization could lead to militancy and terrorism, with transnational forces joining hands to escalate the cycle of violence, which would inevitably put enormous strain on the peace process. I was able to state my case so bluntly to Foreign Minister Singh in private only because of the level of trust and understanding that had developed between us over time.

I had not expected the Indian Foreign Minister to give me a detailed response to a proposition which I felt was self-evident. He did not respond directly but reiterated India's position that it was prepared for a resolution of Kashmir but that cross-border movement of militants had to stop, and that the commitment given by President Musharraf about not allowing Pakistani territory to be used for cross-border terrorism must be honoured. My purpose in delivering my message had been to emphasize Pakistan's earnestness in resolving all outstanding disputes with India, as well as to highlight our concern that militant forces would take full advantage of the disputes between the two countries since we knew from our sources that such elements were deeply perturbed by the ongoing peace process. Along similar lines, in a subsequent meeting with Foreign Minister Singh, I told him that I found President Bush's remark about India being a pluralist democracy and

hence immune from Muslim militancy, quite illogical and ill-informed. Later, the extent of Muslim rage against President Bush and his policies, as evidenced by the demonstrations during his visit to India, validated my concerns and fears.

Foreign Minister Natwar Singh informed me that, in his assessment, I was in a position to deliver on the Pakistan-India issues since I carried weight and gravitas in the government, and that likewise he could say the same about himself as he was 'one of the three or four top decision-makers in India'. His comment regarding his influence in the government did not surprise me at all as he was known to be a close confidante of the Nehru-Gandhi family and had vast experience in the Indian Foreign Service. I affirmed that, in the interest of more than a billion people in South Asia, I was keen to play some role in improving relations between the two uneasy neighbours so that they could focus on tackling poverty afflicting vast numbers of people in both the countries. Foreign Minister Singh responded enthusiastically by remarking that he wanted to be a part of history, and jokingly added that he was in even greater hurry than I was because he was much older and therefore could not afford to waste time. I reminded him that the two states had fought many wars on Kashmir to no avail, and that it was possible to think of a solution on Kashmir which would embarrass neither Pakistan nor India, and would simultaneously fulfil the aspirations of the vast majority of Kashmiris.

I urged Foreign Minister Singh that it was essential to associate the Kashmiris with the peace process in order to enable them to take ownership of it. Although he did not say much on the need to associate the Kashmiris with the peace process, he did say that the Indian government would talk to the Kashmiris, including APHC's leader Syed Ali Shah Gilani. I honestly told him that we had made a good beginning with the BJP and were confident that it could deliver on any agreements concluded between the two sides, and that sections of our government were unsure of Congress's ability to make its decisions stick with the Indian Army. I mentioned to him that, whereas the role of the Pakistan Armed Forces was plainly questioned by the international media, the under-scrutinized Indian Army's positions on Siachen and other issues were also extremely hard-line. Subsequently, General J. J. Singh made hard-line remarks about the prospects of a solution to the Siachen dispute just one day prior to my visit to New Delhi. If Foreign Minister Singh was taken aback by my candid remarks on the Indian Army, he did not show it. In fact, he assured me that the Congress government was certainly in a position to make any agreement stick particularly because the Officer Corps of the Indian Army was unhappy with tendencies of the 'RSS types' to infiltrate its ranks.

I stressed upon Foreign Minister Singh that we ought to encourage backchannel negotiations between Tariq Aziz and J. N. Dixit to discuss possible solutions on Kashmir at length since our official duties as ministers compelled us to work under the media spotlight whose spin could hurt the peace process. I asked him if Dixit and Singh were close enough to enjoy each other's confidence. He responded affirmatively and added that

he was also responsible for Dixit joining the Congress Party. Tellingly, he also revealed to me that Dixit was close to Prime Minister Singh, but not as close to Sonia Gandhi.

In order to restore the momentum of the dialogue and buy some time to resolve the Kashmir issue, I emphasized upon the urgent need to make progress on less complex issues. I urged that India seize the opportunity for a durable solution of the Kashmir dispute, which at the time was critical to carry forward the dialogue process. Moreover, I told Natwar Singh that the future success of regional cooperation within the framework of SAARC was also tied to the success of the Pakistan-India peace process. I also expressed my surprise at the lukewarm Indian response to some of Pakistan's proposals. Thus, I informed him that the framework of a possible solution on Kashmir, including the ideas of identification of the region's self-governance, demilitarization, and joint mechanism, was as flexible as any Pakistani leader could realistically advance. Moreover, the lack of Indian response would arrest any moves towards improvement of relations in the foreseeable future as it was impossible to go beyond the offer that President Musharraf had already made on this issue.

The purpose of the visit of Indian Foreign Minister Natwar Singh during 3–4 October 2005 was to review the progress of the second round of the Composite Dialogue. Since the last review meeting in September 2004 in New Delhi, noteworthy developments have taken place including the two meetings held between Pakistan's President and the Indian Prime Minister in April 2005 in New Delhi and in September 2005 in New York. In our Joint Statement, Foreign Minister Singh and I reiterated 'possible options for a peaceful negotiated settlement of Jammu & Kashmir in a sincere, purposeful, and forward looking manner.' Moreover, we reviewed progress in a number of areas and agreed that a technical-level meeting should be held to discuss the modalities for initiating truck service on Muzaffarabad-Srinagar route for trade in agreed list of goods. We also welcomed the agreement on pre-notification of flight testing of ballistic missiles. It was heartening that the ceasefire on LoC was in place and the CBMs with regard to Kashmir had progressed. However, human rights violations in Indian Administered Kashmir (IAK) persisted, despite greater contact between Kashmiris on both sides of the LoC through the bus service and the opening of the five crossing points between India and Pakistan. We agreed to conduct a joint survey on Sir Creek despite suspicions within some circles that India might be unwilling to accept the verdict of the Rann of Kutch Tribunal which had ascertained that Map B-44 remained the authentic document for demarcating the land and maritime boundary in the area. Lamentably, India remained reluctant to revive the understanding reached on Siachen in 1989 whereas authentication was unacceptable to us.

### **A Case of Good Cop/Bad Cop?**

I was extremely satisfied with my meetings with Foreign Minister Natwar Singh. He had also fulfilled his pledge of speaking to his Prime Minister about allowing the Kashmiri leadership to visit Pakistan. I also felt that the content and outcome of his last visit to

Islamabad had been positive. Moreover, all the meetings between the two sides at various levels held in 2005 had generated a sense of optimism. In fact, it was the general ambience of improved understanding and cordiality between the two countries which made it possible for me to hold a candid one-on-one meeting with Foreign Minister Natwar Singh in Nathiagali on matters of mutual concern.

Against this backdrop, it came as a huge surprise when, in an interview to an Indian media outlet in March 2006, the National Security Advisor to Indian Prime Minister, M. K. Narayanan, came out with a hard-hitting statement accusing Pakistan of ‘breeding a new form of jihadi terror aimed at fanning communal tensions within India’ with reference to recent bomb attacks in India. He also suggested that the status quo in Kashmir was the only viable solution to the dispute.<sup>71</sup> This came as a severe jolt to us, since we had been thinking of an out-of-the-box solution to the Kashmir dispute in consonance with the aspirations of the Kashmiris. Quite a few proposals in this regard had already been discussed on the backchannel and we were certain that the Kashmiris would never accept the status quo as the final solution to the Kashmir dispute. I was unsure whether Narayanan’s fiery interview was a case of good cop/bad cop or whether it reflected differences and divisions within the Indian establishment.

I enjoyed a good rapport with Shiv Shankar Menon, the Indian High Commissioner to Islamabad, and decided to take up this matter with him. Not only was he completely in the loop regarding the progress on the backchannel and bilateral relations, he also enjoyed the confidence of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh—an assessment borne out by the fact that he was later appointed the Prime Minister’s National Security Advisor. When he called on me, I told him at the outset that I wanted to speak very frankly with him, since I was taken aback by Narayanan’s recent interview and felt it was extremely disruptive of the generally upbeat atmosphere prevalent in the two countries. I made myself clear to Shiv Shankar Menon that Narayanan’s accusations could turn the Indian public against Pakistan and the goodwill generated by the peace process could quickly dissipate. Moreover, I emphasized that Narayanan’s remarks on the proposals regarding ‘self-rule, demilitarization, and joint control’ were unhelpful and that his option of a solution to Kashmir based on status quo was completely unacceptable to Pakistan. For good measure, I added that lack of progress on Kashmir would embolden the extremist elements, who would certainly try to capitalize on the growing sense of unease over the ongoing peace process.

Kashmir, I told Menon, was a sensitive issue in Pakistan and aroused deep passions among Pakistanis, especially the Kashmiri populace. Most importantly, Pakistan’s key decision-makers on strategic and security issues, notably the Pakistan Army, were very emotional about Kashmir. I mentioned that apart from Narayanan’s recent remarks, frequent references in the Indian media have been made about Pakistan being responsible for Muslim militancy in India. I highlighted that Pakistanis had a strong emotional bond with

Kashmir which could not be ignored by any government. In order to further stress my point, I reminded him that the concept of the Ummah, the idea of a common universal Muslim brotherhood, was deeply entrenched and could be traced to the various pan-Islamic movements of the last three centuries. In light of the global revival of Islamic radicalism, the situation was grave, and not just in Muslim-majority countries like Iraq and Afghanistan. Glimpses of the radicalization of Muslims in India were evident in the hostile reaction of the Indian Muslims to President Bush's recent visit to India, and the million-dollar bounty offered by a Muslim minister of the UP government for the killing of a Danish editor who had published offensive caricatures of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). I clarified that, far from holding out a veiled threat, I was firmly committed to the peace process but also feared that if the Composite Dialogue failed, Narayanan's accusations could ultimately prove to be a self-fulfilling prophecy.

In response, Shiv Shankar Menon underscored that, notwithstanding reservations from some quarters, the Indian establishment believed that they could do business with President Pervez Musharraf. The general thinking of India's establishment was that the President was guiding Pakistan towards a liberal and progressive future. Therefore, engaging with Musharraf would help promote enduring peace in the region. Menon added that the Indian establishment was aware of the ground reality that it would have to mend fences and make up with the Pakistan Army. Quoting the assassinated Israeli Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin, 'One makes peace with one's foes and not with one's friends,' he expressed the hope that the Pakistan Army would be an element of stability in the region, while underscoring his awareness of the Pakistan Army's role in the country's polity. He denied all allegations of Indian involvement in Balochistan and the Tribal Areas, and said that state institutions and intelligence agencies of Pakistan were trying to wrongly implicate India in this context. Menon also expressed concern about the resurgence of jihadi elements in Pakistan and mentioned that some of them had started behaving as political figures. Specifically, he referred to Hafiz Muhammad Saeed, who, according to him, had made a highly inflammatory speech during the Friday prayers at a mosque in Lahore.

The Indian High Commissioner thanked me for taking the initiative for holding a frank and extremely useful heart-to-heart discussion. He mentioned that our discussion would help him in gaining a better understanding of Pakistani leadership's thinking. He hoped that future Indian response would be formulated in the light of the importance of the issues raised by me. The High Commissioner promised to convey my views to the Indian government.

I must state that such candid conversations enabled the two sides to more fully comprehend each other's concerns, and were instrumental in sustaining the Composite Dialogue and the peace process between Pakistan and India.

## **Water Disputes: A Major Threat to Peace**

Following my visit to New Delhi in September 2004 and prior to Indian Foreign Minister Natwar Singh's arrival in Islamabad in February 2005, the Baglihar Dam and related water issues had taken centre stage and were generating a lot of negative vibes.

It was no wonder then that during Foreign Minister Natwar Singh's visit, both the President and the Prime Minister expressed serious concerns to him about the non-resolution of the Baglihar project and stressed that Pakistan was constrained to approach the World Bank for appointment of a 'neutral expert' as provided in the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT). Pakistan's reservations over the Kishanganga Hydroelectric Project were also conveyed and the urgent need to resolve the water issue equitably, and in accordance with not just the letter but spirit of the IWT, was emphasized.

Foreign Minister Singh opined that Pakistanis were overreacting to the construction of the Baglihar Dam. I responded that it was naive on the part of India to assume that there would be no backlash following the controversy over Baglihar. I urged him to understand Pakistan's suspicions of India's intentions in a historical context, and reminded him that both of us were familiar with water-sharing problems among farmers with adjacent lands as we hailed from rural constituencies. Moreover, a majority of Pakistanis still depended on water for livelihood whose availability in Pakistan had been sharply declining over the past few decades. Therefore, I urged Natwar Singh to apprise the Indian leadership about the seriousness of Pakistan's water-related concerns.

I am no expert on water and my knowledge of problems between Pakistan and India over this scarce and indispensable resource is limited to the disputes that arose during my tenure as the Foreign Minister. However, as a Pakistani, I am aware of the depth of feelings aroused by this issue, particularly since India actually stopped the flow of water into Pakistan as early as 1948.<sup>72</sup> During my school and college days, local newspapers were replete with stories deploring how India could actually starve Pakistan by choking its water supply. However, I later concluded that the real issue dividing the two countries over water was a lack of trust between the two uneasy neighbours. In the words of a water expert of undoubted competence, who also served in the region for many years as a World Bank expert,

If Pakistan and India had normal, trustful relations, there would be a mutually verified monitoring process which would assure that there is no change in the flows going into Pakistan. In an even more ideal world, India could increase low-flows during the critical planting season, with significant benefit to Pakistani farmers and with very small impact on power generation in India. Because the relationship was not normal when the treaty [IWT] was negotiated, Pakistan would agree only if limitation on India's capacity to manipulate the timing of flows was hard-wired into the treaty. This was done by limiting the amount of 'live storage', the storage that matters for changing the timing of flows, in each and every hydropower dam that India would construct on the two rivers.

The expert adds,

While this made sense given the knowledge in 1960, over time it became clear that this restriction gave rise to a major problem. The physical restrictions meant that gates for flushing silt out of the dams could not be built, thus ensuring that any dam in India would rapidly fill with the silt pouring off the young Himalayas. This was a critical issue at stake in the Baglihar case. Pakistan stated that the gates being installed were in violation of the specifications of the treaty.

However, according to the expert,

India argued that it would be wrong to build a dam knowing it would soon fill with silt. The finding of the neutral expert was essentially a reinterpretation of the treaty, saying that the physical limitations no longer made sense. The finding in the case of Baglihar left Pakistan without the mechanism—limited live storage—which was its only, albeit weak, protection against upstream manipulation of flows in India. This vulnerability was driven home when India chose to fill Baglihar exactly at the time when it would impose maximum harm on farmers in downstream Pakistan.<sup>73</sup>

The expert warns,

If Baglihar was the only dam being built by India on the Chenab and Jhelum, this would be a limited problem. But following Baglihar is a veritable caravan of Indian projects—Kishanganga, Sawalkot, Pakuldul, Bursar, Dal Huste [sic], Gyspa. The cumulative live storage will be large, giving India an unquestioned capacity to have major impact on the timing of flows into Pakistan.<sup>74</sup>

Worryingly for Pakistan, while inaugurating the first phase of the Baglihar Dam, a 450 MW hydroelectric power project initiated in the 1990s and completed on 10 October 2008, Indian Prime Minister Singh noted, ‘It is a matter of satisfaction that the reconstruction programme [entailing] 67 projects is well under way with 19 projects completed, one of which is the Baglihar project that I inaugurated today.’<sup>75</sup> Naturally, Pakistan is gravely concerned that in addition to the dispute over Kashmir through which rivers supplying water—the lifeline of Pakistan—flow, water disputes with India could have even more serious implications.

In my exchange with Foreign Minister Natwar Singh, I expressed disappointment that Pakistan and India could not resolve the issue bilaterally, which was referred to Professor Raymond Lafitte, the ‘neutral expert’ appointed by the World Bank, as provided for under the IWT’s Conflict Resolution Mechanism. Predictably, and given half a chance, both the countries proclaimed victory after the verdict was declared on 12 February 2007. Pakistan claimed that three out of the four points referred to the neutral expert were decided in its favour: India was required to reduce the freeboard, the height of the dam above the maximum storage line, to 3 metres from the 4.5 metres set in the original design; peg the poundage at 32.58 million cubic metres instead of the desired 37.5 million cubic meters; and raise the level of the power intake turbines that control the run-off by 3 metres. On the other hand, India claimed that in a vindication of its position, the World Bank had turned down Pakistan’s contention that the construction of the Baglihar Dam violated the IWT, clearing the way for the project, and that the verdict was precedent-setting in that India could now construct dams using modern technology to deal with sedimentation in the Himalayan rivers, technologies that were unknown at the time of the signing of the IWT in

1960.<sup>76</sup> Regardless of the effect of this verdict on Pakistan—a large number of Pakistani water experts were in fact unhappy with the verdict; the fact that the two countries resorted to a fair arbitration process calmed nerves on both sides.

Those among the more serious-minded in the media of the two countries attempted to draw some conclusions. A leading newspaper in Pakistan commented:

The verdict of the World Bank expert has shown that Indo-Pak disputes, howsoever intricate, can be resolved by peaceful means and sometimes by recourse to arbitration ... the Rann of Kutch dispute, which led to heavy fighting between the two countries in 1965, was settled through arbitration. With the Baglihar issue out of the way, it is time the two governments concentrated on moving the normalization process forward with a view to seeking a solution of the Kashmir dispute.<sup>77</sup>

Similarly, a respected Indian newspaper commented,

Pakistan is extremely sensitive about any construction on the Indus, the Jhelum or the Chenab since its agriculture is crucially dependent on the waters carried by these rivers. While questions of sovereign rights and prestige do inhibit India from agreeing to mediation on these riparian issues, it has a lesson to learn from the fact that a neutral expert was able to resolve most aspects of the Baglihar dispute fairly expeditiously. The time has perhaps come for New Delhi to re-examine its approach to the Tulbul and Kishanganga projects.<sup>78</sup>

The water-sharing problem between Pakistan and India has its roots in the Partition of 1947. My family belongs to Kasur and, while growing up, I repeatedly heard from my father and other respected elders how unfair Lord Mountbatten and Sir Cyril Radcliffe had been in awarding the Hussainiwala Headworks in Ferozepur to India even though three canals that originated from the Headworks irrigated vast portions of Pakistani Punjab. Adjacent to Kasur, Ferozepur was an important Muslim-majority Tehsil (administrative division) wrongly awarded to India. There is now little doubt that Radcliffe intended to award Ferozepur to Pakistan but Mountbatten persuaded him to change his mind and he allowed himself to be overruled. Even Indian historians now accept that Mountbatten had some role in awarding Ferozepur to India.<sup>79</sup> The most damning piece of evidence is a map that Radcliffe sent to the last Governor of Punjab, Sir Evan Jenkins, on 8 August 1947. Jenkins received advance notice of all Radcliffe's Awards so that he could get security personnel in place ahead of Partition. The map showed that Ferozepur had been allocated to Pakistan. However, by the evening of 8 August, Jenkins had been instructed to change the map and to note that Ferozepur was now to be part of India. The matter came to light in 1948, when Pakistan managed to get hold of a copy of the original map that had been left in Sir Evan Jenkins's safe.<sup>80</sup> This decision had monumental consequences for future relations of the two countries, especially with regard to water disputes. In 1948, without any warning, India cut off supplies to Pakistan from both Ferozepur and Gurdaspur Headworks, an action contrary to the letter and spirit of international law covering interstate river waters.<sup>81</sup>

River water sharing is no easy business, in fact, the word *rival* originates from the Latin '*rivalis*' meaning one sharing the stream of another. Primarily an agrarian country,

Pakistan is one of the largest states dependent on a single river system. The River Indus and its tributaries support the bulk of agricultural water supply for its teeming population along with being a vital source of electrical energy.

In order to provide a framework for equitable sharing and distribution of Indus Waters, President Ayub Khan and Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru signed the IWT (Indus Waters Treaty) in 1960 in Karachi. The treaty, brokered by the World Bank, had its detractors in Pakistan, who accused the government of selling three rivers to India. President Ayub grasped the less than perfect nature of the IWT. However, he made the decision to sign the IWT in what he and several others considered to be in the greater national interest. According to President Ayub Khan, 'The only sensible thing was to try and get a settlement, even though it might be the second best because if we did not, we stood to lose everything.'<sup>82</sup> He obviously had in mind the bitter history between the two countries on water sharing while concluding the IWT. Remarkably, the treaty has survived despite threats of its suspension by many Indian leaders during tense times between Pakistan and India. It is considered a success by many as it was the first time that the two uneasy neighbours were able to resolve a major dispute, albeit with World Bank's mediation.

According to the former Chairman of WAPDA (Water and Power Development Authority), Shamsul Mulk, the important thing about water treaties is the conduct of the upper riparian state, which determines their success or failure. Moreover, he hopes that in the coming years when both Pakistan and India are faced with greater pressures, India's conduct would not negate the spirit of understanding reached in signing the IWT.<sup>83</sup> India insists that reduced flows into Pakistan from time to time are not the result of violation of the IWT by it or any action on its part to divert such flows to use more than its assigned share of water from the western rivers. According to India, when Pakistan receives reduced flows, it is because of reduced flows available on the Indian side and not because of any diversion of water by India. However, this crucially requires an objective determination as it is a matter of life and death for Pakistan.

Summarizing Pakistan's concerns over Baglihar in a prominent Indian journal a leading international expert states:

The essence of the neutral expert's verdict was that: the IWT had a provision for updating the implementation of the treaty as new knowledge accumulated; what has emerged as a global good practice for silt management would be impossible with the rigidities of the treaty; and therefore India should be allowed to draw water out of the dam at lower levels than those specified in the treaty. For Pakistan, the Baglihar verdict was a huge blow because it reinterpreted the IWT to remove the fundamental physical protection which Pakistan had against the creation of an Indian ability to seriously manipulate the timing of flows of water into Pakistan.<sup>84</sup>

It is important to note that as water gets increasingly scarce, the issue of water management and avoidance of wastage of water would assume great significance. India, according to this narrative, has nothing to do with the issues of water management that are

internal to Pakistan, but which nevertheless ought to be integral to any discourse on water scarcity.<sup>85</sup>

A recent report by the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee titled, 'Avoiding Water Wars in South and Central Asia', has warned about the possibility of a water war between India and Pakistan.<sup>86</sup> It cautions that a breakdown in the IWT's utility in resolving water conflicts could have serious ramifications for regional stability. Further, the report warns that no single dam along the waters controlled by the IWT would affect Pakistan's access to water but the cumulative effect of multiple projects could give India the ability to store enough water to limit the supply to Pakistan at crucial moments in the growing season. This report should not be taken lightly by the two countries.

It does not require a sage to predict that as the effects of climate change become more pronounced, agrarian populations in Pakistan and India, that are greatly dependent on monsoons and the melting glaciers during the summer season, would be profoundly affected. There are several studies which predict less water for Pakistan and India because of global warming and climate changes. It has even been predicted that the glaciers that feed rivers coming into Pakistan could disappear over the next three decades. Therefore, in order to avoid a calamitous situation, Pakistan and India need to cooperate with each other in the water management of the Indus waters.

WikiLeaks cables from US Ambassadors Anne W. Patterson and David Mulford in Islamabad and New Delhi, respectively, also highlight the threats posed by the water issue to the peace process as well as to Composite Dialogue. In a confidential cable dated 25 February, Ambassador Mulford wrote:

Even if India and Pakistan could resolve the Baglihar and Kishanganga projects, there are several more hydroelectric dams planned for Indian Kashmir that might be questioned under the IWT. Both Baglihar and Kishanganga projects are on the Chenab River, one of the three 'western rivers' to whose waters Pakistan has exclusive 'consumptive' rights under the IWT and which have been the source of long festering disagreement between the two neighbours.<sup>87</sup>

The cable by Ambassador Mulford was sent at the height of the Baglihar Dam controversy when Pakistan was vociferously questioning its construction, and quoted the opinion of an unnamed World Bank 'contact' with regard to the upcoming dams. The bank official in particular referred to the Dul Hasti Dam—then under construction but now completed, and the proposed Burser, Pakul Dul, and Sawalkote projects on the Indian side, which were 'all on the order of 1,000 MW', and which were 'significant undertakings in varying stages of planning that might be questioned as to their IWT compliance'.<sup>88</sup>

In a cable sent on 3 November 2008, Ambassador Patterson points out that Pakistan was facing a 34 per cent water shortage that year because of a reduction in water flows in the Chenab, which resulted in lower crop yields for winter and extended blackouts across the country due to reduced hydropower production.<sup>89</sup> Significantly, she reveals that officially

India dispelled Pakistani claims but *unofficially the Indian side admitted that structural constraints of Baglihar Dam as well as weather constraints had resulted in reduction of Pakistan's share of water* [emphasis added]. Despite a storm in the Pakistani media that Pakistan was being denied its due water rights, India predictably never publicly admitted to this. Ambassador Patterson also notes that the Baglihar controversy had resulted in increased anti-India sentiment in Pakistan and her cable proves that Pakistan was not being unduly alarmist for the sake of propaganda as privately also, the Government of Pakistan officials expressed their worries about India's future plans to build numerous other dams on the Chenab River, and the likelihood that water scarcity driven by India's increased usage would become more frequent in Pakistan.

According to a cable sent from New Delhi on 14 February 2007, after the verdict of the neutral expert in the matter of Baglihar Dam, a former Indian High Commissioner to Pakistan, G. Parthasarthy, had told American diplomats that the decision had set precedents for future construction of dams, and that a lot of previously held-up projects would now be possible. Ambassador Mulford observes, 'That India has the green light to complete and/or build similar dams on other rivers throughout Jammu & Kashmir is a fact likely not lost on anyone in energy-starved New Delhi.'<sup>90</sup> In another cable, he notes that a Pakistani diplomat categorically told him that, *on water, there are no doves in Pakistan* [emphasis added].<sup>91</sup>

It is unfortunate that water concerns lend themselves to a lot of confusion and anger because Pakistan and India constantly question each other's moves and motives. Water issues between Pakistan and India have four key dimensions: media perception, Indus Water Commission's differences, geopolitics, and ecological realities.<sup>92</sup> There is an urgent need for sharing of more cross-border information and focusing on facts rather than emotions when addressing water concerns.<sup>93</sup> In my considered view, the IWT needs to be preserved as it has after all stood the test of time and even its critics have failed to provide any viable alternatives to it. Therefore, more so in light of the dramatic changes in the climate pattern, global warming, melting of the glaciers and the possibilities of the use of latest technology, *there are robust reasons for greater collaboration and cooperation between Pakistan and India on water issues* [emphasis added]. However, for this to happen, there needs to be improved understanding between the two countries as well as a reduction in the prevailing trust deficit.

As scarcity of water could potentially influence the livelihood and welfare of great numbers of inhabitants of South Asia, both Pakistan and India ought to address this issue with a greater sense of seriousness and determination. As the lower riparian state, Pakistan faces the greater challenge. Nevertheless, I am hopeful that through bilateral dialogue the two countries would undertake measures to avert potentially disastrous consequences. I strongly endorse the viewpoint that as long as there is a political will for peace, water would not be a hindrance but water could also provide ample opportunities if Pakistan and

India want reasons to fight.<sup>94</sup> More targeted and improved bilateral cooperation on water issues would certainly promote peace and prosperity in the entire region, and failure to do so would only keep Pakistan-India relations under constant strain.

### **Why Dialogue Survived Despite the 2006 Mumbai Train Bombings**

Enhanced levels of understanding and trust between Pakistan and India had developed in general. I had developed a level of trust with the media, not just in Pakistan but in India as well. This enabled me to get across our point of view even in India through the electronic and print media in difficult times. On conflict resolution also, the progress had been considerable. This is what enabled Indian Foreign Minister Natwar Singh and me to speak candidly to each other on troubling issues as indicated already during our talks in Nathiagali.

What followed now was a bolt from the blue as far as I was concerned. It looked like a validation of Murphy's First Law: 'Anything that can go wrong will go wrong'. The serial train bombings in Mumbai on 11 July 2006, killing almost two hundred people, led to a sharp reaction in India, both from the government and the media. The Indian Prime Minister expressed his government's resolve to fight and defeat the evil designs of terrorists. In his address to the nation he said, 'No one can make India kneel; no one can come in the path of our progress.' Pakistan's Foreign Office immediately issued a statement condemning the bomb blasts.

The day after the bombings, in a press conference at the end of a day's visit to Mumbai, Prime Minister Singh caustically remarked, 'We must recognize that terrorists are trying to spread their tentacles across the country. Terror modules exist in Mumbai and in many other parts of the country. We have credible information to this effect. We are also certain that these terror modules are instigated, inspired, and supported by elements across the border without which they cannot act with such devastating effect.' The very next day, the Indian government decided to postpone the Pakistan-India Foreign-Secretary-level talks, scheduled to be held in New Delhi on 21 July. In a media briefing in Islamabad on 17 July, Pakistan's Foreign Secretary Riaz Muhammad Khan termed the postponement of the talks as a negative development and stressed that 'Pakistan does not allow its territory to be used against any other country. This is our firm policy and commitment.'

At the time of the Mumbai blasts, I happened to be in the US on a bilateral visit. My remarks at the Council on Foreign Relations in Washington about the bombings were taken out of context and evoked a storm in India. Although I never talked about linking the Mumbai attacks with the resolution of the Kashmir dispute, the Indian Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson nevertheless stated, 'India found it appalling that Foreign Minister Kasuri should seek to link this blatant and inhuman act of terror to the so-called lack of resolution of dispute between India and Pakistan.' He added that this suggested that Pakistan would cooperate with India on terror only if the so-called disputes between

the two states were resolved. He also urged Pakistan to take urgent measures to dismantle the infrastructure of terrorism 'on the territory under its control' and act resolutely against groups and individuals responsible for terrorism. Moreover, in an interview with India's CNN-IBN, Indian National Security Advisor M. K. Narayan alleged that Pakistan-based jihadi groups were involved in the Mumbai blasts.

In an address to the nation on 20 July 2006, President Pervez Musharraf stated that Pakistan was deeply sorrowed at the loss of innocent lives in Mumbai. He expressed sorrow at the Indian decision to postpone the Foreign-Secretary-level meetings, which he said was exactly what the terrorists wanted. He also urged India to refrain from needlessly indulging in a blame game by making unsubstantiated allegations, which would hand the terrorists the victory they were seeking.

In the aftermath of the bombings, Pakistan was criticized by the Western governments and the media. It came under severe pressure to deal with non-state actors operating from its territory. Some of the Western Ambassadors in Islamabad requested to see me to express their governments' concerns. Ironically, although the meetings were held in the wake of the Mumbai blasts, most of them took the opportunity to also highlight their concerns about the border with Afghanistan. For instance, the British High Commissioner, Sir Mark Lyall Grant, in addition to stressing the need to curb the activities of Hafiz Muhammad Saeed, discussed the situation in Afghanistan and expressed concern that the Taliban were getting sanctuary and training in FATA (Federally Administered Tribal Areas). He added that the 'chatter' in recent days between Afghanistan and Pakistan had picked up and that Pakistan needed to do more to curb terrorism emanating from its border areas adjacent to Afghanistan. It seemed to me that the international community was responding in a concerted manner following the Mumbai tragedy by renewing focus on terrorist activities planned and conducted from Pakistani territory.

The hostile attitude of the Indian media at the time is reflected in two articles appearing in leading Indian newspapers immediately after the blasts. One eminent columnist opined, 'Only a naive person would believe that India-Pakistan dialogue will remain unaffected ... a deliberate pause in bilateral talks at this moment might provide Prime Minister Singh valuable time and space to reflect on the basic assumption about his dealings with President Musharraf.'<sup>95</sup> Another emphasized, 'Prime Minister Singh's government's search for new relationship with Pakistan has now ended with the killings in Mumbai, no one in New Delhi can even think of reviving the dialogue with President Musharraf so long as Pakistan does not end support to terrorism.'<sup>96</sup>

I was deeply perturbed by the rapidly deteriorating situation. The hard work that had been done was being undone at an alarming rate. Not for the first time, I decided to directly touch base with the Indian populace through their media. In view of my continuing interaction with Pakistan, Indian and the international media to project a positive narrative about the peace process, which had now been going on for some time, I felt confident that

I will be able to get my point of view across to the Indian public through the Indian and international media. My aim was to counter the hawkish elements in the Indian Establishment who immediately started accusing the Government of Pakistan of the Mumbai bombings. I was able to lower the temperatures and salvage the peace process. Details regarding this have been given in the section 'Media and Public Diplomacy'.

I called the Indian High Commissioner Menon for a meeting on 6 August at the Foreign Office. According to him, links had been traced to Pakistan with respect to the recent escalating bomb blasts in various parts of India. This information had already been conveyed to Pakistan via the backchannel, and at a meeting between the Interior Secretaries of the two states. Menon noted, 'We have not said that the Government of Pakistan is involved, and therefore we don't blame the government but definitely elements in Pakistan are involved.' He stressed that something had to be done about terrorism as it was a threat to both Pakistan and India. Moreover, he added that there was need for greater action by Pakistan against those linked to terrorism from its soil.

Menon was also of the view that the two countries should not deal through the press on such sensitive issues and instead deal through regular government channels. He was probably making an oblique reference to the recent spate of interviews that I had given to the Indian media as part of damage limitation exercise in which I had deliberately mentioned the exchange of non-papers on Kashmir. I have given my reasons for doing what I did in the section on Media and Public Diplomacy. Obviously, sections of the Indian Government were unhappy with this disclosure. But I thought that my interviews helped calm down the situation. In response to my concerns over Indian interference in Balochistan and FATA, Menon accused the Pakistani Intelligence Agencies of deliberately misleading the President and the government and denied all allegations in this regard. He suggested that the two sides should sit down and talk on the issue of terrorism.

I told him that Composite Dialogue could not be delayed and it was imperative to resume talks as soon as possible. The High Commissioner expressed a desire to call on the Chief of Staff to the President, General Hamid Javed, and requested my help in this regard. In previous meetings with me, Menon had spoken well of President Musharraf, and I thought that perhaps he wanted to convey these sentiments directly to the President's Chief of Staff. In his meeting with General Hamid Javed, Menon repeated what he had conveyed to me regarding India's position on various issues. He proposed the establishment of an Anti-Terror Mechanism to ease tensions and restore mutual trust. For his part, the President's Chief of Staff reiterated Pakistan's concerns on Indian interference in Balochistan and FATA. He also categorically denied Indian allegations that Pakistan harboured terrorist training camps.

A considerable effort went into the damage limitation exercise. Despite the outrage in India, these efforts, coupled with the progress that had already been made on the peace process, resulted in softening of positions and an understanding to continue the dialogue.

Both sides genuinely felt that the Composite Dialogue had indeed made progress including the expansion of trade, enhanced people-to-people contacts, CBMs (Confidence-Building Measures) relating to Kashmir, and the progress on the backchannel. Moreover, the slant of the press in both countries suggested that the 'peace constituency' in the two countries was ascendant and keen to forge mutually beneficial Pakistan-India relations. Fortunately, the Foreign Secretaries of the two countries met on the sidelines of a SAARC meeting in Dhaka on 2 August 2006, where the two sides agreed not to freeze the peace process and to continue to implement what had already been agreed.

India's concern with regard to the recurrence of incidents like the Mumbai blasts needed to be addressed. In this context, the idea of a working group on counterterrorism which would prevent the Composite Dialogue from being derailed was advanced. Subsequently, the two sides discussed the framework and modalities of such a mechanism, and in September in Havana where the President of Pakistan and the Prime Minister of India met to consider the way forward in bilateral relations on the sidelines of the NAM (Non-Aligned Movement) Summit, the two countries agreed on an Anti-Terror Mechanism to identify and implement counter-terror measures and investigations. On the eve of the meeting in Havana, the Indian press was questioning how Prime Minister Manmohan Singh could trust President Pervez Musharraf after the Mumbai bombings, and how he could possibly justify Pakistan being both a sponsor and victim of terrorism. The ground realities, however, were that Pakistan had also suffered terrorist attacks on its territory. Nevertheless, President Musharraf and Prime Minister Singh, who had both developed a considerable degree of confidence and understanding with each other, must be commended for their firm commitment to preserving and advancing the peace process in order to maximize the welfare of their citizens.

The two leaders also directed their Foreign Secretaries to draft a Joint Statement to resume the Composite Dialogue as early as possible, and to expedite progress on a number of issues between the two countries under the Composite Dialogue's framework. Further, in addition to strongly condemning all acts and forms of terrorism, they agreed to continue to jointly seek mutually acceptable options for a peaceful, negotiated settlement of all issues between the two countries.

The Anti-Terror Mechanism was viewed as a new development in bilateral relations and helped the two countries move forward with resumption of Composite Dialogue in the aftermath of the Mumbai blasts. The underlying assumption was that Pakistan and India were on the same page on terrorism and would create a joint mechanism to counter terrorism. In its rightful context, it was seen as a bold step going beyond the usual self-defeating finger-pointing whereby the two sides would directly engage in counterterrorism measures. Perhaps in that mould, Benazir Bhutto remarked that the mechanism could be interpreted to suggest that a consensus to reinvent the bilateral relationship existed among political parties, the armed forces, and the security establishments of the two countries. Unfortunately, this was not the case.

In both countries, certain sections wrongly assessed this development as yielding to the other side's point of view on counterterrorism. In India, the fact that Pakistan was treated as an equal victim of terrorism was viewed negatively. In Pakistan, the demand to include Kashmir in the equation and the desire to involve the intelligence agencies of the two countries was not well-received, nor was India's demand for information relating to 'terrorist groups' operating in Indian Administered Kashmir (IAK).

There were elements in the Pakistani establishment who believed that proposing the Anti-Terror Mechanism was a cheeky move on the part of India to accord primacy to the issue of terrorism. In this regard, it was suggested that India had adopted terrorism as a major theme to explain the freedom struggle in IAK in the 1990s, by portraying Pakistan as a state sponsor of terrorism. It was conjectured that, after the establishment of the Anti-Terror Mechanism, India might place impossible demands on Pakistan. Moreover, it was posited that India would make the continuation of dialogue contingent on Pakistan's cooperation with India on terrorism and, the initiative of either continuing the dialogue or putting it on hold would rest with India. It was also felt that the proposed mechanism could be equated with India's desire to segregate the issue of terrorism from the framework of the Composite Dialogue.

The BJP President, Rajnath Singh, described the mechanism as a 'fig leaf', while the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPIM) termed the decision to resume dialogue as a welcome and necessary step. Senior Hurriyat leader, Moulvi Abbas Ansari, termed the talks as positive, and former Chief Minister of IAK, Mufti Muhammad Saeed, said that the meeting had revived the hopes for a lasting peace in Kashmir. The Congress Party spokesman stated that India had sent out a clear message to the world—and Pakistan in particular—that there could be no compromise or half way dialogue on terrorism. Speaking to the media on his way back to New Delhi on 18 September, the Indian Prime Minister described the talks as a good beginning and expressed his pleasure with the outcome. He felt that the institutional mechanism to tackle terrorism had to be credible and inspire confidence on both sides since it was meant to curtail terrorism. On Kashmir, he said, the two countries had agreed to find a way to reconcile the two positions and had committed themselves to working together to find a credible solution.

The first meeting of the Anti-Terror Mechanism, defining its parameters, modalities, and framework was held in March 2007 in the backdrop of the Samjhauta Express bombing incident. It was also agreed that specific information be exchanged to help terrorism-related investigations in either country. Unfortunately, the four meetings of the mechanism held until October 2008 proved to be inconclusive, as divergent perceptions about issues to be dealt with under it prevailed from day one. Moreover, India's insistence that Kashmir be included as a critical variable marred the mechanism's effectiveness and utility.

Despite all the fiery rhetoric against resuming talks with Pakistan in the aftermath of the Mumbai blasts, what then prompted the two sides to continue with the peace process?

Clearly, a lot of work had already been done by both sides. Besides our commitment, there was also Prime Minister Singh's staunch commitment towards the peace process. Moreover, as a result of the detailed work done on Composite Dialogue and Backchannel prior to the bombings in July 2006, a sense of positivity and optimism had generated goodwill and favourable public opinion in both countries. There was also a feeling among powerful quarters in India that the blasts were more than likely the handiwork of non-state actors outside the Government of Pakistan's control. Therefore, the Pakistan Government should not to be blamed for the Mumbai bombings.

### **Reviewing Progress on the Eight Points of the Composite Dialogue**

In accordance with the Joint Statement of 6 January 2004, the Foreign Secretaries of the two countries met the following month to finalize the dates for various technical-level meetings on the opening of new bus routes between Pakistan and India. They met again in June, but this time discussed peace and security issues including Kashmir and CBMs, and decided to revive the Composite Dialogue format which had been agreed upon in 1997.

In February 1997, Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, in a letter addressed to his Indian counterpart I. K. Gujral stressed, that without any progress on the Kashmir issue, it would be difficult to initiate and achieve meaningful cooperation between Pakistan and India in various fields. This initiative led to the commencement of Foreign-Secretary-level talks. Significantly, it was the first time since the Simla Agreement of 1972 that India had agreed to include Kashmir on the agenda of talks. The three rounds of the Foreign Secretaries' meetings in 1997 largely remained inconclusive. However, in the second round, the two countries identified eight key issues and agreed to address them in an integrated fashion. This mechanism was subsequently branded the Composite Dialogue and these eight issues were identified to be dealt in the following manner:

1. Peace and Security, including CBMs;
2. Kashmir, being the most important, were to be discussed by the Foreign Secretaries;
3. Siachen by the Defence Secretaries;
4. Wullar Barrage/Tulbul, later water issues in general, by the Water and Power Secretaries;
5. Sir Creek, the 96 km strip of water that is disputed between India and Pakistan in the Rann of Kutch marshland, by the Surveyors General;
6. Terrorism and drug-trafficking by the Interior/Home Secretaries;
7. Economic and commercial cooperation by Commerce Secretaries; and

## 8. Promotion of friendly exchanges in various fields by the Culture Secretaries.

The Composite Dialogue's format was significantly different because it included all subjects of interest to the two countries in the same list to be discussed simultaneously. Previously, India had been insisting that Kashmir was far too difficult and intricate an issue to be dealt with without first creating the right circumstances by giving priority to CBMs, people-to-people contact, promotion of friendly exchanges in various fields, and trade and economic cooperation. On the other hand, Pakistan had always maintained that the issue of Kashmir needed to be resolved first. Its resolution would create a conducive atmosphere for dealing with all other issues including trade. The Composite Dialogue process initiated in 1997 was thus a compromise in which all issues including Kashmir, terrorism, trade and people-to-people contact would be discussed simultaneously in an integrated manner. It was hoped that this approach would lead to a satisfactory movement on all outstanding issues.

For various reasons, including the Kargil War and change of leadership in Pakistan in 1999, the Foreign-Secretary-level talks remained stalled after the three rounds in 1997 until their resumption following the Joint Statement of 2004. Thereafter, within the framework of the agenda, the respective Secretaries would meet and discuss the ways and means of promoting cooperation in various fields. The Foreign Secretaries would review the overall progress and the general improvement in relations including people-to-people contact and promotion of friendly exchanges. The Foreign Secretaries also established expert-level talks on nuclear and conventional CBMs. These meetings promoted a better understanding of each other's point of view and also created a sense of stability in bilateral relations. Various meetings on all agenda items under the Composite Dialogue usually took one year to complete. At the conclusion of a round, the Foreign Secretaries held a review meeting which was followed by the Foreign Ministers meetings to review and approve progress made on various issues, and where required, issue the necessary guidelines to move the process forward.

Although for the sake of historical accuracy the origins of the Composite Dialogue can be traced to 1997, it is a known fact that almost all of the detailed and concrete work towards real progress was carried out between 2004 and 2007. The process continued after I left office but unfortunately much headway could not be made and it was largely halted after the Mumbai attacks in November 2008. The following progress was made under various agenda items of the Composite Dialogue during 2004–07.

### ***1. Kashmir Dispute***

Pakistan proposed to associate the Kashmiris with the dialogue process and to appoint High Representatives with a definite mandate to resolve the dispute. The issue of human rights violations in Indian Administered Kashmir was also raised and President Pervez Musharraf's Four-Point Formula was presented for an official response. India proposed

designating five meeting points on the LoC for the divided Kashmiri families, and the two countries agreed to start the Muzaffarabad-Srinagar Bus Service without passports and visas using only local ID papers. Kashmir -related CBMs were agreed upon to allow divided families to write or meet. These were welcomed by the people of Kashmir as a source of relief.

The two sides also agreed to promote trade on the LoC by permitting trucks to use the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad route for trade. While the LoC-related CBMs were agreed upon in the meetings on the subject, the backchannel kept working on the Kashmir dispute. The progress made on the issue is extensively covered elsewhere in a separate chapter of this book.

## ***2. Peace and Security, Including CBMs***

The Foreign Secretaries discussed the maintenance of peace and tranquillity on the Line of Control (LoC) and created a mechanism to ensure that the ceasefire on the LoC continued. Under this heading, the two sides also discussed various issues related to strategic stability and reaffirmed the significance of a consolidated approach vis-à-vis nuclear and conventional CBMs.

With regard to nuclear CBMs, as a result of various rounds held, the two countries signed an agreement on reducing risks of nuclear accidents or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons as well as preventing incidents at sea. Agreements on pre-notification of flight testing of ballistic missiles and on reducing the risk from accidents relating to nuclear weapons were also reached. Pakistan had even suggested including cruise missiles, but India, unaware that Pakistan had already developed its cruise missile, and as it was trying to develop its own cruise missile 'Brahmos' with Russian collaboration, was not interested.

Pakistan's nuclear programme enjoys a sacrosanct status in the country and none of its leaders have ever compromised on it. After acquiring nuclear weapons, Pakistan felt that it had obtained a great equalizer at the strategic level in the region. Perceived nuclear capabilities, opaque or explicit, was an important factor in preventing escalation in the Pakistan-India crises from 1984 to 2002. The reluctance of either side to escalate to conventional conflict, despite over a decade of low-intensity warfare in Kashmir, the Kargil conflict and the 2002 crisis, reinforces the effectiveness of nuclear deterrence over the logic of non-proliferation.<sup>97</sup>

The nuclear deterrent should promote economic cooperation without fear of adverse security spillovers. In other words, the potential for spillover from nuclear deterrence to growing economic cooperation is analogous to the economic growth between the US and the USSR after the détente in 1969. In the case of Pakistan and India, this has unfortunately not happened. In this context, Pakistan proposed a series of CBMs in December 2004 including the elements of a Strategic Restraint Regime which included

measures for nuclear restraint and conventional balance; avoidance of nuclear, missile, or conventional arms race; maintenance of Minimum Credible Deterrence; no acquisition and deployment of anti-ballistic missile systems; and the conversion into implemental measures, as well as elaboration of various such proposals. Lamentably, India rejected Pakistan's initiative and consequently not much progress on this issue was achieved. It is only when the two countries are able to manage their conflicts and resolve their disputes that there could be progress towards strategic stability. In light of their divergent strategic perceptions, it is difficult to think that Pakistan and India would evolve a common ground for consideration of such issues. Nevertheless, mutual ambiguity of each other's nuclear regime continues to be a source of stability. Pakistan's proposal for a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone in South Asia remains on the table at a time of initiatives and moves towards Global Zero, which envisages a world without nuclear weapons.

### ***3. Terrorism and Drug Trafficking***

India has generally projected itself as a victim of terrorism and Pakistan as a state sponsoring it. On the other hand, Pakistan has always voiced serious concerns over human rights abuses in IAK as well as Indian activities from Afghanistan through its consulates in Afghanistan, FATA, and Balochistan. While Pakistan firmly believes that violence in IAK is the direct consequence of suppression of the legitimate aspirations of Kashmiris, India persistently blames Pakistan for cross-border infiltration as well as for allowing training camps in Azad Jammu & Kashmir and Pakistan. Under this agenda, the two sides signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on bilateral cooperation in drug trafficking. They also discussed the issues of human trafficking, counterfeit currency, and illegal immigration. However, the measure of the lack of progress or success under this agenda can be gauged from the fact that the two countries had to agree upon a new anti-terror mechanism in Havana in September 2006 in the aftermath of the Mumbai train attacks in July.

### ***4. Wullar Barrage/Tulbul Project***

The Tulbul Project is a navigation lock-cum-control structure at the mouth of Wullar Lake. The original Indian plan envisaged the construction of a barrage, 439 feet long and 40 feet wide, with a maximum storage capacity of 0.30 million acre feet of water. India proposed building the barrage in 1984 on River Jhelum, at the mouth of Wullar Lake, Kashmir's largest freshwater lake located near Sopore town in the Kashmir Valley. The purpose of this project was to regulate the release of water from the natural storage in the lake to maintain a minimum draught of 4.5 feet in the river up to Baramulla during the lean winter months. Aimed at making the river navigable, the project was conceived in the early 1980s and work on it began in 1984.

According to Pakistan, construction of the Wullar Barrage violates the IWT (Indus Waters Treaty) which forbids construction of any storage project on River Jhelum in Jammu &

Kashmir. Pakistan contends that its agriculture and hydroelectric uses would be negatively affected and that the use of the western rivers cannot be made subservient to the navigational needs of India which would require restricting the flow pattern of water of the three western rivers in breach of the provisions of the IWT. Pakistan fears that India could use the barrage as a geostrategic weapon by controlling the flow of the river. The barrage could also potentially disrupt Pakistan's Upper Jhelum Canal Project, Upper Chenab Canal Project, and Lower Bari Doab Canal Project.

India maintains that the Tulbul Project is meant for non-consumptive use and navigational purposes. Further, India holds that there is no man-made storage involved as the lake would naturally fill and that the control gates would only be used during times of water scarcity or depletion. On the issue of Wullar Barrage/Tulbul Project, Pakistan and India held several discussions without any meaningful progress, and the work on the project was suspended in 2007 upon Pakistan's objection. The stalemate between the two countries over this issue continues. Water disputes, in view of its importance, have been discussed in a separate chapter.

### ***5. Siachen Dispute***

As Siachen and Sir Creek disputes were also tackled via the backchannel, these issues have been extensively dealt with subsequently in the book. The measure of progress made by the two countries on the backchannel on Kashmir encouraged the use of this process for discussing other issues as well. In my considered opinion, substantial progress was achieved not just on the Kashmir issue but also on Siachen and Sir Creek disputes. This view was shared by the top Indian leadership of the time. I was informed by high-ranking officials of the Indian government that Pakistan's suggestions regarding Siachen were workable and that the progress on Sir Creek had been so remarkable that the two sides could agree on its final settlement during Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's expected visit to Pakistan towards the second half of 2006.

### ***6. Sir Creek***

Here, it is noteworthy that the two sides conducted a Joint Survey of Sir Creek and also exchanged maps.

### ***7. Economic and Commercial Cooperation***

This issue has been discussed in the 'Way Forward' section. It is necessary here to say something regarding the progress made under the Composite Dialogue. Typically, international trade is conducted on the basis of a negative list which excludes certain items but allows trade in other items. In the case of Pakistan-India trade, Pakistan follows a more restrictive trade regime under which trade on all items other than those mentioned in the positive list is banned. This restriction on trade was imposed after the 1965 war.

Pakistan-India trade is governed by the Protocol of 1974 whereby the two countries trade on the basis of positive list of items.

When I became Foreign Minister, the positive list was limited to only about 1,000 items, and thus the reported level of bilateral trade between Pakistan and India was minimal. The bilateral trade figures, however, did not represent the true picture of the actual trade volume between Pakistan and India since substantial trade was re-routed through foreign territories such as Dubai. Additionally, smuggling abounds. Following the agreement on SAFTA in 2004, India started insisting on its implementation in letter and spirit and urged Pakistan to do away with the positive list. There was a difference of opinion in Pakistan and even the Cabinet was divided on the subject. A powerful lobby felt that complete normalization of relations with India had to be subject to a resolution of the Kashmir issue. We, therefore, decided on a compromise by dramatically increasing the number of items under the positive list including some of the industrial raw materials, spare parts, and chemicals that India was interested in exporting to Pakistan. Consequently, trade with India increased many times over from \$235 million to almost \$2 billion during our government. I am sure it is much higher now. The net effect of our policies was almost a thousand per cent increase in trade.

Other reservations about our acceding to India's demands were also expressed. Historically, in contrast to India's restrictive regime, Pakistan has had a very liberal trade regime. Moreover, although India had granted MFN (Most Favoured Nation) status to Pakistan, it was of little practical value to Pakistani exporters who faced not just tariff and para-tariff but also non-tariff barriers. Thus, the geometric rise in the volume of bilateral trade was largely in India's favour. I recall highlighting this issue to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh who pledged to establish a committee to look into the complaints of Pakistan's exporters regarding such barriers.

Besides the MFN status, India also proposed the opening of bank branches in each other's countries, easing of visa restrictions, harmonization of customs procedures, granting of transit trade facilities for India to Iran and Afghanistan and permission to multiple airlines and shipping services including private ones for operations in each other's countries. Despite its historic position of restricting trade with India pending the solution of the Kashmir dispute, Pakistan engaged in a meaningful dialogue with India on these issues at the Secretary level. The two countries also agreed on the modalities to allow cross-border movement of trucks at the Wagha border.

On the whole, it would be fair to say that, while India was extremely keen on trade issues, Pakistan trod more cautiously as it tried to calibrate liberalization of trade with resolution of long-standing disputes, including Kashmir. Encouragingly, there has been a healthy domestic debate in Pakistan on this issue with protagonists of normalization of relations with India often citing the example of China liberalizing trade with India despite being embroiled in several boundary disputes with it.

## ***8. Promotion of Friendly Exchanges***

Substantial progress was made in some fields while not much was achieved in others. Besides the enormous goodwill generated by cricket matches between the two countries, Indian films, which had been banned since 1965, were allowed to be screened in Pakistan. Also, exchange of renowned musicians and pop singers positively contributed towards normalization of Pakistan-India relations. Lamentably, although a large number of Pakistanis and Indians visited each other's countries, not enough progress was made towards the introduction of a liberal visa regime and proposals mooted on encouraging group tourism failed to make much headway as well. However, meaningful progress was made towards facilitating visits of pilgrims to shrines and places of worship. The two countries agreed upon opening the Lahore-Amritsar and Lahore-Delhi bus service as well as Khokhrapar-Monabao rail service.

### **Mukherjee Accepts My Proposal on Treatment of Prisoners**

I was particularly pleased when, in February 2007, my Indian counterpart Pranab Mukherjee (now President) accepted my suggestion of forming a commission of retired judges of superior courts of the two countries to deal with the plight of prisoners—largely poor fishermen in each other's prisons—and recommending their release where the requirements of the judicial process had been met. I felt strongly on this issue since the prisoners belonged to the relatively more deprived sections of our societies. Unfortunately, due to bureaucratic bottlenecks, the commission has yet to realize its full potential. I hope that in the future it becomes able to achieve its objectives. Nevertheless, it must be underscored that the prisoners issue marked one of the highlights of the fourth round of the Composite Dialogue. Since then, a large number of prisoners have been released from Indian and Pakistani prisons to go back to their countries.

### **A New Dynamic at Work**

A new phenomenon transpired in Pakistan-India relations, at least during our tenure. Remarkably, the peace process itself began adding a new dynamic. Under the format of the Composite Dialogue, dozens of meetings held under different heads of the Composite Dialogue, and widely covered by the print and electronic media of the two countries, were convened in Islamabad and Delhi. With improving Pakistan-India relations, SAARC, often a hostage in the past to hostile relations between Pakistan and India started assuming greater importance and also became more proactive and newsworthy. As promoting regional cooperation is SAARC's essential purpose, its meetings, which were held in different capitals of the SAARC countries including Islamabad and New Delhi, generally struck positive notes. Meetings of SAARC members on political, social, and economic issues also attracted plenty of positive attention. Such was the increasing frequency of these meetings that I felt this phenomenon would soon acquire a critical mass to effect positive change. Moreover, in this context, some leading journalists from the two

countries travelled across the border to interview leading policymakers on the other side. South Asian Free Media Association (SAFMA) must also be credited for its proactive role during this period in bringing together different sections of society including parliamentarians, journalists, and businessmen.

The normalization process was sustained and encouraged by frequent meetings between the leaders of the two countries. Besides the Indian Prime Minister's visit to Islamabad in 2004 and that of Pakistan's President Musharraf to New Delhi in 2005, the two heads of government regularly met once or twice a year on the sidelines of various meetings. I was also meeting my Indian counterpart more frequently in Islamabad and New Delhi and at various international conferences. In our one-on-one encounters, we discussed matters such as commencement of the Muzaffarabad-Srinagar Bus Service in 2005 and the modalities of travel for Kashmir including travel without passports and visas through the use of simple ID documents. Occasionally, we reviewed the progress on the backchannel as well. It was also during such meetings that measures for facilitating the visit of the APHC and other prominent leaders from IAK to Pakistan and vice versa were discussed.

In addition to the flurry of activity under the Composite Dialogue and the backchannel, leading to noticeable improvement in the political atmosphere of both the countries, the peace process was greatly strengthened by a relatively more liberal visa regime resulting in an exponential rise in the number of visitors from one country to the other. This brought about a sea change in the atmosphere in both countries. People started believing that Pakistan and India might at long last be able to resolve their bilateral disputes, including the Kashmir issue, and reap the dividends of peace and regional cooperation. The value of real estate on either side of the international border shot up astronomically. We regularly met a large number of Indian businessmen, industrialists, and investors at the annual meetings of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. Businessmen and representatives of the corporate sectors began to explore business opportunities and possibilities for joint ventures. In this connection, I personally know several leading Indian businessmen who visited Lahore and Islamabad. Pakistan's top corporate leaders and captains of industry were equally enthusiastic. However, such mutual enthusiasm could only have been sustained if the general public as well as the media and civil society had sensed that the ongoing peace process was indeed making significant progress. The situation changed significantly after our government's tenure ended. Nevertheless, it is my firm conviction that sooner rather than later, the two countries will conclude that far from being a mere mirage, peace is achievable and within their grasp. Had I not seen the situation from such close quarters during my five years at the Foreign Office, I would not have been as confident as I am in the conclusion that Pakistan and India are capable of resolving their bilateral problems.

After the meeting in Havana, the Composite Dialogue was resumed and Foreign Secretary Riaz Muhammad Khan visited India. In a businesslike manner, the two sides examined the dialogue process and reviewed the progress made in various areas. Pakistani side

reiterated the importance of eliminating human rights abuses in IAK and explained Pakistan's concept of demilitarization in Kashmir and how it would help raise the confidence and comfort level of the Kashmiris. The two sides also decided to make Kashmir-related CBMs more effective by increasing movement across the LoC, including the early commencement of truck service for trade. Foreign Secretary Riaz Muhammad Khan also expressed Pakistan's resentment over India's constant finger-pointing at us whenever a violent incident occurred. In response, Indian Foreign Secretary Shiv Shankar Menon presented a bland dossier of evidence of Pakistani complicity in acts of terror in the past but no evidence was presented on serial train bombings in Mumbai. When Riaz Muhammad Khan called on the Indian Foreign Minister Pranab Mukherjee, his tone was more nuanced as he stated that terrorism had become a major problem for the two countries and that both must make sincere efforts to stamp it out. Welcoming the establishment of joint Anti-Terror Mechanism, Mukherjee warned that certain vested interests might want to sabotage the process but added that it was refreshing that the two sides had not lost heart and had returned to the table. On Kashmir, he remarked that the two countries were engaged in a form of dialogue qualitatively different from the ones in the sixties and seventies. Moreover, Foreign Minister Mukherjee underlined that if the two countries were able to resolve the Kashmir dispute, they would both become powerful states in the international arena.

From some of his statements at the time, it is clear that the Indian Prime Minister believed that the two countries had made progress towards the resolution of outstanding disputes, including Kashmir.<sup>98</sup> Kuldip Nayar, a prominent Indian journalist, later informed me that in a private conversation with him, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had told him that while India had enjoyed a good rapport with President Musharraf, he did not know whom to talk to in the political dispensation that succeeded our government in Islamabad.<sup>99</sup> Manmohan Singh also later admitted in an interview to an Indian channel that the two countries came very close to resolving the Kashmir issue during our tenure.<sup>100</sup>

Pakistan continued emphasizing the need for further progress on substantive issues and stressed that genuine progress in bilateral relations hinged upon addressing these issues fairly and justly. Moreover, the two countries needed to shift focus from conflict management to conflict resolution. In my private meetings with my Indian interlocutors, I was clear that in the absence of a fair and just solution of the Kashmir dispute, the relationship between the two countries would remain hostage to terrorist incidents beyond the control of their respective governments. It was, therefore, supremely important that the two countries engage with each other on Kashmir in a forthright manner. It is my belief that Pakistan and India were moving along the lines that would have produced a solution acceptable to them, as well as to the people of Kashmir. Hopefully, the subsequent setbacks and delays to the peace process will be overcome in due course of time.

As the fourth round of talks were taking place in Islamabad, Pakistan was beginning to be convulsed following the suspension of Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry in March 2007. Accordingly, the prospects for a breakthrough receded as public and media attention shifted to Pakistan's internal turmoil. Earlier, the two countries had missed a window of opportunity for a breakthrough towards the end of 2006, when matters were delayed in light of the forthcoming elections in several Indian states including the pivotal state of Uttar Pradesh.

### **The Lingering Issues of Siachen and Sir Creek**

The Siachen Glacier is situated near the north-eastern tip of Baltistan, forming part of Gilgit Agency (now Gilgit-Baltistan), and is the northernmost terminus of the Line of Control (LoC)— Point NJ 9842—which was also the terminus of the Ceasefire Line of 1949. Historically, this area had been controlled and administered by Pakistan with foreign mountaineering expeditions always seeking the Government of Pakistan's permission to visit the area. However, largely due to inaccessibility, the area could not be demarcated until India occupied it by moving its troops in April 1984 in a clear and flagrant breach of the Simla Agreement.

On Siachen, I reminded my various counterparts that the two countries had agreed to withdraw troops in June 1989, but India reneged from the Agreement of 1989 by advancing the element of the authentication of the Actual Ground Position Line, held by India. Historically, Pakistan used to issue permission for hiking expeditions in the Siachen Glacier area which is 72 km long and 2–3 km wide. However, the Indian Army started sending expeditions to the area beginning in 1978, and India moved its troops in 1984 north of the LoC in violation of the Simla Agreement wherein the two sides had undertaken to refrain from the threat or use of force. <sup>101</sup>

Pakistan reiterated the above understanding for the withdrawal of troops to settle the dispute and assure durable peace. Setting aside bitter history, the two countries discussed the Siachen issue and the fifth round of Defence Secretary-talks during 15–17 June 1989, they agreed to withdraw the troops. The Joint Statement issued after the meeting stated that 'there was an agreement by both sides to work towards a comprehensive settlement based on redeployment of forces to reduce the chances of conflict, avoidance of the use of force and the determination of future positions on the ground so as to conform to the Simla Agreement and to assure durable peace in the Siachen area.' <sup>102</sup>

According to a leading Indian commentator A. G. Noorani, 'This was in striking contrast to all previous Joint Statements'. The next day, separate talks between the Foreign Secretaries concluded. At a Joint Press Conference, Pakistan Foreign Secretary Humayun Khan referred to the Defence Secretaries' meeting. According to the Voice of America's tape, he called it 'a significant advance', and spoke of a Joint Commitment to 'relocation of forces to positions occupied at the time of the Simla Agreement. The exact location of

these positions will be worked out in detail by military authorities of the two countries.’ Foreign Secretary S. K. Singh said, ‘I would like to thank the Foreign Secretary Humayun Khan and endorse everything he has said.’

The very next day, Aftab Seth, Joint Secretary and official spokesman of the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi, said that no agreement had been reached on troop withdrawals. ‘There was no indication of any such agreement in the Joint Press Statement issued at the end of the talks.’ In the words of the distinguished Indian commentator, ‘This statement was palpably untrue.’<sup>103</sup>

The two sides resolved to implement this understanding during Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi’s visit to Pakistan in July 1989. In this regard, when the two Defence Secretaries were about to conclude an agreement in 1992 after working out the modalities of withdrawal, the Indian side brought in additional elements insisting on authentication of the current position. Pakistan refused to accept as it would have amounted to accepting and legalizing Indian aggression.

Following the resumption of dialogue between the two countries, in the first round in August 2004, the Indians again insisted on the authentication of the current position while Pakistan stressed upon the need to implement the understanding reached in 1989 regarding the unconditional withdrawal of Indian troops. Nevertheless, the Pakistan-India Joint Statement of April 2005 stated, ‘the existing institutional mechanism should convene discussions immediately with a view to finding mutually acceptable solution to both issues i.e. Siachen and Sir Creek expeditiously.’<sup>104</sup>

While the Indian political leadership was talking about expeditious solution of the Siachen issue, the Army Chief, J. J. Singh, on 26 May 2005, remarked that authentication of the 110-km Actual Ground Position Line (AGPL) on the Siachen Glacier should be done by Pakistan when disengagement takes place.<sup>105</sup> When asked to respond to this statement at Delhi Airport, I said that Indian commentators often accuse the Pakistan Army of political interference but in this case it was abundantly clear that the Indian Army Chief was interfering in matters exclusively falling within the domain of the political government.

In October 2005, India handed over a Non-Paper on Siachen Redeployment Elements. In November 2006, it expressed willingness to approach this issue by agreeing on a package that established a Zone of Disengagement in the area. Pakistan’s proposal adequately addressed Indian fears of possible Pakistani ingress into the vacated areas. According to our proposal, the package agreement would include a monitoring mechanism and attached schedules indicating current positions as well as positions before disengagements which would dispel apprehensions of violations by either side. It was also around this time that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, while visiting the troops in the area, suggested that Siachen be turned into a ‘mountain of peace’.<sup>106</sup> Obviously, he could not be talking in a vacuum and was aware of the progress being made on the issue in the talks between the

two countries. I was informed by a high-ranking official from India that Pakistan's proposals on Siachen were workable. This has now been confirmed by Dr Sanjaya Baru, who was Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's Chief Media Advisor in UPA-1, in his book *The Accidental Prime Minister*. He goes on to say that the Prime Minister made this proposal, regarding turning Siachen into a 'mountain of peace', after consulting every retired Army General who actually commanded the troops at Siachen.<sup>107</sup> He even attacks the then Army Chief, General J. J. Singh, about whom he says, 'In closed-door briefings, the General would say the deal with Pakistan was doable, but in public he would back Antony when the Defence minister chose not to back the Prime Minister.'<sup>108</sup> Interestingly, he even questions (former Indian Defence Minister) A. K. Antony's motives in opposing the Prime Minister's Siachen initiative which he links to wrangling within the Congress Party.<sup>109</sup>

I was assured by a senior Indian interlocutor that the two countries could work on the basis of our proposal. Subsequently, in a speech in Amritar in March 2006, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh sounded optimistic on the possibility of a resolution of the Siachen and Sir Creek disputes.<sup>110</sup> President Pervez Musharraf, while in office and afterwards, exuded similar confidence regarding resolution of these outstanding dispute.<sup>111</sup> Whenever a decision is taken by the political leadership of the two countries to resolve the Siachen issue, it is my firm belief that the agreement could be signed without delay as it only requires political will.

Besides Siachen, Sir Creek is another long-standing issue between Pakistan and India. The 1907–08 Sir Creek boundary dispute between then Kutch state and Sindh was resolved by the Government of India, and is known as the 1914 Resolution. This resolution, in conjunction with Map B-44, settled the boundary between the Kutch state and Sindh. After Partition in 1947, the boundary between Pakistan and India ran in accordance with the 1914 Resolution and Map B-44. The two countries jointly demarcated the boundary from Pillar No. 1 to Pillar No. 920 during 1958–61, but further demarcation was halted due to the Rann of Kutch dispute. The disputed boundary from Pillar No. 920 towards West and South up the Western terminus, i.e. Pillar No. 1,175, was settled by arbitration through the Rann of Kutch Tribunal and determined by the surveyors of the two countries during 1968–69.

A few minor complications notwithstanding, the two sides have conducted *a joint survey and also have an agreed upon map which should facilitate an early decision on demarcation of Sir Creek's boundary* [emphasis added]. In the middle of 2006, it was our understanding that during his expected visit to Pakistan towards the end of the year, Prime Minister Singh would sign the agreement on the resolution of the Sir Creek dispute. Both sides felt that the resolution of this relatively minor dispute would also generate a lot of positive momentum to the peace process and help facilitate resolution of the few remaining issues linked to the Kashmir dispute. Unfortunately, Prime Minister Manmohan

Singh had to delay his visit because of elections in several states of India and his next planned visit in March 2007 could not materialize due to Pakistan's political tumult following the Judicial Movement. At the time, most experts in Islamabad and New Delhi believed that Sir Creek was the easiest to resolve of all outstanding disputes. It is my firm conviction that this is still the case, and I hope that the two countries would muster the necessary political will to resolve this dispute.



# Interrupted Symphony: Contours of Backchannel Settlement on Kashmir

## **KASHMIR: THE EVOLVING POSITIONS OF PAKISTAN AND INDIA**

The value of dialogue can never be underestimated. The many rounds of dialogue that took place during our time were successful. It is not that we were making progress in every single meeting on every issue but we were definitely learning more about each other. I personally witnessed some of our erstwhile hawkish diplomats on India advocating a change in Pakistan's position after 9/11 and realizing the merits of interfacing with India. As a result of the new dialogue process, the two sides started viewing each other differently as both found a more pragmatic approach in their leadership. In fact, we came very close to a solution.

During the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Session in September 2003, President Pervez Musharraf invited India to engage in a sustained dialogue with Pakistan over the Kashmir dispute and to jointly observe a ceasefire along the Line of Control (LoC). He conveyed Pakistan's willingness to encourage cessation of violence in Kashmir through reciprocal obligations that would require removing Indian forces' restrictions on Kashmiris. In President Musharraf's speech on 24 November 2003, Pakistan announced proposals to further improve relations with India. These included observance of ceasefire by Pakistani forces along the LoC with effect from Eid-ul-Fitr on 26 November 2003, and an invitation to India to reciprocate this unilateral gesture, highlighting that effective maintenance of ceasefire along the LoC necessitated a positive reciprocal response from India. In fact, Pakistan had offered a comprehensive ceasefire along the LoC, the working boundary and the Line of Actual Contact Control in Siachen area in the disputed territory of Kashmir. Other measures that were announced included the revival of the Khokhrapar-Munabao railway route, the establishment of the Muzaffarabad-Srinagar bus service without prejudice to Pakistan's widely known position on the disputed status of the territory of Kashmir with immediate resumption of air links between the two countries, the start of a Lahore-Amritsar bus service, and resumption of the Samjhauta Express passenger train service. Pakistan stressed that, although there had been an improvement in the atmosphere between the two countries, there was no substitute for meaningful talks between Pakistan and India. The Indian response was generally positive and, until

recently, the ceasefire line along the LoC was not violated by either side. However, despite Pakistan's initiatives and proposals, India continued to harp on infiltration across the LoC, with varying emphasis at different times, while Pakistan consistently called on the Indian government to honour and uphold the fundamental rights of the Kashmiris.

On 2 May 2003, I issued a statement positively acknowledging Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's announcement of the appointment of the Indian High Commissioner in Islamabad. I was pleased and encouraged that our government's initiatives were starting to bear fruit. My message was to hold meaningful discussions on all outstanding issues between the two countries, including Kashmir, so that our region could focus on the much needed economic and social development of its people. That was my refrain then as well as now.

### **A New Kashmir Resolution?**

When for a two-year term, Pakistan assumed its non-permanent member seat in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) from 1 January 2003, India was unmistakably worried that Pakistan might introduce some new initiatives on Kashmir, particularly during our Presidency of the Council in May 2003. The Foreign Office conducted a comprehensive study in the light of the raised expectations amongst the people and the media, and there was a feeling that Pakistan could use this opportunity to its advantage over the Kashmir issue. During the Foreign Office's study and discussions, it became clear that, over the years, Pakistan had been circulating non-papers on Kashmir in the UN, sending letters to the UN Secretary General as well as to the monthly rotating President of the UNSC, and holding regular bilateral meetings with the Secretary General or the President of the UNSC on the Kashmir issue. We strategized that Pakistan could raise the Kashmir issue at the monthly lunches of the UN Secretary General with members of the UNSC, and urge the UNSC to commission a report on the UNSC Resolutions on Kashmir that had not been implemented while highlighting the role of the UNSC in facilitating long-standing disputes like Kashmir. The last important UNSC Resolutions on Kashmir were the Ceasefire Resolution of 20 September 1965, and the resolution adopted after the nuclear tests on 19 May 1998. It had urged both India and Pakistan to address the root causes of their disputes, including Kashmir. Thus, we also explored the possibility of calling an informal or a formal meeting of the UNSC on an agenda item titled 'The Pakistan-India Question'. A formal meeting could have adopted a new resolution superseding all earlier resolutions. That however required nine positive votes and no veto by a permanent UNSC member. Since, prior to 9/11, the major powers, including China, had been calling for settlement of Kashmir through bilateral talks, we concluded that it was prudent not to take any initiative on this subject as chances of garnering the necessary support for the passage of a new UNSC Resolution on Kashmir were rather slim.

On the eve of the UNSC meeting over which I was to preside, I met two of Pakistan's most seasoned diplomats at the residence of our Permanent Representative in New York.

The meeting lasted until early morning hours. These diplomats, known to be hardliners on Pakistan-India disputes, including Kashmir, also tried their best to convince me not to raise the Kashmir issue at next day's session. I, of course, already knew that the international situation had undergone major changes, more so after 9/11, but some of our diplomats trained in confronting India never accepted this even in discussions at the Foreign Office. I was finding it ironic that they were now arguing rather persuasively that, under the transformed world order post-9/11, it was not possible to muster the necessary support for a new UNSC Resolution on Kashmir. If ever there was a reality test, we all faced it then. Apart from the intense media pressure on us to raise the Kashmir issue at the UNSC session, it was obvious to me, as a politician from Central Punjab, that if I succeeded in getting a new resolution on Kashmir adopted, it would be a feather in my cap. Our two seasoned diplomats must have felt the same. Yet all of us eventually concluded that it was imprudent at the time to take any initiative on Kashmir as it would not be helpful to our cause.

This meeting further confirmed my belief that the national interests of Pakistan and the interests of the people of Kashmir demanded a serious bilateral dialogue with India over this dispute, as that was the only way to achieve a solution reflective of the aspirations of the Kashmiris, who had suffered for decades under Indian occupation. Whereas we realized that the international environment was not conducive for a new resolution, we were confident that it was not possible for India to forever remain in control of Kashmir by force. India also needed to conduct a dialogue with us on the Kashmir issue and resolve its disputes with its neighbours, particularly Pakistan, if it wished to play an important role on the international stage.

### **Our Success in Preventing Deletion of Kashmir from the UN Agenda**

During those days, an effort was being made to delete dormant UNSC Resolutions which had not been acted upon for years, aimed ostensibly at rationalizing the UN and UNSC agendas. At the Foreign Office, we were alarmed by this development. Pakistan and other states with similar concerns and interests took umbrage at this proposal and, following protracted efforts spearheaded by Pakistan, the proposal was abandoned. Thus, Kashmir continued to remain on the UN agenda. Despite our realization and disappointment that the UN had failed to resolve the Kashmir issue, we were extremely keen to retain the Kashmir issue on the UN agenda, as it provided the legal basis of our position on Kashmir.

It may be useful here to mention that in 1996, a Kashmir Study Group (KSG) consisting of diplomats, academics, and politicians was formed for the purpose of facilitating interaction among the three stakeholders and to provide fresh ideas for a peaceful settlement of Kashmir. In 1999, the group developed a proposal titled 'Kashmir—A Way Forward', which was widely discussed in Pakistan, India, and Kashmir. Farooq Kathwari was instrumental in the establishment of the KSG and also in promoting contacts between the Kashmiri leaderships on both sides of the LoC and their interaction with significant

Indian and Pakistani leaders. Kathwari met me at the Foreign Office during my tenure and during one of my visits I met him in New York.

In an effort to promote the prospects for self-governance in Kashmir and cooperation among people across the LoC, a conference was arranged in Islamabad by Pugwash International in March 2006. Kashmiri leaders from India and Pakistan participated in the conference. Omar Abdullah also attended this meeting and met President Musharraf. I was also present at that meeting. Speaking about the proposals on self-governance, Abdullah remarked that it was akin to reverting to the position where the Central government in India only handled foreign affairs, defence, and currency. He was informed about some of the efforts that were being made on the backchannel. Upon his return to India, Abdullah was criticized for his statement that accession to India by the Maharajah in 1947 was a 'historical blunder'. All such informal contacts proved to be extremely helpful.

### **The Envoys' Conferences**

The Envoys' Conferences, in which Pakistan's Ambassadors posted to various countries participate, provide an important occasion for in-house reviews of our policies. The discussions are frank and often the ambassadors speak their minds and critique current policies. During my tenure as the Foreign Minister, three Envoys' Conferences were held in Islamabad: in 2003, 2006, and 2007. On Kashmir, it was stressed at every conference that Pakistan must diplomatically do all that it could to bring the gross violations of human rights in Indian Administered Kashmir (IAK) to the attention of the international community. Over the years, I sensed a change of nuance in the thinking of Pakistan's seasoned diplomats, particularly over the issue of militancy.

The Envoys' Conference convened in July 2003 comprehensively discussed the international environment, the evolving situation with India, and the way forward on the Kashmir issue. At the time, there was a lot of soul-searching at the Presidency, the Foreign Office, as well as among other key stakeholders. They all concluded that following 9/11, militancy, even in the context of the freedom struggle in Kashmir, was no longer tenable. Fears were expressed that militancy was actually counterproductive and harmful to Pakistan's interests as well as the Kashmir cause. In fact, Pakistan needed more creative means to sustain the support of the international community for a just and peaceful solution of the Kashmir dispute. It was therefore becoming clear, at least amongst the stakeholders in Pakistan, including its Foreign Office, that while maintaining our position of principle on the issue of Kashmir we had to work for a political solution to the Kashmir issue. We also realized that the Kashmiris are really the important party in the issue. Therefore, consultation to strengthen and energize the political aspect of the Kashmir struggle (and thereby raising its profile) was a viable option. It is unfortunate that our concerns at the time over the harmful effects of militancy have subsequently been proved right beyond a shadow of doubt, considering that the recent activities of militants and

terrorists have spared no one—man, woman, child, Muslim or non-Muslim, civilian or military.

The Envoys' Conference in 2006 recommended that our prime objective should be a reduction in Indian repression in IAK through major troop withdrawal from the area and also called for clarity in Pakistan's policy on the Northern Areas. Reflecting a further shift in their attitudes, the envoys stressed the need for a more nuanced attitude towards trade by calling for stronger economic ties, irrespective of bilateral disputes. It was also agreed that Pakistan must explore all possible options for enhanced interaction between Kashmiris across the LoC while maintaining its principled position on the issue. In my concluding statement in the meeting that was presided over by President Musharraf, I summarized our discussions, including the animated debate over Kashmir. The conference also included presentations by the Ministers of Interior and Commerce, Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, Director General (DG) of Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), Director General of Military Intelligence (MI), and other senior officials. I was glad to note that there was a feeling at the conference that the onus for generating and maintaining momentum on Kashmir rested on Pakistan, which was why there was a need to be proactive in making suggestions for a solution to the dispute. I highlighted that there was a consensus at the conference that the strategic necessity for improvement of our relations with India had increased in the wake of 9/11. Moreover, our bilateral disputes with India should not stand in the way of trade and economic relations that are to Pakistan's advantage, and also, we ought to review our redlines in this regard. I mentioned that great benefits would accrue from liberalizing tourism. Lahore and Karachi held great attraction for Indians who either had roots and relations in those cities or simply wished to visit these cities. I also pointed out that several holy sites of Sikhs and Hindus are situated in Pakistan and this would certainly draw tourists.

The Envoys' Conference in 2007 was important because of the fact that substantial progress had been made on the backchannel on Kashmir and a healthy debate was under way in Pakistan's media on the various aspects of the framework agreement under discussion. Some retired diplomats had been voicing their reservations, largely based on incomplete and tendentious leaks.

Therefore, I looked forward to the deliberations of the conference. The details of the Draft Agreement, contained in the non-paper on Kashmir, had not been shared with many in the Foreign Office or in the government partly because it was still a work in progress. However, general awareness about the contours of a possible agreement on Kashmir was common knowledge, given the public debate on the issue following several statements by President Musharraf sketching the outlines of his Four-Point Formula on Kashmir. In my own statements as well, I had been hinting at the progress being made on the backchannel and some think tanks had also arranged discussions on the models for resolution of disputes between the two uneasy neighbours. Refreshingly, the conference generally welcomed the progress toward normalization of relations with India. This was all the more

significant, because of the challenges faced by Pakistan on its western front and, also because the participating ambassadors were broadly aware of the contours of the framework agreement being negotiated on the backchannel. The participants also felt that Pakistan should continue insisting that besides Kashmir, the Siachen, and Sir Creek disputes must also be resolved at the earliest.

It must be stated that Prime Ministers Nawaz Sharif and Atal Bihari Vajpayee, and later President Musharraf and Prime Ministers Vajpayee and Singh, displayed great flexibility and finesse in searching for a solution to the Kashmir dispute.

President Musharraf, however, had the opportunity to carry forward this process the furthest. On 24 July 2000, less than a year after assuming power the previous October, President Musharraf backed the Hizbul Mujahideen Chief Sayeed Salahudeen's offer of a unilateral ceasefire. This offer was withdrawn on 8 August 2002, after Hizbul Mujahideen's condition that Pakistan must also be involved in its dialogue with the Indian government was rejected by New Delhi.<sup>1</sup> In March 2001, the President gave one of his interviews to an Indian journalist suggesting that the two countries meet halfway. At the Agra breakfast meeting on 16 July 2001, President Musharraf enunciated his four points but strangely, the Indian media took little interest and echoed the official Indian line that he was belligerent. Shekhar Gupta, editor of *The Indian Express*, did recognize this but rather belatedly. Two- and-a-half years later, he acknowledged that 'if you go through the tapes of the Agra breakfast, you would underline things Musharraf said that no Pakistani leader had said until then.'<sup>2</sup>

On New Year's Day 2001, Prime Minister Vajpayee in his *Kumarakom Musings*<sup>3</sup> promised to seek a lasting solution to the Kashmir problem. He promised that in this quest, both in its internal and external dimensions, the beaten tracks of the past shall not be traversed. In an interview with British journalist Jonathan Power, shortly after being sworn in (22 May 2009), Prime Minister Manmohan Singh articulated the parameters of a possible Kashmir solution by stating, 'Short of secession, short of redrawing boundaries, the Indian Establishment can live with anything. Meanwhile, we need soft borders—the borders are not so important.'<sup>4</sup> For Pakistan, this was sadly not enough because, besides satisfying the Kashmiris, the people of Pakistan also needed to be convinced that Pakistan was not accepting a status quo solution.

On 17 December 2003, President Musharraf went further by declaring that, in the quest for a negotiated settlement of the Kashmir issue we had 'left the UN resolutions on plebiscite aside'.<sup>5</sup> As a politician, I knew that all hell would break loose after the President's statement made headline news, with opponents of the peace process having a field day. However, I immediately grasped that those opposed to a negotiated settlement to the Kashmir dispute would certainly misconstrue the President's statement and attack it, besides accusing him of taking a U-turn. I felt that this could potentially derail the peace process by sowing the seeds of doubt in the minds of the people of Pakistan. Therefore,

without even consulting the President, I deemed it appropriate to issue a clarification that he had been quoted out of context, and that his statement in no way implied a unilateral abandonment of Pakistan's principled position on Kashmir based on international legitimacy flowing from several UNSC Resolutions.<sup>6</sup> It was also clarified that what the President actually meant was that Pakistan stood by the UNSC Resolutions to achieve a lasting solution to the Kashmir dispute but in case Pakistan and India wanted to resolve this issue bilaterally, both sides needed to talk with flexibility.<sup>7</sup> Later, Prime Minister Zafarullah Jamali also felt it necessary to issue the clarification, 'The basis of the whole solution lies in the UN Resolution. That has to be kept in mind.'<sup>8</sup> These clarifications undoubtedly helped place things in their proper perspective.

President Musharraf elaborated his ideas in some major pronouncements over a period of time. In this respect, I think it would be appropriate to refer to various statements of President Musharraf. A chronology of these has been given by A. G. Noorani, a prolific Indian historian, author, and a constitutional expert as well as an incisive political commentator.

- *25 October 2004*: 'Identify the regions in Jammu & Kashmir, demilitarize them and change their status.'
- *18 April 2005, New Delhi*: 'The LoC cannot be made permanent but it can and should be made irrelevant.'
- *20 May 2005*: 'Self-governance must be allowed to the people of Kashmir.'
- *8 January 2006, in an interview to Karan Thapar*: '(a) Something between autonomy and independence, I think self-governance fits in well; (b) Let us [India and Pakistan] work out self-governance and impose the rules in both parts. Kashmiris will be involved; (c) Demilitarization; (d) There have to be subjects which are devolved and there have to be some subjects retained for the joint management; and (e) India and Pakistan will each have a stake in guaranteeing the situation in the other half of Kashmir.'
- *25 January 2006*: 'What cannot be given to the Kashmiris and what residual powers would be left with the Joint Management Mechanism involving Pakistanis, Indians, and Kashmiris ought to be defined.'
- *23 June 2006, to CNBC*: 'I am proposing demilitarization as a concept of a final settlement. Demilitarize Kashmir, give self-governance to the people of Kashmir, and have a joint management arrangement on top ... we could debate and modify the idea. I think it is the people of Kashmir themselves who need to now generate the kind of ideas and put pressure on the Indian Government. ... I am glad to say

that Prime Minister Singh has been interacting with all groups of Kashmiris and I am quite sure he is obviously talking of some kind of a resolution.’<sup>9</sup>

Meanwhile, in addition to his interview to Jonathan Power in 2004, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh made the following four pronouncements:

(a) *16 September 2005 in New York*: ‘It would require ingenuity to reconcile the three positions: (i) the Indian position that the border would not be redrawn; (ii) the Pakistani position that the status quo was unacceptable; and (iii) the Prime Minister’s own formulations that while the border would not be redrawn, it was possible to make the border irrelevant.’<sup>10</sup>

(b) *25 February 2006 at the First Round Table Conference (RTC) in New Delhi*: ‘There is a need to evolve a common understanding on autonomy and self-rule for the State of Jammu & Kashmir and I am confident that working together with all groups, both within and outside the mainstream, we can arrive at arrangements within the vast flexibilities provided by the constitutional arrangements which provide real empowerment and comprehensive security to all the people of Jammu & Kashmir.’

(c) *24 March 2006 in Amritsar* Prime Minister Singh made these four points: (i) a step-by-step approach; (ii) dialogue by both Pakistan and India with the people in their areas of control; (iii) borders could not be redrawn but the two countries could work towards making them irrelevant as just lines on a map by allowing people on both sides of the LoC to move more freely and trade with each other; (iv) with the active encouragement of the governments of Pakistan and India, the two parts of Jammu & Kashmir could work out cooperative consultative mechanisms so as to maximize the gains of cooperation.

(d) *25 May 2006*: In Srinagar Prime Minister Singh reinforced the last point by posing the question, ‘What are those institutional arrangements which can bring people from both sides of the LoC closer to each other?’

From the foregoing, it is clear that President Musharraf and Prime Minister Singh fundamentally agreed upon the following four points: (1) Jammu & Kashmir could not be made independent; (2) borders could not be redrawn; (3) the LoC could be made irrelevant; and (4) a Joint Mechanism for both parts of Kashmir could be worked out. The last point was absolutely essential to convince the Kashmiris and the people of Pakistan that there had been in fact a change in the status quo.

On 17 September 2006, Prime Minister Singh, while returning from the Non-Aligned Movement meeting in Havana, made the following statement to the media: ‘President Musharraf recalled what I had stated before that borders cannot be redrawn, and his statement that they cannot accept the LoC as a permanent solution. We both agreed that we have to find a *via media* to reconcile these two positions. And I do believe that we should work in all sincerity to think out of the box to deal with this situation.’<sup>11</sup> Compare

this with President Musharraf's remarks to Geo TV on 23 October 2006. He was asked whether he was frustrated that Prime Minister Singh had said that borders would not be redrawn since he had changed Pakistan's traditional position on Kashmir based on UNSC Resolutions and had offered several options. Musharraf replied, 'No. They say that the borders will not be drawn a second time. We say that the LoC is not acceptable as a permanent border. We need to find a *via media* between these two positions which would mean self-governance with a joint management system at the top for both sides of the LoC and you make the LoC irrelevant. This will cease to divide the people of Jammu & Kashmir—and thus become irrelevant to their lives.' He had made similar remarks at the SAFMA (South Asian Free Media Association) Conference on 20 May 2005. Musharraf's memoirs detail the four elements of his formulation with greater precision.<sup>12</sup>

It is clear from the above that President Musharraf and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh were not issuing statements in a vacuum. Both of them were aware of progress being made on the backchannel and were trying to sensitize their public opinions in their respective countries regarding the outlines of a possible framework agreement on Kashmir. By the time we left the reins of government, it would be fair to say that those in the know on both the sides had begun to feel that a possible solution was at last within their grasp. It was a solution which they could sell to their respective constitutional authorities and their people on the vexed issue of Kashmir over which they had fought many wars and experienced sustained hostility since Partition.

I am confident that the progress we achieved towards the settlement of the Kashmir dispute will not go to waste, because every major political party of Pakistan supports a fair and just negotiated settlement of the dispute. In this context, although the solution embodied in the draft agreement was largely finalized during our time in office, Prime Ministers Nawaz Sharif and Atal Bihari Vajpayee must also be credited for their courageous leadership in restarting the peace process in February 1999. Similarly, former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, during both her tenures, made concerted efforts to improve the relationship between the two countries. She showed courage in doing this and was routinely criticized by radical anti-India elements in Pakistan.

Imran Khan, Chairman of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) which emerged as the second largest political party in terms of votes in the highly controversial 2013 General Elections, has repeatedly said that he stands for a negotiated settlement on Jammu & Kashmir. He also feels that the issue cannot be resolved through military means. I had already briefed him on the details of the backchannel negotiations conducted during my tenure as Foreign Minister. He agreed with my views, and in fact indicated as much during a party rally at Mirpur in Azad Jammu & Kashmir in 2013. Obviously, both of us assume that there has to be a fair and just settlement of the J&K dispute for there to be lasting peace in South Asia. Imran Khan's views on Kashmir have been given in greater detail elsewhere in the book. Other important political parties of Pakistan, including the MQM,

the Awami National Party (ANP), and even the right-wing JUI-F all support a negotiated settlement with India on Kashmir.

The situation in India is more complicated despite the fact that Prime Minister Vajpayee belonged to the BJP and started the peace process and the Congress Party under Prime Minister Manmohan Singh carried it forward with equal passion. But when the BJP and the Congress Party were in Opposition, it was clear that there was a shift in their attitude. This is obviously for domestic political purposes. During my tenure, I found the leaders of the Left Front supportive of the peace process. This was equally true of leaders of different regional political parties in India as well. Ironically, although Pakistanis are often accused of being India-centric, there is something of a consensus among politicians of major political parties on improvement of relations with India. On the other hand, political parties in India find it politically advantageous to raise the 'Pakistan issue' when in Opposition. This would support the thesis that Indian politicians are as Pakistan-centric as their Pakistani counterparts are accused of being India-centric. That this should be so is strange because recent public opinion surveys in both the countries, until before the present rise in tensions, found a large percentage of people in both the countries to be in favour of normalization of relations.

I do not wish the reader to gain the impression that the peace process does not face major hurdles. There are extremists on both sides who wish to derail it. Over the years, because of frequent wars, long periods of tension, and failure to resolve the Kashmir issue, militancy has found a fertile ground in Pakistan. Likewise, there are groups in India espousing Hindu nationalism with great zeal. These are the same groups that tend to be antagonistic towards Indian Muslims. According to them, India should not trust Pakistan at all and must spend hefty sums on armaments, including strategic weapons. They have also sometimes advocated carrying out surgical strikes inside Pakistan against organizations they accuse of promoting militancy in Pakistan. Unfortunately, the extremist groups in both the countries employ a counter-narrative to accuse the other side of all sorts of wrongs, real and imaginary. Given the fault-lines in the two countries, India's North-Eastern provinces, Kashmir, the increasing threats by Naxalites, and in the case of Pakistan, the activities of nationalist elements in Balochistan and non-state actors in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), it is vital not to provide any space to extremist elements in Pakistan and India as their hate-woven counter-narrative sustains the conflict between India and Pakistan. As a matter of fact, such elements have a vested interest in continued friction between the two countries.

Hindu extremists behind the Samjhauta Express bombing in 2007 have their counterparts in Pakistan. In addition to such elements opposed to the peace process, there are groups in Pakistan that assert that Kashmir cannot be solved by talks. Many in Pakistan blame India for committing gross human rights violations in IAK. These groups maintain that Pakistan's government should review its Kashmir policy and not enter into any kind of agreement with India. They criticize efforts for promoting people-to-people contact or for

increasing trade between the two countries. Their narrative maintains that a great power like Russia could not control Afghanistan and now the United States is looking for a way out of the region as well; therefore, India will not be able to control Kashmir for long.

I felt that the appeal of the counter-narrative could be greatly reduced if the public at large in the two countries could be convinced that Pakistan and India were capable of resolving their long-standing bilateral disputes. It was thus essential to keep up the morale of the constituencies of peace constituting big majorities (at least at that time) in both the countries. Therefore, as Foreign Minister, I was particular about taking the public into confidence regarding the progress we made on the backchannel on Kashmir. My public pronouncements often unnerved the elements in the governments of both the countries, who, as a matter of habit, prefer secrecy.

Since leaving office, I have continued to maintain that Pakistan and India came extremely close to resolving the vexed issue of Kashmir. The need to be reminded of this has become even stronger after the Mumbai terrorist attacks and the subsequent suspension of dialogue. I remain hopeful that, by garnering the necessary political will, the two countries would amicably resolve their disputes, including Kashmir. I say this on the basis of the immense progress that was made and as someone who was an insider with a ringside view of the positive developments that took place during our tenure. The wheel does not have to be reinvented although a new tag on it is quite understandable—if only to encourage ownership of the process by the governments that follow ours. I have not given up this optimistic view despite some hard-line statements and actions by the Narendra Modi government, as I argue elsewhere for reasons explained there.

## **WHY THE BACKCHANNEL?**

While Kashmir remained an important issue on the Composite Dialogue, over a period of time, both sides realized that, in view of the sensitivity of the dispute, it needed to be discussed in the initial stages in a confidential manner through backchannel diplomacy. The fact is that all meetings of Foreign Ministers and Foreign Secretaries are preceded and followed by extensive media coverage and, what is worse, intense speculation. This enables the opponents of the Indo-Pak peace process to put a negative spin on the whole process. The purpose of the backchannel was to produce a draft based on inputs over a prolonged period from both sides. The idea was to try and find out whether it was at all possible to produce an agreed draft, which the two sides felt that they could sell to their respective cabinets, parliaments, media, and the public. It was unthinkable that such a draft could be agreed upon in full glare of the media. Both sides were aware that they did not have the authority to agree to a settlement on Kashmir without reference to their respective constitutional and political organs. They did, however, feel that this would become easier were they to first attempt an agreement on a joint draft before it was presented for approval to their respective cabinets and parliaments. What made the

backchannel on Kashmir even more useful was the fact that both parties were forced to revisit their positions in the light of the proposals coming from the other side. The backchannel contact continued for approximately three years. It is unthinkable that so many exchanges of non-papers could have remained confidential in the absence of a backchannel. In Pakistan and India, hardly anything remains secret; to make matters worse, the leakages would almost always be selective and tendentious. Pakistan and India were not the first to resort to quiet diplomacy.

Backchannel politics were not used earlier in a sustained manner between Pakistan and India in view of the troubled nature of their relationship and the presence of a trust deficit. The origin of the backchannel, however, can be traced to its initiation in February 1999 after Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's visit to Lahore. It could not however achieve much since the government changed in October 1999. The use of a systematic backchannel assumes a degree of trust and understanding which alone can create the space resulting from confidence among the top leaders that a situation has been reached where even hard and intractable disputes can at least be discussed in a meaningful manner hopefully leading to their ultimate resolution. Before our tenure, it would be fair to say that such a level of trust had not been created between the leaderships of the two countries. Earlier on, it would have made no sense to appoint any backchannel negotiators, given the hard-line positions of the two sides. The backchannel would have nothing to negotiate about.

A leading American author and analyst of international politics has stated that secret diplomacy between foes was back in fashion. He particularly mentions the need for the right person and emphasizes: 'You don't want your negotiator to be a semi-independent wild card.' The article rightly points out that too much secrecy may even backfire and that what is said in public should not be at variance from what is being discussed in private. If there is no public statement to support it, the secret negotiations may even break down.<sup>13</sup> This was inter alia among the main reasons why I continued to talk publicly, off and on, regarding the progress being made on the backchannel. I also wanted to weaken the cynical mindset of Indians and Pakistanis who believed that the two countries were incapable of resolving anything bilaterally. I would also try to pick up positive signals from the Indian side to reinforce the peace process. For example, President Kennedy during the Cuban Missile crisis responded to conciliatory messages while ignoring the negative ones from the Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev.<sup>14</sup>

Henry Kissinger, in his book *Years of Renewal*, has referred to some advantages of backchannel diplomacy. He felt that through backchannel negotiations President Nixon was able to impose coherence on various departments of the government which were trying to 'thwart his policy'.<sup>15</sup> He referred to secret talks with North Vietnam Politburo member Le Duc Tho which were started during the Johnson Administration by Governor Averell Harriman and Secretary Cyrus Vance, the official negotiators at Paris. These talks

continued at the height of the bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong where, in a period of eleven days, one hundred thousand bombs were dropped on the two cities. It was said at that time that the collective destructive power of these bombs was equivalent to five of the atom bombs that were dropped on Hiroshima. These secret weekly talks between Le Duc Tho and Henry Kissinger continued, at the Hotel Majestic in Paris every Tuesday, despite this destructive bombing. For their efforts during these private peace talks, both the negotiators were awarded a Nobel Peace Prize. It is a different matter, however, that Le Duc Tho refused to accept the Prize on the grounds that his country had not yet achieved peace.

I have elsewhere mentioned the dramatic and secretive manner in which Dr Henry Kissinger took off from Islamabad, and which remained a mystery until his return to Washington and the public announcement in this regard. Henry Kissinger was able to go to China in July 1971 through the intermediary facilitation of Pakistan. Pakistan, in view of its close relationship with both the People's Republic of China and the United States of America, was able to play this role. The example of Secretary of State Kissinger highlights the role that special emissaries on secret missions have played under various Presidents.

The origins of the backchannel can be traced back to the time of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and Prime Minister Vajpayee when R. K. Mishra and Niaz A. Naik started talking to each other on the backchannel as Special Envoys of their Prime Ministers and were nominated after the Lahore Summit in February 1999.<sup>16</sup> R. K. Mishra was a veteran journalist and a public figure. He was also the editor of the *Patriot* and *Link* magazines. He was Member of the Upper House of the Indian parliament while Niaz A. Naik was a distinguished diplomat and former Foreign Secretary of Pakistan. I remember one of the criticisms of Tariq Aziz's nomination by General Pervez Musharraf by some at the Foreign Office used to be along the lines that how Tariq Aziz, who was not a diplomat, could be entrusted with this delicate responsibility. It is interesting that R. K. Mishra, Vajpayee's nominee was not a diplomat either, but obviously had the confidence of Vajpayee. I think R. K. Mishra also visited me when I was a Member of Parliament. This was perhaps the time when he accompanied Prime Minister Vajpayee on his famous bus *yatra* (pilgrimage) to Lahore or maybe on some other occasion at that time. He sounded optimistic about the peace prospects between the two countries.

This was followed by the backchannel established after the 6 January 2004 Joint Statement issued in Islamabad following talks between President Pervez Musharraf and Prime Minister Vajpayee. Brijesh Mishra, National Security Advisor to the Prime Minister of India, and Tariq Aziz, Secretary of the National Security Council (NSC) and a close confidante of President Pervez Musharraf, were the backchannel negotiators. After the change of government following the BJP's defeat in the 2004 general elections, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's National Security Advisor, J. N. Dixit, picked up the pieces

from where Brijesh Mishra left. Unfortunately J. N. Dixit died soon afterwards. From the Pakistani side Tariq Aziz remained Pakistan's backchannel negotiator. On the Indian side however there were three backchannel negotiators. The first of these was Ambassador Brijesh Mishra.

Mishra was Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, as well as his National Security Advisor, from November 1998 to May 2004. He was involved in the preparation of both the visits of Prime Minister Vajpayee to Lahore in 1999 and to Islamabad in 2004 during our tenure. In my opinion he made a very useful contribution during the tenure of the BJP government and helped prepare the right atmosphere for the backchannel talks which began in earnest after the new Congress government assumed office. A reference to my meeting him privately at a dinner party in Lahore has already been made. I remember his remarking to me then that the Jammu & Kashmir dispute could be resolved in a matter of months. That gave me some inkling into the thinking of the then BJP leadership.

Ambassador J. N. Dixit who became the National Security Advisor to the Indian Prime Minister during 2004–05, died while still in office in January 2005. Earlier, he had served as Foreign Secretary of India and had also served as Ambassador in Afghanistan as well as High Commissioner in Pakistan and Sri Lanka. He is the person who mentioned to me as the National Security Advisor during my meeting with him in Delhi in 2004 that there was need to think out of the box on the issue of Jammu & Kashmir. This remark by J. N. Dixit during my first visit to Delhi following the elections and the coming into power of new Congress government, gave me a clear indication that the Congress government was also positive about the Pakistan-India process as well as on the need to resolve outstanding issues including Jammu & Kashmir. Prior to this, I have already indicated the reasons why Pakistan and India had compelling reasons to start talking seriously on Jammu & Kashmir. These remarks were the clearest indication that the Indian government was thinking along similar lines.

Dixit was succeeded by Ambassador Satinder Lambah who had served as India's High Commissioner in Pakistan. He was made the Special Envoy to Afghanistan after his retirement. He continues to be engaged in the efforts at quiet backchannel contacts between the two countries. A large part of the progress made on the backchannel was during his time.

Pakistan was represented on the backchannel by Tariq Aziz. He was a close confidante of President Pervez Musharraf and Secretary of the National Security Council. Prior to this he had served as the Principal Secretary to the President. He was known to have complete trust of the President. Tariq Aziz dealt on the backchannel with Brijesh Mishra, J. N. Dixit, and Ambassador S. K. Lambah, the three Indian negotiators during the five-year tenure of our government. He thus represented Pakistan on the backchannel through the change of government and personnel on the Indian side.

In order to maintain the secrecy of the backchannel it was essential to limit the number of people involved in this process. I remember that we used to meet regularly in the President's Camp Office in Rawalpindi rather than at the *Aiwan-e-Sadr* (President's House) in Islamabad. This was done precisely to maintain the secrecy of our meetings. I remember Tariq Aziz would bring his draft after meeting his Indian counterpart. This draft would be opened for discussion. Besides President Pervez Musharraf, me, and Foreign Secretary Riaz Mohammad Khan, the then DG-ISI, General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, later Chief of Army Staff, the then Vice Chief of Army Staff, General Ahsan Saleem Hayat, and Chief of Staff to the President, Lt Gen. Hamid Javed would be present. President Pervez Musharraf, in response to a question as to how many people were involved on the Pakistani side, 'The Foreign Minister and Foreign Secretary were always taken on board, while Pakistan Army Chief, General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, then head of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), had been there since the beginning. He was the DG-ISI, so he had to be on board.'<sup>17</sup> Former Military Secretary to the President, Major General (later Lt Gen.) Shafatullah Shah, Major General (later Lt Gen.) Shafqat Ahmed, Corps Commander Multan, and Major General Nadeem Ijaz, the then Head of Military Intelligence would be present. Although President Musharraf was Chief of the Army Staff, he made it a point to invite Vice Chief of Army Staff General Ahsan Saleem Hayat to represent the army's viewpoint. This was so because General Musharraf was wearing two hats, namely, that of the President as well as that of the Chief of Army Staff, and he wanted the Vice Chief to represent the institutional point of view of the Pakistan Army.

After a lengthy and careful discussion here on every word and sentence, Riaz Mohammad Khan, the Foreign Secretary, would be given the draft to revise it in the light of the discussions around the table. The discussion was thorough and detailed. After making the necessary amendments, the Foreign Secretary would hand over the draft to Tariq Aziz to give it to his Indian counterpart. I am sure that a similar exercise was going on the Indian side. We heard that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh took five or six of his colleagues and aides into confidence. We were not quite sure whom he was consulting. I remember on one occasion when there had been a change in a particular portfolio, a certain dignitary visiting Islamabad made a remark which surprised the president and me. We were not quite sure if he was in the loop and decided to say no more on the subject to him. We made hurried inquiries and were told that the person concerned was new but would be taken into confidence and that in our future meetings we could assume that he was fully briefed.

There was another interesting incident during my visit to Delhi in early 2007 concerning the backchannel and my call on former Prime Minister Vajpayee. He was accompanied on this occasion by former Foreign Minister Yashwant Sinha and former National Security Advisor Brijesh Mishra. Prior to my visit to India, there had been a storm of protest in the Lok Sabha (Parliament) following my remarks that we were making progress on Kashmir. The then leader of the Opposition L. K. Advani moved an adjournment motion in the Lok

Sabha to the effect that the Prime Minister of India was keeping the nation in the dark and not telling them what was happening on the Kashmir issue on the backchannel. Following this adjournment motion, we read in the Pakistani newspapers that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had invited his predecessor Atal Bihari Vajpayee and the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, L. K. Advani, to have lunch with him, in order to brief them on the progress being made on the backchannel. It became quite clear to me after hearing a few questions from Vajpayee, Sinha, and Mishra that they were curious about the progress on Kashmir and wanted my assessment. I remember saying to Vajpayee that I had read in the Pakistani newspapers that he had been briefed by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh over lunch. After a silence of more than a few moments for which Vajpayee is famous, he said to me in a barely audible voice '*Haan, khana bahut achha khilaya tha*' (Yes, he gave us a very good meal), suggesting that the details of the progress made had not been shared with them. I have already given the reasons for this secrecy on our side. Obviously, the Indians were equally keen on this for the same reasons.

Since I have invested a lot of time and effort on the Pakistan-India peace process, I could not help but take notice of the recent statement of Arun Jaitley, who is the Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha, on 6 January 2014. The comments followed Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's earlier statement in January 2014 that Pakistan and India had been making progress on all issues, and that the two countries were nearing a resolution on Jammu and Kashmir. Unfortunately, the judicial crisis in Pakistan put a stop to further movement. Jaitley, in his blog, criticizing the Prime Minister's statement that the two countries had almost reached an agreement on Kashmir, queried, 'What was this possible resolution on Kashmir? The people of India are entitled to know an answer to this question.' He also asked if the settlement would have violated India's traditional stance on Kashmir.<sup>18</sup>

I could not help thinking that this was a case of *déjà vu*. Jaitley's statement reminded me of Advani's adjournment motion in the Lok Sabha seven years earlier. I was not, however, unduly disturbed by this statement since Jaitley is a sophisticated politician and one of the most senior BJP leaders (this was written before the election results, he has since been appointed India's Finance Minister). It is therefore highly unlikely that he was caught completely unawares regarding the outlines of a possible solution to the Jammu & Kashmir dispute that was being negotiated. A lot has been written in the Pakistani, Indian, and international media on the contours of a possible settlement to this dispute. Even Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had made similar statements in the past. His remarks that the Prime Minister revealed for the 'first time' that the two countries had almost agreed to resolve the conflict on Kashmir, and that a breakthrough appeared 'in sight' when General Pervez Musharraf had to make way for other leaders following political developments in Pakistan would be difficult to believe, were it not for the fact that it is open season in India prior to the elections (due in May 2014) and use of hyperbole by politicians should be taken in its stride. This is also because I have dealt with the BJP and

the Congress Party and both have in their time, actively promoted the peace process. I am cautiously optimistic that whichever party wins will carry the peace process forward. It bears remembering that it was during the tenure of the BJP Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee that this process was initiated. Furthermore, I cannot forget that it were the senior BJP leaders like Advani and Jaswant Singh, some of whom have been regarded as hardliners in their time, who have ventured forth and broken into new territory showing a lot of courage and have had to pay a political price. After all, Advani was forced to resign as BJP President for his remarks that Pakistan's founder was secular-minded; and Jaswant Singh was expelled from the BJP for voicing opinions on Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, contrary to what was considered to be the established truth in India in his book *Jinnah: India-Partition-Independence*. Courage is an essential ingredient where new policies have to be formulated, particularly in sensitive areas like India-Pakistan relations. It is courage which enables leaders to expend the political capital that is required to move along 'a road less travelled'. As discussed elsewhere, I still hold the view that Pakistan and India should go back to the peace process despite the massive violations of the LoC recently, which have led to casualties on both sides.

## **FRAMEWORK FOR A KASHMIR SETTLEMENT**

The Government of Pakistan and that of India as well were acutely conscious that despite progress that was going on under the Composite Dialogue resulting in a much greater people-to-people contact and an improvement in the atmosphere in South Asia, sustainable peace could only be brought about by a resolution of the dispute over Jammu & Kashmir. It became clear to me after my interaction with top Indian officials and after extensive brainstorming among those involved in Pakistan that no solution arrived at could be perfect from the point of view of Pakistan, India, or the Kashmiris. It would have to be the best possible under the circumstances. We were also aware that we could be overtaken by unforeseen circumstances like a terrorist attack, à la-Mumbai (which happened after our time), or even by developments in Pakistan, India, or Kashmir, such as a change of government, as happened in the case of Pakistan, or of the *Intifada* in Kashmir. This necessitated that we act with relative speed in trying to find a solution. We also recognized that there were forces in both Pakistan and India that would not like normalization of relations between the two countries.

There were also people who just wanted a maximalist solution from their perspectives in both the countries. There were thus powerful vested interests that would stand in the way. This required that a workable plan be negotiated in relative secrecy in the first instance. This would be essential until at least we were able to agree on a framework that we felt we could present to the respective constitutional and political authorities in both the countries who alone could finally accept it.

Thus came about the famous backchannel. It operated under a changed international scenario. Both Pakistan and India had become nuclear powers with the means to deliver weapons over long distances. An all-out war was no longer an option. Earlier on, they had fought three major and two minor wars. The minor ones included the Rann of Kutch and the Kargil wars.

On 8 January 2007, when the peace process was doing very well and there was optimism in the air, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh remarked, 'I dream of a day, while retaining our respective national identities, one can have breakfast in Amritsar, lunch in Lahore, and dinner in Kabul.'

The economies of both the countries had started growing at a very high rate. India had been included among the BRIC countries, signifying Brazil, Russia, India, and China. A lot has been written in recent years about India's economic rise, and its IT sector was doing particularly well. A prominent Indian diplomat was reported to have commented, 'India's leaders initially mistrusted Musharraf because he was the author of Kargil but gradually we found that he was a man we could talk to. After 2002 India's economy began to grow quickly and steadily; the ranks of its middle class consumers swelled; and it became possible for Indian strategists to visualize their country rising to become a great power by the mid-21st Century.'<sup>19</sup> The Indians feared that the pitch could only be queered by a war with Pakistan or a continuation of debilitating tension.

Pakistan was considered to be one of the fastest-growing emerging economies and was included in the list of 'Next Eleven' (N-11) by Goldman Sachs in December 2005 when it included Pakistan along with South Korea, Mexico, Turkey, Indonesia, and some others in the category of a new emerging markets, destined to play a major role as economic powers.<sup>20</sup>

According to the World Bank, there was a reduction in the proportion of Pakistanis living below the poverty line by one-half between 2001–07. It came down from 34.5 per cent people living below the line to 17.2 per cent.<sup>21</sup> The size of Pakistan's economy, defined as GDP at current market price in US dollars, had more than doubled over the last six or seven years<sup>22</sup> and the per capita income had also more than doubled in that period.<sup>23</sup> Karachi's Stock Exchange had been declared as one of the highest-performing stock exchanges in the world. Rising eleven fold in the index between 2006–07, it represented the growing influence of the private sector in Pakistan's economy.<sup>24</sup> In one particular year in this period, Pakistan's economy grew by 8.6 per cent, which was second only to China's 9.2 per cent.<sup>25</sup> Pakistan possessed an effective economic team in Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz and Finance Minister Dr Salman Shah and major inflows of foreign investment were expected. The middle class was growing rapidly, with ever-rising expectations. Both countries were becoming part of the 'globalized village' and subject to its concerns and constraints. For example, in one period of high tensions between the two countries a travel advisory from the United States and some European countries had an immediate impact on

the business classes of both countries. The effects of success of regional cooperation, not just in the European Union, but nearer home in the ASEAN (Association of South-East Asian Nations), were quoted regularly in the business circles of the two countries. Both countries had begun to realize that perpetual tension would be a barrier to attaining their full potential.

On the peace process with India, the Pakistan Army was completely on board during this period. Besides interacting with top military officials in my capacity as Foreign Minister, I have addressed many meetings of senior defence officials at the National Defence University as well as at the Staff College in Quetta. There is a very strong impression in some circles, particularly in India, that the Pakistan Army is determined to maintaining a relationship of hostility towards India at any cost. This in my opinion is a misreading of the military's mindset. It understands quite clearly the relationship between the country's foreign policy, its economy, and defence. It is also clearly understood that a strong defence is underpinned by a strong economy, and not the other way round.

In my interactions at the National Defence University, the Staff College, Quetta, and other defence establishments, it was assumed as a given that strong defence needed a vibrant economy and a pragmatic foreign policy. I have no reason to believe that things could have changed dramatically as far as the mindset of the officer corps is concerned. It is my belief that the *raison d'être* of the Pakistan Army is not permanent enmity with India; it is Pakistan's permanent security. And this implies secure borders, a strong economy, and an inclusive and proactive foreign policy.

I have already pointed out that General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, the Chief of Army Staff, who was then DG-ISI, attended all the meetings on the backchannel on Kashmir. I found General Kayani to be a clear-headed officer. I see no reason for a strategic shift. As things on the ground change, of course there can be tactical readjustments. The recent strain in the relationship between Pakistan and India can be attributed, at least partially, to the perceived commencement of the endgame in Afghanistan and Pakistan's fear based on the history of the Pashtunistan stunt. This was an effort by the Afghan ruling family to extend Afghanistan's territories to Pashtun areas in Pakistan. It naturally impacted Pakistan-Afghan relations and this hostility was at its height during the time of Prince Muhammad Daoud Khan, the powerful Prime Minister of Afghanistan under King Zahir Shah until the latter was deposed by Daoud Khan. Relations between the two countries deteriorated to such an extent that all diplomatic relations were severed. Pakistan believed that Prime Minister Daoud Khan had strong backing from India.

Thus Pakistan's concern, based on its historical experience, springs from its assessment that an overtly anti-Pakistan government in Kabul backed by India could worsen problems in our tribal areas and Balochistan. This situation can be changed by a paradigm shift in relations with India. It is my belief that there are enough factors that, in the event of a just

solution of the Kashmir dispute, their mutual paranoia would be greatly reduced, and would have a positive impact on the situation in Afghanistan.

At least this was my experience of the officer corps during the period that I held office. Perhaps at the height of the jihad that followed the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan, a more ideological strain of officers were preferred by General Zia ul-Haq. I therefore did not find any difficulty in trying to promote the case for peace with India as far as the Pakistan Army was concerned. They of course wanted peace on equitable terms, as did I. I strongly believe that there can be no durable peace with India unless it is on equal terms and is based on a just solution of the Kashmir issue. I have anyway dealt comprehensively with the role of the army and its attitude towards India in the next chapter.

President Musharraf and I had been hinting in our statements and interviews regarding the broad principles of a possible Kashmir settlement, based on identification of the regions in Kashmir, demilitarization, self-governance, and a joint mechanism. All these call for some elaboration. It may be in order here to highlight some of President Musharraf's views on the subject. This is only fair, since the reader will have ample opportunity to know about my views, not just on the nature of Pakistan-India relations, but also about the framework of the agreement that we almost reached with India on Kashmir. Of course, since both of us come from different backgrounds it is but natural that we would approach some issues differently. This became clear to me in my very first meeting with him as Foreign Minister when he asked me bluntly whether I was a hawk or a dove on India. His views regarding Kargil were different to mine. I had always believed that Pakistan could thrive and prosper only if it translated into reality the vision of its founder Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who believed in a forward-looking modern state. I have always believed that our relations with India had impacted our national psyche and affected Pakistan's foreign and security policies because of the distrust, suspicion and hostility between the two countries. I strongly believe that this needs to change and in fact I took part in the Track Two Dialogue between Pakistan and India at a time much before it became fashionable to do so. Obviously, President Musharraf came from a totally different background. He was the man of Kargil and of the failed Agra Summit, which led to even greater tension between the two countries. It is, therefore, all the more remarkable that he reached the same conclusion, travelling a totally different road from the one that I had. He had also come to the conclusion that Pakistan needed to change the nature of its relationship with India. I had heard the phrase 'out-of-the-box solution' to Kashmir from J. N. Dixit, India's National Security Advisor under Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in September 2004. President Musharraf in his book *In the Line of Fire* also wrote that he had in mind an 'out of the box solution to Kashmir'.<sup>26</sup> Obviously, the ground realities must have changed drastically for the leaders of Pakistan and India to reach the conclusion that there is indeed a need for an out-of-the-box solution. I have already described in the book, how this solution materialized in a more concrete form through the backchannel negotiations over

almost three years. It also bears mentioning that the details of this framework as they evolved may well have been different at the end of three years than when the backchannel negotiations first started.

### **Contours of the Agreement on Jammu & Kashmir**

We now come to the contours of a possible settlement of the intractable Jammu & Kashmir dispute between Pakistan and India which has been the cause of constant friction between the two countries over the last six decades. It was not just the Cassandras or the usual sceptics who thought that we were engaged in a futile exercise; in fact, a large part of the intelligentsia shared these doubts. As I recollect, the main elements of the proposed agreement and the spirit underlying it can best be described by what follows.

As far as we were concerned, it was quite clear to us that no agreement worked out between India and Pakistan could be sold to the people of Pakistan unless the vast majority of Kashmiris accepted it. This required trying to understand in earnest what the Kashmiris really desired. This in turn entailed meetings with Kashmiri leaders on both sides of the Line of Control (LoC), particularly, those in the Indian Administered Kashmir (IAK). I had marathon sessions with Kashmiri leaders to try and understand what their real priorities were, since it was the people of IAK who had suffered the most and consequently protested throughout regarding the conditions under which they were living. I made special efforts to understand their real concerns. For this purpose, I interacted with the Kashmiri leaders in Islamabad and New Delhi and in other world capitals, sometimes secretly.

### **Demilitarization**

As a result of this interaction, it had become abundantly clear to us what their priorities were. First of all, they pointed out that about a hundred thousand Kashmiris have been martyred since 1989. All Kashmiris emphasized demilitarization since they wanted that Indian troops be withdrawn from the populated areas as soon as possible. Life, they said, had become unbearable for them. They could not go through their ordinary chores under Indian bayonets. Additionally, their women and children had suffered psychological trauma due to the presence of Indian troops on the streets of their towns and villages. This posed a major challenge to Pakistani negotiators. We realized that, unless we were able to satisfy the Kashmiris on this score, they would not be amenable to a long-term solution that ignored their immediate plight. We thus had to insist on demilitarization in our negotiations with India. Initially, the Indians would hear none of it. When it became clear to them, both on the backchannel as well as during talks between leaders, that no Kashmir settlement without a meaningful progress on this issue was possible, the Indians came forward with a counter-proposal. They said this proposal was untenable and no government could sell it to the people of India unless Pakistan similarly withdrew its troops from AJK. We pointed out to the Indians that there had been no demand by the

people of AJK to withdraw Pakistani troops. The Indians said that, in the absence of a quid pro quo on this issue, our proposal was politically undoable. We had brainstorming sessions on the Pakistani side and came to the conclusion that, in the interest of a settlement, we would also agree to withdraw troops from AJK as the Indian withdrew theirs from IAK. Anyhow, we felt that we did not need troops to maintain Pakistan's position in AJK as India did to maintain its control over the territory under its occupation.

It was, therefore, decided after protracted negotiations that both sides would agree to a major reduction of armed forces in the region. It was also agreed that this reduction would be brought about gradually, in consonance with the improvement of the situation on the ground and that troops would not only be withdrawn from population centres but that they would be reduced to a bare minimum on both sides of the LoC. Pakistan and India further agreed to solemnly conclude an agreement within one year over reduction of troops and the process of demilitarization.

### **Centres to Wean Militants Away Through DDR: The Challenge of Non-State Actors**

There was a clear understanding between the two countries that conscious efforts would be made by both sides through all means available to them to reduce violence in Indian Administered Kashmir (IAK). Without putting it in so many words, the understanding was that India would make the lives of Kashmiris more bearable by withdrawing its troops initially from population centres as explained above, and that Pakistan would utilize all the influence and exert all the moral pressure it could apply on those who were engaged in crossing the Line of Control (LoC) from Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK). This was one of the most important items in the backchannel discussions on Kashmir. In addition to the provision that Pakistan and India decided upon solemnly, concluding an agreement within a year over reduction of troops and the process of demilitarization, there was also a reference to the need to make efforts to reintegrate into society those involved in Kashmir freedom struggle through violent activities. We tried to achieve this through the launching of various programmes designed to wean them away from violence to enable them to lead a normal and peaceful life upon reintegration in society.

When we assumed office, it had become clear to all of us that the policies Pakistan had pursued following the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and after the 1989 Geneva Accord, as well as in Kashmir, were no longer tenable. The militants' support to the freedom struggle led to its radicalization. This process gained strength following the rigged elections in 1987 in IAK. We also realized that the peace process we had initiated with India would not make much headway unless conscious efforts were made to control cross-border movement. As indicated elsewhere, we had faced criticism from a section of retired ambassadors, generals, and some others on the contents of the Islamabad Joint Press Statement of 6 January 2004, which mentioned that Pakistan would not permit any territory under Pakistan's control to be used to support terrorism in any manner. We were attacked on the grounds that this amounted to an admission that Pakistani territory was

being used for acts of terrorism. Our critics seemed to be living in a world of make-believe. It was widely believed by the international community and was a matter of common knowledge among most informed Pakistanis that there was movement from the territory of AJK into IAK. The international media were full of such stories and, in my interaction with some of the major world leaders, including some of Pakistan's closest friends, a reference, however indirect, polite or oblique, to conform to the niceties of diplomatic etiquette, was made to this phenomenon. Sometimes these references were not particularly oblique either, especially, when I was dealing with my counterparts from the West. There was also a general realization that the rising militancy was not in our own long-term interest. We felt that, in the changing international climate, Pakistan would do all it can to espouse the cause of the Kashmiris through political means. The cause of Kashmir has a strong legal and moral foundation and acts of violence would not help advance that cause.

We realized fairly early that the peace process with India could not survive, let alone thrive, unless cross-LoC movement was controlled. It was in this background that in 2005 and 2006, I started hearing in hushed tones at the Presidency and in some other high-level meetings that centres had been set up to wean away militants from their past and impart skills to them which would help them integrate better in society. On more than one occasion, I offered to some ambassadors who raised the issue of militancy with me to take them to these centres.

It is, therefore, no wonder that statements started appearing from important persons in India that the number of militants crossing the LoC had gone down substantially. For example, Lt Gen. T.K. Saproo General Officer Commanding (GOC), K. Saproo, of Nagrota (Jammu-based) 16 Corps of the Indian Army said that infiltration across the LoC had been brought down to 'almost zero'.<sup>27</sup> Understandably, he gave much of the credit for this to better control of the LoC by India. Perhaps it was too much to expect a senior Indian Commander to give credit to Pakistan publicly. Some Indian sources which give the figures of fatalities caused due to terrorist violence testify to this fact. For example, from 4,507 in 2001 according to these sources, the number of fatalities had come down to 777 in 2007. This was the year when our government left office. It is clear that the Pakistan Army had been on board on the solution of J&K that we were trying to achieve and continued along the same path even after our government's tenure ended and President Musharraf was no longer in power. According to the same sources these fatalities by 2014 had been reduced to sixty-eight.<sup>28</sup>

The Government of Pakistan was trying to follow practices which lead to de-radicalization, and to involve disengagement and rehabilitation to wean away the militants. The process of De-radicalization, Disengagement, and Rehabilitation known as DDR, has been used by some countries. There is a vast amount of literature on the subject particularly following 9/11. It involves processes, methods, and programmes, including

psychological approaches, through which a militant can be weaned away and turned into a useful member of society. This is easier said than done but there is no escaping from it, if Pakistan aims to live in peace with its neighbours and wishes to reverse the violence and terrorism that it faces on a daily basis manifested in attacks on its military and security agencies as well as on innocent individuals. I may recall that in enforcing the writ of the state, the government has to engage in such programmes together with various security reforms. The concept of DDR became famous in the wake of the Afghan conflict, but has been adopted in various other countries.

After 9/11, many countries, like Egypt, Yemen, and Saudi Arabia have tried such approaches to counter the rise in militancy.

It is now by and large accepted in Pakistan that the activities of non-state actors in Afghanistan and Kashmir caused a lot of difficulties for Pakistan and has come back to haunt it. It is, therefore, not surprising that General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, who, until November 2013, was Chief of Army Staff, had to publicly announce that the internal threat to Pakistan was greater than the external. While going into history may help in understanding the factors which motivated the radicalization of the freedom movement in Kashmir, it will not provide concrete help to their cause today. The fact that India has not carried out the UNSC Resolutions on Kashmir and that national liberation movements involving violence were at one time acceptable, will not help either. The world has moved on and the situation has undergone a sea change, particularly after 9/11. Even the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) has effectively shifted its position on the issue of national liberation movements. I remember, I had to meet informally with some of my counterparts to have a particular paragraph included,<sup>29</sup> supporting the freedom struggle and drawing a distinction between terrorism and freedom struggle. It was a difficult job indeed and representatives of the Foreign Office had to work equally hard to convince their counterparts to have this paragraph included for submission to NAM Foreign Ministers for their approval.

Many people remind us these days (including some Western countries who initially encouraged Pakistan in this direction during the Soviet invasion) that Pakistan should have known better before it created Frankenstein's monsters that have come to haunt it in the shape of Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP).

Moreover, it should have also known that this was a common historical experience. This is true, but unfortunately, as George Bernard Shaw put it, 'We learn from history that we learn nothing from history. There have been numerous examples of this but the two nearest ones come from India, where the Congress government itself created the phenomenon of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale to unsettle the Akali Dal-Janata Party government in the state of Indian Punjab, leading to Bhindranwale's extraordinary rise, and, which ultimately led to the storming of the Golden Temple and the assassination of Indira Gandhi by her Sikh guards. Similar was the case with the tragic killing of Rajiv

Gandhi where first the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam were helped and then the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) were sent to Sri Lanka to control them, resulting in the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi by a frustrated LTTE suicide bomber.

One of the factors leading to the rise of militancy among the youth, particularly in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), was the mushrooming of madrasahs. It was obviously Pakistan's failure in the social sector, particularly in education, which played a major role in radicalizing young students whose parents found it convenient to send them to madrasahs where they were provided with free board and lodging facilities as well as an education of sorts.

There is no doubt that successive governments in Pakistan are responsible for the alienation of individuals from society and it is their failure over the years in addressing the issues of public education, health, and employment which have driven young people to this senseless violence. It is therefore the government's duty to bring these people back to the fold through focus on the social actor. It was because of the recognition that poverty alleviation could play a major role in de-radicalizing the youth in FATA that we proposed the idea of Reconstruction Opportunity Zones (ROZs) to the Bush Administration and this issue received top priority during Bush's visit to Pakistan in 2006. The purpose behind this scheme was to attract business and industry to the area and for the identified products to have free access to the US market. We planned to make a similar request to the European Union (EU). Some of the sectors to be encouraged included the textile and marble industries, since high-quality marble is found in huge quantities in many FATA agencies. We felt that this, along with other factors which we had in mind to develop the area economically, would be helpful in creating job opportunities and thus decreasing militancy in the area. Unfortunately, however, after our government left office, this project was not pursued with the same vigour as we did.

These madrasahs had initially sprung up in the tribal areas near the camps housing Afghan refugees. Later on, madrasahs spread to other areas of Pakistan, including Southern Punjab, which is relatively less developed. Some of the madrasahs have impressive buildings and infrastructure and money seems not to have been a problem. No serious and sustained efforts were made by various Pakistani governments to develop a coherent strategy to prevent the inflow of funds and donations which come largely from private sources, both Pakistani and later, increasingly, through other Middle Eastern countries. Although initial funding for the Afghan refugees came from official sources, very soon private charities and individuals in the Gulf and other Muslim countries took it upon themselves to support jihadi militancy, including training in some of these madrasahs. Before the advent of the Afghan refugees, madrasahs were imparting a largely religious education, while some of them also taught lay subjects. They never really posed a major security problem. It is also true that, unfortunately, a large number of madrasahs in the tribal areas and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (formerly, NWFP or North-West Frontier Province) were radicalized. Certain Punjab-based religious organizations devoted themselves to

jihad and the Kashmir freedom struggle after rigged elections in Indian-held Kashmir in 1986. Thereafter, the Kashmiri struggle took a violent turn. All this, as they say, is history.

Pakistan is facing the consequences of this radicalization. It is also believed that a large number of Muslim countries were involved in supporting their respective lobbies financially in Pakistan to create pockets of support along sectarian lines. This is because Pakistan is one of the largest and most important Muslim countries, has the largest army in the Muslim world, and is the only Muslim nuclear power. The Iranian revolution, as well as the fears of those opposed to the consequences of this momentous event and the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union, played a major part in increasing militancy in Pakistan. Various governments in Pakistan seemed to have turned a blind eye to this militancy. The consequence was the adoption of a highly flawed national security approach, wittingly or otherwise. These policies have increasingly exposed Pakistan to radicalism, violence, and terrorism.

I will not delve into the details regarding the developments referred to above, since they are known and a lot has been written on the subject. I am mentioning this because my experience as Foreign Minister leaves me in no doubt that Pakistan just cannot afford to carry on with these policies. Pakistan will have few friends left in the neighbourhood and will be isolated internationally and polarized internally if it does not make serious efforts to wean the militants away from their activities. Mercifully, there is an increasing realization of this in important circles in Pakistan. The operation launched by the army in North Waziristan in the recent past is a very strong indication of this.

Pakistan is not the only country where the social sector has failed, leading to the marginalization of significant sections of its population. India also has major problems of poverty and deprivation. As a result, large swathes of Indian territory have been exposed to Naxalite terrorism. There is however a difference in the situation in Pakistan and India in this respect. In India, violent activities, except in Kashmir, by and large have domestic ramifications, whereas in Pakistan these have an external dimension, both on its eastern and western fronts. Non-state actors from all over the world have been sucked in following Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan and the events that have taken place there subsequently, including those after 9/11. Those justifying the use of militancy in Kashmir never forget to remind the people here of India's role in supporting the Mukti Bahini in the then East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) in gross violation of international law. Again, living in the past will not help Pakistan or advance the cause of the Kashmiris. Pakistan will have to adopt a coherent and well-thought-out strategy to combat militancy and terrorism since these could develop into existential threats. Pakistan has justifiable grievances regarding Indian activities in Balochistan and in FATA through Afghanistan but there is a need for a paradigm shift in relations between the two countries to prevent them from exploiting each other's fault lines. Both need to focus on improving the lot of their citizens. They need to become more sensitive to the plight of their populace and act

responsibly in view of the fact that both are nuclear powers and cannot afford to play with fire.

In early 2014, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's government has come forward with a National Internal Security Policy (NISP). It refers to some of the issues mentioned above; I hope it will also walk the talk. While the new policy is welcome, it is surprising that the Cabinet Committee on National Security (CCNS) which was announced in August 2013 with great fanfare seemed to go into a state of dormancy by March 2014. This is not a good sign. That is the forum where matters pertaining to national security, including foreign policy, defence, and economic and internal security have to be discussed, and a comprehensive policy framework devised and implemented if Pakistan is to meet the challenges it currently faces in a determined and wholesome manner. This issue has been dealt with separately under the section, 'Need for a Coordinating Body'.

### **Self-Governance**

The issue of self-governance was highly emotive with the Kashmiris. I must admit that, prior to getting involved on this subject, I had not gone deeply into Kashmiri complaints over Article 370 of the Indian Constitution, since Pakistan's case had always rested on the United Nations Security Council Resolutions. I got to know of the depth of Kashmiri feelings on this subject once I started interacting with them directly. The Kashmiri leaders had been complaining publicly over the years, and now in private to me, that the special status of J&K guaranteed by Article 370 amounted to a farce and a charade. The article, they contended, provided that India's powers over the state would be limited to the subjects assigned to it by the Instrument of Accession, on 26 October 1947, namely, Defence, External Affairs, and Communications. Therefore, it empowered the President of India to make an Order under Article 370 for New Delhi's assumption of authority on those subjects in 'consultation' with the government of the state. 'Consultation' was provided instead of 'consent' because the state had already agreed to give these powers to India, though by a document signed by an autocratic Maharaja in 1947 who did not represent the people.<sup>30</sup> A condition was stated in Governor General Lord Mountbatten's famous letter to the ruler that the people of Kashmir would decide on their future.<sup>31</sup>

I was told by the Kashmiri leaders that Article 370 represented a solemn pact. It was the only provision of the Indian Constitution whereby a state negotiated the terms of its membership of the Indian federation. The Instrument of Accession of 1947 had stated that the state's freedom would not be affected by the constitution drafted by India's Constituent Assembly. Accordingly, Jammu & Kashmir's Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and the Indian Prime Minister negotiated the terms of Article 370 from May to October 1949. The Kashmiris were extremely bitter that this solemn compact was systematically broken. In 1952, Sheikh Abdullah resisted Nehru's efforts to ratify the Instrument of Accession and, in May 1953, he set up a committee of the National Conference to consider the options which would facilitate an accord with Pakistan,

without which he realized peace and stability were not possible.<sup>32</sup> Nehru hit back and had Sheikh Abdullah and his trusted colleagues arrested on 9 August 1953, after getting him dismissed from the office of the state's Prime Minister. Charged of conspiring to accede to Pakistan in a case filed in 1958, Abdullah remained imprisoned until April 1964, except for a short break in 1958. Meanwhile, Nehru proceeded to fulfil his aim of bringing the status of Kashmir into line with other Indian states. In 1963, Nehru publicly said that Article 370 had been eroded and in 1964 Home Minister G. L. Nanda said that the Article was a tunnel through which many more powers could be acquired over Kashmir by India. They complained that, although in theory Article 370 was designed to ensure self-governance, in practice it was abused to no end to quash it. Moreover, a mere executive order issued by the Indian President under Article 370 can crush or destroy Kashmir's powers. They added that for decades from 1954 onwards, one Presidential Order after another was issued under this unconstitutional device, each leading to India's amassing of power, based on the concurrence of the state's governments that came to power through serially rigged elections. It became clear to me that the grievances of the Kashmiris on this score could not be ignored. Their views seemed to be backed by a number of scholars on the subject.<sup>33</sup> The proposed agreement sought to alter this situation drastically.

How important Article 370 is to the people of J&K, particularly, those living in the Kashmir Valley, was very recently illustrated by the strong negative reactions in J&K to a statement by Jitendra Singh, a Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), issued within one or two days of his being sworn in. He spoke of initiating a debate on abrogating Article 370. There was immediate negative reaction all over Jammu & Kashmir. Even the Chief Minister of IAK, Omar Abdullah, reacting in a series of tweets, said, 'Article 370 is the ONLY constitutional link between J&K and rest of India,' and 'Talk of revocation is not just ill-informed it's irresponsible.' Omar Abdullah also said, 'Long after Modi government is a distant memory either J&K won't be part of India or Article 370 will still exist.'<sup>34</sup> One of India's leading newspapers, *The Hindu*, warning the Prime Minister in an editorial pointed out, 'Many in the State see it [Article 370] as their only protection against existential threat. Fears of being swamped by a hostile majority remain a powerful motif in Kashmir politics—last erupting into large-scale street battles in 2008.'<sup>35</sup> Even the Chief Minister of Indian Punjab, Parkash Singh Badal, a leader of the NDA ally Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), cautioned the Prime Minister on this and pointed out that 'abrogation of the article was a very sensitive issue and needed utmost restraint'.<sup>36</sup> It is ironical that while the Kashmiris explained that the article was being misused to destroy self-governance, there have been statements by some BJP leaders recently hinting at the possibility of its abrogation!

It is necessary that the people of Kashmir should be given back the powers of which they had been deprived for nearly sixty years, and that there be effective guarantees against repetition of the past. The envisaged agreement with India did both.

India, however, insisted in private talks with us that it would only guarantee that quantum of self-governance to territories under its control as Pakistan granted to AJK. When we pointed out, that as far as AJK was concerned, it had a separate President, Prime Minister, Supreme Court, and High Court, the Indians told us, that any constitutional arrangements in this connection notwithstanding, they wanted both sides of the LoC to have similar and equal powers. After deliberation we came to the conclusion that we should accept this and make the necessary changes on our side in the interest of reaching an agreement with India. It was, therefore, agreed that the level of self-governance would be the same on both sides. With this objective in view, it was agreed that maximum self-governance would be granted in legislative, executive, and judicial areas to each of the units. It was also agreed that a mechanism will be evolved to achieve this objective. We agreed that within one year of the agreement, India and Pakistan would conclude a charter of principles regarding self-governance and that the nature and quantum of self-governance would be the same on the each side.

## **Elections**

The Kashmiri leaders who spoke to me said that India rigged the elections in IAK. Under the proposed agreement, India would lose the incentive to rig the elections. Guaranteed self-governance would render rigging the polls a breach of the international agreement between India and Pakistan. Free and fair elections in the respective units would be held regularly to enable democratic governance. These elections would be made open to international observers and the media. Suitable arrangements would be made in this regard soon. We had no doubt that this development would be welcomed by Kashmiris of all political affiliations.

## **Defining Units of Kashmir**

This was the most difficult part of the negotiations; reasons for this will become evident from what follows. Pakistan has always regarded Gilgit and Baltistan as separate from other areas included in J&K over a period of time during the Dogra annexation. This area was different ethnically and culturally from other areas which formed part of the former princely state. A great deal has been written on the revolt by the people of Gilgit and Baltistan who, after 1947, wanted to join Pakistan against the Dogra rule. For example, Alastair Lamb, the well-known historian and author of several books on Sino-Indian and Pakistan-India relations in his book *Kashmir: A Disputed Legacy*<sup>37</sup> refers to the exploits of Major W. Brown who was Commander of the Gilgit Scouts and under whose leadership the people of the area revolted successfully against Dogra rule and publicly declared their intention to join Pakistan. The role of 'Colonel Pasha' (real name of Major Muhammad Aslam Khan who later rose to the rank of Brigadier) in the liberation of the Northern Areas from Dogra rule has been described in some detail by his younger brother Air Marshal Asghar Khan in his book *My Political Struggle*.<sup>38</sup> The account gives details of the

undaunted courage of 'Colonel Pasha', who, with a force of nearly two thousand men (in a few months), was able to liberate this area where the people had revolted against the representative of the Maharaja of Kashmir in 1947. Over the years, they have sought merger with Pakistan and had struggled for a provincial status within the Pakistani federation for decades afterwards.

Regardless of the above, the Indians made it clear that any solution to the dispute over J&K will have to include all the territories in J&K, including the Northern Areas. There was yet another factor why, despite our desire to separate this region from the rest of J&K, we decided to show some flexibility on the subject. There was a strong feeling among sections of the Kashmiris that the former princely state should be considered as one unit in any future dispensation. We were keen to avoid a controversy on this subject.

For the purposes of the envisaged agreement, it was, therefore essential to describe with careful precision what constituted 'Jammu & Kashmir'. During the backchannel negotiations also, the Indians made it abundantly clear that they could only accept an agreement regarding J&K, if the Northern Areas were also included in the entire scheme. We confronted a dilemma. The feelings of the valiant people of Gilgit and Baltistan who had struggled for inclusion in Pakistan had to be respected. Besides, Pakistan has serious strategic interests in the area because it adjoins China (Xinjiang), Pakistan's most trusted friend. Defence of the Northern Areas is of immense importance to Pakistan because of its common border with China which provides a strategic link between China and Pakistan. Therefore, there was no way that we could countenance the presence of any troops other than our own in this region.

We were conscious of the fact that Ladakh was of great importance to India for similar reasons. It had a common, albeit disputed, border with China. Furthermore, it was sparsely populated and had a significant Buddhist population, with the rest being Muslim. Additionally, there is a Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council which was created in 1995 and which administers the Leh district of J&K. Jammu itself, though Hindu majority, had a large Muslim population. Despite the difficulties described above, our desire to have a peaceful diplomatic closure to J&K necessitated new thinking. After all, Pakistan had done everything to help the Kashmiris in their liberation struggle, fought five major or minor wars, and endured an unending tension in our relations with India. We, therefore, had to think hard and try and arrive at a solution that would somehow synchronize with the aspirations of the people of Gilgit and Baltistan and also take into consideration Pakistan's vital strategic interests in the area. It followed naturally from the above considerations that defence and maintenance of security of each of the units will continue to lie with Pakistan and India, as had hitherto been the case. We had to strive for a solution which would accommodate all this as well as be acceptable to both India and Pakistan. India had seen that its coercive diplomacy towards Pakistan in Operation Parakram had failed. Pakistan also realized that we could not achieve an acceptable solution to Jammu & Kashmir other than through negotiations with India. Pakistan had

also experienced effects of the jihadi blowback in the form of suicide bombers who have killed thousands of Pakistanis, including innocent children, and did not even spare worshippers in mosques. Both sides were thus under pressure to think creatively, and creatively we did think.

We therefore reached an agreement after many arguments and negotiations that there would be two units for the purposes of the agreement regarding the disputed State of Jammu & Kashmir currently under the control of Pakistan and India. The two units will comprise the areas respectively controlled by India and Pakistan. The governments of Pakistan and India would be free to have more than one administrative region in the units under their control. While so deciding, they would take into consideration cultural and ethnic factors. From our perspective, the arrangement that was arrived at took into account the aspirations of the people of Gilgit and Baltistan on the one hand as well as those of the people of J&K on the other.

### **Joint Mechanism**

We were happy that through steps taken towards demilitarization, self-governance, and defining the units of what constituted Kashmir, we had, to a significant extent, attempted to meet the aspirations of the Kashmiri people. On our side, we wanted more, not just to meet criticism from the Opposition, which, regardless of the merits of any solution, would allege that our government had accepted the status quo. As a politician I knew that this alone would not satisfy the people of Pakistan or that of Kashmir. We had to come forward with something additional, while at the same time living within our constraints that a solution had to be found which would be acceptable not just to a large majority of Kashmiris and Pakistanis but equally importantly to India as well. The Kashmiris had made it clear to us in their interaction with us that they did not want a solution which would permanently separate them from their brethren across the LoC. We felt that some form of a Joint Mechanism would meet that objective. We had to devise a system of cooperation which could be acceptable to the Kashmiris and Pakistanis, while the Indians could live with the mechanism that would come up as a result of our negotiations. At first sight it seemed a daunting if not an impossible task indeed.

It was thus that we thought of a 'Joint Mechanism' through which Kashmiris on both sides could cooperate in specified areas of mutual interest and where Indians and Pakistanis would also be present in one form or another. Whereas the principle of the presence of Pakistanis and Indians in this mechanism had been accepted through protracted negotiations, the manner of their presence and association was still under discussion. I have no doubt, in view of the fact that far more difficult issues had been thrashed out, a satisfactory manner of association of Indians and Pakistanis would also have been similarly resolved in future meetings of the backchannel. We felt that the Joint Mechanism would also help promote a spirit of cooperation as well as help create conditions of peace and stability in the former state as well as in the region generally. We agreed to facilitate

free movement of peoples, goods, and ideas. We created a structure called the Joint Mechanism, which was aimed at facilitating decision-making on issues of common interests; we felt that it would encourage a spirit of interdependence. Former President Pervez Musharraf refers in his book *In the Line of Fire* to the Joint Mechanism in the following words,

Most important, have joint management mechanism with a membership consisting of Pakistanis, Indians, and Kashmiris overseeing self-governance and dealing with residual subjects common to all identified regions and those subjects that are beyond the scope of self-governance.<sup>39</sup>

The Joint Mechanism would consist of a specified number of elected members from each of the two units. These members were required to be nominated by the governments of both the units. It was also agreed that a decision of the Joint Mechanism would require more than a bare majority of members of each side. It was further agreed that this mechanism would meet periodically— at least twice or thrice a year. It would be entrusted with the responsibility of increasing the number of crossing points, and encourage travel, trade, and tourism. It was also decided to further streamline the transport services and to encourage interaction between the peoples as well as exchange of commodities.

### **Common Policies Towards Development and Water Resources**

One of the most important responsibilities envisaged for this mechanism was to encourage the promotion of common policies towards the development of infrastructure, hydroelectricity, and exploitation of water resources. I do not have to emphasize how important this could be for maintaining future peace between Pakistan and India. Water is and could become even a greater source of friction between the two countries. Water poses existential threats to Pakistan since two-thirds of its population relies on water from rivers coming through Kashmir. Even the US Senate's Foreign Relations Committee has warned in a recent report that unless Pakistan and India are able to resolve their water disputes amicably, a future war between them cannot be ruled out.<sup>40</sup> Despite all the criticism levelled against the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) it has survived the test of time and withstood the pressures generated by five wars (including Siachen and Rann of Kutch) that Pakistan and India have fought. The presence of Kashmiris on both sides of the LoC, as envisaged under the Joint Mechanism, will provide further impetus in this direction. It is unthinkable that Kashmiris will do anything which will adversely affect Pakistan's interests. Indeed with the spirit of cooperation that will be encouraged—both India and Pakistan will find it unnecessary to indulge in a zero-sum game on the water issue. As I argue in the section on water disputes in the previous chapter, the IWT needs to be interpreted more creatively in view of climatic and technological changes since the treaty was signed.

This mechanism also aims at encouraging cooperation in agriculture, tourism, education, business activities, and commerce. Efforts would also be made through this mechanism for

strengthening cooperation in health and disaster management and encouraging cultural exchanges.

The ambit of the Joint Mechanism was fairly large and encompassed other areas as well. I can conclude by saying that the Joint Mechanism would have promoted a spirit of cooperation not just among Kashmiris but also between Pakistan and India. This Mechanism holds the potential for promoting new ways of thinking and of encouraging Pakistan and India to sit on the table not just as adversaries but as partners.

### **Monitoring and Review Process**

We were conscious of the fact that since Kashmir is a highly emotive and contentious issue, any solution that we agreed to would find its detractors, particularly among the political opposition on both sides. The two sides, therefore, decided to provide for a review of the agreement. The Pakistani and Indian sides realized that in view of the history of the J&K dispute, no solution that they could think of would be an ideal one, since it had to be made acceptable to all three. We felt that there would be general support for this Draft Agreement; but, we also realized that there would be criticism from some sections in Kashmir, Pakistan, and India. As already indicated, in the very nature of things, it is impossible to produce a solution which would be acceptable to all. It was for this reason that we decided that the arrangement that we had arrived at would need a review after a certain period, during which time, its implementation would be monitored with great care by all parties concerned, and that in the light of the experience, this arrangement could be improved. This is also the reason why the Draft Agreement had also stipulated that the Foreign Ministers of India and Pakistan would meet at least once a year to monitor the progress that had been made under this agreement. Furthermore, any solution that was presented could experience unanticipated difficulties. It was, therefore, appropriate that in the first instance the agreement be of an interim nature. The envisaged agreement, consequently, provided for a Monitoring and Review Mechanism. The Foreign Ministers of Pakistan and India would meet at least once a year to monitor the progress of the agreement and it would be subject to review at the expiration of fifteen years. In fairness, I may note that towards the end of 2006 and the beginning of 2007, we were negotiating on the period after which the review would take place. I have mentioned fifteen years here, because, it seemed that a compromise was beginning to emerge on fifteen years.

### **Treaty of Peace, Security, and Friendship**

There have been many treaties of peace, security, and friendship. One of the most important ones is between Germany and France when the two countries signed the Elysée Treaty.<sup>41</sup> The treaty established a new foundation for relations that ended centuries of rivalry between them. This friendship has acted as an engine of European integration. No wonder, therefore, that fifty years down the line, there is a project of common Franco-German history course book for use in both the countries to foster a shared vision of

history.<sup>42</sup> Since most decision makers in Pakistan and India had grown up reading about the rivalry between France and Germany and the wars that they had fought, they could not but get impressed about how these erstwhile enemies had forgotten the enmities of the past and turned a new page. For this reason, although there are other treaties of peace, security, and friendship between different nations, the one sealing peace between France and Germany has much greater resonance in South Asia. It should come as no surprise, therefore, that the Draft Agreement between Pakistan and India also envisaged that after the resolution of the Kashmir dispute, durable peace between Pakistan and India would be sealed by the signing of a Treaty of Peace, Security, and Friendship between them. The Draft Agreement provided that after a resolution of the Jammu & Kashmir dispute, durable peace between the two countries will be sealed by signing of such a treaty.

India had proposed a Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Security with Pakistan on more than one occasion.<sup>43</sup> A No-War Pact between India and Pakistan also has a long history since the two countries have proposed it at different times, starting with India in 1949.<sup>44</sup> They failed to agree on a draft which did not contain a provision for resolution of outstanding issues. The two countries could not agree because the Indian draft had two provisions, namely, that the contracting parties will have no alliance with a great power and will not grant any military bases to it, and also that the two would resolve their differences bilaterally. Pakistan's interpretation of India's motives over the years had been that, all India meant by this formulation was that the Pakistan accept the existing status quo. For this reason there could be no agreement earlier. The agreement not to use force or resort to the use of threat of force and adopt the principles of non-aggression could only be arrived at once the two countries had agreed to resolve their outstanding issues, thus enabling the two to recognize each other as friendly states.

It was agreed that Pakistan and India would create conditions which would lead to permanent peace between the two countries on the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter. Since it was clear to us that no solution that we arrived at could be sold to the people of Pakistan unless the Kashmiris accepted it, it was of paramount importance that the conditions in Kashmir be addressed in a manner as to ensure for them a life of peace and dignity as well as to assure to them enjoyment of human rights. It was also agreed that efforts would be made to reintegrate into society those who had been involved in violent activities. We came to the conclusion on the Backchannel that, if the Treaty of Peace, Security, and Friendship is signed after a resolution of the outstanding issues, including Jammu and Kashmir, it would provide a fitting finale to such an agreement.

### **Line of Control: A Line on the Map**

Despite the many wars that Pakistan and India had fought, it is evident that neither could coerce the other into accepting its position on Kashmir. It should also be clear by now, that the two countries had realized the following points: (i) Jammu and Kashmir cannot be made independent; (ii) borders cannot be redrawn; (iii) the Line of Control can and should

be made 'irrelevant'; (iv) and a Joint Mechanism for both parts of Kashmir can be worked out. This last point was absolutely essential to convince the Kashmiris and the people of Pakistan that there had been a change in the status quo, details of which have been given above.

Pakistan could not just accept the status quo, meaning that each side keeps what it has. A disinterested observer may well ask why not, more so because the territorial situation had not changed despite wars and continued tension, and the two countries had now become nuclear states making war impossible. My answer to this would be: because Pakistan had suffered all that it had, not just to add territory to its own, but also for humanitarian considerations regarding the Kashmiri people. Pakistan was in no position to compromise on the aspirations of the people of Kashmir. The people of Pakistan would have, anyway, rejected any solution if it gave the impression of bartering away Kashmiri sentiments on the issue. I have already indicated the role of Joint Mechanism in this connection.

Pakistani response to India's position, that the border cannot be changed, was that in that case the border would cease to exist between the Kashmiris, and they would require no visas or passports to travel across the LoC. Effectively, the LoC would be reduced to just being a line on the map. Over a period of time, Indian leaders had also started accepting this position and the Prime minister's own statement had taken that factor into account.

Kashmiris on both sides had been demanding for a long time that all barriers impeding their movement as well as on the movement of goods be removed. There was a human element to this. Dramatic pictures had already been published in Pakistani newspapers in which divided families had been shown on opposite sides of the River Neelum, frantically waving to each other and throwing gifts across the river to their loved ones. This demonstrated the misery afflicting families that had been separated and were not able to meet.

I remember, during our discussions I pointed out the human dimensions of what we were attempting to do. I emphasized that an increased people-to-people contact between Kashmiris on both sides would cement relationships between the younger generation; even marriages would take place. Later on some high profile marriages across the LoC did take place. For example, the famous Kashmiri leader Yasin Malik married a British Kashmiri girl of Pakistani origin in Islamabad. Earlier, Sajjad Ghani Lone had married the daughter of Amanullah Khan, leader of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front. When Yasin Malik got married, I thought to myself that what I had been predicting was now becoming a reality.

Abundant fruit is grown in Kashmir but it has a short shelf life. It has to be transported all the way to Delhi. The Kashmiris informed us that they could get far higher prices for their produce if they could sell it in the adjacent areas of Pakistan. Exquisite handmade shawls, rugs, and handicrafts are made in Kashmir and those are in demand internationally. The Kashmiris used to tell us that they were looking forward to the day when they could board

their flights and export their goods through the Islamabad-Rawalpindi air route. We were quite surprised when we received similar requests from people living in Jammu who could avail of similar facilities from the Sialkot International Airport. It is not widely known that the distance between Jammu and Sialkot is less than thirty miles. We could thus understand and empathize with the depth of the Kashmiris' desire for free movement of peoples and goods. After a lot of to and fro between the two sides, it was decided to make the LoC soft through enhanced interaction in trade and travel and thus make the LoC 'irrelevant'. At least as far as the Kashmiris were concerned, the LoC would just become a line on the map. Hopefully, over a period of time they would become unaware of even the existence of this line just as very few people today care to know which side of the Franco-German Border, Alsace-Lorraine is located.

## **An Evaluation of the Possible Settlement**

### ***'Cleansing Peace' and 'Transformational Peace' Better than 'Balanced Dissatisfaction'***

I have already referred to various moves that had been made over the years to reach a negotiated settlement of the Kashmir issue. I believe that the inspiration for these moves come from the vision of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah who visualized a friendly and cooperative relationship between Pakistan and India provided they could resolve the issue of Jammu and Kashmir in a just and fair manner. Over the years, Pakistani leaders have reached the conclusion that a solution to the dispute cannot be reached without the three parties, namely, Pakistan, India, and the people of Kashmir, agreeing to it. In recent years, the two countries have also reached the conclusion that a compromise can only be reached by mutual flexibility while UN Security Council resolutions form the basis of Pakistan's claim as a party to the dispute. Starting with Prime Minister Feroz Khan Noon to President Ayub Khan to Bhutto-Swaran Singh talks and including recent leaders like Nawaz Sharif, Benazir Bhutto, and Pervez Musharraf, all have attempted to resolve this dispute politically. President Musharraf recognized this increasingly after assuming office.

There is no doubt that one conclusion we could draw from the history of the Kashmir dispute is that neither war nor repression could solve this dispute. It is also a matter of record that, quite logically, therefore, a number of alternative solutions have been mooted over the years.

While it is important to remember that Pakistan's position on Kashmir is based on sound legal, moral, and political grounds, we have to adopt an approach which will lead to a solution of this intractable problem. Militant activities have proved counterproductive, more so since 9/11 because of international focus on terrorism.

Over the years, most Pakistani leaders, both civil and military, have explored the possibility of a negotiated settlement. It was the vision of a future that was better than the past that motivated our diplomatic efforts during our tenure. It was based on the assumption of a reciprocal flexibility by India. This assumption was not unrealistic as the

narrative described above would attest. Ayub Khan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Nawaz Sharif, Benazir Bhutto, and Pervez Musharraf have their detractors as well as their supporters but no serious person has ever doubted their patriotism. There must be very good reasons why all of them made serious attempts at a negotiated settlement with India on Kashmir, despite their very different backgrounds and despite recognition by all of them that Pakistan's legal case on Kashmir rested on UNSC resolutions. All of them had spoken of the need for a political settlement of the issue which would require flexibility by both sides on the issue of Jammu and Kashmir.

The Pulitzer Prize-winning author Steve Coll in his article,<sup>45</sup> after meeting all the main actors involved (during our tenure) on the backchannel in Pakistan and India, as well as those in Washington and other European capitals, says that these efforts were aimed at producing a 'cleansing peace' and a 'transformational peace'. He gives an outline of some of the details of the Draft Agreement. He mentioned in his article that, even after the change of government, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and President Asif Ali Zardari were keen to pursue a negotiated settlement. He also stated that the Indian government has long resisted scrutiny of its human rights records in Kashmir and deflected blame on to Pakistani support for jihadi groups.

His article is important because it was written after meeting all the main stakeholders in Pakistan and other countries involved. He provides an insight into the mindset of the Pakistan Army as well. He refers to frequent meetings that Admiral Mike Mullen, who became Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff in October 2007, had with the Pakistan Army Chief General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, as well as with General Ahmad Shuja Pasha, DG-ISI. Steve Coll gives Admiral Mullen's assessment, according to which Kayani endorsed the principles of the non-paper on Kashmir. Both Pakistani generals, he said, spoke of a new strategic direction and that their shift in outlook 'has been transformational'. Commentators continued to refer to the 'hopeful spring of 2007', when backchannel talks between Indian and Pakistani diplomats, encouraged by Manmohan Singh, India's Prime Minister, and Pervez Musharraf, Pakistan's President, seemed to be close to bearing fruit.<sup>46</sup>

In early 2011 an Indian writer of repute suggested that India should resume its backchannel dialogue on Kashmir, which he said had produced dramatic gains until it was abandoned in 2007, including a tentative agreement on porous borders, gradual demilitarization and increasing autonomy and self-rule for various sub-regions of undivided Jammu and Kashmir. 'This will gain credibility and momentum if India substantially withdraws its military presence in the Kashmir Valley.'<sup>47</sup>

There is no doubt the two countries need to move forward based on the work that was done during 2004–07. They should move both on the front and backchannels and continue the joint search for a mutually acceptable negotiated settlement of the Kashmir dispute. I would like to reiterate that the solution envisaged in the framework would have been

acceptable to a large majority of Kashmiris, Pakistanis, and Indians. It is impossible to find a solution that would be equally acceptable to all. Dr Henry Kissinger writing in March 2014 on how to resolve the Ukraine Crisis lists some of his suggestions, and says that in problems of this nature ‘the test is not absolute satisfaction but balanced dissatisfaction’.<sup>48</sup> I believe that what we had tried to achieve in the framework on Kashmir was better, because it was aimed at ushering in a period of genuine peace between Pakistan and India after finding a solution, which, we hoped, would largely meet the aspirations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir and help remove distrust between Pakistan and India.

## **A RESPONSE TO THE CRITICISM OF OUR POLICY ON KASHMIR**

Since some ideas of a possible agreement on Kashmir had become known because of statements by President Musharraf as well as my interviews, reactions from various quarters had also started appearing in the media. Overwhelmingly, there was a sense of relief that Pakistan and India might at long last resolve this dispute which had bedevilled relations between the two countries since independence. It was not unnatural, however, in view of the bitter legacy of Partition and of the various wars fought between the two countries, that there would be some criticism as well.

During this period, we were criticized that Pakistan had taken a U-turn on Kashmir; that the four-point proposal on identification of regions, demilitarization, self-governance and Joint Mechanism amounted to giving up on our stand on Kashmir regarding the holding of a plebiscite; that Pakistan was offering concession on all issues without any quid pro quo from India; and that pro-Pakistan elements in Kashmir were being isolated.

Such perceptions were misplaced. There was no U-turn on Kashmir. I had repeatedly spoken of the need for reciprocal flexibility by both India and Pakistan. Even earlier on, many Pakistani leaders had been speaking on the need for a negotiated settlement on Kashmir. Details of statements by both civil and military leaders of Pakistan to this effect are available and some of these have already been referred to, at relevant sections in the book. It would be inappropriate to go into details once again. These leaders could have simply ruled out all talks with India short of a plebiscite. It is obvious that they did not do so.

In more recent times, Prime Ministers Nawaz Sharif and Vajpayee were also thinking of a negotiated settlement on Kashmir and had even initiated a backchannel for that purpose consisting of former Foreign Secretary Niaz A. Naik and R. K. Mishra, a close confidante of Vajpayee and a veteran journalist.

Interestingly, senior Indian diplomats were unhappy over R. K. Mishra’s appointment as the backchannel negotiator, some of whom confided to me after I left office, their doubts as to how R. K. Mishra, ‘a mere journalist’, could match his wits against an accomplished

Pakistani diplomat like Niaz A. Naik. I used the word ‘interestingly’ consciously because similar criticism was levelled against Tariq Aziz as a backchannel negotiator when senior Foreign Service officers used to mutter, not always in low tones, at that time as to how Tariq Aziz, an officer from the Pakistan Taxation Service, could hold his own against experienced Indian Foreign Service officers such as Brijesh Mishra, J. N. Dixit, and S. K. Lambah. Furthermore, it is also worth mentioning that, although Pakistani and Indian diplomats spend their lives matching their wits against each other at various international fora, they seem to be almost mirror images of each other in terms of their attitudes and training.

In this connection, it would be pertinent to mention how Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif intended to tackle the Kashmir issue and it would be fair to quote his exact words as reproduced in former Foreign Minister Sartaj Aziz’s book.

We have asked the two Foreign Secretaries to meet, but you know and I know that such sensitive and important issues cannot be resolved by civil servants. We as political leaders have to come to grips and take initiatives that will lead to solutions, you come up with any reasonable proposals on Kashmir, and I promise to move forward responding to your proposals. Are you ready?<sup>49</sup>

In this case, I agree with the Prime Minister’s approach. I would like to ask critics of our policy if this was not an out-of-the-box approach to the resolution of the Kashmir dispute, reflecting a determination to move away from the traditional position in the interest of peace between the two countries.

Some idea along which a possible solution could have been worked out is contained in Sartaj Aziz’s book.<sup>50</sup> It is appropriate at this stage to give an idea of the type of solution that was being contemplated at that time and in the interest of objectivity and fairness, I quote portions of it verbatim under the heading ‘The Chenab Formula’ which is contained in his book: ‘According to the Chenab Formula Pakistan may consider Doaba, a narrow strip of land between Chenab and Ravi rivers in the suburbs of Shakargarh, District Sialkot, stretching up to Chamb, Dhodha, and Rajwari districts, as international borders. The town of Kargil might go to India under this “give and take”, but from Kargil upward, India will have to agree to give territory to Pakistan.’<sup>51</sup> ‘Most of the districts in Jammu and on the left bank of the Chenab are Hindu majority in the State of Jammu & Kashmir, while in most of the districts on the western side of Chenab, Muslims are predominant.’ ‘Pakistan may agree to forego its claim over Buddhist majority Ladakh as well but there will be no compromise on the valley. The Muslim majority valley will be partially autonomous.’<sup>52</sup>

Sartaj Sahib writes further as follows:

Since India was not willing to go back to the concept of Hindu versus Muslim majority, the Chenab Formula basically converted a communal formula into a geographical formula. Since most of the Hindu majority is east of Chenab and Muslim majority districts are west of Chenab. The Lahore Declaration had called upon the two Foreign Ministers to meet periodically to discuss all issues of mutual concern. An opportunity for such a meeting

emerged within a month when Jaswant Singh, the Indian Foreign Minister, and I were together at the SAARC Foreign Ministers' meeting in Nuwara Eliya, Sri Lanka, from 17 to 19 March 1999. We met on a bench perched in the middle of a lotus filled lake, away from all glares and cameras. I began the discussion by stating, 'For the first time the two prime ministers had accepted, first in New York and then in Lahore, that the peaceful settlement of all outstanding issues including Jammu & Kashmir was essential to creating an environment of durable peace and security in the region. Both the leaders had also displayed flexibility by not insisting on their traditional viewpoints. Vajpayee did not say Kashmir was an integral part of India and there is nothing to discuss. Nawaz Sharif also conceded that to resolve the Kashmir issue, both sides will have to move beyond their stated positions. You cannot expect me to move 90 per cent, without further movement from your side. We have to find that midpoint somewhere.'

Jaswant Singh listened carefully and then said, 'So, how should we proceed?'

I said, 'Let us list all the options identified so far on the Kashmir issue, eliminate those that are totally unacceptable to either side and narrow the discussion to opinions in which there is some common ground.'

He said, 'Let us start.'

After listing various options, I said, 'I found some common ground in the formula for district wise or region wise voting or ascertainment. Under such a formula, the Hindu majority areas, east of Chenab will go to India, and Northern Areas and Azad Kashmir to Pakistan, narrowing the problem to the Kashmir Valley, for which the maximum autonomy formula put forward by the Kashmir Study Group (KSG) might be the best option.'

Jaswant Singh said, 'It would be difficult to accept the principles of voting for some areas or to go back to Hindu majority versus Muslim majority but these are matters of detail. Give me four to six weeks and I will get back to you for a meeting at some mutually convenient location and date.'

On my return I briefed Nawaz Sharif and my colleagues at the Foreign Office. We all felt that for the first time in decades, we could see some light at the end of the tunnel. But the optimism did not last long. The four-to-six weeks Jaswant asked for did not materialize because the Vajpayee government fell in less than four weeks, on 17 April 1999.<sup>53</sup>

I have immense respect for Sartaj Sahib; he was representing Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's government at that time. It is for this reason that I have quoted him verbatim so as to avoid misinterpretation. In my view, the Chenab Formula, which amounted to a division of the state: parts of it going to Pakistan, parts of it going to India, would not have been readily accepted by people of Jammu and Kashmir, or for that matter, to the people of Pakistan or India. I also find it difficult to believe that India would have accepted the Chenab Formula as hinted by Sartaj Aziz while giving Jaswant Singh's response: 'It would be difficult to accept the principle of voting for some areas or to go back to Hindu majority versus Muslim majority.' Furthermore, a similar proposal on the division of Kashmir had already been rejected by India during the Bhutto-Swaran Singh talks. Also in the backchannel discussion on Kashmir following Prime Minister Vajpayee's visit to Lahore in 1991, Niaz A. Naik's comments that he held a series of meetings on the so-called Chenab Formula with R. K. Mishra, but nothing concrete ever came out of the secret talks that he held, should not surprise anyone.<sup>54</sup> The late Niaz A. Naik, former Foreign Secretary of Pakistan, was a distinguished diplomat. I got to know him well during my tenure in office. I am happy to note that former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif as well as Sartaj Aziz, and 'his colleagues in the Foreign Office' felt that a negotiated solution was the only way out.

I am, however, of the opinion that the formula that Pakistan and India worked out during 2004–07, after detailed negotiations on the backchannel spread over dozens of meetings, had greater chances of acceptability. The very fact that over these three years of intense negotiations, all the possible objections and reservations that were voiced and resolved held an assurance that there was a good chance of its acceptance by a large majority of Kashmiris, Pakistanis, and Indians. It is for this reason that I have said, repeatedly, that we do not have to reinvent the wheel and negotiations must start from where we left off. I do not mind that a new government would like to put its own nameplate on it. In fact there may be advantage in this, since the new government would thereby acquire ownership of the proposals worked out so diligently during our tenure. There should not be insurmountable difficulties since there was bi partisan support for a negotiated settlement of Kashmir both in Pakistan and India (at least at the time). A tinkering here and there with the proposals on Kashmir outlined in the draft framework agreement, details of which have been given above, are obviously possible in view of changing times and circumstances.

It is however surprising that some people, out of purely partisan considerations, attack the main outlines of the Draft Agreement worked out during 2004–07, as showing too much flexibility or amounting to a ‘U-turn on Kashmir’, while praising the progress made between 1997 to 1999, when Mian Nawaz Sharif was Prime Minister and had displayed similar flexibility. In foreign policy, security, and major national issues, one has to rise above partisanship.

I have given in considerable detail the outcome of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee’s visit to Lahore in February 1999. I would like to highlight a few points in this regard:

- (a) Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif conveyed to his Indian counterpart that sensitive and important issues cannot be resolved by civil servants, and political leaders have to take the initiative to provide solutions. This statement also helps explain why all the elected politicians, who, because of their roots among the people, are confident that they can sell a negotiated and just solution on Kashmir to the people of Pakistan. It is clear to anyone who is prepared to keep an open mind that when one talks of a negotiated settlement, it has to be on terms acceptable to both the sides and involves give and take. The fact that major politicians from the mainstream political parties of Pakistan have spoken of the need for a negotiated settlement, also highlights the fact that those who are in contact with the people of Pakistan know that a just and fair negotiated settlement will be acceptable to the people of Pakistan.
- (b) The two leaders agreed to set up a backchannel to conduct serious discussions on Kashmir, correctly concluding that such sensitive talks needed in the first instance to be negotiated outside the media glare. This is exactly what we were doing. I

was, therefore, surprised when some quarters criticized our backchannel for its secrecy. I was amazed at the criticism, since by its very definition, the backchannel had to remain quiet and avoid the media glare. If the backchannel talks during our time were not widely shared, the details of the backchannel negotiations started during former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's time were not shared either. There was nothing wrong with the secrecy of our backchannel. I stated at that time as well that the backchannel negotiators or for that matter the governments of the two countries had no constitutional authority to arrive at a settlement. All that they were trying to do was to arrive at a draft which could be submitted to their respective cabinets and parliaments before its submission to the scrutiny of the public. Hence, the criticism that the details were not widely shared is surprising; they could not be shared since the entire exercise was aimed at preventing media spin by interested quarters which would have aborted the entire process before it even took off. Both leaders showed flexibility by not insisting on their stated positions and accepting that they had to find a middle ground. We were later criticized for attempting to do precisely that. It is unthinkable that we would have agreed to a settlement on Kashmir without any quid pro quo from India.

- (c) Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, Foreign Secretary Sartaj Aziz and his colleagues in the Foreign Office were satisfied with the outcome of these talks and felt that they were seeing some light at the end of the tunnel.<sup>55</sup> I am happy to learn from his book that senior diplomats at the Foreign Office shared the pragmatism of the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister. Over the years as Foreign Minister, I also found that the views of senior officers at the Foreign Office began to undergo a change in consonance with the changing national and internal environment and imperatives.
- (d) Another criticism against our efforts to find a negotiated settlement on Kashmir concerned the alleged isolation of the pro-Pakistani elements in Kashmir. This is without foundation. Our support base in IAK remained intact. On the other hand due to the raised expectations regarding the possibility of a resolution of the dispute of J&K, the morale of the people was raised and even members of reputedly pro-India parties started demanding the need for a resolution of J&K. These parties had earlier never done so, since they felt that the arrangement to which they were subjected would last forever. The expectations of the Kashmiris had been aroused greatly by the ongoing peace process. It is no wonder, therefore, that when the process slowed down following our government's exit, the Kashmiris felt very unhappy and saw their expectations being dashed to the ground. Their resentment of the status quo went up exponentially. For example, in the context of the dispute over the allocation of land to Amarnath Shrine Board, apart from the Hurriyat Conference, parties like Mufti Mohammad Sayeed's and

Mehbooba Mufti's PDP supported the Kashmiri traders' call (fearing a loss of their perishable goods) of 'Muzaffarabad Chalo' when they were threatened with blockade of the Jammu-Srinagar highway. This was the time when the slogan of '*Chalo chalo Muzaffarabad chalo*' (March towards Muzaffarabad', capital of AJK) became very popular and was adopted by various political parties including some that had a reputation for being close to New Delhi. Sometime later, tens of thousands of Kashmiri youth expressed their demand for 'Azadi' spontaneously. It is not without significance that after the last elections in Kashmir, even the leaders of the parties that took part in the elections were forced to say repeatedly that the Kashmir issue needed to be resolved between India and Pakistan, and that the participation of the people during the elections should not be taken as an acceptance of the status quo. No wonder even Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said that status quo is no option.<sup>56</sup> Furthermore, later on an almost unending series of protests in Kashmir took place that was compared to the Palestinian *Intifada*.

## THE WAY FORWARD

### Reducing Trust Deficit Through Creating Commonalties of Interests

Removing or reducing the yawning trust deficit will undoubtedly promote normalization of relations and help guide the peace process to its logical conclusion. It is essential that Pakistan and India try to enlarge areas of common and converging interests. History bears testimony to the fact that conflict between peoples, families, tribes, and nations can be mitigated or eliminated by creating commonalty of interests. In olden times, this was sometimes achieved even through marriage alliances among the royalty to end wars or to promote peace. For instance, Mughal Emperor Akbar cemented his relations with the Rajputs through various marriage alliances, which were so successful that Rajput soldiers and generals ended up fighting under Akbar's command. Similar marriage alliances were fairly popular in Europe. Fortunately or unfortunately, since Pakistan and India do not enjoy the luxury of such alternatives, they must make concerted efforts in relatively more mundane areas to create commonality of interests. In modern times, increased commercial exchanges have helped create such interests among people in countries with historical animosities, by increasing the number of stakeholders whose interests demand that the countries remain peaceful.

### Trade

An enduring tenet of liberal democratic theory is that the spread of commerce creates the foundations for peace and international cooperation.<sup>57</sup> In the words of the nineteenth-century British philosopher, John Stuart Mill: 'It is commerce which is rapidly rendering war obsolete, by strengthening and multiplying the personal interests which are in natural opposition to it.' Even if one is sceptical of grandiose philosophical claims, it is

undeniable that by creating mutual understanding and interdependence, trade promotes cooperation and friendly relations between nations. Recently, this has been illustrated by the successes of the EU (European Union) and ASEAN (Association of South-East Asian Nations) in reducing long-standing antagonisms among their member states. As the volume of commercial interaction between nations grows, so do the prospects for mutual understanding and cooperation. The interdependence that comes with increased trade, investment, and technology exchange can also increase the impact of incentive offers. Elevating this principle to a strategy of international relations holds enormous promise for enhancing the prospects of cooperative security.<sup>58</sup>

However, Charles A. Kupchan states in his book *How Enemies Become Friends: The Source of Stable Peace*: 'Political reconciliation must come first if societal interaction is to have beneficial geo-political consequences.' He also argues that only when the geo-political competition has been tamed would economic cooperation make a decisive contribution to the establishment of stable peace.<sup>59</sup> During our government, however, we were able to simultaneously address issues of concern to Pakistan and India. This was a sensible approach since, by discussing Kashmir on the Composite Dialogue as well as more comprehensively on the backchannel, we were able to sell the peace process to a large majority of Pakistanis. Moreover, by addressing issues like people-to-people contact and trade, which India had historically prioritized, and the issue of terrorism, India was also able to carry the peace process forward.

Kupchan further states: 'Stable peace is possible. Enemies do become friends. When adversaries settle their differences and replace rivalry with cooperation, they succeed in leaving behind conflict and expanding the footprint of peace. This finding is uplifting and suggests that there is an alternative to the destructive wars that have so darkened the course of history.'<sup>60</sup>

He also notes: 'After diplomacy has set the stage for reconciliation, sub-state actors, bureaucracies, the private sector, civil society, and educators, help this process further, deepening rapprochement's social foundations. The process ends in the realm of constructivism, with opinion leaders propagating narratives and identities of friendship, which ultimately seal the deal. No doubt when the adversaries settle their differences and replace conflicts with cooperation, they also recognize the fact there is an alternative to war and that is in peace and cooperation. The practice of restraint is the sine qua non of the efforts to edge slowly and gradually from enmity to amity ... Although strategic and societal interaction do much of the work in turning enemies into friends, managing the domestic politics of rapprochement is as important as the diplomacy.'<sup>61</sup> Thus, the political leaders play a vital role in carrying forward this process as perceived economic advantages alone would not suffice in the absence of necessary political will.

In Europe and East Asia, the EU, and ASEAN were guided by their leaders' vision that the time had come to move from war to peace. That is why Western Europe has finally left

behind centuries of bloodshed and become a zone of stable peace. Despite the historical distrust, bloodshed and acrimony between France and Germany, the vision and political sagacity of German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and French President Charles De Gaulle led the two countries to end their enmity and carve out a future of friendship and cooperation. Indonesia and Malaysia settled their differences in the 1960s, and have since anchored ASEAN, a regional grouping that has preserved peace in South- East Asia since 1967. The same is true for Brazil and Argentina, which were for many decades hostile rivals, but since the 1980s have amicably anchored stability and regional integration in South America.<sup>62</sup>

In recent years, the European Economic Community (EEC) has evolved into the European Union (EU) with a number of factors influencing movement in this direction. The setting up of a single currency for member states of the community was a unique and historic step towards fuller integration. Significantly, this remarkable development was marked by considerable hiccups and for several years the French distrust of the Germans continued clouding their psyche. The vision of far-sighted leaders and the skills of technocrats like Jean Monnet as well as the force of circumstances helped bring the two countries together. Economic imperatives and the bitter experience and memory of wars gradually led to a revision in French opinion of Germany and laid the foundations for a peaceful, stable, and prosperous Europe.

In the case of ASEAN, since Indonesia always was and remains the largest and most powerful member state, its special role and relations with other member states, particularly Malaysia, needs to be highlighted. Indonesia's 'Crush Malaysia' campaign began under President Sukarno and lasted for some years. The next Indonesian President Suharto recognized the campaign's failure and realized that it ran contrary to Indonesia's best interests. He appointed an experienced diplomat, Adam Malik, as the Foreign Minister, who promised that the new government would regain the confidence of the nations that had been mistreated by or had suffered at the hands of earlier Indonesian governments. In order to build a credible profile, Indonesia ended its confrontation with Malaysia as well as Singapore and significantly undertook the initiative to form a regional organization as an instrument for promoting peace and reassuring its neighbours of its peaceful intentions. Malaysia joined the organization in May 1967, when the Malaysian Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman was persuaded that the initiative would also tame Indonesia's hegemonic aspirations in addition to promoting peace and stability. Malaysia's acceptance paved the way for the establishment of the ASEAN in August 1967. The contribution of the ASEAN towards economic development of the region and aiming towards cooperation as well as good neighbourly relations has been considerable. Indonesia's role in ASEAN's creation and effectiveness underlines the essential role of the most powerful member states such as Germany in the EU (European Union), Saudi Arabia in the GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council), and Brazil in LAFTA (Latin American Free Trade Association) in the establishment and success of regional organizations.

Given the increasing importance of trade, business, and investment in today's world, economic factors are acquiring greater weight in foreign policy considerations. Countries are promoting trade and economic cooperation, as illustrated by the robust trade and business relations between China and India, both of whom despite their differences, are encouraging, not just commercial cooperation, but also investment, joint ventures, and technology transfers. As large and developing countries with teeming populations, Pakistan and India must take economic factors more seriously in the conduct of their foreign relations. Only then would the two countries be able to improve the economic lot of their populace who live in conditions of relative, if not abject poverty, in large numbers.

Given the nature of Pakistan-India problems, in order to bring prosperity to the people of South Asia, there is a strong need for a bi partisan support for the peace process in both the countries, and for politicians to think and act as statesmen. Surely, with almost a quarter of the world's population, South Asia cannot be bereft of a few statesmen who can usher in a new paradigm of regional peace and amity. I can state with all humility that during my tenure as Foreign Minister, the leaders of both the countries were trying to move forward in a spirit of statesmanship. Otherwise, it would have been impossible to achieve progress in the peace process in the manner that we did.

With regard to South Asia, SAARC (South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation) was formed on 8 December 1985, with Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka as its founding members. Afghanistan joined as a member in 2007. It is unfortunate that rivalry and tensions between Pakistan and India have held the SAARC hostage and deprived South Asia of the fruits of regional cooperation.

Unlike ASEAN and the EU, SAARC lacks an effective dispute resolution mechanism. SAFTA's (South Asian Free Trade Area) dispute settlement body under Article 10(7) of the Agreement remains weak and ineffectual. It is worth referencing the approaches of ASEAN and the EU with respect to dispute settlement and conflict prevention as they are highly instructive in making SAARC a more effective regional organization.

The ASEAN's dispute settlement mechanism is a non-binding dispute resolution mechanism for cross-border issues of business, trade, and investment. It is implemented through online network of government agencies where complaints can be submitted through a website or a national office. It is considered to be a very expedient system of dispute resolution based on diplomacy. Member States of the organization not involved in the dispute are asked to review the case and issue their findings within an agreed time frame. In the event of a dispute remaining unresolved, it can be referred to the ASEAN summits. The system is based on WTO (World Trade Organization) settlement of disputes framework and given ASEAN's essentially non-confrontational culture, negotiated and diplomatic solutions are generally found.

European integration has helped prevent conflict in Europe for almost three quarters of a century by promoting regional peace and stability. The EU's attraction as a region of peace

and stability serves as a potent conflict prevention strategy and has promoted the vision of a united and peaceful continent. The establishment of the EU External Action Service in 2009 ushered in a new dawn in EU foreign policy through improved coordination on issues of common concern among member states. The service is answerable to EU's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. The harmonization of policies is achieved through regular meetings between the Presidency, the Commission, and the High Representative. Under the Treaty of Nice, the EU has also developed a conflict prevention policy which makes systematic and coordinated use of EU's instruments to go to the roots of the conflict and to improve their capacity to react and to promote cooperation with major international partners in its programme of conflict prevention such as in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Democratic Republic of Congo.<sup>63</sup>

Notwithstanding SAARC's lack of dispute resolution or conflict prevention mechanism, the SAARC Summit meetings have been useful in enabling the heads of state and government of member countries as well as their foreign ministers to meet bilaterally on the sidelines. The useful role of such meetings in bringing Pakistan and India closer in critical times should not be ignored. Prior to Prime Minister Vajpayee's visit for the SAARC Summit in Islamabad in January 2004, a bilateral meeting between President Musharraf and Prime Minister Vajpayee had not been fixed. The Summit, however, provided an opportunity for me to meet Indian Foreign Minister Yashwant Sinha. Our meeting (after a lot of backchannel work had been done) actually helped pave the way for the meeting between President Musharraf and Prime Minister Vajpayee, which, in turn, significantly led to the Joint Press Statement of 6 January 2004.

It must be highlighted that as a result of the then generally positive political ambience, the Summit produced good results.

The leaders of the member states resolved to improve the quality of life of people of South Asia through economic synergies. The Summit adopted the Islamabad Declaration and signed three other documents reflecting the resolve of the SAARC members to strengthen regional cooperation. These included the SAFTA Agreement, Additional Protocol to the SAARC Regional Convention to Combat Terrorism, and the SAARC Social Charter.

With regard to SAFTA, suffice it is to say that it could not be implemented in its true spirit. Our government simply ran out of time to convince various domestic stakeholders that SAFTA would benefit Pakistan economically in addition to enhancing regional peace and security. Notwithstanding India's grant of MFN (Most Favoured Nation) status to Pakistan in 1995, many members of Pakistan's business community complained of various tariff and non-tariff barriers imposed by India which were proving to be insurmountable hurdles in export of goods despite comparative advantage over India. The Indians objected to Pakistan limiting trade with India to a positive list of items claiming that such specific restrictions violated SAFTA, while Pakistan maintained that SAFTA was subject to domestic law that restricted trade with India. Pakistan's response to Indian insistence to

implement SAFTA was based on the Agreement's Article 14, which states: 'Nothing in this Agreement shall be construed to prevent any contracting parties from taking actions and adopting measures which it considers necessary for the protection of its national security.'<sup>64</sup> I did not entirely agree with this line of reasoning but more time was needed to bring sections of our media, the political class, the various government departments and the business community on board. In principle, however, our government remained loyal to the idea that expanded trade between the two countries was mutually beneficial and would in due course also help narrow their differences on political disputes. The upshot of our internal debates over this issue was that while expanding the positive list, we took care to include those items which India was keen to export to Pakistan and would also economically benefit Pakistan. Although our government's policies resulted in a dramatic increase in volume of trade between Pakistan and India, I am convinced that there is potential for far more, provided the two countries muster the necessary political will.

In a positive development in February 2012 which is expected to boost bilateral trade to US \$6 billion by 2014, Pakistan's Cabinet approved restrictions on free trade with India under MFN after December 2012. It was decided to replace the positive list of 1,946 items with a negative list of 1,209 items which was to be abolished by the end of the year. Owing to concerns from local industry, the abolition of the negative list is still in progress. I believe such concerns can be effectively addressed, inter alia, through SAFTA's safeguard clauses, which enable Pakistan to take retaliatory measures against a surge of Indian imports seriously undermining Pakistan's economy, and also permit a negative list of sensitive items. SAFTA's safeguards notwithstanding, I have never been convinced that free trade with a much larger economy like India would hurt Pakistan's economic interests because on a level playing field Pakistan's businessmen are second to none. Pakistan already has a Free Trade Agreement with China whose economy is many times larger than India's. If our business and industry can survive that, we should have little to fear from MFN-based trade relations with India.

### **Agreements for Resolving Issues Involving Disagreements**

In September 2012, the two countries signed the following three agreements: (1) The Customs Cooperation Agreement (CCA) to avoid arbitrary stoppage of goods at each other's ports to facilitate bilateral trade; (2) Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) to ensure acceptance of each other's standards and certificates which meet international benchmarks; and (3) Redressal of Grievances Agreement (RGA).

Implementation of these measures can prove very beneficial. More importantly, Pakistan has agreed in principle to restore normal trading relations with India under the nomenclature Non-Discriminatory Market Access Agreement (NDMA).

Since the new government led by Mian Nawaz Sharif took over, conscious efforts to normalize relations with India have been made. During 2013, various attempts were made

to move the bilateral trade agenda forward. This was attempted by efforts to encourage reciprocity and to provide a level playing field. This is the only way to encourage a mutually beneficial relationship in this area. I think that common attempts by the private sector of the two countries to devise a mutually acceptable framework in different areas shows potential. In this connection, the formation of Pakistan-India Joint Business Forum (JBF) is helpful, and common recommendations made by different groups to deal with different areas of trade like agriculture, automobile parts, engineering products, textile and textile made-ups, pharmaceuticals and various others to their governments hold greater prospects of acceptance. It is unfortunately true that despite the government's decision to have normal trading relations with India through Non-Discriminatory Market Access (NDMA), the actual implementation has been held up. This is largely due to the increased tension between the two countries. In this, one finds an example of Charles Kupchan's argument proving correct.

Had the assertion of those who say that free trade with the larger economy (like India's) necessarily spelled economic harm for the smaller trading partner, there would not be a beeline by smaller countries in Central and Eastern Europe to get into the EU, which comprises economic and industrial giants like Germany, France and the UK. I believe that the real hurdle to Pakistan-India trade liberalization is the unpredictability of their relations due to political disputes and not just a presumed threat from a larger Indian economy. In this context, it must be highlighted on the other hand that ideal political relations between trading partners are not a necessary prerequisite for increased trade. Besides the obvious example of Germany and France, who fought two world wars against each other in the last century but are now virtually integrated under the EU, it needs to be noted that the volume of trade between India and China jumped from just US \$1 billion in the early 1990s to about US \$70 billion, despite their border disputes and rivalry on various international issues. Other examples of robust trade relations between countries that have previously fought wars or maintain sustained policy differences on pressing international issues include China-Japan trade relations, and US trade ties with China and Vietnam. US trade with China burgeoned from \$122 billion to \$457 billion over the last decade, whereas its trade with Vietnam grew from \$1 billion in the early 1990s to \$16 billion in 2011.

Several leading economists and commentators in Pakistan believe that strengthening economic engagement with India would build bridges of peace and prosperity in the region. I agree with them. Significantly, this viewpoint also coincides with Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's vision. Jottings made on loose sheaves by the Quaid reveal amazing insights into his mind. He made an entry about asking Liaquat Ali Khan to speak to Pandit Nehru about retaining common customs despite the mayhem of Partition.<sup>65</sup>

Pakistan's geostrategic significance can be much more effectively leveraged if it actually becomes a bridge between South, Central, and West Asian regions. Providing a viable

economic, energy, and transport corridor would undoubtedly add to Pakistan's strength and prosperity. If the peace process with India is supplemented with trade, both the process as well as commercial exchanges would be strengthened. Given the many examples of countries where differences among nations were gradually papered over through free trade, it is tragic that the largest number of people trapped below the poverty line live in South Asia. The quickest path to improve their lot is through creating conditions of peace and stability in South Asia. Free regional trade would greatly help in attaining the goals.

### **The Media and the Peace Process**

Moving forward, the media, and particularly the electronic media, could play a major role in influencing public opinion in the two countries. In this connection, a tie-up between *The Times of India* and Pakistan's Jang/Geo Group is a promising development. I sincerely hope that similar tie-ups would occur among other media groups in Pakistan and India as well. In fact, during a visit to India a few years ago, I met people belonging to the Indian media networks who were interested in such tie-ups with Pakistani media groups in the interest of promoting peace. I urge the media in both the countries to be more careful in the future while handling contentious issues including terrorism. In fact, it is during such delicate times that the media has an added responsibility not to inflame passions. I am conscious that this may be a tall order, particularly in this day of competition and 'ratings'. We worked hard for bringing in the 2003 ceasefire across the LoC which held until 2013. Recent firing across the LoC is the worst in recent years. I believe tensions between India and Pakistan could be better handled by the media. Currently, only two journalists from each country are allowed to be assigned in each other's capitals. In order to promote better understanding, this needs to change and the media networks of the two countries ought to be allowed to post their correspondents in multiple cities outside of their respective capitals.

The media has always played an important role in moulding public opinion and for this reason I have devoted an entire section in the book on the importance of 'Media and Public Diplomacy' (see Chapter 9: Section II). Here, it is sufficient to say that, as early as the eighteenth century, Napoleon understood the importance of the news media when he said, 'four hostile newspapers are more to be feared than a thousand bayonets'. After the advent of the electronic media, it would not be an exaggeration to say that a single channel of significance is perhaps more to be feared than an entire corps of an army. As Foreign Minister, I realized the importance of building a positive narrative on the ongoing peace process between the two countries.

Since media plays such an important role, it must also realize the responsibility such a role carries. In order to carry our story, I adopted an open-door policy towards both Pakistani and Indian media. Despite advice that I could be quoted out of context, I took the risk and

felt that even if I was quoted out of context I would have an opportunity to clarify my position.

In view of the importance of the media in either promoting or impacting negatively on relations between two countries, it is no longer sufficient to blame the political leaders if things start going wrong. The media must get credit as well as the blame besides the politicians in the two countries. My experience, on the other hand was very positive, and I was able to get our narrative in both the countries effectively even at times, when the situation was tense as was the case after Mumbai serial bombings in 2006. I have dealt comprehensively with this subject in the book under the heading 'Media and Public Diplomacy'.

### **Promotion of Friendly Exchanges**

It has been correctly noted: 'Indians who visit Pakistan are invariably pleasantly surprised by the openness, helpfulness, and hospitality of Pakistanis. It is hard for them to believe that there is so much vibrant art, fashion, music, dance, media, literature, and theatre. They are moved by the outstanding work that people are doing, often voluntarily, in fields ranging from women's and human rights to education and medical care.'<sup>66</sup> Similarly, Pakistanis who visit India are also very warmly welcomed there. Therefore, nothing can explain or justify the mean-spiritedness reflected in the existing visa rules. Police in both countries shabbily treat their own citizens who are unfortunate enough to visit a police station. Their attitude towards visitors from Pakistan or India is far worse. As Foreign Minister, I took particular interest in trying to get visa barriers relaxed and forcefully advocated the complete exemption of certain categories of people from requiring visas. Among other classes of citizens, this included representatives of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry as well as senior journalists attached with reputable media organizations. I strongly argued in this regard at various SAARC meetings and I succeeded only partially. Thus, although nearly 100,000 people travelled in both directions during 2004 and 2005, travel between the two countries became relatively restricted after 2007, especially so after the Mumbai attacks of 2008. Certain categories can be easily expanded without risking either country's security. Thus, serving and retired officials above a certain rank, lawyers, doctors, and other professionals of a certain standing, as well as those paying income tax above a specified level for a certain number of years could be included in these categories. While a far cry from the extremely liberal visa regimes of the EU and ASEAN, it would still substantially increase the number of visitors to each country and thus, importantly, enlarge the constituency of peace.

During the tenure of our government, we also made special efforts to promote religious tourism. The Katas Raj Temple near Rawalpindi was restored. L. K. Advani came to Pakistan on my invitation and visited the temple accompanied by Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, the then President of the Pakistan Muslim League, who had taken a particular interest in its restoration. On that occasion, Chaudhry Shujaat remarked, 'Hindus from

India will visit temples in Pakistan just as Muslims from Pakistan visit Ajmer.’<sup>67</sup> In fact, driven by a strong desire to promote people-to-people contact between the two countries, our government not only discussed with India but even considered concrete proposals to introduce group tourism in order to obviate the requirement of an invitation from a family in Pakistan or India to visit the other country. The two countries ought to revive and sustain such efforts that encourage people-to-people contact. Encouragingly, I have noticed that the importance of a liberal visa regime is being recognized in the renewed dialogue between Pakistan and India. With respect to promoting mutual understanding, nothing is more helpful than a large number of people regularly travelling back and forth from both India and Pakistan.

### **Student Visas**

Pakistan and India are among the few countries in the world that impose restrictions on each other’s students to study at their respective universities, which must be removed to encourage the new generation of Pakistanis and Indians to stop thinking stereotypically about each other. Several countries, including those in the EU and ASEAN, as well as the US and China, encourage student exchange programmes to overcome long-standing prejudices and bitter histories. During our government’s tenure, this issue was discussed many times and further progress could have been made had things not changed after our government left office. Moving ahead, given their potential for promoting understanding and burying historical biases, the two countries must take affirmative steps to encourage student exchanges.

### **Sports**

Pakistan and India must continue their healthy rivalries in various sports. As in 2003 and 2005, visits between the cricket teams of the two countries can be an effective Confidence-Building Measure (CBM). At the time, the atmosphere generated by these matches marked a ‘public celebration of peace’. One saw during these matches that youngsters of the two countries ran across the cricket field carrying flags of both the countries. In the absence of an ongoing peace process, however, simple exchange of sports teams would probably not have the same impact. Nevertheless, I support cross-border visits by sportsmen at all times as it lends a semblance of normalcy to the bilateral relationship, which in turn might help kick-start dialogue or even the stalled peace process, as was the case when Prime Minister Singh invited Pakistani Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gillani to witness the cricket World Cup’s semi-final in Mohali in Chandigarh, India, in 2011. Similarly, a lot of goodwill was generated across South Asia when joint Pakistani and Indian tennis pair Aisam-ul-Haq Qureshi and Rohan Bopanna, dubbed as ‘partners in peace’ and ambassadors of peace, made it to the finals of the US Open and the quarter-finals of Wimbledon in 2010. It is unfortunate that Indian authorities eventually prevailed upon the sponsors of Indian Premier League (IPL) to keep Pakistani

cricketers out of the annual competition. A lot of positive sentiment could be generated by allowing Pakistani and Indian cricket stars to play alongside each other in the IPL.

## **Soft Power**

When I assumed office, I was conscious of the fact that Pakistan's image had suffered quite a hit during General Zia's rule. Zia's government pursued intolerant religious policies that replaced the tolerant Islam that was practised for centuries in the subcontinent by religious militancy. In this context, I even suggested to President Pervez Musharraf to place the Ministry of Culture and External Publicity under the Foreign Office. Although the President initially favoured this proposal, it was eventually shelved because of a turf war among various ministries.

The importance of 'Soft Power' in today's world should not be underestimated. The term 'Soft Power' was first coined by Harvard University Professor Joseph Nye who defines the concept as: 'coopting people rather than coercing them'. The essence of Soft Power lies in a state's cultural values and the way it handles itself internationally.<sup>68</sup> The term is now widely used in international affairs by analysts and diplomats to broadly refer to the culture, sports, music, films, entertainment, education, and diplomacy of a country and how it narrates its story in the international arena. Despite the fact that the US maintains most elements of hard power like the strength of its armed forces and the size of its GDP, it does not exert comparable soft power in a large number of developing countries. Interestingly, Nye nominates Canada, the Netherlands, and the Scandinavian countries as states whose political influence is greater than their hard power would permit. Recently, China has realized the importance of Soft Power, and India has managed to exert it through cultural projection particularly through Bollywood movies. Moving forward, Pakistan must also consciously and actively promote its humane culture, the power of its Urdu prose and poetry, unmatched traditions of hospitality, thrilling natural beauty, and incomparable trekking territory in the country's North, which contains some of the highest mountain peaks in the world. Moreover, domestically as well as internationally, Pakistan must affirm the true values of Islam which lie in tolerance and equality of men regardless of caste, creed, or colour.

## **Culture**

Cultural activities between the two countries can go a long way towards blunting adversarial feelings. In this context, a liberal visa regime for artists, poets, writers, and musicians would greatly benefit Pakistan and India. It has been aptly remarked: 'Lata's songs won't destabilize Pakistan while Faiz's poems can't break India.'<sup>69</sup> Love and not hatred is the lyrical idiom of singers and poets. Undoubtedly, a regular exchange of artists between Pakistan and India would be a good way of palliating historical wounds. In the words of famous Indian poet and lyricist Gulzar:

What is common between us is our culture, our values, the fine arts, the air, the water, the sea; the birds from both our countries fly back and forth. If there are differences in our political agendas we must sit across a table and sort out those differences.’<sup>70</sup>

In the words of venerated Pakistani poet Ahmad Faraz,

People on both sides of the border share the same food habits, breathe the same air and are entertained by the Khans of Bollywood. If the Indo-Pak politicians work positively, both the countries can get rid of the scarcity of water, electricity, food grains etc.<sup>71</sup>

In a positive development in 2011, the birth centenary of Pakistan’s great Urdu poet, Faiz Ahmed Faiz, was celebrated in both Pakistan and India. Replicating this spirit of mutual admiration and appreciation for each other’s arts and culture, the two countries should host annual conferences in their respective countries for the subcontinent’s poets, writers, and artists.

## **Films**

Indian films have always been popular in Pakistan and latest Bollywood blockbusters are readily available in Pakistan on DVDs and are now being screened in cinemas. Similarly, Pakistani television plays were so popular in India that, until the advent of private electronic media in India, Pakistanis planning on visiting India were often requested by their Indian friends to bring them recorded video cassettes of their favourite TV serials on PTV (the government owned Pakistan Television). During my recent visit to India to attend the Jaipur Literature Festival, I was pleasantly surprised to meet a large number of Indians who informed me that Pakistan TV plays produced by private production houses were tremendously popular in India even now and that some of them were hooked on to them. It was during our government that the screening of Indian films that were banned in Pakistan for decades was allowed. *Mughal-e-Azam* was the first Indian film to be exhibited in Pakistan after many years as a result of a deliberate decision by our government. However, it must be cautioned that movies can also negatively impact society by perpetuating and intensifying hatred.<sup>72</sup> When, through the media, I appealed to the film industry not to produce Hate Movies, it elicited a mixed response from them. But fewer movies portraying Pakistan in a negative light were made as the peace process progressed. Nonetheless, I am pleased that the liberal approach adopted by our government with respect to import of films from India, in fact resuscitated Pakistan’s own film industry which had been in a state of sharp decline since the 1970s, with the shutting down of hundreds of cinemas leading to the collapse of film production infrastructure in the country. Since the introduction of this policy, which has been prudently continued by successor governments, Pakistan has already produced some high-quality films. *Ramchand Pakistani*, a Pakistani film written and produced by a former Pakistani Cabinet Minister, Javed Jabbar, and directed by his daughter Mehreen Jabbar, elicited positive reviews in both Pakistan and India.<sup>73</sup> Although the film depicts Hindus as a minority in

Pakistan, it primarily emphasizes the commonality between the two countries rather than exacerbating ill will between them.<sup>74</sup>

## **VIEWS OF QUAID-I-AZAM MUHAMMAD ALI JINNAH AND MAHATMA GANDHI ON FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN**

Before we conclude, it would be appropriate to quote Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Mahatma Gandhi in this connection. Articulating his vision of friendly relations between Pakistan and India, Quaid-i-Azam remarked:

Now that the division of India has been brought about by a solemn agreement between the two Dominions, we should bury the past and resolve that despite all that has happened, we shall remain friends. There are many things which we need from each other as neighbours and we can help each other in diverse ways, morally, materially and politically and thereby raise the prestige and status of both Dominions. ...<sup>75</sup>

Mahatma Gandhi acknowledged: 'Peace must be just; in order to be that it must neither be punitive nor vindictive.'<sup>76</sup>

Inspired by these guiding principles of the two great leaders, significant progress was made towards peace and justice during 2002–07. Notwithstanding the complexity of the bilateral relationship, Pakistan and India must set their eyes on the future. There is already a framework in place on a possible settlement on Kashmir.

The two countries are not destined to live as adversaries forever and should pursue their legitimate security concerns without denying the economic benefits that regional cooperation can bring to each other.<sup>77</sup> Pakistan-India relationship has suffered as a result of several missed opportunities. This should not be allowed to happen again. The future of the bilateral relationship must be guided by constant engagement and cautious optimism as the two countries move towards a new model of an inter-state relationship based on regional cooperation and fair competition, and not distrust and suspicion fuelled by counter-reactive moves and a zero-sum approach. Moving forward, by emphasizing common challenges and promoting regional cooperation, Pakistan and India must overcome political challenges to adopt a positive-sum approach.

## NARENDRA MODI'S VICTORY: ITS LIKELY IMPACT

Since I have written the above about the way forward, I feel that this is a good place to include the likely impact of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's victory in 2014 elections on Pakistan-India relations. This has become all the more necessary because a large number of commentators both in Pakistan and in India feel that the policies adopted by him will be different from those of former Prime Ministers Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Manmohan Singh.

I am aware of the opinion of important sections in India regarding Narendra Modi's rigid attitude generally and, in particular, his pronouncements during the 2014 election campaign, as well as the unfortunate riots in 2002. I am conscious of some of his hard-line pronouncements regarding Pakistan, China, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh but, as I have mentioned with reference to Arun Jaitley's statement earlier (he has since become Finance Minister of India), I hope this is more a case of an election campaign's oratorical flourishes than an indication of his expected policy towards India's neighbours. I am also aware that some Indian analysts think that it is a mistake to compare Narendra Modi with Atal Bihari Vajpayee. A well-known Indian columnist has written in March 2014 that those who equate an essentially 'peacenik' Atal Bihari Vajpayee with Narendra Modi and dream of a repetition of the Indo-Pak bonhomie witnessed during Vajpayee's tenure are living in a fool's paradise.<sup>78</sup> These analysts think that were Modi to become Prime Minister (he has since become PM), he would adopt a hostile posture towards Pakistan and follow a more aggressive foreign policy. I would prefer to think that Narendra Modi, under whom the economy of Gujarat has thrived, is like other successful politicians, a pragmatist in the ultimate analysis.

Many analysts in Pakistan, India, and elsewhere believe that Modi's government could well adopt an aggressive attitude towards Pakistan and a hard-line posture on Kashmir. I sincerely hope that this does not happen since it will only add to the misery of those living in the region. I have advocated throughout this book that we need a complete paradigm change. Not only do we need to normalize our relations, we also have to attempt to become friendly neighbours. Even from a military perspective, the two countries do not have an option but to reach a *modus vivendi*, despite the current tensions reflected dramatically by conscious efforts of both the leaders to ignore each other and even to acknowledge each other's presence in the Kathmandu Summit on 26 November 2014. Better sense seemed to have prevailed the next day when they did shake hands for about forty-five seconds eliciting a loud applause by the delegates of the conference.

Modi would obviously know that, as a result of the events of 2001–02, which witnessed a huge mobilization of troops on the border between the two countries, neither country was successful in achieving its objectives. It also proved that coercive diplomacy could not succeed. Moreover, both countries have nuclear weapons, with miniaturization at a fairly

advanced stage, with an ever-growing stockpile of fissile material and sophisticated delivery systems consisting of both ballistic and cruise missiles. Long ago, the National Command Authority had tasked the Strategic Plans Division (SPD) to develop a Second Strike Capability to support a policy of Credible Minimum Deterrence (CMD) as a guarantee for peace and stability in South Asia, which has been realized.<sup>79</sup> I am certain India has this capability as well. This should impose a degree of responsibility among war mongers on both sides. This calls for adopting a policy of restraint. I hope Modi's desire to develop India economically will bring the pragmatism in his personality to the fore and help check a tendency among some elements in his party to please grass-roots support. In view of the risks involved, despite the recent increase in tension and massive firing by both the armies across the LoC, each claiming to have taught the other side a lesson, sanity should prevail. This will enable the two countries to focus on improving the socio-economic indicators of their peoples which are perhaps the worst in the world, containing almost half of the world's poor.

### **The Cold Start Doctrine**

I am aware that some Indian defence analysts have been talking of the Cold Start Doctrine as a way of neutralizing nuclear parity in South Asia, although the then Indian Defence Minister, Jaswant Singh, has denied the existence of the doctrine, stating that these were just off-the-cuff remarks of General V. K. Singh (a former COAS and now a member of Prime Minister Modi's Cabinet).<sup>80</sup> In WikiLeaks, dated 16 February 2010, Tim Roemer, then US Ambassador to India, described Cold Start as 'a mixture of myth and reality' that, if implemented, 'would likely encounter very mixed results.'<sup>81</sup>

The genesis of India's Cold Start Doctrine, advocated by hawkish elements in the Indian Army, can be attributed to the Indian Military's (specifically the Indian Army's) frustration with its earlier strategic doctrine of 'Mobilize and Hit', which had prevailed for over three decades. This had, however, been refined under General Sundarji by the introduction of more mechanized formations during Operation Brasstacks of 1986–87.

Under the doctrine of 'Mobilize and Hit', the Indian Army would take nearly 3–4 weeks to fully mobilize to battle stations on its western border with Pakistan before it was ready to undertake any meaningful operations at three or four major thrust points, or Points of Attack. The advocates of the doctrine argued that the period of this cumbersome mobilization, however, allowed the element of surprise to be lost and enabled Pakistan, with a favourable geography, to counter-mobilize much faster and be ready for India. They argued that the lengthy mobilization handicap became all too apparent in 2001, when India, in response to the attack on the Indian Parliament, was frustrated for nearly ten months because, besides other factors like Pakistan's nuclear capability and international concerns, it had lost the element of surprise and the Pakistani armed forces were ready for it. The foregoing experience led to a renewed thinking among hawkish elements in the Indian Army, which, after much internal debate turned around the strategy of 'Mobilize-

and Hit' at three to four thrust points to 'Hitand-Mobilize' at eight to nine thrust points on India's western borders. This revised Indian strategy was called the Cold Start Doctrine. Among those who advocated this, the 'Hit' of the strategy was to be launched within 48–96 hours of a major incident (Mumbaitype) by troops from within its defensive formations, while the rest of the offensive formations from the depth of India 'Mobilize' to carry forward the initial thrust. It is, purportedly, the Indian military's way of trying to surprise Pakistan and overcome the earlier handicap of a lengthy mobilization period. According to the advocates of the Cold Start Doctrine, in this way, India would be able to exploit its conventional force advantage over Pakistan and achieve decisive military gains without bringing into play Pakistan's nuclear weapons. Many defence analysts, including foreign experts, regard the Cold Start Doctrine as naive, recklessly proactive, and exceedingly dangerous, challenging, as it does, another nuclear power while expecting that Pakistan would not hit back. In their view, therefore, it plays with the fundamental premises of nuclear deterrence and is thus destabilizing.

### **Tactical Nuclear Weapons**

Some Pakistani strategists have been talking of the need to confront the threat emanating from the Cold Start Doctrine by developing battlefield Tactical Nuclear Weapons. The Pakistan Army felt that it needed to restore nuclear parity and strategic stability. It felt that India's Cold Start Doctrine, with its potential to destabilize South Asia's delicate strategic balance, needed to be countered by Pakistan, so as to prevent the adverse strategic, operational, and the resultant political consequences of the doctrine. They argued that India, in terms of military strategy, had attempted to bring down the level of military operations to the tactical level at the very outset of the conflict. The response from Pakistan's National Command Authority (NCA) and Strategic Plans Division (SPD) was, therefore, to simply lower the nuclear threshold by developing a variety of Tactical Nuclear Weapons (TNWs—battlefield weapons). The Pakistan Army argued that Pakistani Tactical Nuclear Weapons (TNWs) ensure that the Indian planners would now seriously consider that Pakistan's nuclear deterrence is based on a full-spectrum deterrence, wherein even the envisaged early thrusts under the Cold Start Doctrine, would be met with conventional forces backed by TNWs. In this way, Pakistani strategists felt that they had basically reinforced the concept of deterrence, controlling India's rush to conventional war under the flawed and reckless belief that a nuclear power could be punished in this manner. The Pakistan Army strategist argued that the variety of Pakistani TNWs inventory, therefore, ought to be seen as weapons of peace in the hope that these will deter India from contemplating operations even at the lowest level, thereby ensuring that peace, however uneasy, will continue to prevail in South Asia.

I hope that any 'Dr Strangeloves' <sup>82</sup> that may exist in South Asia are kept very much in check. Armchair analysts who comment freely on these issues do not know the consequences of their theories. I have some idea of this since, as Foreign Minister of

Pakistan, I was a member of the National Command Authority, which is in charge of Pakistan's nuclear and missile programmes. It oversees the employment, policy formulation, exercises, deployment, research and development, and operational command and control of Pakistan's nuclear arsenals. During our tenure, we tried our best to encourage nuclear CBMs. An agreement was signed between India and Pakistan on reduction of risks of nuclear accidents or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons. Agreements on prenotification of flight testing of ballistic missiles and on reducing the risk from accidents relating to nuclear weapons were also reached. We even suggested including cruise missiles, but India, unaware that Pakistan had already developed its cruise missiles, while it was trying to develop its own cruise missile Brahmos with Russian collaboration, was not interested. Recently, 'Pakistan successfully tested a cruise missile with stealth capabilities capable of carrying conventional and nuclear payloads.' The Pakistan Army only tersely commented on the test: 'The state-of-the-art Ra'ad cruise missile with stealth capabilities is a low altitude, terrain-hugging missile with high manoeuvrability and can deliver nuclear and conventional warheads with pinpoint accuracy.' 'The army also notes the missiles strategic standoff capability on land and sea, which implies that the army is planning to use this new weapon for precision airstrikes on both land and sea targets.'<sup>83</sup>

Despite some progress reached during our tenure on nuclear CBMs, unfortunately, very few meetings were held between experts on the subject. I sincerely hope that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government will try and conclude agreements with the Government of Pakistan on creating some sort of an architecture like the Cold War nuclear rivals had done, which assured uninterrupted peace despite the two sides possessing more than 20,000 nuclear weapons.

For starters, Prime Minister Narendra Modi should visit Pakistan. Had Dr Manmohan Singh visited Pakistan in 2006 (there was also a plan for him to visit Islamabad in March and later on in May 2008), he would have been able to sign the agreement on Sir Creek, thus providing further impetus to resolving the few details that remained to be settled on the framework of a possible Kashmir settlement. It is a pity that he did not do so and when the peace process had advanced to such a level that solutions to all contentious disputes including Kashmir, Siachen, and Sir Creek, were within grasp. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh himself told me that he looked forward to visiting his birthplace, Gah village in Chakwal district near Jhelum.

With the impressive mandate that Modi has received, he would not find it difficult to put the finishing touches on the Draft Agreement on Kashmir. Narendra Modi is also being supported by big business houses of India, and businessmen hate nothing more than instability. Even an ordinary travel advisory from a major country in case of tension between the two countries can cause negative outflows of capital. This happened a few years ago. I hope that my belief in the pragmatism of successful politicians is not

misplaced. Some may well think that I am unduly optimistic. I readily confess to that tendency. Given the nature of Pakistan India relations, it is only huge doses of optimism which help carry this process forward. I think Narendra Modi showed some of this pragmatism in inviting Nawaz Sharif to his Swearing-in Ceremony along with other SAARC leaders, knowing fully that the entire media focus would be on Nawaz Sharif. It is a different matter that Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif faced criticism on his return. A leading newspaper quoted a senior PML-N leader who stated that the Prime Minister was unhappy 'when there was no joint press conference after the one-on-one meeting between the two Prime Ministers'. The report goes on to say that the Prime Minister was expecting a Joint Communiqué, but none was issued. Instead, Delhi unilaterally released a press statement which did not carry Islamabad's stance. It also noted that the 'abrupt and inadequate' press release by Delhi forced Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to hold a press conference of his own, where he read out a carefully worded statement so that 'whatever was achieved by the visit might not go waste'.<sup>84</sup> Whereas I had welcomed Nawaz Sharif's decision to accept Prime Minister Modi's invitation, I had assumed that in the three days that passed between the extension of invitation and its acceptance by the Pakistani Prime Minister, the two Foreign Offices would have worked out the modalities. As someone who has been closely involved with Pakistan-India negotiations, I hope that future visits by either side will be better prepared to avoid disappointments or raised expectations.

Now that Narendra Modi has been elected with a massive mandate, I would like to believe that he will be freer from constraints from his hard-line supporters. I am hoping for this despite the knowledge that many who had been advising him on foreign and security issues are hardliners on Pakistan. He has a historic opportunity to complete the mission that we pursued, particularly during 2004–07.

I would like to reiterate the need for an early resumption of the dialogue. Without sounding like an alarmist, I would like to point out that the nature of Pakistan-India relations is such that in the absence of positive stimuli, they do not remain on an even keel. If there is no dialogue, a near certainty prevails that relations will move on a downward trajectory. In this connection, it is pertinent to point out that while Pakistan and India were talking meaningfully during our tenure through the Composite Dialogue as well as on the Backchannel, the issue of the LoC remained in control. When dialogue between the two countries broke, the LoC problem began to heat up. The situation is bound to become worse if attempts are not made to rectify the situation through meaningful dialogue.

Bright young Foreign Service officers of both India and Pakistan spend their entire careers in trying to outsmart one another at various international fora. They fight over paragraphs, phrases, and even punctuations in drafts presented, and celebrate when their point of view is accepted. This has, however, not brought about any change in relations between the two countries. I remembered that during the NAM Summit at Kuala Lumpur in 2003, young

officers of the Pakistani delegation fought very hard for their point of view. I had to meet informally with some of my counterparts to have a paragraph included supporting the freedom struggle and drawing a distinction between ‘terrorism’ and ‘freedom struggle’. The Indians were arguing that there was no need for any reference to this in the document. It was a hard job indeed and young officers of the Pakistan Foreign Service hardly slept at night in their effort to convince their counterparts to have this paragraph included for submission to NAM Foreign Ministers for their approval. We celebrated when our point of view was accepted. Despite such ‘victories’ by Pakistani and Indian diplomats at different international fora, neither Kashmiris nor Indians or Pakistanis have benefited in any meaningful way. For meaningful change, political masters will have to be more assertive. With Prime Minister Modi coming in with such a decisive mandate, he will have to adopt a path less travelled by thinking creatively. On the Pakistan side, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif is lucky that even his domestic political opponents stand for negotiations between India and Pakistan to resolve the issue of J&K and are unlikely to oppose a solution that is considered just and fair. It is interesting that in the past, Pakistan was accused of being focused on just one issue, namely, Kashmir, while India used to talk of progress on people-to-people contact, trade, and a host of other issues of mutual interest. In due course, the two countries decided to discuss all issues and not just Kashmir. Ironically, India now seems to have adopted Pakistan’s position. It wishes to address only the issue of terrorism. The only way that there can be meaningful progress between the two countries is to start talks under the Composite Dialogue and discuss all issues of interest to both the countries simultaneously. I am quite happy for India to lay importance on the issue of terrorism, but, it can only hope for meaningful progress on this issue, if issues of concern to Pakistan like Kashmir, Siachen, and Sir Creek are addressed as well. In this connection, I would like to refer to an article by an experienced Indian diplomat Satyabrata Pal who was India’s High Commissioner to Pakistan and succeeded Shiv Shankar Menon who later became National Security Advisor to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. Both of them served as High Commissioners in Islamabad when I was Foreign Minister. Menon was in the loop on the progress being made on the backchannel, although I do not know how much of this he shared with his successor. Since the article in question comes from an experienced Indian diplomat, it may be in order here that a portion of the advice that he gave to the new Prime Minister be reproduced:

Prime Minister Narendra Modi thinks out of the box. He showed this in inviting his counterparts from the South-Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) to his swearing-in. In his meetings with them, however, going by what was reported, he toed the standard line, which, on issues new to him, was both understandable and prudent. As he moves forward, though, he should review received wisdom on our neighbours, above all on Pakistan. If the Foreign Secretaries meet only to talk about talks, they will simply mark time. We want satisfaction on terrorism before we talk on other issues, though Nawaz Sharif has made it clear that Pakistan wants a dialogue that is comprehensive, even if not ‘composite’. There is a huge irony in this, because in the sincerest form of flattery, Pakistan has embraced our traditional position and we have appropriated theirs. (I hope he also thinks that India adopting Pakistan’s position would equally flatter Pakistan’s hardliners.) For over two decades after 1971, we urged Pakistan to discuss all issues with us, while it refused without satisfaction on Kashmir. We argued that it was absurd to reduce relations between neighbours to a single issue, no matter how important, and took it as a

triumph when Pakistan eventually agreed to what we dubbed the Composite Dialogue. Bizarrely, we have now disowned what we conceived and Pakistan has adopted the foundling, but as we reduce ourselves to a single issue, terrorism, we give Pakistan the excuse to revert to its own one-child policy—Kashmir.<sup>85</sup>

Even the political opponents of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif would willingly accept that he wants peace with India, but he will not be able to make any progress if India decides to focus only on one issue, namely, terrorism. All of us noted that after Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's visit to New Delhi, the positive feelings generated by the invitation extended to him and his acceptance of that to visit Delhi dissipated fairly quickly after the remarks of the Indian Foreign Secretary highlighting issues of concern to India only. No wonder, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was placed on the defensive. He had to go out of his way to silence his critics at home by stating that he was 'much satisfied' by the visit.

Since the expected changes under Prime Minister Narendra Modi have not taken place (in fact, the situation has deteriorated fairly quickly and unfortunately), my argument advanced above, that the very nature of Pak-India relations is such that it does not remain on an even keel in the absence of a positive stimulus, has proved to be correct. The demand for a meaningful dialogue is, therefore, paramount. Despite this deterioration all the arguments given above are still valid.

It is a pity that India cancelled the Foreign Secretary level talks on the pretext that the Pakistan High Commissioner in New Delhi met with Hurriyat leaders. This has been the norm for many years, and there are good reasons for this. Since India had objected to including the Kashmiris directly in the dialogue process and Pakistan had wanted the Kashmiris to be included, as a compromise I suggested to Natwar Singh that Kashmiri leaders on both sides of the LoC be allowed to interact with each other as well as with the leaderships in Islamabad, Delhi, Srinagar, and Muzaffarabad. This, we thought, was eminently sensible, since any framework of an agreement that the Governments of Pakistan and India would agree to, was not likely to be accepted, at least in Pakistan, if the Kashmiri leadership rejected it. The purpose of such meetings and interactions was to actually provide support among the Kashmiris for an agreement that the two governments might work out, as was the case during the tenure of our government. As one publication in Pakistan which has consistently supported the peace process commented in its editorial, '... in the past, Pakistani officials and leaders have exploited opportunities of meetings with Hurriyat leaders to nudge them to the negotiating table with New Delhi rather than urge them to wage jihad. ...'<sup>86</sup>

There is criticism in India on why Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif raised the issue of Jammu and Kashmir in his speech at the United Nations. This is strange, because unless there are talks to resolve the dispute bilaterally, as we were trying to do during our tenure, what are the options Pakistan is left with? I have also noticed statements by some BJP leaders regarding the removal of Article 370 (which guarantees special status for Jammu and Kashmir), I have already dealt with this issue comprehensively elsewhere in the book. It

will suffice here to say that some of BJP's own supporters, like the Chief Minister of Indian Punjab, Parkash Singh Badal, a leader of NDA ally Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), have cautioned the Prime Minister in this connection.<sup>87</sup> I hope my earlier optimism in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's pragmatism, as well as the need for peace in the region to realize his own ambition for developing India is not misplaced. I hope he will reflect seriously on the consequences of increased tension between the two countries for that vision. There has been mention in the media that this was perhaps an attempt to appeal to his grass-roots support for domestic political considerations prior to elections in three Indian states (Maharashtra, Haryana and particularly J&K where he ambitiously embarked on Mission 44-plus, namely, an attempt to secure a majority in order to form the government in J&K). I hope that the earlier optimism generated by his invitation to Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to attend his inauguration will not evaporate. There seems to be some realization of this in New Delhi. When Sushma Swaraj, Minister for External Affairs in Prime Minister Modi's government, was asked about the government's future strategy towards Pakistan she said, 'There is no full stop in diplomacy, it's always comas and semi colons. And, after all this, people always move forward. There are no full stops in a diplomatic journey.'<sup>88</sup> I couldn't agree more.

Following the cancellation of Foreign Secretary-level talks, vitriolic rhetoric has increased tension in the region, with the electronic media on both sides under pressure for ratings making it worse. Both sides have been saying that their armed forces have taught the other side a lesson (in the recent cross-LoC firings).

I think that Pakistan and India would be making a massive mistake if they pretend that they can ignore the other side. There have been voices on both sides urging that they do exactly that. There are hardliners on the Pakistani side who believe that we should just focus on the Muslim world, China, the US, and the EU. They say that Pakistan's diplomatic leverage has increased due to recent events including an announcement by President Obama to withdraw all US troops from Afghanistan by 2016, and the increasing tension between Russia and the West following the Ukraine crisis. They point out that, inter alia, this would lead to greater reliance by the US on Pakistan since the Northern Distribution Network passing through Russia may not be available to the West during the US 'drawdown'. They also point to the increasing tensions in the Middle East with various Muslim countries wooing Pakistan for its support. Similarly, there are hawkish Indians who say that the Indian economy is currently doing better than Pakistan's, as are its democratic institutions. They also love to highlight Pakistan's internal difficulties, particularly at the hands of hard-line domestic terrorists. They say that Pakistan should be left to stew in its own juice. Such elements should remember that like plagues and diseases, terrorism also knows no borders. Pakistanis, particularly those in a position to influence decision making, realize that in the ultimate analysis different groups of extremists or jihadis are interlinked with similar objectives. Ever since the Gulf countries became cash rich, private funding for jihadi activities does not seem to be a problem. The

Mumbai attacks in 2008 were a great tragedy for Pakistan-India peace process. The Pakistan Army has decided to crack down on the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) as is abundantly clear from its decision to launch a powerful operation in North Waziristan, the importance and the success of which has been acknowledged by the international community. The TTP could instigate an attack on India (attempting to force India to retaliate) to prevent Pakistan from decisively dealing with it by turning the attention of the Pakistan Army outwards. I understand India's pain after the Mumbai attacks of 26 November 2008. They occurred after we had left office, but there are also people in Pakistan who find it difficult to forget India's role in the 1971 War and its conscious attempts to undermine Pakistan's unity and its occupation of Siachen in violation of the Simla Agreement. Both countries will have to look forward in the interest of the downtrodden of South Asia.

However hard Pakistan and India try to ignore each other, both countries would do well to remember that they have no option but to deal with each other. India will have to deal with Pakistan—it is not going to go away anywhere, notwithstanding its attempts in the last decade to de-hyphenate itself from Pakistan. This was seen when India expressed hostility towards Obama's desire, during the early days of his Administration, to include Kashmir in Richard Holbrooke's AF-Pak mandate. Although technically Kashmir was excluded from his mandate, the problem did not go away, nor did this attempt at de-hyphenation help. This became clear by the recent response of the international community to the increased ceasefire violations across the LoC and the Working Boundary. Both accused each other of starting the firing first and killing civilians—the media only exacerbating the tension. The US Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Dan Feldman, voiced serious concerns, urging both sides to resolve these tensions through dialogue.<sup>89</sup> Ironically, even the announcement in the joint Nobel Peace Prize awarded to Malala Yousafzai and Kailash Satyarthi in 2014 (for their struggle against social injustice) states: 'The Nobel Committee regards it as an important point for a Hindu and a Muslim, an Indian and a Pakistani, to join in a common struggle for education and against extremism ...'<sup>90</sup> There can be no de-hyphenation as long as they have the problems that they do and the geography that they share. Vajpayee was obviously referring to the axiomatic truth in the famous speech that he made when he said, 'you can choose your friends but not your neighbours'. Manmohan Singh said as much. Horace, the leading Roman poet (during the time of Augustus) said something even more telling, 'When your neighbour's house is on fire, your own property is at stake.'

Pakistani leadership has by and large begun to understand that despite the undoubted international character of the Kashmir dispute, it will need to be resolved bilaterally. It will also need to be resolved peacefully which is possible since we do have a basic framework for Kashmir, negotiated over many years through the backchannel. Despite hard-line rhetoric emerging from India recently, they must realize that in order to achieve its true potential globally, it will need to resolve outstanding disputes with Pakistan peacefully

through negotiations. This point was brought out fairly strongly during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit to the United States where many commentators regarded Pakistan-India tensions as one of the constraints on Indo-US relations. This point was also highlighted by Dan Feldman, referred to above in another context, who said, 'I am convinced that India's rise in prosperity and global leadership cannot be fully realized until it has a better relationship with Pakistan,'<sup>91</sup> just as Pakistan must realize that despite India's difficulties with China, Pakistan's closest ally, India-China trade has increased rapidly over the last few years. Similarly, India must understand that regardless of difficulties in Pak-US relations, both countries have, over the years, found many areas where their interests converge. There is, therefore, a limit to the assumed pressure that India can apply on Pakistan through the United States.

If India wants Pakistan to give it iron-clad guarantees that it will not allow any cross-LoC movement, it would be making an unrealistic demand. Pakistan itself has been a victim of major terrorist attacks directed against soft civilian targets as well as against its security personnel and institutions. Were it that easy to stop jihadi infiltration, India could have done so on its side of the LoC. The fact that it has not been able to do so despite fencing and posting massive number of troops along the Line of Control underlines the complexity of the problem. India has itself been subjected to different types of internal terrorism including from the Naxalites, the Indian Mujahideen as well as secessionists of different varieties. The attack on Samjhauta Express proves that terrorism has no religion either. Both countries have huge fault lines which can be exploited by the other. Common sense would dictate that they resume the peace process in earnest and each assure the other that they will not exploit the other's fault lines or encourage terrorism in the other country. This is the only way forward if South Asian leaders are to focus on the alleviation of poverty in the region. It is a humiliating truth that half the world's poor live in this region. This requires leaders in Pakistan and India to show statesmanship and I hope that they will rise to the occasion since failure is not an option. Let me end this section on an optimistic note. Mr Modi's rise has been quite spectacular. He has arisen from relatively humble origins to the highest political office in the Republic of India. How can such a man not have a sense of destiny about himself? I was Foreign minister for an uninterrupted term of five years which are regarded as the most productive in the Pak-India peace process ever since Independence. I interacted with a large number of top Indian leaders including two Prime Ministers and three Foreign Ministers. Every Indian leader, I have spoken to or who has been my interlocutor has said to me privately, 'Let's make history'. How can Narendra Modi be an exception to that?



# The Pakistan Army and India

## **MY INTERACTIONS AND OBSERVATIONS**

### **Pak-India Wars and Near-War Situations**

The memories of the wars that the two countries have fought have been a major determinant in Pakistan-India relations. It has obviously impacted the attitude of the Pakistan Army towards India. These wars were responsible for further solidifying the animosities existing at the time of Partition, and creating a particular psyche towards the other. This bred ill-will and exacerbated feelings of mutual mistrust. Before I give my views on the Pakistan Army, as well as my interaction with it, it is pertinent to mention some of the major wars fought between Pakistan and India as well as the near-war situations faced by them in a period of almost perpetual tension.

#### ***The Kashmir War (1947–49)***

Kashmir was the cause for the first Indo-Pak military conflict. A war over it was fought between the two countries from October 1947–January 1949, and resulted in the killing of approximately 1,500 soldiers on each side.<sup>1</sup> As British officers were present in both the armies and the world was urging restraint, the conflict ended in a ‘tactical and strategic stalemate’.<sup>2</sup> The UN intervention in January 1949 resulted in the demarcation of a ceasefire line in July 1949 that divided the administration of the territory. That temporary measure with slight modifications continues till today. The state is presently recognized internationally as disputed territory between India and Pakistan. This war had the effect of militarizing relations between the two dominions. Each sought outside support and allies for several years, and pressed its case in the United Nations, where the dispute remains.<sup>3</sup>

The 1947 war on Kashmir had a lasting impact not just on the state of relations between the two countries but on their attitude towards the international community. Pakistan in particular became more conditioned to accepting Western military alliances such as the Baghdad Pact, Central Treaty Organization (CENTO), and South-East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO). Pakistan’s military as well as its populace felt that these alliances would aid in equalizing the balance between Pakistan and its much larger neighbour India. Pakistan needed the latest military equipment from the West to neutralize a much bigger Indian military force. Pakistan’s relationship with the US and the West has continued in

one form or other to date. Secondly, after the Kashmir war, the image of the Pakistan Army was raised in the eyes of the Pakistani populace. People felt that despite paucity of resources and India's comparative advantages in terms of numbers and materials, the army fought well. Thirdly, the war had immense popular support since it was generally believed by the people at large to be a just war as India had forcibly occupied Hyderabad and Junagadh with Muslim rulers and now was trying to occupy a state with a Hindu ruler with an overwhelmingly large Muslim population. This popular support was not just limited to the Frontier Province from where a large number of Pashtun tribesmen participated. I am aware of many progressive Punjabis who volunteered to fight in this war. As a child, I remember stories of Pakistani volunteers almost reaching Srinagar, but in view of their irregular nature and lack of discipline they wasted a lot of time which enabled the Indian Army to land its troops in Srinagar. Fourthly, had it not been for the Pakistan Army and the volunteers, Pakistan would have had nothing of Kashmir. The liberation of a part of Kashmir and the Northern Areas became the basis of Pakistan's strategic relationship with China. Finally, some critics point out that this pattern of popular participation was subsequently followed in later conflicts with India; the complications that this created will be discussed subsequently.

### ***The 1965 Indo-Pak War***

I was in Britain from 1961 to 1966 for my studies at Cambridge and Oxford Universities. I had come down to London in connection with my Bar exams, preparing to be called to the Bar from Gray's Inn, London. There, I was staying at London House, a popular hostel for postgraduate students from the Commonwealth. As can be expected there were a large number of Indians and Pakistanis in residence. We were on fairly good terms with each other and had animated discussions on issues relating to Kashmir and other Indo-Pak matters. It was during that time that the situation started to heat up over Kashmir.

The immediate incident which aroused passions in Kashmir was the issue of the missing holy relic, a hair of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). It came to be known as the 'Hazratbal incident'. The holy relic was reported missing by the media in December 1963. Multitudes of Kashmiris came out in protest in demand for the recovery of the holy relic. The incident caused indignation not just in Kashmir, but all over India and Pakistan. In fact, the anguish was so great that Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru had to address the nation over the issue. Mirwaiz Muhammad Farooq, father of Mir Waiz Omar Farooq, the current President of the All-Parties Hurriyat Conference, was appointed President of the Action Committee formed to recover the holy relic. The atmosphere at the London House also became charged up, and passionate exchanges between Indian and Pakistani students started to occur.

It was thus that the Kashmir issue became centre stage once again. In the volatile atmosphere that followed, volunteers in large numbers infiltrated into Indian Administered Kashmir (IAK). The Indians alleged that the infiltrators had complete Pakistani backing.

In the backdrop of this heightened tension in April 1965, the Rann of Kutch tank battle between the two sides took place. Pakistan felt that it had the upper hand in the battle. Indian Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri was enraged, and gave a statement that India will choose the appropriate time for action against Pakistan.

In 1965, Pakistan and India engaged in a full-blown war. The war started, when India decided to cross the international border on the premise that Pakistan was trying to incite an uprising in Indian-held Kashmir. The Operation Gibraltar<sup>4</sup> was organized by Pakistan to capture IAK. In April 1965 a tank battle was fought between the two sides in the Rann of Kutch in Sindh, in which the Pakistanis felt that they had won the battle.<sup>5</sup> The British government eventually intervened and the matter was resolved by the UN.<sup>6</sup>

In September 1965, the two countries fought a land, sea, and air war, 'which featured the first-ever dogfights between supersonic jet aircraft.'<sup>7</sup> One of the biggest tank battles fought between India and Pakistan was witnessed at Chawinda and Sialkot. Although civilian casualties were not high, approximately 3,000 Pakistani and 3,800 Indian soldiers died in this battle.

The Pakistan Army made advances towards Akhnoor in the Chamb-Jaurian Sector.<sup>8</sup> The then Foreign Minister, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, and the Foreign Secretary, Aziz Ahmad, advised President Ayub Khan and the Cabinet that there was no chance that India would in response cross the international border. But India did do so when it attacked Lahore and Sialkot. According to a distinguished author, 'Foreign Minister Bhutto persuaded the usually cautious President Ayub Khan that it was better to move militarily against India before it grew too powerful and would be impervious to Pakistan's views on Kashmir.'<sup>9</sup> Here lay the seeds for a future political controversy about the causes and consequences of a war and the arguments advanced by pro- and anti-Bhutto forces in Pakistan. There is, however, no doubt that President Ayub Khan was the primary casualty; and future Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto the primary political beneficiary of this war. Ayub Khan who was being hailed by the West until that time as an Asian de Gaulle was set on a political slippery slope after this.

The war was considered 'inconclusive'.<sup>10</sup> At a popular level, it was believed that Pakistan had won the 1965 war. In view of the surprise and sudden attack on Lahore which is only thirty miles from Amritsar, according to popular folklore, the Indian general leading the attack had boasted to his colleagues that they would have a drink in the evening at the Lahore Gymkhana. There was a strong feeling among the people that the armed forces of Pakistan succeeded in defending the country from an attack by a much larger army.

It has been analysed that the Pakistani military at that time had 'an exaggerated estimate of their own strength'. They believed in the myth of martial races 'developed by the British in the nineteenth century, which grew out of European theories that jumbled racial, climatic, cultural, and religious notions.'<sup>11</sup> In my view, perhaps, this 'exaggerated estimate

of their own strength' may well have been further reinforced by the induction of the latest arsenal by the United States. Some in Pakistan also believed that one Pakistani soldier equalled ten or more Indians. In the view of some, this seriously distorted the army's professionalism.<sup>12</sup> Pakistanis felt that even with little outside support they could not only challenge but defeat India. 'If one Pakistani equalled ten or twenty Hindu Indian soldiers, then Pakistan could overcome the disadvantages of its apparent size and resources, and, if necessary, the Pakistan Army could challenge India.'<sup>13</sup> Regarding the army's professionalism being affected by such notions, I would like to state clearly that this was not my impression when I dealt with senior army officers. I am privy to many discussions involving the military and civilian leadership in the context of the assessment of threat from India, and I know that the Pakistan Army never doubted the professional competence of the Indian Army.

Pakistan Army officers have invariably achieved distinctions in various international courses and are well respected as professionals by their host countries. Professional acumen is considered the most important criterion for merit-based selection and in determining suitability for important command assignments. Pakistani and Indian officers regularly interact with each other at various international fora, and I believe mutual admiration and respect for each other's professionalism exist between them. Furthermore, the Pakistan Army is perhaps the largest contributor to the United Nations' peacekeeping operations. It is but natural that their global outlook is keenly developed.

The war of 1965 is a tale of tactical brilliance and gallantry at the lower ranks; and lack of vision among the higher levels of leadership. The propaganda of great victory within Pakistan only produced disillusionment.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, after the 1965 war, there was a striking change in Pakistan's security environment. 'Instead of a single alignment with the United States against China and the Soviet Union, Pakistan found itself cut off from United States' military support, on increasingly warm terms with China, and treated equitably by the Soviet Union. Unchanged was the enmity with which India and Pakistan regarded each other over Kashmir. The result was the elaboration of a new security approach, called by Ayub Khan as the "triangular tightrope", a tricky endeavour to maintain good ties with the United States while cultivating China and the Soviet Union. Support from other developing nations was also welcome. None of the new relationships carried the weight of previous ties with the United States, but, taken together, they at least provided Pakistan with a political counterbalance to India.'<sup>15</sup>

The 1965 war gave rise to a new folklore in Pakistan; it produced patriotic music in the form of *Quami Taranas* (patriotic songs). The inimitable singer *Malika-e-Taranum* Noor Jehan, from Kasur, enthralled the people of Pakistan with her patriotic songs, supporting and motivating the armed forces through her melody. Regardless of any critical and academic analysis, it also became part of folklore that Pakistan had the better of India. It

generated feelings of immense patriotism among ordinary Pakistanis, and the performance of the Pakistan Armed Forces, particularly the air force, became a matter of national pride.

It was only a few days earlier that Air Marshal Muhammad Asghar Khan, the first Chief of the Pakistan Air Force, had retired. He was regarded as the father of the Pakistan Air Force and along with Air Marshal Nur Khan, who actually commanded the air force during the war, they both emerged as Pakistan's national heroes after the war. People during the war ignored threats to their lives by going on rooftops to witness the dog fights of Indian and Pakistani fighter jets.

It was this notion that Pakistan had won the 'war' that came in handy for Zulfikar Ali Bhutto later on. He maximized on it to build a case against President Ayub Khan when the latter signed the Tashkent Accord, a peace treaty between India and Pakistan. Since the general consensus of the Pakistani populace was that Pakistan had won the war, people felt that what they had won in the battlefield, Ayub Khan lost it all on the negotiating table in Tashkent. Bhutto continued to assure the people that at the 'appropriate' time he would divulge the 'secret' (he never did) behind the Tashkent Accord. The impression that Pakistan had won the war also led to miscalculations regarding the military strength of the two countries.

This war was brought to an end as a result of the efforts of the great powers, on 23 September 1965, since they feared being dragged into it and was officially ended through a peace agreement signed in Tashkent on 10 January 1966, through the good offices of the Soviet leadership under Prime Minister Alexei Kosygin, between President Ayub Khan of Pakistan and Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri of India. Shastri died the very next day. Hence the seventeen-day war between Pakistan and India of August–September 1965 officially came to an end, even though a ceasefire had been secured by the United Nations Security Council on 22 September 1965. The parties agreed to withdraw the armed forces to positions held before 5 August 1965, to restore diplomatic relations and to discuss economic matters, the refugee problem, and other issues. The agreement was criticized in India because it did not contain a no-war pact or any renunciation of guerrilla aggression in Kashmir<sup>16</sup> and in Pakistan because people had been made to believe that Pakistan had actually relinquished its gains in the war through the Tashkent Agreement.

### ***The 1971 War and Beyond: A Defining Time in Pakistan-India Relations***

After the Partition of 1947, the bitterest experience in Pakistan-India relations is the 1971 war that resulted in the dismemberment of Pakistan and the creation of Bangladesh. This war proved to be a traumatic experience for Pakistanis.

After the 1970 general elections, the East and West wings of Pakistan became highly polarized. In West Pakistan, the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), led by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, swept the elections, with a clear victory securing eighty-one seats, without winning a single seat in East Pakistan.

On the other hand, in East Pakistan, the Awami League (AL) led by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman won so comprehensively that it secured a clear majority in the National Assembly consisting of 300 seats by securing 160 seats, but unfortunately, ending up with no seats at all in West Pakistan. Thus, the stage was set for a clash, which only statesmanship and a spirit of compromise could have prevented. The failure of both to compromise, coupled with both overt and covert Indian interference, resulted in the break-up of Pakistan. In this connection, the failure of the ruling elite led by General Yahya Khan to bring about a compromise between the two leaders cannot be excused.

The Indian government decided to intervene in the struggle. On 29 March 1971, the Indian parliament passed a resolution supporting the people of East Pakistan in their 'struggle for the transfer of power to their legally-elected representatives'. The parliament expressed confidence that ... 'the historic upsurge of 75 million people of East Bengal will triumph. This resolution represented a change in Indian policy toward Pakistan. Previously, India had respected the unity of Pakistan in order to protect her own unity, which had been also threatened by regional factions and demands for autonomy.'<sup>17</sup>

Recent revelations make it clear that the Indian government's interference in Pakistan's internal affairs was initially covert but later became overt as well. In fact, the Indian intelligence agency, Research & Analysis Wing (RAW), takes credit for 'the creation of Bangladesh in 1971'. The passage, written by B. Raman, a former RAW official, in his book *The Kaoboy of R&AW: Down Memory Lane*, is revealing.

RAW had two priorities after its formation. ... The organization worked to strengthen its capability for intelligence gathering on Pakistan and China and for covert action in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). Some experts say that RAW's efforts in East Pakistan, which was created from the partition of the Indian state of Bengal and completely separated from the rest of Pakistan, was aimed at fomenting independence sentiment.<sup>18</sup>

In July 1972 India and Pakistan signed the Simla Accord. The Accord, besides paving way for the release of Pakistani Prisoners of War (POW) redefined the Line of Control (LoC)<sup>19</sup> in Kashmir with minor deviations, following the same path as the Karachi Agreement's CFL (Ceasefire Line). The Simla Agreement also called on both sides to respect the LoC 'without prejudice to the recognized position of either side', prohibited either side from unilaterally altering the LoC, and bound both countries 'to refrain from threat or the use of force in violation of this Line'.<sup>20</sup> The results of the 1971 war authenticated the Pakistani perception, particularly of the Pakistan Army, that India was out to destroy Pakistan's integrity.

### ***Near-War Crises***

A discussion of all-out wars between Pakistan and India is not enough; the fact that Pakistan and India have faced near-war situations several times is a testament of the level of hostilities present.

Three crises are worth mentioning because of their potential for igniting hostilities between the two countries. The first is India's 'Brasstacks' military manoeuvres (1986–87), resulting in a Pakistani 'counter-move'. The second occurred in 1990, during increased turmoil and a massive uprising in Indian-held Kashmir, when Pakistan and India moved forces to the border. The third and the most recent was the 2001–02 Indian troop mobilization after a terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament in New Delhi.

The international context of Pakistan-India crises cannot be ignored. These 'crises took place in the context of three different international environments: (a) for Brasstacks, the backdrop was the Cold War; (b) for the 1990 and Kargil conflicts, it was the immediate post-Cold-War period; and (c) for the border confrontation crisis, it was the post-9/11 altered world scenario. Did the shifting international environment have a direct bearing on these crises? Specifically, were they connected in any way with USA's altering relations? In 1987, Washington was a close ally of Pakistan, but by 1990 it had distanced itself from the region. Then in 1999, after the nuclear tests, it began a new rapprochement with India, and by 2001–02, it again saw Islamabad as an important ally, this time in the 'War on Terror'.<sup>21</sup> The role of the international community is an integral part for understanding how these crises panned out in reality.

### ***Operation Brasstacks***

Since the 1971 war, India and Pakistan never came so close to a war than in 1986–87, when Indian armed forces started 'Operation Brasstacks', their largest military exercise in history. Brasstacks was India's code name for massive military manoeuvres near Pakistan's border from November 1986 to January 1987. The scale of the manoeuvres and Pakistan's response in deploying its troops near the border raised the spectre of war in both countries.<sup>22</sup>

It was perceived by Pakistan as a threat. Islamabad reacted by moving its troops to the border. This became a near-war crisis and accelerated the nuclear programme of both the countries.<sup>23</sup> Pakistan retaliated in a way by moving two strike corps to a position from where they could easily target India's Punjab which was already facing internal militancy by the Sikhs.<sup>24</sup> 'India assessed these moves as defensive and precautionary until the Army Reserve South (ARS) crossed the Sutlej River from its southern to its northern bank in second week of January 1987 and stationed itself facing the Indian cities of Bhatinda and Ferozpur.<sup>25</sup> The Indians, alarmed at this move, responded by mounting 'Operation Trident' to strengthen its borders in order to defend any move by Pakistan to detach a part of its Punjab territory or to disrupt its communication with Jammu and Kashmir.<sup>26</sup> Tensions further mounted when on 18 January 1987, Indian Minister of State Defence, Arun Singh, and the Indian Chief of Army Staff, General Krishnaswami Sundarji, in a meeting briefed the Indian press that war, if not imminent, was at least quite possible.<sup>27</sup> I later on met General Sundarji in Lahore in connection with a Track-II Pakistan-India dialogue. It is an

interesting phenomenon that generals in both Pakistan and India tend to become peacemakers, if not actually peaceniks, after their retirement. This could be perhaps because they know more than the civilians about the destructive potential of war, both for the fighting men, who are the first casualties of war, as well as for the countries on whose behalf they are fighting. 'The United States, for one, stepped forward as it was deeply concerned about the prospect of war between an ally, Pakistan, and a new-found friend, India, and about the pace of the region's nuclear programmes.'<sup>28</sup> The crisis lasted three months and ended when the leadership of both the countries had a direct contact with each other in which they decided to withdraw the forces from the border.<sup>29</sup>

### ***The Kashmir Crisis, 1990***

After an uprising in the Indian Administered Kashmir (IAK), a tense situation on Pakistan-India border was created, according to some experts, with a potential for a nuclear crisis.<sup>30</sup> Before I go into the details, I would like to refer to my conversation on this subject with Mr I. K. Gujral, former Prime Minister of India, who at the time of the crisis that erupted in Kashmir in 1990, was India's Minister External Affairs.

On a visit to Delhi, before assuming the office of Foreign Minister, I met with I. K. Gujral. Gujral told me of an incident which happened while he was Minister External Affairs in the Government of Prime Minister V. P. Singh. He told me that one day he received a call from Sahabzada Yaqub Khan, then Foreign Minister of Pakistan, who said to him that he would like to visit Delhi and meet with him. Gujral Sahib told me that Yaqub Khan (who happens to be my mother's cousin) and he were posted as Ambassadors to Moscow at the same time and got to know each other well. He was, therefore, looking forward to Sahabzada Yaqub Khan's visit. Immediately after his arrival Yaqub Khan went into a meeting with Gujral. After it was over Gujral said to me that he was taken aback by Yaqub Khan's remarks. Not going into the details of their conversation, Gujral told me that he asked Sahabzada Yaqub if he was '*delivering a threat*'. Yaqub Khan did not directly respond to this but indicated to Gujral that he would like a reply immediately and that he was under instructions from Islamabad to come back as soon as he received the Indian response. According to Gujral, an emergency meeting of the Indian Cabinet was called to discuss Pakistan's message delivered by Sahabzada Yaqub Khan. This was all that Gujral told me and I became intrigued. Hence, on my return to Islamabad, I confirmed with Sahabzada Yaqub Khan regarding his conversation with Gujral. Yaqub Khan did not deny the thrust of Gujral sahib's account, although, he, like Gujral, hesitated in delving more and remained diplomatically silent.

Several years later I decided to get some background information regarding this incident from Tanvir Ahmad Khan, Director of the Institute of Strategic Studies in Islamabad, who was Foreign Secretary of Pakistan in 1990, at the time when this crisis erupted. According to him, India had started amassing troops on the border. There was a large troop deployment in the Haji Pir sector and there was a danger that they might lunge across the

border. They (Indians) were threatening Muzaffarabad. A counter-deployment was organized by the Pakistan Army in Sialkot. India responded by deploying its troops on the Sialkot and the Rajasthan borders.

The US and European Union took active interest in diffusing the situation and the US Ambassador, Robert Oakley, monitored the situation very closely and made feverish attempts to defuse the crisis. Ultimately, a hotline conversation between the Foreign Secretaries (on 25 April 1990 in New York) revived the dialogue between Pakistan and India.<sup>31</sup>

It may be pointed out that Pakistan had earlier leaked through the media that it possessed nuclear capability. This was done through an interview in January 1987 when Mushahid Hussain Syed, then editor (later on a Cabinet Minister) of a leading newspaper, *The Muslim*, introduced Kuldip Nayar, a respected Indian journalist, to Dr A. Q. Khan. According to some scholars, despite the crisis between the two countries, the situation did not move towards conventional warfare and they consider this crisis as a proof of the validity of nuclear deterrence as a security measure in South Asia.<sup>32</sup>

I must confess that I was not just intrigued, but was also a bit surprised and felt that Sahabzada Yaqub Khan, the suave and sophisticated diplomat that he was, would have found it difficult to deliver a blunt 'threat', as Gujral Sahib, himself an extremely sophisticated diplomat, had perceived it. I also thought to myself that maybe something he said could have been misinterpreted as an indirect threat. In the interest of historical accuracy, as I was sending this book to the publishers towards the end of 2014, (twenty-four years after the incident had occurred and almost fourteen years after I. K. Gujral had told me) I decided one last time to try and contact Sahabzada Yaqub Khan and persuade him to talk more on the subject. He does not keep well these days and his wife, Begum Tuba Yaqub Khan, an urbane and sophisticated lady, responded to my phone call. I said she should alert Sahabzada Yaqub that this story was going to appear in the book. She said that she remembered vaguely that Sahabzada Yaqub Khan was upset after the meeting with Gujral. She recollected that Sahabzada Yaqub had told her that he had narrated a couplet from the great Urdu poet Ghalib which may have been misinterpreted by Gujral. When I asked her what the couplet was, she could not recollect. Neither she nor I was interested in further pestering Sahabzada Yaqub Khan on the subject.

### ***The Kargil War***

Kargil was another small war fought between Pakistan and India in the summer of 1999. I was sent as Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's Special Envoy during the Kargil war to explain Pakistan's case. I visited the United Kingdom, Russia, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and Brussels, to meet with EU (European Union) as well as Belgian leaders (earlier, I had been sent as the Prime Minister's Special Envoy after India's nuclear tests in May 1998) to better explain Pakistan's perspective.

The fighting took place in the backdrop of a recently nuclearized South Asia. Since Indian and Pakistani accounts are completely divergent, I am trying to rely on a published, independent source before I give my own views.

The fighting took place near Kargil, a small town about 120 miles from the Kashmiri capital of Srinagar and just east of one of the major passes on the only road between Srinagar and Leh, the principal town in the Ladakh district. The road itself is at an altitude of about 11,000 feet, and the surrounding peaks are upwards of 15,000 feet high.<sup>33</sup> This location gave Kargil immense strategic importance.

Initially, a force of Pakistan Army paramilitaries and ‘mujahideen’, supported by locally recruited porters, occupied the heights dominating the Srinagar-Leh road. Once they were detected, New Delhi mounted a counter-offensive that escalated into an intense battle involving artillery, infantry, and some air-to-ground action. This action continued until July, when Pakistan made a US-brokered announcement that it was withdrawing its troops from their forward positions.<sup>34</sup>

India had quietly occupied the Siachen area in 1984 in violation of the Simla Agreement which stated that,

In Jammu and Kashmir the ‘Line of Control’ (LoC) resulting from the ceasefire of 17 December 1971 shall be respected by both sides without prejudice to the position of either side. Neither side shall seek to alter it unilaterally, irrespective of mutual differences and legal interpretations. Both sides further undertake to refrain from the threat or use of force in violation of this line.

The Siachen Glacier is situated near the north-eastern tip of Baltistan and at the time formed part of Gilgit Agency (now Gilgit-Baltistan). It is the northern-most terminus of the LoC (Point NJ 9842), which was also the terminus of the Ceasefire Line of 1949. Although this area had been controlled and administered by Pakistan, it remained undemarcated and unoccupied because of inaccessibility, until India moved its troops in April 1984.

Despite agreeing to move back from the area in 1989 and 1992, India had failed to honour its agreements. The Indian backtracking here and generally on Kashmir greatly troubles Pakistan, and its strategic planners often cannot reconcile with this. It was in this backdrop that the Kargil operations were undertaken. The short war on Kargil still arouses a lot of passion in Pakistan among political circles. President Pervez Musharraf’s opponents allege that Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif had been kept completely in the dark, and the Kargil operation effectively sabotaged the effort that had begun following Prime Minister Vajpayee’s famous bus journey to Lahore in February 1999 on Nawaz Sharif’s invitation. Others, however, dispute this version. In an interview with an Indian magazine, Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, then Interior Minister, recalled attending a meeting before 17 May 1999 where the Prime Minister was briefed about Kargil. According to him, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif wanted to move on both tracks and was not so interested in Kargil as much

as in getting his name associated with the success in Kashmir.<sup>35</sup> Although there is a general feeling that a briefing was given, Nawaz Sharif's supporters maintain that even if such a briefing did take place, it was deliberately kept vague and confusing and, thus, perhaps he did not understand the full import of the briefing. Some even say that the briefing was given, but *after and not before* the Kargil Operation had been launched. God alone knows the truth.

President Pervez Musharraf has stated on many occasions that Kargil highlighted the need to find a solution to the Kashmir dispute. While he can argue that Kargil may have facilitated the movement that took place in the direction of finding a solution to the Kashmir issue,<sup>36</sup> I feel that Kargil isolated Pakistan and brought international censure upon it as typified by the G-8 statement of 20 June 1999 calling 'infiltration of armed intruders' by Pakistan in Kargil as 'irresponsible'. Washington asked Pakistan to withdraw its forces and 'restore status quo ante'. The European Union (EU) called for the immediate withdrawal of infiltrators. China called on both sides to respect the LoC. Only the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) backed Pakistan's position.

The reason that Kargil gained international significance was primarily because both countries had acquired nuclear capabilities. 'Nuclear weapons played a significant role in this crisis, largely through threat and bluster, and the latent threat (sometimes made explicit) ensured intense and widespread coverage in the world's press.'<sup>37</sup> Soon, the Air Force and Navy also got involved. At that point, diplomatic channels were opened up, but talks progressed at a very slow pace. India and Pakistan agreed to hold talks on 12 June, with Pakistan proposing the UN observation and India predictably disagreeing. This entire crisis, the 'sub-critical' Kargil war of 1999, had nuclear connotations.<sup>38</sup>

This confrontation is significant in another sense as well; a 'secret channel had been established with special envoys R. K. Mishra, a journalist in the confidence of Prime Minister Vajpayee, and Niaz A. Naik, a former Pakistani Foreign Secretary, meeting on behalf of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, travelling to Pakistan and India, respectively, in an attempt to find a solution. Prime Ministers Sharif and Vajpayee also activated the hotline, holding at least three telephone conversations on it.'<sup>39</sup>

### ***The Mumbai Attacks***

**The McCain Episode:** This section is about near-war situations. The Mumbai attacks in November 2008, though truly tragic and gruesome, could not really be called a near-war situation, since neither country moved its armed forces in any menacing or hostile manner. The reason why I am including the Mumbai attacks in this section is the massive scale of the attacks, the huge number of casualties, the international dimension due to casualties belonging to different countries, and last but not the least, due to what I call, the McCain Episode, on which I shall elaborate upon later. All this could have gone horribly wrong with horrendous consequences.

Fortunately, it did not, largely due to the fact that the peace process started in 2004 had advanced a great deal and helped normalize the situation between the two countries. The magnitude of the Mumbai attacks almost put paid to such efforts. There was, however, also a feeling that the new PPP government led by President Asif Ali Zardari, did in fact wish to strengthen relations with India. Additionally, of course, there were nuclear weapons on both sides.

It was a sad day indeed when the tragic attack on Mumbai took place on 26 November 2008, delivering a heavy blow to the peace process between Pakistan and India, which we had so diligently pursued. Shah Mahmood Qureshi, Pakistan's Foreign Minister in the new PPP government, who succeeded me, was present in India in connection with the Composite Dialogue when the attacks took place, in what seemed like a calculated attempt to sabotage the visit and the process itself. I was reminded of a similar situation on the eve of my own visit to India when the Samjhauta Express blast occurred in which there were many casualties, most of whom were Pakistanis visiting their relatives in India. The accused in that instance ultimately turned out to be Hindu extremists in India.<sup>40</sup> I was advised to cancel my visit after the Samjhauta Express blasts. I refused, since that would encourage terrorists by raising their morale and into believing that they had succeeded in sabotaging my visit.

As a result of the four-day siege in Mumbai, at least 160 people died and 293 were injured, many of them severely. The outrage in India was understandable. In Pakistan, sympathy for the victims was widespread. There was immediate and strong condemnation of the attacks by President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gillani as well as by the leaders of mainstream political parties. We instantly understood that the perpetrators wished to wreck the peace process. Many incidents in Kashmir, India and Pakistan had taken place before important diplomatic visits to the subcontinent by important foreign visitors, including the 'Chattisinghpura Massacre' which took place on the eve of President Bill Clinton's visit to India, and other incidents during the visits of Pakistani leaders to India or by Indian leaders to Pakistan.

This unfortunate incident had an international dimension as well. The dead and injured victims included nationals from almost twenty-five countries including those from the United States, Germany, Israel, Australia, Canada, France, and Britain. Additionally, this attack was on a totally different scale. Terrorists held Mumbai hostage for four days straight. Both Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and the then Opposition leader L. K. Advani, displayed great restraint, despite the pressure they were under, and did not directly implicate the Government of Pakistan. This was obviously due to the great progress that had been made in the peace process during our tenure which ended in November 2007. In a televised address Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said India would 'go after' individuals and organizations behind the terrorist attacks, which were 'well-planned with external linkages ...' In addition, 'the attacks were intended to create a sense

of panic by choosing high-profile targets and indiscriminately killing of innocent foreigners'. The leader of the Opposition, L. K. Advani, asked the people of India to stay united during this emergency. He also said, 'We will take the strongest possible measures to ensure that there is no repetition of such terrorist acts.'

Now I come to the McCain Episode. I had ceased being Pakistan's Foreign Minister in November 2007. Almost a year later, I received a message in Lahore, where I live, from the office of the Principal Officer of the US Consulate that Senator John McCain, who had remained in the headlines all over the world for many months as the Republican Presidential Candidate for the upcoming 2008 elections, was visiting Lahore. I knew that Senator McCain was a highly regarded individual in the US and outside. I was told to come a bit early because he and other members of the delegation wished to discuss something with me and that he would be accompanied by Senator Lindsey Graham, a senior and influential Republican Senator who has been a Ranking Member as well as a Member of many committees of the US Senate. At that time he was Member of the Select Committee on Intelligence. I was also informed that the two Senators will be accompanied by Richard Holbrooke, US Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan. It almost gave the impression of being a bipartisan delegation since Holbrooke was a supporter of the Democratic Party and had been nominated to his office by President Barack Obama and was considered to be very close to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

My experience told me that this was as high-powered a delegation as it could be. I was informed that it would be a small and quiet lunch and I instinctively understood that there must be something important that they wished to discuss with me. I have a vague memory that I saw a few others when lunch was served. Before lunch, however, the two senators, Richard Holbrooke and I sat in a corner for a quiet chat. They said that they were coming from India and there was a feeling of complete outrage and that something needed to be done to release the pressure (I assumed on the Government of India). They said unless some dramatic action was taken, all the good work that had been done during our tenure on Pakistan-India peace process will be wasted. I was waiting for the punch line and it didn't take long to come. To my consternation, Senator McCain wanted to know from me, in view of my experience, both as former Foreign Minister and as a politician, what the reaction of the Pakistan Army and the public at large would be, if there was a limited air raid on Muridke, the headquarters of the Lashkar-e-Taiba and its political wing, Jamaatud Dawaah (JUD). The Indians strongly believed that the JUD on orders of Lashkar-e-Taiba's leader Hafiz Saeed was responsible for the Mumbai atrocities.

I was horrified at the mere suggestion and said to the two Senators, with Holbrooke keenly listening, that this would result in public outrage. I was certain beyond doubt that the response of the Pakistan Army would be immediate, though measured, and commensurate to the raid at Muridke. I have no doubt in my mind that such a suggestion could not have come without their sounding out people at the highest level in India before their visit to Pakistan. I further told them that they needed to be sensitive to the history of South Asia,

and in many instances it is the gut reaction which determines how people act in a given situation. I gave them the example of India's nuclear tests in May 1998. I said Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was under great pressure from the international community, particularly the Americans, not to respond to India's nuclear tests. In fact, he was given many incentives, including by President Clinton, to desist from going through with the nuclear tests. I informed them that the common wisdom on the street was '*ya Nawaz bum pharayga—ya bum usko pharayga*'! (either Nawaz will detonate the bomb—if he doesn't, he will be detonated himself!). I did, however, tell the Senators that since I was out of office, they needed to discuss this matter with somebody currently in power in Islamabad and even better, sound out the Pakistan Army, either directly or through their contacts. I do not know whether they broached the subject or not with anyone in Islamabad.

I have not spoken about this publicly before, because I felt it could have been misinterpreted and have a negative impact on Pak-US relations. I am mentioning it now to underline how quickly things can go horribly wrong and out of control for both the governments if the activities of non-state actors are not strictly curbed.

I did realize that Senator McCain was a Republican and did not represent the elected Democratic Obama Administration. He very well could have been speaking for himself because he was the one who broached the subject while Richard Holbrooke, who did represent the Obama Administration as Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, kept quiet for the duration that this idea was being discussed. I think this was probably to provide him with a 'plausible deniability' which diplomats often employ. He could always say that he had nothing to do with this idea and that he was merely accompanying senior Congressional leaders.

After the lunch was over, I thought it necessary to immediately ring General Hamid Javed, who had been the liaison between the army and the entire presidency during my tenure, knowing that he will pass on this information not just to General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, who was the Director General, Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), during our time and the Chief of Army Staff at the time of the attacks, but to other relevant people also. I told him about what I was asked, and also that they were coming to Islamabad. If my memory serves me well, I also rang General Kayani directly.

I was genuinely afraid that once an attack, however limited, took place, and once a response, however measured, was given, nobody could predict how the situation would evolve. There was no guarantee that a tit-for-tat response would soothe feelings on either side. Once the media and politicians got into the act, the situation could easily spiral out of control. Elsewhere in the book, I have discussed the Cold Start Doctrine advocated by some in India as a way to neutralize nuclear parity in South Asia, and the thinking among some strategists in Pakistan to develop a battlefield tactical nuclear weapons in response.

Although, bomb blasts have unfortunately continued in Pakistan and India, nothing as catastrophic as the Mumbai blasts have taken place. I have pointed out in another place in

the book that non-state actors have caused huge damage to Pakistan itself and that such groups have transnational linkages, as is evident from the happenings in the Middle East. Luckily, the Pakistan Army, under General Raheel Sharif, has taken massive action in North Waziristan where terrorists have been chased out of their safe havens and their infrastructure destroyed.

**Unexpected Upshot of the Meeting:** Another upshot of the lunch was the up gradation of the Principal Office of the US Consulate to the status of Consulate General. It was an unexpected result of my discussions with Richard Holbrooke prior to the lunch. He had not spoken when Senator McCain was broaching his idea of the raid with me. Now it was Holbrooke's turn. He began by talking about Pakistan's complaints against Indian efforts to encourage acts of terrorism in Federally-Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Balochistan through its Consulates in Jalalabad, Kandahar, and elsewhere. Wanting to draw my reaction, Holbrooke said there was nothing new in these Consulates and that they had been there since the British times. I instantly responded that a lot had changed since then, including the fact that Lahore no longer had a British Deputy High Commission, which it had maintained for many years after Independence but shut it down for reasons of financial constraints. Its functions were handed over to multifarious British organizations in Lahore (there are reports now of Britain having decided to reopen its Deputy High Commission in Lahore again). I added that as a seasoned diplomat, he obviously knew that countries continue to upgrade, downgrade, open or close down Consulates in certain locations depending, in most cases, on their commercial value to the country concerned. I asked, what commercial purpose or community assistance could Indian Consulates in Jalalabad and Kandahar serve since there was hardly any trade originating from there or presence of Indian citizens in the area. I gave examples of Pakistan, United States, and Britain where we had been closing down redundant Consulates and establishing new ones that were largely based on commercial and political interests. The political aspect was by and large taken care of by the Embassy or the High Commission in the relevant country's capital. Moreover, I informed them that, although currently there were five or six Consulates of Pakistan operating in the United States, they mainly looked after the large Pakistani diaspora living in the US. I informed Holbrooke that even the United States, with their massive financial resources, had downgraded the US Consulate General's office in Lahore in the last few years to that of Principal Office of the US Consulate. I pointed out that the office we were having lunch in used to be the office of the Consul General but had been downgraded a few years ago. On hearing this, Richard Holbrooke almost jumped out of his seat and exclaimed, 'Did this mean that the US office in Lahore was not a full-fledged Consulate General?' I responded that surely India does not possess greater financial resources than US or Britain, yet India maintains its Consulates in Jalalabad, Kandahar, and other cities. Furthermore, according to the reports of Pakistan's Intelligence Agencies, these Consulates were being used for encouraging acts of terrorism in Pakistan.<sup>41</sup> At this point I noticed that Holbrooke had lost interest in my argument. He had

taken a notebook out and was jotting something down. Sometime later, I received an invitation from the US Consul General in Lahore. I could not help but smile when he informed me that immediate steps were being taken to upgrade the Principal Office of the US Consulate into a Consulate General. Subsequently, when I met the US Consul General, I said to her that they should be grateful to me for being instrumental in having their office upgraded. I could not help but admire Holbrooke's hands-on approach towards problems and the speed with which he acted once he had made up his mind.

## **MY INTERACTIONS WITH THE PAKISTAN ARMY GENERALS**

I do not claim to be a scholar on the Pakistan Army, and my account in this section is primarily based on my first-hand experience of dealing with some of the senior-most army officers. Besides, I regularly addressed officers at the National Defence University in Islamabad and at the Staff College, Quetta. On many occasions I faced lengthy question-answer sessions from officers from all the three forces: the Pakistan Army, Pakistan Navy, and Pakistan Air Force. Very rarely indeed did I face hostile questions towards the ongoing peace process towards India. As Foreign Minister, I have also attended meetings of the Formation Commanders. Before I proceed to write of my experiences and observations about the Pakistan Army, it may be pertinent to mention some of the people I got to know well during my tenure as Foreign Minister.

Among the Army Chiefs, I came to know General Mirza Aslam Beg after his retirement, when he was trying to form a political party. The others included General Jehangir Karamat and of course General Pervez Musharraf and General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani. All of them were thorough professionals. Although, I did find General Aslam Beg to be emotional at times. For example, I did not agree with General Beg's policy of 'strategic defiance' as it panned out during the First Gulf War when he openly spoke of supporting Saddam Hussein, while Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and the entire political leadership of the country sided with Saudi Arabia that was fearing an attack from Saddam. I admit that as a lay person, I am not in a position to grasp the full significance of his military doctrine (strategic defiance).

**General Jehangir Karamat:** I know him well. He served as our Ambassador to the United States when I was Foreign Minister. General Jehangir Karamat is a cerebral general and has a reputation of being very professional. After retirement he founded the 'Spearhead Research', a think tank based in Lahore. It works in collaboration with reputed international think tanks. It brings out analyses of current topics regularly and some of its core concerns include issues such as 'counter terrorism, extremism, Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), conflict prevention and resolution, economic and political stability, human security, human resource development, miscellaneous issues of social concern and various facets of internal security'.<sup>42</sup> I have always found their analyses balanced, reasoned, and well researched. I do not have to write about General Pervez Musharraf

here, about whom innumerable references are scattered in the book. Furthermore, there is an entire section in this chapter regarding my relationship with President Musharraf.

**General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani:** I found General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, who served as Army Chief from 2007–13, supportive of the peace process at a time when maximum progress was made in improving relations with India. Since he held key positions in the army for nine long years, three years as DG-ISI during my tenure; and six years as Chief of Army Staff, it may be pertinent to make a few observations about him.

Kayani is a good listener and enjoys smoking. His way of obtaining President Pervez Musharraf's permission to smoke was to walk up to him and offer him a cigarette. He did that frequently before making an important intervention. Taciturn by nature, he speaks only when necessary and is private about his thoughts. Nevertheless, General Kayani must be credited for making a positive contribution in arriving at the aforementioned framework on Kashmir.

I gained insight into his personality during a meeting on the issue of the President's uniform. The issue related to the question whether President Pervez Musharraf should contest the next presidential election in uniform or as a civilian. The President desired to contest the election in military uniform which had been legally challenged. The meeting to discuss this issue was attended by top political leaders and military officers. The military officers did not give any comments. This could be so, perhaps because they may have been consulted earlier on this issue. I was the only one out of the politicians at the meeting who advised the President to shed his uniform and contest as a civilian. After the meeting was over, while we were waiting for our cars, General Kayani shook my hand and said quietly: 'Sir, you were absolutely right.'

I also found that there has been a hardening of the stance towards terrorism among the senior ranks of the Pakistan Army. It was General Kayani who first stated that 'internal threat is greater than an external one' clearly indicating that the threat of terrorists was greater than the one posed by India. This was a major statement from the Pakistan Army that had been trained to fight the Indian threat. In his speech on 14 August 2012 at the 'Azadi Parade' General Kayani stated,

[I]t becomes blatant extremism when one not only insists upon finality of personal opinion, but tries imposing it on others. More so, if one tries to enforce his opinion through the use of the gun, it becomes terrorism ... if this is the correct definition of extremism and terrorism, then the war against it is our own war, and a just war too. Any misgivings in this regards can divide us internally, leading to a civil war situation. It is therefore, vital that our minds must be clear of cobwebs on this crucial issue.<sup>43</sup>

On another occasion General Kayani and I had to car-pool in Saudi Arabia during a presidential visit. He was far more communicative, and said to me that one of his bosses, Lt General Ali Kuli Khattak, always spoke with affection about me, and through Ali Kuli he had already got to know me!

***Lt General Ali Kuli Khattak:*** I am writing about Lt General Ali Kuli Khattak here because although he did not hold the post of Chief of Army Staff (COAS), he was seriously considered for it. Also, Ali and I have been friends since our days at Government College, Lahore. Later, his brother Raza Kuli Khattak and I were in England together as students and we became lifelong friends. When President Musharraf was appointed as Chief of Army Staff, it was Lt General Ali Kuli Khattak who was his primary competitor. It is indeed ironical that I was appointed Foreign Minister by the same man who was a competitor of my friend, and with whom I developed cordial relations, and who created conducive conditions for me to operate effectively as the Foreign Minister of Pakistan.

I am also close to Ali Kuli's sister Zeb who is married to Gohar Ayub, General Ayub Khan's son. It was because of this connection that I always called Gohar Ayub Khan, 'Gohar Bhai'. In fact I remember the rain-swept parade grounds at Sandhurst where I was the only Pakistani to clap for Ali Kuli Khattak on that rainy and cloudy day when he was declared the 'Best Overseas Cadet' at Sandhurst. These days the 'Best Overseas Cadet', is also awarded the 'Sword of Honour'. Ali is the only cadet from Pakistan to have ever been made the Senior Under Officer. When Ali was not appointed Chief of Army Staff, people compared his fate to that of his father, Lt General Habibullah Khan, who, despite being under serious consideration for this slot (at that time Commander-in-Chief of the Pakistan Army), was overlooked by President Field Marshal Mohammad Ayub Khan in favour of General Mohammad Musa, a Hazara from Balochistan, despite the fact that Lt General Habibullah's daughter was married to Gohar Ayub.

***General Ahsan Saleem Hayat:*** General Ahsan was appointed Vice Chief of Army Staff in October 2004. He regularly attended all meetings in connection with the backchannel on Kashmir. President Musharraf made sure that while sitting in that meeting, General Ahsan Saleem Hayat represented the institutional viewpoint of the Pakistan Army. Since Musharraf was wearing 'two hats' (that of President as well as Chief of Army Staff) as he put it, he preferred that General Ahsan Saleem Hayat give his input on behalf of the army on the 'backchannel non-papers' going to and fro between Pakistani and Indian negotiators.

General Hayat was clear-headed, and his views on the role of non-state actors were equally clear. In fact, it was, perhaps, because of such views that he was targeted by the terrorists. He survived an assassination attempt as Commander of the V Corps at Karachi which covers almost the entire Sindh province. Eleven *jawans* (soldiers) embraced martyrdom in the attack that he survived. He strongly supported a negotiated settlement on Jammu and Kashmir along the contours being discussed by the backchannel negotiators.

***General Raheel Sharif:*** I do not personally know General Raheel Sharif but I do know his immediate boss and Corps Commander, Lahore, Lt General Shafaatullah Shah when General Raheel was commanding a division at Lahore. General Shafaatullah spoke of General Raheel Sharif as being a straightforward no-nonsense soldier with a professional

outlook. Moreover, General Raheel and General Shafaatullah shared a similar world view. This is amply borne out by General Raheel's tough approach towards the non-state actors.

Lt General Shafaatullah Shah's assessment of General Raheel Sharif, who succeeded General Kayani, seemed to be borne out by his actions since he took over as COAS in November 2013. There is a growing perception that, although, General Kayani first highlighted the threat from internal terrorism, General Raheel Sharif has adopted a more focused and muscular approach towards it. For example, after every incident of terrorism, the Pakistan Army, Army Aviation, and the Pakistan Air Force have conducted surgical strikes against terrorist hideouts in Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) on the borders of Afghanistan. In a landmark speech delivered on the 'Martyr's Day', on 30 April 2014, Chief of Army Staff General Raheel Sharif, declared unequivocally that, while the armed forces would prefer a peaceful resolution, the terrorists had to lay down their arms and come within the ambit of the law and the constitution, failing which would result in strong action against them.<sup>44</sup> This action has since been taken and a full-fledged operation in North Waziristan, 'Zarb-e-Azb', has been launched; terrorists have largely been chased out of their safe havens in North Waziristan and their infrastructure destroyed. This has been coupled with intelligence based operations in Karachi, and in some other parts of the country to go after their sympathizers and supporters hiding in civilian areas.

**Generals on the Presidential Staff:** Lt General Hamid Javed as Chief of Staff to the President attended all the meetings of the in-house committee dealing with the backchannel and supported the ongoing peace process with India. Before assuming this office, he was Chairman of the Heavy Industries Complex at Taxila and it was under his supervision that Pakistan's famous *Al-Khaled* tank was developed and manufactured.

Lt General Shafaatullah Shah (then Major General) sometimes attended meetings of the backchannel on Kashmir, as did Lt General Shafqaat Ahmed (then Major General) and Lt General Nadeem Taj (then Major General) as Military Secretaries to the President. Lt General Nadeem Taj later on commanded the Gujranwala Corps. He also served as Director General, Military Intelligence and Director General, ISI. Lt General Shafqaat Ahmed commanded the Multan Corps and was President Musharraf's Military Secretary, till I left office. I found them supportive of the peace process. This does not turn them into 'doves'; instead it shows that they are 'realists' who understand where Pakistan's core national interests lie.

### **'From North Waziristan to Karachi!'**

President Pervez Musharraf himself could, by no stretch of the imagination, be described as a 'peacenik', but he was bright and pragmatic enough to realize that Pakistan had to change with the changing ground realities, more so after 9/11. Equally, if not more importantly, from Pakistan's perspective was the widespread realization in Pakistan that the 'chickens had come home to roost' and that Pakistan's policies in Afghanistan

following the Soviet Union's invasion of that country had cost it dearly. I have already mentioned in the section, 'Framework for a Kashmir Settlement' in the previous chapter that we had opened centres to wean militants away through DDR (De-radicalization, Disengagement, and Rehabilitation) who were engaged in crossing the LoC from Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK). This was done to enable them to be readjusted into society.

This has been described in detail in that section and does not require repetition here. There was widespread realization that the terrorists spared no one: neither Pakistan's security forces nor its innocent civilians. I clearly remember, attending a high-level meeting discussing the need for launching an operation 'from North Waziristan to Karachi'. This was the first time that I ever heard the expression, 'from North Waziristan to Karachi'. Since I left office towards the end of 2007, I can only attribute the delay in the operation that was finally launched by General Raheel Sharif to the disarray and lack of focus by the government that followed ours. It would appear from my account that those I dealt with supported the peace process with India. This does not mean that there were none who may have disagreed with the policy that we pursued within the ranks of the military. It is, however, my firm conviction that they would constitute a small minority among the senior officers. There are of course individual differences of opinions in the military, as among civilians. My point is that the *institutional view*, as represented by senior officers that I came across, was in favour of a solution of the Kashmir dispute on a just and fair basis. It should not surprise anyone that these officers thought the way they did, since President Musharraf, as the Chief of the Army Staff (COAS), had a major input in their promotions. It was natural for him to promote those who shared his world view. This again further underlines the importance of the individual holding the office of the Chief of the Army staff since his world view, besides the professional competence, definitely, affects the type of officers that he promotes to higher ranks.

The two other four-star generals that I came to know during my tenure as Foreign Minister are General Tariq Majeed and General Ehsan ul Haq. Both of them have served as Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee. In spite of their shared military background, they had their own distinct personalities and traits, temperaments, attitudes, and views.

I found General Kayani's approach during backchannel negotiations with India more accommodating, while General Ehsan ul Haq's was slightly less so. Similarly, Lt General Javed Ashraf Qazi, former DG-ISI, was my Cabinet colleague. His world view could not be more different than that of his predecessor, Lt General Javed Nasir, 'during whose tenure strange non-military atmosphere prevailed at the ISI'.<sup>45</sup> Interestingly, Lt General Rizwan Akhtar (whom I do not know, and who has recently taken over as DG-ISI) according to newspaper reports, in 2008, had argued that peace between Pakistan and India was imperative in the broader regional picture, calling for the country to 'aggressively pursue rapprochement with India'. In a research report for his Masters degree at the US Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, on 'US-Pakistan

trust deficit and the war on terror', Lt General Akhtar had argued that peaceful relations with India not only improved regional stability but would also alleviate international concerns.<sup>46</sup> The point that I am trying to make is that my impression was different from the stereotypical image, based on negative propaganda in sections of the international media, of Pakistani generals being trigger-happy and irresponsible in their attitudes towards India.

In an army, as large as the Pakistan Army, it would be surprising not to find some senior officers who had a more hard-line attitude towards India than others. It also depends on a particular period of time, as well as ground realities that influences and determines attitudes. For example, after and during the Afghan 'Jihad', General Zia ul-Haq did promote officers with a certain bent of mind. After 9/11, Pakistan was compelled to realign its policies in consonance with those of the international community. This led to the promotion of a different type of officers to higher ranks, during the period when President Pervez Musharraf was in charge in his capacity as COAS.

This phenomenon was no different from the attitude of Foreign Service officers. For example, when I assumed office, some Foreign Service officers harboured a relatively harder stance towards India. As time passed, and as it became clear, that I had President Musharraf's backing, and that I was going to stay on as Foreign Minister, and also that I had a different attitude and world view for which I was prepared to stick my neck out, the situation began to change. I was pleasantly surprised to find that some Foreign Service officers, who would previously keep silent at meetings, now started speaking openly of the need for Pakistan to adopt a more pragmatic policy. I have written about the views of the officers as expressed in 'The Envoys' Conferences' in a different section in the previous chapter. The evolution of views among our senior Foreign Service officers became more pronounced. Like the Army, the Foreign Service is also composed of thorough professionals who cannot but take note of the changing international scenario and realize the need to tailor policies to better serve the interests of Pakistan.

Another point which is interesting about the Pakistan Army is the total obedience of the entire army to the command of the COAS. One COAS, General Asif Nawaz Janjua, whom I did not know personally (although his daughter Aneela and her husband Dr Salman Shah, who was also my cabinet colleague, are family friends), is reported to have light-heartedly (or maybe even half seriously!) commented on the power that the Army Chief wields in the Pakistan Army. He said no one should underestimate the power of a COAS who, with the mere wagging of his '*chichi*', (little finger in Punjabi), can make more than 600,000 men sway from left to right and right to left. Ironically, he was another COAS that Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif could not get along with.

## **Relationship of the Army and Political Governments**

I strongly believe that the army should be subservient to the civilian authority. This is not only in the national interest, but also in the long-term institutional interest of the army itself. It is, however, necessary to point out that politicians in Asian countries, expecting total control over the military in the Westminster, European, or North American traditions of civilian dominance, must understand that, unless they are able to deliver, make their governance totally transparent and their personal integrity above board, there will be attempts to place some restraint on their unchecked authority. Nature abhors a vacuum and if there is a vacuum in the political system the army more often than not tends to fill it. This has been witnessed in recent years in Egypt, Thailand, and other countries. In developed countries where there are strong civil institutions and a parliament that is sensitive to public needs, the military cannot dare to defy the civilian government. The example of Turkey is particularly important for a country like Pakistan, because of the almost similar roles that the armies of the two countries have played in their polities, although for different empirical reasons. Despite the important role that the Turkish Army has historically played in the affairs of the Turkish Republic ever since it was founded by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan has dismissed several generals on charges of plotting against his government. This, however, happened after he delivered unprecedented economic growth, raised the level of Turkish institutions so as to make them compatible with European Union's entry standards, transforming Turkey from being the 'sick man of Europe' to one of the best performing economies in that continent. Interestingly though, even in Turkey, as corruption allegations (justified or unjustified) started surfacing against some government ministers, and for this and other reasons there was public agitation in Turkey, the generals who had been imprisoned were released for one reason or the other.

Civilian Prime Ministers in Pakistan do not understand the power that the armed forces chief wields (for reasons explained). Many a time civilian rulers make the blunder of appointing Army Chiefs who they feel will toe their line and be 'their man'. This was the case with Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto when he handpicked Zia ul-Haq as COAS who was way down on the seniority list. Also, again based on incorrect assumptions, prime ministers have appointed officers from a 'Muhajir' (those whose families migrated to Pakistan from India at the time of Partition) background as COAS. Their premise is that since they don't possess rooted local connections, they will be less 'risky' and more 'manageable'. It is generally believed that one of the reasons that Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif preferred General Musharraf for this slot was this mistaken notion. General Musharraf turned out to be anything but 'manageable' for Nawaz Sharif. Pervez Musharraf turned out to be very much his own man and a diehard believer in the institution of the army. No wonder, when Nawaz Sharif gave orders to the generals to not allow Musharraf's airplane to land when he was returning from Sri Lanka, they did not pay heed to Nawaz's orders. They supported their chief even when he was in the air!

Civilian leaders sometimes fail to understand that discipline and loyalty are so drilled in cadets during their military training, that by the time they become officers, their background does not matter. Ironically, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif also faced great difficulty in getting along with yet another COAS—General Mirza Aslam Beg—who also belonged to a ‘Muhajir’ background.

### **Dixit’s Bombshell!**

It would be fitting to conclude this section by recounting one of the most astonishing moments of my five-year tenure as Foreign Minister. From a hotel in New York, I rang India’s National Security Advisor J. N. Dixit who was also in New York for the September 2004 UNGA session. I had called to protest the Indian Representative’s opposition to Pakistan remaining in the Commonwealth at a meeting of a select group of Commonwealth Foreign Ministers, in light of the fact that President Pervez Musharraf had not yet given up his military uniform. I objected that the Indian Representative’s statement belied the positive spirit of the ongoing bilateral dialogue. Dixit was surprised and assured me that this would not happen again at any other forum. He regretted that the representative in question had not been briefed properly, due to a last-minute change in Indian representation at the meeting. As I was about to hang up, Dixit amazingly remarked that the President should in fact retain his uniform. Without saying so, he implied that the peace process between the two countries had been helped by the President continuing to retain his uniform.

Needless to say, coming as it did from a high-ranking Indian official, I was so stunned by this statement that I was rendered speechless. Not only was this in complete variance with what we had been, at least publicly, told by the leaders of democratic nations, but it was also contrary to my own viewpoint since I had been urging the president to shed his uniform. Sensing that Dixit’s remark might further strengthen the president’s resolve to not part with his uniform, I was reluctant to impart this information to the president. In good conscience, however, I could not withhold it either. Hence, to appease my conscience, I relayed it to the President’s Chief of Staff, General Hamid Javed, who I thought would pass it on to the President in due course. It could well be that not just Dixit but also some other high-level policymakers in India were of the opinion that a powerful President, who was also part of the military, was advantageous for reversing the antagonistic paradigm of relations between India and Pakistan. It is perhaps the same phenomenon that Mani Shankar Aiyar has attempted to explain in his speech quoted below in which he refers to substantial progress that had been made during the tenures of Presidents Ayub Khan, Zia ul-Haq, and Pervez Musharraf (all military men) on Indo-Pak relations. It is pertinent to mention here that while it is true that considerable progress was made during their period on improvement of Indo-Pak relations, their rule also had several negative impacts on Pakistan, particularly, during President Zia ul-Haq’s era. The internal

terrorism that afflicts Pakistan today can largely be traced to the policies that were pursued by General Zia.

### **My Relationship with President Pervez Musharraf and the Issue of My ‘Resignation’**

It was a bleak day indeed for Pakistan when President Pervez Musharraf decided to sack the Chief Justice of Pakistan, Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry, in March 2007. I say this, regardless of the reasons that may have motivated him to take this step. It is doubtless that it had grave consequences for Pakistan. At that time, we were on the cusp of settling many contentious disputes with India. The internal instability following the movement for the restoration of the Chief Justice brought the peace process with India to a sudden halt. It also negatively impacted Pakistan’s economy besides dealing a major blow to its international image.

Prior to his elevation as the Supreme Court Chief Justice, it was commonly known that Iftikhar Chaudhry was close to the President, besides being the senior-most judge. He was elevated amidst rumours that the President had been cautioned by some against his appointment, as his tenure as the Chief Justice would be very long indeed.

I would meet Justice Iftikhar Chaudhry often at official receptions at the *Aiwan-e-Sadr* (President’s House). This was not necessarily the case with his predecessor, Chief Justice Nazim Hussain Siddiqui, whom I hardly saw at such banquets. It could either be that he was not invited to state banquets, or more likely, that he declined invitations due to considerations of judicial propriety.

Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry was friendly towards the president as well as others at the *Aiwan-e-Sadr*’s head table at official banquets. However, soon after his elevation, stories of him being overly protocol conscious began to surface. In fact, according to one popular story, whether true or false, he was extremely incensed at the quality of cars sent to receive him at the Lahore airport. The story gained so much currency that I heard from one of the Foreign Office drivers who, in turn, had heard it from official drivers sent to the Lahore airport to receive the Chief Justice, that he refused to leave the airport and had a message sent through his staff to the Chief Minister’s office that newer, better cars be sent to receive him. Such stories began to multiply. Chief Ministers, Chief Secretaries, and Inspectors General of Police began to lodge their complaints at the Presidency and even to the Prime Minister, about their lives being made a misery by Iftikhar Chaudhry and his ever-increasing demands of protocol.

There were complaints from senior bureaucrats that he interfered in their work. Moreover, he had a habit of summoning them and then making them wait for hours, wasting their productive time. According to many, he would do this to satisfy his inflated ego. Officials posted outside Islamabad complained that a lot of their time was being wasted by being made to travel back and forth to Islamabad, something that had never been done in the past by any Chief Justice. To make matters worse, he ensured that his comments were

made in the presence of the media in order to gain popularity among the masses. In fact, he would delay hearings of important cases until after 11 a.m. to ensure that reporters had arrived at the court to cover the proceedings. Thus, 'trial by the media' became a constant complaint during his tenure. His ego received a further boost during protests for his restoration (that were cashed in by politicians) after his suspension, with the media providing round-the-clock coverage to the protests. Ironically, President Musharraf became the first casualty for not just allowing private channels to function but also permitting cross-corporate ownership between the print and electronic media.

It was in this backdrop that the famous Pakistan Steel Mills case came up for hearing before the Supreme Court. As Pakistan Steel Mills (PSM) had been suffering huge losses for years, the government decided to privatize it after completing the required process. The government was to hand over the PSM to a consortium that had bid successfully for the project. However, interfering in the policymaking domain of the executive (unless of course there are allegations of corruption), which in my opinion, is against the true spirit of the constitutional scheme of trichotomy of powers, the Supreme Court halted the privatization process. The PSM continues to bleed and has become a big ulcer eating away at Pakistan's economy. I cannot calculate what the accumulated losses are to date. Another result of the judgment was the huge setback to the government's plans to privatize other white elephants in the state sector which had caused (and continue to do so) a black hole in Pakistan's economy. The government had planned to privatize a large number of these projects and reinvest the funds in Pakistan's economy. It is estimated that the projects whose privatization would have yielded eight to ten billion dollars to Pakistan's economy were put on hold. There is a strong probability that if this money had come into the kitty, the government that succeeded ours would not have been compelled to go to the IMF (International Monetary Fund), with a cap in hand. Yet another result of this decision was that the additional foreign direct investment that Pakistan was expecting after a successful completion of this privatization process was also diverted to other countries. It is worth pointing out that Pakistan was expecting huge foreign investment and Goldman Sachs had declared Pakistan to be among the N-11, the 'Next Eleven' emerging economies of the world, at that time.

Without getting into the finer legal details of the case, it proved to be the straw that broke the camel's back. The President, who had previously resisted calls to act against him, summoned the Chief Justice to his Camp Office on 9 March 2007 and asked for his resignation in the presence of five generals. When Justice Chaudhry refused, the President suspended him. He invoked Article 209 of the Constitution and forwarded a reference against him to the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC), a body composed of senior-most Judges of the Supreme Court as well as the two senior-most Judges of the Provincial High Courts to hear complaints of judicial misconduct. In the backdrop of an agitation led by Opposition politicians and lawyers, a thirteen-member bench of the Supreme Court, headed by Justice Khalil-ur-Rehman Ramday, did not really let the SJC consider the

reference and set aside the presidential reference against Justice Iftikhar Chaudhry on 20 July 2007, and invalidated his suspension. The Supreme Court hence reinstated him as the Chief Justice of Pakistan.

Iftikhar Chaudhry's removal and subsequent reinstatement as a result of the agitation in which he personally led long motorcades on the Grand Trunk Road passing through main cities along the way, has had major consequences for the institution of the judiciary in Pakistan. A polarizing figure, Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry today has more detractors than admirers even among members of the Bar. Under his stewardship, the Supreme Court essentially turned into a court of public opinion engaged in rampant judicial activism often by arrogating to itself the constitutionally enumerated powers of the other organs of state. By failing to institute meaningful judicial reforms, tailored to address the grievances of ordinary litigants and also as a result of the allegations against his son, his popularity and, unfortunately, the court's prestige gradually declined. The most unfortunate case involved the former Chief Justice taking suo motu notice of even a bottle of wine allegedly found in the luggage of a person considered a supporter of former President Pervez Musharraf. The inevitable backlash to the court's unrestrained exercise of its suo motu powers led Iftikhar Chaudhry's successor, Chief Justice Tassaduq Hussain Jilani, to adopt a corrective approach by restricting its exercise and prudently distancing the court from the media glare. Justice Tassaduq Hussain Jilani was succeeded by Justice Nasir-ul-Mulk who enjoys an impeccable reputation in the legal fraternity. He is also thus far following a policy of judicial restraint. I hope that the Supreme Court continues to fulfil its strictly constitutional role and resists viewing itself as the platonic guardian justifying activist judicial intervention.

Significantly, quite a few blunders were committed by the government itself in its action against the Chief Justice, including the publication of his photograph surrounded by four uniformed generals at the President's Camp Office in Rawalpindi. I told President Musharraf that even though I was the Foreign Minister, I was most upset as a civilian, to see the Chief Justice surrounded by senior generals in what seemed like an attempt to cow him down. Another blunder of Himalayan magnitude was committed when the Chief Justice was shown as being manhandled by a senior police officer in full view of the television cameras. Regardless of the explanations that were offered by the government, notably that the police was only trying to protect the Chief Justice, who insisted on walking with a group of angry lawyers, and that the police wanted him to sit in a car for his own security, a picture as they say is worth a thousand words. But the damage was done. The government lost its case with the masses as soon as the photograph was made public and repeatedly flashed on television. No one was interested in hearing the government's side of the story.

To add fuel to fire, Geo TV's offices in Islamabad were attacked. I immediately condemned the incident, as did the President. Conspiracy theories started circulating as to who was behind the attack. I persisted with my urging the President to reinstate the Chief

Justice regardless of any merit in the reference as national interest compelled bringing this controversy to a swift end. My state of mind at the time is reflected in my reaction to the Supreme Court's decision in the reference against the Chief Justice, although as Foreign Minister it was not necessary for me to comment on the decision of the Supreme Court. My viewpoint was carried by national and international media:

Foreign Minister Khurshid Mahmud Kasuri said the government has wholeheartedly accepted the Supreme Court verdict reinstating the Chief Justice ... the government did not waste even a single minute in accepting the judgement. He said it would be a stupid thing to see the decision in terms of victory or defeat.<sup>47</sup>

I continued advising the President to accept the decision with an open heart. The government also announced that it accepted the verdict of the court. For a brief spell, we felt that the situation would settle down. The Chief Justice, however, became even more assertive which the government regarded as interference in its work. Matters between the government and the Chief Justice began to deteriorate. I, however, felt that the government had little option under the altered political conditions and disagreed when ideas regarding some sort of a 'quasi-constitutional' action began to be seriously mooted. I remember the president telling me on one occasion, 'Kasuri Sahib, there is a tradition in the military and at Corps Commanders' meetings, that those present do voice their views openly, but that once a decision is taken, everybody then follows the line.' This was the first time when I started getting clear signs that the President was going to seriously undertake an action which was being described in government circles as a 'quasiconstitutional' action. I recall thinking to myself that I was not a Corps Commander but a civilian Foreign Minister.

Sometime earlier, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice rang me and said that she had heard rumours that President Musharraf was planning something extra-constitutional or 'quasi-constitutional'. She expressed her reservations. I passed on the message to the President but it seemed that his mind was by then made up and he was not going to be deterred by what he heard from the United States. I am not clear whether Condoleezza Rice was on the same page with President Bush on this issue because it is within my knowledge that a large number of senior members of the Bush Administration had a soft corner for President Musharraf. I recollect that three or four other parliamentarians on different occasions including S. M. Zafar and Mushahid Hussain Syed also advised the President to desist from the contemplated action that took place on the 3 November 2007.

It may be necessary to make a brief reference to the background of 3 November 2007 Proclamation of Emergency, which the Supreme Court later held to be unconstitutional. There was a petition in the Supreme Court challenging President Pervez Musharraf's right to contest the forthcoming presidential elections in uniform. There was a lot of agitation at the President's House. I tried to calm the President down by saying that he need not assume that there would be a negative decision by the court. I told him that Islamabad was buzzing with rumours that the Bench that was hearing the case was likely to give a

decision in his favour by a small majority. Suddenly, we came to know through newspapers that the number of Judges nominated by the Chief Justice to hear his case had been increased. This was indicative of the fact that the verdict would be tilted against the President. I remember President Musharraf saying to me, '*Kasuri Sahib, agar insaf hi karna hai to judgon ki tadaad ko kiyon barhaya gaya hai?*' (Mr Kasuri, if the intent is to do justice [as you tell me] then why has the number of Judges on the Bench been increased?). He clearly indicated that Justice Iftikhar Chaudhry intended to pack the Bench to ensure a decision against him. This was the backdrop in which the 3 November 2007 Emergency was proclaimed.

I remember that I had to leave for a summit meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) which was being held in Tashkent on 2 November 2007 to represent Pakistan. I was scheduled to leave for Tashkent by a special aircraft on 1 November when I received an urgent message from the British High Commissioner Robert Brinkley through DGFMO (Director General, Foreign Minister's Office) Khalid Mahmood. He wanted to convey an urgent message from the British Prime Minister Gordon Brown to President Musharraf. Unable to get an appointment from the President's House, he wanted to meet me. Khalid Mahmood told Robert Brinkley that he could not meet me either since I was on my way to the airport, en route to Tashkent. He urged Khalid Mahmood that he should arrange a meeting with me before I departed. I put two-and-two together and realized that it had something to do with the rumoured 'quasi-constitutional' action being contemplated. The British and the Americans must have got wind of this possibility. I understood that President Musharraf had no desire to receive a message from Prime Minister Gordon Brown at that moment and was thus refusing to see Robert Brinkley.

Since I was travelling by a special aircraft, I decided to delay my departure and agreed to talk to the High Commissioner. He told me that Prime Minister Gordon Brown wanted his message to be conveyed urgently to President Musharraf that he should not to go for any extra-constitutional deviation. I heard him out and told him that the British Prime Minister's message would be conveyed to President Musharraf immediately. As soon as he left, I telephoned General Hamid Javed, Chief of Staff to the President, from the airport and told him the details of Gordon Brown's message.

I remember my one-on-one meeting with the Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao in Tashkent on the morning of 3 November, the fateful day, just before my departure for Islamabad. China is Pakistan's closest friend and the rumours regarding contemplated action were touched briefly and politely by the Prime Minister without giving his views on the merits of the matter. He, however, assured me that Pakistan could always expect China to stand with Pakistan in any difficult situation. When we returned to Islamabad, we found the airport deserted and there was hushed silence. It was the afternoon of 3 November (the fateful day).

Once I found out that the President had actually issued the Proclamation of Emergency the same day, I decided to tender my resignation. I rang my wife Nasreen (Mona) Kasuri to inform her of my decision. I left Islamabad despite the fact that Federal Ministers were instructed to remain in Islamabad. On my way back by car, I rang up my old friend Najam Sethi, one of Pakistan's most prominent journalists and then editor of the *Daily Times*. He is also co-owner and editor, along with his wife Jugnu Mohsin, of the weekly *Friday Times*. I informed him of my decision to resign and requested him to meet me in Lahore at my residence. I was planning to draft a letter of resignation and hand him a copy of it so that it could be published in the *Daily Times* the next day. I wanted to avoid addressing a press conference on the issue of my resignation; I felt the publicity would hurt the sentiments of the President. I drafted a short letter of resignation in Najam's presence and handed him a copy. Simultaneously, I dispatched the letter to President Pervez Musharraf with a copy to General Hamid Javed, so that he doesn't get to hear of my resignation through the media. I asked one of my oldest staff members at our residence in Lahore to deliver these letters by hand. Once the letter had been dispatched, I felt a sense of relief from the stress that I had been undergoing the last few days.

I felt that the fate of this resignation letter was going to be different from the last one that I tendered when Mian Nawaz Sharif was the Prime Minister and he insisted on pushing through the fifteenth amendment, also known as the Shariat Bill, which I had felt was an exploitation of religion for personal purposes. In this case the real purpose of the bill was to increase the powers of the Prime Minister. On that occasion, my resignation was torn up in a stormy meeting of the parliamentary party when a large number of members following my lead declared that if I resigned, so would they.<sup>48</sup> The news of my resignation had continued to make national headlines for almost two weeks. My extensive letter to Raja Zafar-ul-Haq, a senior Federal Minister deputed by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to try and win support of opponents like myself and find a via media, was reproduced in most national newspapers. In the letter, I had highlighted that if the Bill was passed in its original form it would spell the demise of Quaidi-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's and Allama Iqbal's vision of Pakistan. As a result of my objections, the Bill was made toothless and its real sting taken out by amending the original, particularly the process for amending the Constitution. I also felt that this time I would be following in the footsteps of my illustrious father, the late Mian Mahmud Ali Kasuri, regarded by many as founder of the human rights movement in Pakistan. He had resigned when he was Deputy Leader in the National Assembly, Senior Vice President of the Pakistan Peoples Party, and then he was Federal Law Minister, after developing serious differences with Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto on political and constitutional issues.

Fate however had other things in store for me and my peace of mind was not to last for long. A few hours later, I received a call from the *Aiwan-e-Sadr*, asking me to be there the next morning. President Pervez Musharraf wanted to explain his reasons for his action to

the Diplomatic Corps in Islamabad. My state of uncertainty and confusion returned with full force.

My dilemma in this situation was due to the fact that I strongly supported some of the policies that President Musharraf followed during his tenure, particularly, empowerment of women and minorities, as well as devolution of authority and independence of the media (notwithstanding his actions regarding media's independence towards the end of his tenure). Despite my support for these policies and his non-interference in the functioning of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the robust state of the economy, I was uncomfortable with a President in military uniform as well as the rumoured quasi-constitutional action. To make matters worse for me, I could even empathize with him and understood his grievances against the Chief Justice who was increasingly interfering with the day-to-day functioning of the government.

I was comparing my situation with my father's when he was determined to resign from Bhutto's Cabinet. My dilemma arose out of the fact that President Musharraf gave me a free hand on foreign policy issues and running of the Foreign Office, including the appointment of Riaz Muhammad Khan as Foreign Secretary, despite the fact that he had other preferences. I was largely able to take my own decisions without interference on important policy matters. Importantly, our views on the ongoing peace process with India were similar.

While we have seen the evolution of President Musharraf's views on Kashmir, and since I have dealt extensively with him on foreign policy matters, it is in order that I give my assessment about his general approach not just towards foreign policy but on various other issues. This has become all the more necessary because he is under the clouds these days and it has become fashionable for a lot of people, who used to praise him earlier, to take pot shots at him now.

Pervez Musharraf has quoted US Secretary of State Colin Powell, a person with military background like his own, on the qualities of leadership, in his book *In The Line of Fire*.<sup>49</sup> '... it is the art of accomplishing more than the science of management thinks is possible'. I think President Musharraf attempted to do this and had the ability to focus for long hours on important issues and take difficult and unpopular decisions. He could also delegate authority, which, in my opinion, is essential for leadership. I would like to illustrate this point. The appointment of Foreign Secretary is a key decision. After Riaz Khokhar's retirement, President Musharraf had his own preferences for this appointment. Those he had in mind were articulate and accomplished diplomats but I felt that I would be more comfortable working with somebody who had a similar world view. This was all the more important because we were trying to chart a new path in our relations with India. I suggested the name of Riaz Muhammad Khan as the new Foreign Secretary. President Musharraf asked me my reasons for choosing Riaz. I told him that Riaz Muhammad Khan shared my world view as well as my approach towards policy with India, which we were

in the process of crafting. I added jokingly that another reason for my wanting him as Foreign Secretary was that he had sometimes earlier disagreed with President Musharraf's views on India. It goes to President Musharraf's credit that he accepted my recommendation by saying, 'Kasuri Sahib, you have to run the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It is only fair that you should have a Foreign Secretary of your choice.'

Musharraf was willing to learn from his experiences. Initially, when I assumed office, he was quite a hawk on India. It is a measure of how far Musharraf had travelled that someone who was considered the architect of the Kargil debacle as well as the interlocutor of the failed Agra Summit with Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee was able to clinch an agreement with that same Indian Prime Minister on the way forward on relations with India in 2004. As explained elsewhere, although the agreement was largely welcomed, it did have a few detractors, including some in the Pakistan Army, the Foreign Office, and the Intelligence Agencies. In my view, the ability to take difficult and unpopular decisions is a hallmark of leadership. When Pakistan and India do make peace, history will record Musharraf's positive contribution. Ironically, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif who is today considered his nemesis also displayed strong leadership when he invited Prime Minister Vajpayee in February 1999 despite opposition from major sections of popular opinion in Pakistan. In fact violent demonstrations were organized to protest against the visit of Prime Minister Vajpayee. Vehicles of many diplomats and invitees were attacked when they were proceeding to attend the reception for Prime Minister Vajpayee at the historic Lahore Fort in February 1999. It is also generally believed that the Pakistan Army, then led by General Pervez Musharraf, was not in favour of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's peace initiative.

President Musharraf carefully read all the briefs sent by the Foreign Office and disagreed when he found the need to do so, as was sometimes the case on India. Many world leaders sought his views on key international issues. I recall a meeting in September 2006 in Brussels at a luncheon by Javier Solana, Foreign Policy Chief of the European Union (EU). Solana sought his assessment of the rising power of China and exchanged views on the Middle East Peace Process. I recall him, spelling out his own views on the rise of China in economic, political, military, and strategic terms. He was heard with rapt attention by all present. On one occasion, key world leaders encouraged him to play a major role in the Middle East Peace Process. Most of us at the Foreign Office concluded that the manner in which this initiative was conceived had the potential of pitting Pakistan against Iran without really achieving the desired results. We were able to successfully deflect him in pursuing this any further. This topic has been discussed in detail in Chapter 9, titled 'The Foreign Office', later in this book.

President Musharraf was able to take risks even if it involved taking unpopular decisions. This happened as his stature grew internationally and he had become an international celebrity. I recall the NAM Summit of 2003, where two leaders especially stood out and were eagerly sought by the world media: one was of course the old superstar of the Non-

Aligned Movement, President Fidel Castro of Cuba; and the other was President Pervez Musharraf. I noticed at this conference that a bond was created between Fidel Castro and President Musharraf. Castro would send Havana cigars to him regularly. Incidentally, I (who does not smoke) also started getting cigars in the bargain. A more meaningful expression of Castro's friendship was seen at the time of the devastating earthquake that hit areas in north of Pakistan and Kashmir in 2005. Literally thousands (3,000) of doctors and paramedics from Cuba arrived to help the victims. In response, Pakistan decided to establish its Embassy in Havana.

Another positive trait of President Musharraf was that he would hear all points of view before deciding upon the course of action. At this stage I find it difficult to resist a comparison in the attitude of some top politicians on the one hand and Air Marshal Asghar Khan (founder of the Tehrik-e-Istiqlal which had become a significant Opposition political party during Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's rule) and President Pervez Musharraf on the other, both of whom came from a military background. I found both of them more democratic in their attitudes. They would not try and impose their opinions but had the confidence to listen to an opposing point of view and come forth with their arguments if they disagreed. Their modus operandi was very different from many political leaders who were not open to the opinions of others. In fact, it is no secret that in parliamentary party meetings, those who dare to disagree with the Prime Minister do so at their own risk and at the risk of their political careers. This proved to be the case with me when I disagreed with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on the fifteenth amendment to the Constitution and had to tender my resignation in a stormy meeting of the parliamentary party.

It would be interesting to speculate the reasons for this. It could be because those who make it to the top in the military achieve it through a difficult and competitive process. Their skills are honed and their attitudes broadened. They can take nothing for granted and nothing is inherited. Interestingly, both Air Marshal Asghar Khan and President Pervez Musharraf also had a more inclusive attitude and were far more conscious of the need to uphold women and minority rights—again more so, than most politicians.

I also found that President Musharraf could articulate his point of view effectively, particularly with his international interlocutors. He was sought after by major domestic and international outlets in print and electronic media and was thus able to effectively project Pakistan's point of view. I remember that at the NAM Summit in Kuala Lumpur in February 2003 there was almost a stampede when it was announced impromptu that Musharraf would be addressing the international media. It was so crowded that people had to sit on the floor at the International Media Centre. I am happy that he also permitted electronic and print media to flourish in Pakistan. It is pertinent to point out that he did this by allowing the setting up of private television channels. Previously, this was a monopoly that was held by the state-owned Pakistan Television Corporation (PTV). Ironically, he was later to become a casualty to the same media, particularly in the wake of the judicial crisis of March 2007.

There was another reason why world leaders and the international media held him in high esteem despite his military background. Pakistan had been hogging the limelight largely for the wrong reasons ever since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and its fallout on Pakistan's polity, economy, and society. The attitude of the extremists towards women and minorities made Musharraf's enlightened view stand out in strong contrast. His inclusive views regarding the role of women who form almost 50 per cent of our population were greatly applauded. As Foreign Minister, I used to take pride in the fact that we had women ambassadors in some of the most important world capitals including London, Paris, Madrid, Rome, and many others. I took keen interest in the promotion of the first woman to Grade 22 (highest grade in the Pakistan Civil Service) at the Foreign Office and had President Musharraf's complete support in this. I hope that the number of Grade 22 women officers have increased over the years. I am a strong believer that no country can make progress if half its population is discriminated against. I am particularly conscious of this because of my association with the Beaconhouse School System, founded by my wife Nasreen (Mona) Kasuri which is one of the largest private school systems in the world, as well as the Beaconhouse National University (BNU), Pakistan's first non-profit, Liberal Arts University and has already made a name for itself in the region particularly in the fields of television, film-making, liberal arts and design, architecture, IT, social sciences, psychology, and education. I have seen first-hand the effective and prominent role that women have played in these organizations in raising them to a level which can be compared to some of the best in the world. I strongly supported President Musharraf's positive attitude towards the minorities as well. Special seats were reserved for women and minorities in the National and Provincial Assemblies as well as at the Local Bodies' level where literally thousands of women and minority representatives were empowered through special quota.

Where I disagreed, I never tried to hide my views from President Musharraf or from others. On one occasion, my opinion on the issue of President Musharraf retaining the army uniform while holding the office of the President made international headlines when India's famous TV anchor, Barkha Dutt<sup>50</sup> asked for my views on the issue. She surprised me because the interview was regarding the visit of Hurriyat leaders to Pakistan for the first time that had coincided with L. K. Advani's visit to Pakistan on my invitation. Although it was perhaps the very last question she asked me, the answer to this question was the one that made headline news and was published by some newspapers under the headline, 'Kasuri says he is not in favour of a President in uniform'. Hence Barkha's interview took the attention away from the visit of the Hurriyat leaders and brought the focus on the issue of President Musharraf's uniform, whereas, I wanted the focus to remain on Hurriyat leaders' visit to Pakistan. This visit had come about as a result of my sustained efforts with Natwar Singh to involve the Kashmiris in the peace process. Natwar's response to me in private had been that the time had not yet come for the Indian public opinion to digest this. But I had urged upon him to allow these leaders to visit

Muzaffarabad and Islamabad so that they could be associated with the peace process, albeit indirectly, as a first step.

My interview with Barkha created such a stir in Pakistan that I remember President Musharraf audibly saying to me in the presence of others, '*Kasuri Sahib, aap aaj kal bari khabrain bana rahain hain*' (Mr Kasuri, you are making big news these days). He was obviously not happy with my public remarks. Privately, however, I advised him often to shed his uniform and contest the next election as a civilian. Even on earlier occasions, I had told him that in view of the productive performance of the government, he should take the 'political risk' of contesting as a civilian and not as a military man.

I felt that in view of the economic performance of the government and the high standing of Pakistan in the international community, there was a good chance that the ruling party would perform well during the elections and that General Musharraf could be elected as President. The issue of his military uniform was creating problems both inside the country as well as externally. As Foreign Minister, despite my best efforts to convince the international community that Pakistan was a working democracy, that it had a fiercely independent electronic and print media, a completely independent judiciary, a vibrant civil society, and a vocal Opposition, the fact that he was in his military uniform as Chief of Army Staff was flung in our faces. There was particular resistance from the European Union and the Commonwealth. This in turn provided a convenient handle to the local opponents for attacking him and the government. Furthermore, the fact that he was in uniform was controversial for the Pakistan Army. Army officers resented this and stories were published in local newspapers which did not reflect well on the army despite the fact that it had very little to do with the running of the government.

Coming back to my resignation, in all fairness, I must admit that I had a personal reason as well for taking this step. There was always this thought at the back of my mind that I was the son of Mian Mahmud Ali Kasuri, one of Pakistan's most respected politicians, a human rights activist, and a jurist of international repute. I have written in-depth about him elsewhere in the book but here I want to mention him because it will provide an insight into the state of my mind. Many of my father's friends used to taunt me and say, 'What would your father say if he were alive today?' And that he had stood up to Bhutto's dictatorship with great courage. They would also say to me that I myself had been to prison several times for my political views and for opposing the dictatorial regime of General Zia ul-Haq, who sent me to a condemned prisoner's cell. They would ask me why I was partial towards Musharraf when I was so opposed to Zia ul-Haq? I would try in earnest to convince them that there was a great difference between Bhutto's civilian dictatorship and General Zia ul-Haq's reactionary dispensation and Musharraf. And also, that the present government of which I was a part could not be compared in any manner to either Bhutto's government which employed strong-arm tactics while dealing with his political opponents or General Zia ul-Haq's regime which adopted reactionary policies and

harsh methods. I argued that our government was different, and had achieved a lot towards strengthening of the judiciary, media, and civil society.

Additionally, I also referred to the affirmative action policies of the government towards women and minorities and empowering grass-roots democracy through a robust local government system.

Nevertheless, his being in uniform did provide a useful handle to the detractors of our government to mislead the local and international opinion about our democratic credentials. Additionally, as Foreign Minister, I was able to convince my colleagues in the international community that Pakistan was effectively in compliance with the 'Harare Declaration' which set out the core principles and values, detailing the Commonwealth's criteria for judging a country's democratic credentials, and set the criteria for its membership. Very often, however, one or two member countries who wished to attack Pakistan would use the issue of his uniform as a stick to beat us with. It is pertinent to point out that my advice to the president had been communicated to him when the stock of our government was very high, and much before the Lawyers' Movement for restoration of Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry.

One of Pakistan's top most lawyers and former Law Minister and Senator, S. M. Zafar, in his autobiography has referred to the issue of the President's military uniform and my strong views on it. His account is of a period almost two years before my interview with Barkha Dutt that took place in June 2005. S. M. Zafar's account is given in the backdrop of the negotiations with the MMA (Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal, a political alliance consisting of ultra-conservative religious parties opposed to President Pervez Musharraf) on the issue of the Legal Framework Order (LFO) and the President's uniform. Referring to an incident which took place after we had travelled together by air from Lahore to Islamabad on 23 November 2003, he describes one particular occasion when S. M. Zafar was present and the issue of the President's uniform was being discussed. S. M. Zafar has devoted many pages to this incident in his autobiography and refers to the passion with which I argued the case against the President remaining in uniform, and, humorously, even compared the tone of my voice on this occasion to that of my father's, whose voice was legendary, both for being loud as well as clear, in the legal and political fraternity of Pakistan.<sup>51</sup>

Recently, Pakistani newspapers carried a report publishing the minutes of a meeting held on 6 November 2007, three days after the proclamation of Emergency. My state of mind on this issue is also reflected clearly by the minutes as recorded and released, 'Kasuri told the Cabinet that some countries threatened to stop aid: The then Foreign Minister Khurshid Mahmud Kasuri in the said Cabinet meeting briefed about the response of the international community declaring it "largely negative". He admitted that there was a tremendous pressure from international community for early general elections and timely restoration of democracy.'<sup>52</sup>

On this issue, I remember, on one occasion I especially requested President Musharraf for an exclusive meeting with him at his residence. It would be pertinent to point out here that Musharraf and I had a warm and cordial, yet complex, relationship. He instinctively understood that my insistence on wishing to meet him alone at his residence was about the uniform issue. A day later, my wife and I received a dinner invitation from him. I also instinctively understood that he wished to make the evening into a social occasion so that attention was not focused on his uniform.

When we arrived at President Musharraf's residence, we were greeted by his wife Begum Sehba Musharraf and their son Bilal. I thought that I should use this opportunity to attempt at convincing not just him but his family too. Our dinner meeting continued into the early hours of the morning.

While discussing the issue of the uniform, General Musharraf insisted that it was because he was still in uniform that he was able to be effective on key foreign and domestic issues concerning the economy, women, and minorities, as well as extremism and the peace process with India and the difficult situation on the western borders. He did stress though that he would take off his military uniform when the time was appropriate. I was pleasantly surprised when I found that his son Bilal agreed with me rather than with his father. President Pervez Musharraf's attitude towards me was always warm and cordial. So, perhaps only the great bard of Oxford could understand the contradictions and complexities of my state of mind at that time. For these reasons, when, after having already dispatched my resignation letter to the President with a copy to Lt General Hamid Javed, I received the phone call a few hours later from the President's House, it restored with full force the confusion and uncertainty that I grappled with before dispatching the letter. I was confused, agitated, and disturbed. It should be clear that I felt that Pakistan had made a lot of progress in different areas of national life during President Musharraf's tenure, but I faced yet another dilemma. My immediate family members including my brothers Umar Kasuri and Bakhtiar Kasuri took an active interest in the movement launched to restore the Chief Justice, as did my sister-in-law Fouzia, wife of my brother Daniyal Kasuri. Also, the legal fraternity to which my father and grandfather belonged was at that time up in arms, and I knew that some of my father's friends and associates would expect that I resign, without really knowing the true state of my mind.

Alas! My temporary sense of relief after dispatching the letters had vanished into thin air. In my state of confusion and anxiety, I called a meeting of my immediate family members. One of them remarked that if I persisted with my resignation, it would seem that I was stabbing President Musharraf in the back while he was down and out, just to promote my own political career. This remark shook me no end. My brother Bakhtiar thought I should persist with my resignation and that it would enhance my political position in the country. The rest, as they say, is history. Suffice it to say that I requested Najam Sethi not to publish the news of my resignation the next day and I told the person who had been tasked to hand-deliver the resignation letter to come back to Lahore without delivering it. I did

inform General Hamid Javed a few days later of my 'resignation' and its subsequent withdrawal. The upshot of my unhappy state of mind was reflected in the meeting the next day at the President's House where President Musharraf, while explaining his reasons for declaring Emergency attacked some people by name, including human rights activist Asma Jahangir who was one of the leaders of the movement launched by the lawyers (for the reinstatement of the Chief Justice) and daughter of Malik Ghulam Jilani, an ardent fighter for democracy in the days of Ayub Khan. Malik Ghulam Jilani was a close friend of my father's and had a lot of affection for me. The moment President Musharraf mentioned Asma Jahangir's name in an uncomplimentary manner, I immediately got up and expressed my disagreement with his views regarding Asma in front of the entire Diplomatic Corps. They were stunned by my intervention. If any incident can explain my confused and unhappy state of mind at that time, this does. Later on, Asma told me that some diplomats rang her up to inform her of the dramatic happenings at the President's House earlier that day.

## **THE PAKISTAN ARMY: AN OBSTACLE TO PEACEFUL RELATIONS WITH INDIA?**

### **Some Observations: Army Wants a Just and Equitable Peace with India**

My views in this chapter basically reflect my experience in dealing with the military leadership for five years as Pakistan's Foreign Minister. I can thus speak with confidence, at least regarding the military's attitude to the backchannel talks with India on Kashmir during my tenure.

Like the Indian Army, the Pakistan Army was once part of the British Indian Army. In the early days, the British Indian Army officers largely belonged to old feudal and princely families. Quite a few of my maternal relatives were commissioned as officers in the British Indian Army. Following Partition in 1947 they opted to become part of the Pakistan Army and other defence services. Some of them rose to the highest ranks. Perhaps for this reason, despite the strong anti-colonial background and democratic and anti-establishment credentials of my paternal family, and despite the fact that I went to prison many times during my political career in movements launched against General Zia ul-Haq, I had developed a degree of empathy and understanding regarding the values that the armed forces represented. While growing up, I frequently heard references to 'Hodson's Horse' (now part of the Indian Army), 'Probyn's Horse', 'Guide's Cavalry', 'Punjab Regiment', 'Baluch Regiment', 'Piffers', etc. Over time and with greater social mobility, the officers started coming from the middle and the lower-middle classes. Nonetheless, their proud affection for their regiment and its traditions remained intact. Moreover, just as Pakistani society is becoming progressively conservative, so is the military. Significantly, while General Zia's period was marked by emphasis on indoctrination, the focus shifted to professionalism during General Pervez Musharraf's tenure as COAS. My views regarding the professional attitude of General Aslam Beg

(COAS, 1988–91) and General Jehangir Karamat (COAS, 1996–98) have been reflected earlier in this chapter. There is no doubt that the Pakistan Army remains a proud inheritor of hallowed traditions. For various well-known historical reasons, it will not settle for a subservient role in South Asia. It has come in for criticism on this score from certain quarters, both local and foreign. Be that as it may, it is unlikely to change its attitude towards India until contentious disputes between Pakistan and India are resolved.

I believe the army's leadership understands that Pakistan, a nation of almost two hundred million, is inundated by complex problems. Perpetual tension with India is an impediment in the path of economic and social development. Moreover, the country needs to build a strong economic infrastructure to sustain such a huge population and the rising expectations of the country's youth. During my tenure, I felt that the military's leadership realized that peace with India, despite contentious issues, is not just desirable but also worth pursuing. However, the military demands peace on just and equitable terms, something that we were trying to achieve on Kashmir. People sometimes ask me whether the draft agreement with India had the backing of the Pakistan Army. Of course it had the support of all the stakeholders. It is unthinkable that an issue of such a sensitive nature could be negotiated without having all the stakeholders on board. Besides the Presidency and the Foreign Office, the military was deeply involved in the peace process. President Musharraf is on record stating on more than one occasion, that he took his Corps Commanders into confidence over the peace process with India.<sup>53</sup> The Army's High Command clearly understood that the concept of national security was not limited to military preparedness but also included economic and political stability. Therefore, when I argued that peace with India on honourable terms would actually enhance national security, I did not find much resistance.

It must be borne in mind that the definition of national interest does not radically change over such a short time, especially since some of those involved in the backchannel were, until recently, still around. Since I left office, several people have asked me whether the army has staged a U-turn on the backchannel agreements on Kashmir. In this regard, I am aware of some recent hard-line statements attributed to the military leadership. However, based on my experience, I believe such statements were tactical in nature and made in the context of the approaching end game in Afghanistan. Furthermore, it is likely that the Pakistan Army started entertaining reservations as the Indian Army's position on Siachen hardened. This happened as Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's position weakened for reasons given elsewhere in the book. In my experience, the army was happy to go along with both the Composite Dialogue as well as with the backchannel, as long as all outstanding issues including Jammu and Kashmir, the Siachen, Wullar and Sir Creek were being discussed meaningfully. Later on, when for different reasons that are already indicated, progress on outstanding issues stalled, the Pakistan Army may have developed reservations on discussing issues such as liberalizing of visas and trade, without making progress on outstanding disputes.

Significantly, it has been revealed through WikiLeaks that in a two-hour meeting with General Kayani and the DG-ISI Lt General Ahmad Shuja Pasha in October 2009, the then US Ambassador Anne Patterson inquired about the likelihood of restarting the backchannel with India. She told the generals that she had met me earlier (almost two years after I had relinquished the office of Foreign Minister), and that I was in favour of the appointment of former Foreign Secretary Riaz Muhammad Khan as the backchannel negotiator to restart the process. By her account, both men wanted to restart the backchannel and also expressed confidence in Riaz Muhammad Khan as the backchannel negotiator. Thus, as reflected by this meeting, the army top brass continued supporting the peace process with India even after President Musharraf left the national stage.<sup>54</sup>

By profession and training, the military mind is wired to analysing security environment, the primary military preoccupation, in black and white rather than in shades of grey. The army's thinking (like that of other armies) is focused on the *enemy* through a simplistic approach trying to distinguish friend from foe as well as on looking for a centre of gravity when confronted with a challenge. Year after year, Pakistani and Indian military officers engage in war games assuming the other as the enemy. The Indian Army habitually betrays Pakistan-centric thinking and threat perceptions while ironically accusing the Pakistan Army of being India-centric. The army culture of both the countries is unabashedly hostile and obsessively preoccupied with the other, irrespective of protestations to the contrary. Unsurprisingly, therefore, the Pakistan Army is routinely chided for its obsession with India and Kashmir. The fact that Pakistan and India have fought several wars over Kashmir helps explain this phenomenon. The Pakistan Army is not unique in this regard. According to Anatol Lieven,

[T]he vast majority of Pakistani soldiers have served in Kashmir at some point or other, and for many this service has influenced their worldview. Kashmir, therefore, plays a role of irredenta [a region ethnically or historically related to one country but politically connected to or controlled by another] and has joined a long historical list of such obsessions ... like France with Alsace-Lorraine after 1871, Italy with Trieste after 1866 and Serbia with Bosnia after 1879.<sup>55</sup>

Most Pakistanis would differ with Lieven's description of Pakistan's focus on Kashmir as an 'obsession' and instead highlight that, besides their commitment to respecting the aspirations of the Kashmiris, the issue directly impacted Pakistan because most of the rivers flowing into Pakistan pass through Indian Administered Kashmir (IAK). This issue gained credibility when India started building dams on rivers flowing to Pakistan and impacting on the flow of water into Pakistan. It also released surplus water during monsoons, thereby causing extensive flooding and damage in Pakistan in the recent years. In the past India has also stopped water supply to Pakistan; this happened as early as 1948. This issue has been dealt with in greater detail in the section labelled, 'Water Disputes: A Major Threat to Peace', in Chapter 3. Significantly, as illustrated by the case of Alsace-Lorraine, even 'obsessions' can be dealt with peacefully.

The purpose of this chapter is to probe whether the military mindset and culture is irrevocably opposed to or an insurmountable obstacle to the improvement of relations between Pakistan and India. My experience in dealing with the military leadership, specifically on the Kashmir issue, suggests that the Pakistan Army is neither opposed to nor is it a roadblock to better relations with India. My assessment rests on what I discerned to be the ability of top military leaders to think pragmatically and realistically with an ingrained sense of discipline. During the course of discussions on Kashmir spanning over approximately three years, the inputs from the army leadership were neither rhetorical nor laced with ideological spin often associated with mid-level and even fairly senior army officers, but invariably supported by reason and informed perspectives. However, some clarification is in order.

First, irrespective of its form, the role of the government as an institution is critical in high-level decisions involving both civilian and military elements. Since from the outset, our government was seeking a solution of the Kashmir dispute on reasonable and fair grounds, subsequent engagement focused on the objective rather than attempting to derail the process. This was not the first instance of Pakistan's military leadership accepting a decision apparently at odds with the commonly held view of the military mindset and positions. Earlier, the army accepted the decision to sign the Geneva Accord on Afghanistan as well as the post-9/11 U-turn in state policy.

Second, my experience informs me that no institution is monolithic in its thinking or functioning. However, the internal dissent subsisting within an institution does not significantly impact decisions or policy direction set at the highest level. Sometimes it could lead to resistance at the implementation stage but we never reached that point in our deliberations with India. Some accounts blame autonomous elements within the ISI for undermining the stated government policy by acting at cross-purposes.

Although these accounts are highly exaggerated, the existence of such elements at relatively lower levels is not beyond probability. Nevertheless, actions attributed to them cannot be taken as the measure of policy.

My experience in dealing with the army with respect to India is also borne out by the perceptive remarks on the subject by a prominent Indian politician and analyst Mani Shankar Aiyar, India's former Petroleum Minister as well as a former Indian Foreign Service officer. Regarding the attitude of the Pakistan Army towards India generally, it is useful to quote him at length from an insightful speech delivered by Mani. Pakistan has been his focus of study since the days he was posted in Karachi for three years as Consul General (1989–91), and he frequently visits Pakistan.

‘From the Indian perspective, and perhaps also from the perspective of majority of Pakistanis, the overwhelming role of the military in Pakistan's approach to India is often held to be the principal institutional block to reconciliation. The argument goes that so long as the army, abetted by a complaisant civil service, is the effective political power in

Pakistan, and so long as the *raison d'être* of the huge Pakistani military establishment and what Ayesha Siddiqa calls Pakistan's Military Inc. is founded on the assiduous propagation of the threat from India, Pakistan's military will never permit hostilities between the two countries to be undermined. That would be tantamount to cutting off a branch on which the Pakistani defence forces are perched. On the other hand, here in Pakistan it is often claimed that revanchist sentiment in the entire Indian establishment, including the Indian military, is so strong and persistent that the dismemberment of Pakistan in 1971 was only the prelude to the destruction of the rest of Pakistan, whenever this might prove possible; hence the need for eternal vigilance is the price to be paid for Pakistan's liberty. Both these views appear to me to be *a case* of the wish fathering the thought. I don't believe that the actual course of India-Pakistan relations validates the view that India cannot deal with the Pakistan's military; or that India is still hankering after a restoration of *Akhand Bharat*.

'Let us first take the Indian view of the Pakistan military. It is rooted in General Ayub Khan's coup of 1958. One needs to remember that in Ayub's time, almost all the top officers of the Indian military were either Ayub Khan's contemporaries or his seniors in the British Indian Army. India, understandably, did not want Bonapartism to spread from the Pakistan Army to their Indian counterparts. And it was indubitably during the Ayub regime that the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) was signed. The IWT has weathered three wars and continues to offer a forum for the resolution of water disputes as witnessed in the recent spats over Baglihar and now Kishangana. Moreover, it was during that regime that Sheikh Abdullah, Jayaprakash Narayan and others were, by all accounts, on a promising peace mission to Pakistan when Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru suddenly died (d.1964). Yes, the battle in the Rann of Kutch in April 1965, and Operation Gibraltar in August that year, followed by the September war, took place in the Ayub dispensation, but much of that seems to have been stoked as much by civilian political forces as by the armed forces. In any case, it was President Ayub Khan who signed the Tashkent Agreement (1966), disagreement having been registered principally by his civilian colleagues. Later, it was during the period of Zia ul-Haq that, whatever might be one's reservations about his domestic policies, there was a new impetus given to people-to-people relations; the most important was the opening of the Indian Consulate General in Karachi. And when in the winter of 1986–87 temperatures started building up over Operation Brasstacks, it was Zia ul-Haq that Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi found a most effective partner in defusing the threat of war. Although General Pervez Musharraf's coup was looked upon with deep disapproval and suspicion in India, coming as it did in the wake of Kargil 1999, eventually it was under his aegis that the Composite Dialogue made more progress on the Tariq-Lambah backchannel than at perhaps any other stage of India-Pakistan relations. Hence, I do not think the objective record makes for any insuperable difficulty in India dealing directly with the Pakistan military or with a civilian government that has the military breathing down its neck.'<sup>56</sup>

There is ample evidence that Ayub Khan considered various options to resolve the issue of Jammu and Kashmir. His approach can be termed as an early evidence of an attempt at an out-of-the-box solution to Kashmir. An indication of this can be found in his interaction in one of his talks with the media when he suggested that there was ‘need for reappraisal, for forgetting and forgiving, and for a more realistic, rational and sensible relationship with each other’.<sup>57</sup>

My observations regarding the role of the Pakistan Army are also supported by the Pulitzer Prize-winning author Steve Coll. While responding to the question whether the Pakistani military establishment would welcome a resolution of the Kashmir dispute, Coll recalled that when President Musharraf was at the zenith of his power and authority, he was working to change the mindset and world view of the top military commanders in order to provide the way forward on the Kashmir issue. In this context Coll mentioned three compelling reasons. First, Pakistan needed more resources to modernize the army and defend its territorial integrity.

Second, President Musharraf felt at the time that Pakistan could achieve acceptable goals in Kashmir by political means with India. Finally, as one of the finest fighting forces in the world, the Pakistan Army craved international legitimacy and recognition as a peacemaker by achieving peace with India through political means.<sup>58</sup> I feel these arguments are still valid.

In this respect, I would also like to refer to Stephen Cohen, an eminent American political scientist and an expert on Pakistan, India, and South Asian security issues. He has conducted an in-depth analysis of the various generations of officers in different eras. He feels that Pakistan’s military leaders need to better understand the altered international environment and be more objective in their assessment of India.<sup>59</sup> Moreover, he feels that ‘the higher command of the officer corps is not a monolith and while different strategic schools abound, such differences are to be expected in a country which borders on Central Asia, West Asia, and South Asia and which sees itself as a major global player.’<sup>60</sup> Like most professional institutions, the army has an ‘operational code’ that most officers are taught and meant to subscribe to. The code can be summarized as follows:

- Avoid a war with India, without yielding to Indian pressure on vital issues;
- Support the Kashmir cause, but not to the point where it leads to open confrontation with India;
- Attempt at maintaining positive relations with the major Islamic States in order to broaden the base of economic and potential military support, and to avoid the appearance of tilting towards one or the other, thereby triggering sectarian conflicts within Pakistan itself;

- Maintain and expand the nuclear programme, but without risking Pakistan's ... relationship with the United States and other anti-proliferation states;
- Avoid a too dependent relationship with the US, the state that has 'let Pakistan down' many times in the past but remain close enough to make Pakistan's case in Washington and to balance Indian influence;
- Do whatever is possible to hold together Pakistan's most important proto-alliance—that with China.<sup>61</sup>

Stephen Cohen reproduced the code in 1998 and significant changes have since then taken place. The code could nevertheless be regarded as an accurate reflection of the mindset of the Pakistan Army as fairly pragmatic and not a trigger-happy one. Cohen also states, 'The excellent army sees Pakistan as a threatened, peace loving, and status quo power pursuing a defensive strategy, heavily dependent upon the support of friends and allies of uncertain reliability ... Kashmir is not considered as an international issue as much as an extension of domestic politics and the remnants of a flawed partition.'<sup>62</sup> There is substance in his assessment that the Army lacks the capability to fix Pakistan's problems but is unwilling to give the other institutions and the political system the opportunity to learn and grow, and that its tolerance for the mistakes of others is very low.<sup>63</sup> Be that as it may, nature abhors vacuum, and the only way that the politicians can earn real legitimacy is by better governance and by maintaining a low threshold for corruption, particularly at a time when the public opinion and the media in Pakistan are very conscious, alive and critical of lack of performance. For example, when the politicians were debating how to deal with the existential terrorist threat (which has caused havoc in Pakistan and has claimed thousands of innocent victims), it was the Pakistan Army which decided to launch Operation Zarb-e-Azb in North Waziristan. The politicians were indecisive and were arguing among themselves whether talks with the terrorists was a better option. Nevertheless, his point is valid that the Army has to show better understanding and tolerance for politicians who have to deal with very difficult and complex problems. Again, this is no excuse for the scale and type of corruption in which some political governments have indulged and which has been reported by the media extensively.

Based on my experience, all the stakeholders, including the army, had realized that non-state actors wielding arms could not be controlled and were a major threat to internal and regional peace. Considering that the Pakistan Army, the Intelligence Agencies, the law enforcement institutions, places of worship, markets, and innocent civilians were the direct targets of terrorist attacks, it would have been absurd to think otherwise. This position applied to cross-LoC movement as well. In fact, if that were not the case and the Indians were not convinced of it, at least substantially, and had not seen the cross-LoC incidents and fatalities decline significantly, it was not possible that the peace process could have made the substantial progress that it did during 2003–07. This could not have

been done without the army's support. There are of course critics who feel that the Pakistan Army has a country rather than the other way round, much in the same way as was said of the Prussian Army. Anatol Lieven, a leading academic and analyst, while referring to this criticism has said, 'Voltaire remarked of Frederick the Great's Prussia that "Where some states have an army, the Prussian Army has a state." In view of the sheer size, effectiveness and wealth of the Pakistan military and associated institutions compared to the rest of the state, much the same could be said of Pakistan.' But he also recognizes that without a strong army, Pakistan would find it difficult to face the numerous internal and external challenges and points out that 'the Taliban threat makes the unity and discipline of the army of paramount importance to Pakistan and the world all the more so because the deep unpopularity of US strategy among the vast majority of Pakistanis has made even the limited alliance between the Pakistani military and the US extremely unpopular ...'<sup>64</sup>

According to Shuja Nawaz, an eminent analyst on strategic and political affairs, and author of *Crossed Swords: Pakistan, Its Army, and the Wars Within*, the Pakistan Army remains a conservative institution but it is not yet a breeding ground for the large numbers of radical Islamists that many fear.<sup>65</sup> In fact during the last few years, the Pakistan Army which is essentially conditioned to fight India, has conducted major operations against the Pakistani Taliban. Its officers and soldiers have suffered greater casualties here than in wars with India. The army's professional and disciplined approach enabled it to endure the painful experience of fighting Muslim compatriots to safeguard national security, the latest being the army operations in North Waziristan launched in June 2014. Considering the multifaceted and intense nature of the challenges that the Pakistan Army has had to face, both internally and externally, ever since Independence, it has truly become a battle-hardened army.

Progress has also been made in Indo-Pak relations during the tenures of civilian governments. It would be uncharitable to deny the fact that Nawaz Sharif's invitation to former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to visit Lahore in February 1999 led to a summit filled with 'symbolism and hope of warmer relations'.<sup>66</sup> President Clinton publicly commended the two Prime Ministers for demonstrating courage and leadership by coming together and addressing difficult issues that have long divided their countries. Earlier, Prime Ministers Nawaz Sharif and Inder Kumar Gujral had agreed in principle at the SAARC Summit in Male in 1997, to initiate a process of 'Composite Dialogue'. It can also be argued that had the military not intervened Nawaz Sharif would have gone further. Similarly, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's government would have also made progress were she not sacked twice under Article 58-2(b) of the Constitution by the President. Benazir in 1989 agreed on the framework of an agreement on Siachen with Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.<sup>67, 68</sup> As a result, the Defence Secretaries of Pakistan and India issued a Joint Statement in June 1989 in Islamabad that provided for a comprehensive settlement based

on redeployment of forces to positions conforming to the Simla Agreement. The agreement was approved by the two Prime Ministers when they met in Islamabad a month later. However, differences arose over the interpretation of the agreement and new issues were raised about 'the authentication of the existing positions'.<sup>69</sup> It has been explained elsewhere that we had agreed to the details to such an extent during our tenure that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh started talking publicly of the need to make Siachen 'a mountain of peace'. Alas! This has yet to be implemented. In fact, the Indian Army has made its position more rigid during the last few years of UPA-II just as the government's grip seemed to get less firm following a large number of scandals and rising inflation. It can thus be stated that both Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto were committed to peace with India and worked towards that end. We can therefore conclude by my stressing that normalization of relations between Pakistan and India are vitally important for the social and economic well being of the people. Efforts to change this paradigm must continue regardless of who is minding the store in Delhi or Islamabad. In an earlier chapter, I have discussed the possible ramifications of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's assumption of office and the prediction by some that he was likely to adopt a more hard-line position towards Pakistan. I sincerely hope that does not happen since the consequences could be catastrophic. The six hundred million people living below poverty line would be the main casualty.

### **Need for a Coordinating Body**

Recent developments have sparked a vigorous national debate about the military's calculations and attitude towards militant outfits. These include the raid by US forces to kill Osama bin Laden in Abbottabad in May 2011, the terrorist attack on the Mehran Naval Base in Karachi, and more recently, attacks on various security and public establishments and facilities, resulting in the killing of many innocent civilians. Questions about who defines Pakistan's national interests and who formulates policies are also being raised. It is essential that Pakistanis confront all these questions head-on as no useful purpose would be served by burying our heads in the sand. There is now consensus in Pakistan that serious efforts need to be made to bring all stakeholders on the same page and that the political government must assume the responsibility for setting the national agenda in foreign policy. For this to happen effectively there is an urgent need for an effective body where all the key stakeholders on matters concerning national security are present.

The concept of national security is multifaceted and includes issues relating to foreign policy, defence, and internal security. The state of the economy has a major bearing on internal stability and is in turn impacted by the external environment. In some countries, as in Pakistan, internal terrorism has foreign linkages. It thus becomes all the more important to have a body where these issues can be tackled with meaningfully and holistically. In the case of Pakistan, the domestic context is very important, facing as we

do, transnational terrorism, rising sectarian tensions, as well as a foreign-funded nationalist insurgency in parts of Balochistan. In a country like Pakistan which has fought five wars with India, besides facing prolonged periods of near-war situations, as well as unstable eastern and western borders, the input from the military is critical. It is also true that militaries all over the world, at least up to the middle-level, and agencies conceive everything in terms of black and white and are not used to taking a nuanced approach. Such views need to be tempered by those dealing with Pakistan's external relations as well as by the representatives of the people through the government, which in the ultimate analysis is responsible to the people of Pakistan. At the same time, in order to effectively combat internal insurgency or terrorism, the military requires political ownership by the government so that its actions are supported by the general public.

The territories of Pakistan are geopolitically very sensitively situated. The country is located at the hub of Central, South, and West Asia. Thus ever since Independence this region has attracted a lot of attention by major world powers. Consequently, we had close interactions with the United States, the former USSR, Britain, and the European Union, and of course with our immediate neighbours, China, India, Afghanistan, and Iran. This situation led to our involvement initially in the containment of the Soviet Union and later in the Afghan Jihad. Following 9/11, there was instability in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Because of the Kashmir dispute, our relations with India have generally been tense. Pakistan has therefore been facing major foreign policy and security challenges from the very beginning. The need for the establishment of an effective national security mechanism has become all the more necessary in the backdrop of the peculiar civil and military relationship in the country. The absence of such a mechanism has created complications in our relations with the United States, Afghanistan, India, and even Iran to an extent. There is therefore an urgent need for an effective institution or a mechanism where all the stakeholders including the Foreign Office, the Intelligence Agencies, the military, and the political stakeholders give their own assessments before finalizing the government's position on various important national security and foreign policy issues. It bears repetition that intelligence agencies all over the world do have an input in policymaking. It is no secret that George Tenet, Head of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) was perhaps the first person to meet President Bush everyday for an early morning briefing. An appropriate national security mechanism will prevent misunderstandings between the political forces on one hand and the military and the security agencies on the other.

There is thus an urgent need to have an effective body under the Chief Executive or President to coordinate on matters relating to issues impacting national security. Given Pakistan's history, where there have been four military interventions, the controversy surrounding the setting up of such a body in the country has been bedevilled by questions relating to the role of the armed forces in the decision-making process. In earlier days, when the President was not a mere figurehead, there was even a dispute as to who should

head such a body: the President or the Prime Minister. The irate reaction of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to Army Chief General Jehangir Karamat's proposal regarding the National Security Council (NSC) in October 1998 and his [Karamat's] subsequent resignation reflected, inter alia, a lack of agreement among the stakeholders on the need as well as the composition of such a body. Sometimes, political stakeholders in Pakistan perceive the existence of such an institution as an attempt to dilute the authority of the civilian government. They forget that the real dilution of their authority takes place not by other stakeholders sitting on the same table but by their own lack of performance.

Under General Yahya Khan, a National Security Council was created in 1969. After Yahya's fall a lot of criticism prevailed about the functioning of the National Security Council, particularly, regarding the absence of civilian input, that was attributed by many as the reason for the 1971 debacle. The Defence Committee of the Cabinet (DCC) was created by Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in May 1976. Such a coordinating body has had different nomenclatures at different times, namely, the National Security Council (NSC), the Defence Committee of the Cabinet (DCC), or for that matter, in its latest avatar, the Cabinet Committee on National Security (CCNS), although CCNS according to reports is supposed to be subservient to the DCC that is the highest policymaking forum on national security and foreign policy.<sup>70</sup> I do not care what the body is called but wish to underline the need for such a body which is supported by a professional staff. The DCC has not functioned effectively. The absence of a professional staff supporting such a system of decision making raises doubts about its efficacy. The ad hoc and uncoordinated system of decision making has exposed the country to too many perils and this issue has to be addressed.

I used to attend the meetings of the National Security Council and can say with confidence that it did lead to positive results when all the stakeholders provided their input. We faced a particularly difficult situation in the aftermath of 9/11. Millions of Afghan refugees poured into Pakistan. There were reports of Indian and Afghan support for separatist elements in Balochistan and an ever-growing chorus for 'doing more' led by the United States. Although all the factors for instability were present, better coordination between the main stakeholders helped save the situation. Of course, the fact that General Musharraf was both the President and the Chief of Army Staff made a difference, but the presence of other stakeholders, both civil and military, sitting institutionally, had a positive impact. Given the current situation in Pakistan, there is no doubt that there is a need for such a body. It should be headed by the Prime Minister, and Members should include key Ministers: Foreign, Defence, Interior, and Finance. Given the internal situation, as well as the situation on our eastern and western borders, it is necessary that such a body also has as its Members, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, Chiefs of Staff of the Army, Navy and the Air Force, and the DGISI. Since there are relatively fewer provinces in Pakistan, in our case, it would make sense for Chief Ministers of the four provinces to be Members also. I felt that the inclusion of Chief Ministers was very useful during NSC

meetings. Their presence led to a better understanding of the issues confronting the federation, with direct implications for their respective provinces.

When Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif assumed office, a decision to institute a Cabinet Committee on National Security (CCNS) under Mr Sartaj Aziz, former Foreign and Finance Minister, was formed. One does not know how effectively it is working. In practice at least, it seems to have been substituted by a meeting which provides a good photo-opportunity with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif sitting on one chair and the Army Chief on the other. Sartaj Aziz, currently Advisor to the Prime Minister on National Security and Foreign Affairs, is not always present, nor are the other stakeholders seen. It seems that the CCNS is not working in a truly institutional manner or that its functioning has been substituted by some other informal mechanism. If the CCNS was functioning effectively, fewer rumours would abound of differences between the Prime Minister and the Chief of Army Staff. Currently, the CCNS seems to be in a state of limbo. It needs to be institutionalized if it is to serve the purpose it is meant for. It is not just the drawing rooms in Pakistan that were buzzing with stories of disagreements between Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, now in the first year of his third tenure—and the Army Chief, General Raheel Sharif, who was appointed by the Prime Minister himself. These stories were making headlines in the newspapers. There are reports of open disagreements on policies towards operations against the Taliban, as well as on Afghanistan and India (these differences seem to have been exacerbated on matters related to the trial of former President Pervez Musharraf, and Geo TV's telecast relating to DG-ISI, both incidents being regarded by observers as proxy wars between the government and the army. If there was an effective coordinating mechanism, there would be far less confusion on policy matters. Moreover, for such a body to function effectively it must have a full-time professional staff headed by a senior Secretary and a National Security Advisor. Muhammad Sadiq, a competent officer from the Foreign Office who served efficiently during my tenure as Foreign Office Spokesman, as number two at the Embassy in Washington, and as Ambassador to Afghanistan, has been appointed as Head of the Secretariat of the CCNS. If despite him and the experienced Sartaj Aziz, there are widespread perceptions of the main stakeholders not being on the same page on important foreign policy and security matters, it has obviously more to do with the non-institutional style of functioning of the present government.



## Afghanistan

*Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*  
(The more things change, the more they stay the same)

### **COMMON HISTORICAL, RELIGIOUS, CULTURAL, AND ETHNIC BONDS**

Pakistan and Afghanistan enjoy a special relationship. It is rooted in shared history and bound by ties of faith, culture, and geographic proximity. There have been over the years, particularly during our tenure, convergences of interests as well as periods of troubled relations. No country has a greater stake than Pakistan in peace, stability, and prosperity of Afghanistan. For me, Afghanistan has always evoked a sense of romance as well as a common bond because of my family's connection with that country, an account of which is provided elsewhere in the book.

In order to understand the situation in Afghanistan today, one needs to understand the bond that ties Afghanistan and Pakistan together. Hence a brief historical reference may be in order here. Afghanistan became the centre of conflict between two great imperial powers: the Czarist Empire of Russia and the British Empire. The latter was concerned that its Indian possessions could be threatened by 'Czarist Expansionism'. Thus started what came to be known as the 'Great Game', which continues in one form or another to this day.

The First Afghan War (1839–42) began when Britain, in order to counter the expanding Czarist influence in Afghanistan, sent an army to set up a pro-British King, Shah Shuja al-Mulk, in place of Dost Muhammad. Resistance to Shuja's rule led to the destruction of the British Indian forces in the area, and their eventual withdrawal from Afghanistan. The real purpose of the British was to check Russian influence in the region and to keep Afghanistan as a buffer state. The second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–80) began when an uninvited Russian diplomatic mission to Afghanistan refused to leave the country. The British demanded the presence of a British mission; when rejected, they began to march towards Afghanistan. Fearing invasion, Afghanistan signed the Treaty of Gandamak (1879), giving Britain the right to maintain a Resident in Kabul and control over Afghanistan's external affairs in lieu of an annual subsidy and protection in case of foreign aggression. Having achieved this objective, the British later withdrew.

It is in this historical milieu that the activities of one of my uncles, Maulana Muhammad Ali Kasuri, become relevant. He was at that time declared by the British Governor of Punjab, Sir Michael Francis O'Dwyer, as one of the two biggest threats to the British Empire in the area; the other being Sardar Mangal Singh, a Sikh revolutionary.<sup>1</sup>

My uncle seems to have been quite a unique character. People belonging to his academic and socio-economic background usually joined the Indian Civil Service—the highest echelon of bureaucracy in the subcontinent at the time. Instead, after a triple first at Cambridge, he decided to join the Court of Ameer Habibullah of Afghanistan. He was treated and looked after as a son by Sardar Muhammad Yousaf Khan, grandfather of King Zahir Shah.<sup>2</sup> At the Afghan Court, he tried to convince the Ameer to join the Germans against the British. He wanted Afghanistan to attack British India so that India could be liberated with German help. It was however a different matter that the British had the better of him. They conspired to have him expelled from the Court through the efforts of Mullah Shorebazar who had close ties with the British Intelligence. Maulana Muhammed Ali Kasuri barely survived an attack on his life by pro-British elements at the Court. He was forewarned and helped in his escape from Afghanistan by his dear friend Marshal Shah Wali Khan, Fateh Kabul, an uncle of King Zahir Shah. Incidentally, Mullah Shorebazar was the grandfather of former President Mujaddadi of Afghanistan. There is also an account of the rivalry between the pro-British and the pro-German groups at the court of Ameer Habibullah in the famous book on Afghanistan by Louis Dupree.

An 'interim government of free India', in which my Uncle, Muhammed Ali Kasuri, was 'Foreign Minister', was recognized by both Germany and Afghanistan.<sup>3</sup> This, along with the account in my uncle's book *Mushahidat-e-Kabul-o-Yaghistan* (Observations/Reflections during the Travels of Kabul and Yaghistan) will provide an interesting backdrop for readers on Afghanistan and the Tribal Areas. The situation illustrated in the book is eerily similar to the prevailing milieu. In fact the term 'Yaghistan', which refers to the tribal areas on both sides of Pak-Afghan border, literally means 'Land of the Rebels'. It seems the more the things change, the more they remain the same, *plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*.

My uncle failed to convince Ameer Habibullah to attack British India, but India was in fact attacked by Afghanistan in 1919, not long after Habibullah's death. This came to be known as the Third Anglo-Afghan War. The attack was however repulsed. My uncle was later awarded a medal by the new King, Amanullah Khan, in recognition of his contributions to the stability of Afghanistan. The Third Anglo-Afghan war of 1919 is considered by war historians as a tactical gain for Britain for pushing the attack back and as a strategic victory for Afghanistan because it regained control over its foreign affairs, which had been ceded to the British in the Second Anglo-Afghan war. After the war, the Durand Line Agreement of 1893 was reaffirmed and the Afghans agreed to desist from

fomenting trouble across the border. This agreement ultimately caused difficulties in relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

## **Pashtunwali**

A reference to *Pashtunwali*, the honour code by which Pashtuns live, is in order here. *Pashtunwali* chalks out various moral and ethical principles, including honour, hospitality, sanctuary, and revenge. The *jirga* (assembly of elders) system is also a part of *Pashtunwali*. A *jirga* deals with dispute management and revolves around a consensus decision by adult male members of the community in resolution of all types of disputes. These *jirgas* have in the course of history unified under the leadership of charismatic leaders, particularly in situations of external pressure.

During the anti-Soviet jihad of the 1980s, mullahs and religious leaders (who were part of the *jirga* system) used the huge financial grants from the US for the expansion of madrasahs, largely in Pakistan's tribal areas and in areas where refugees were housed, as well as in Afghanistan. These madrasahs trained and educated a generation of students in militancy and spawned the phenomenon of the Taliban. It explains the extreme bigoted interpretation of religion adopted by these former students, as well as the spirit behind the cliché often used these days that Afghanistan is the 'graveyard of empires'. Additionally, this can help us look at the present situation as a continuum of an evolving story. In the view of the historian William Dalrymple, who has studied the area thoroughly, the West's 'Fourth war in the country looks certain to end with as few political gains as the first three, and like them, to terminate in an embarrassing withdrawal after a humiliating defeat, with Afghanistan yet again left in tribal chaos and quite possibly ruled by the same government which the war was originally fought to overthrow.'<sup>4</sup> Whether this becomes a reality or not, we will soon discover. Hopefully, history will not repeat itself in its entirety. Regardless, it is in the interest of both Pakistan and Afghanistan that they understand each other's concerns and priorities so that, following the US drawdown in 2014, we are not faced with a civil war situation in Afghanistan once again, which will be disastrous for both Pakistan and Afghanistan. The account that follows is based on my interactions with Afghan rulers.

At Pakistan's Independence in 1947, Pakistan-Afghanistan relations began with a rocky start, with Afghanistan voting negatively on Pakistan's admission to the United Nations (UN), and stating on the occasion that Pakistan's North-West Frontier 'should not be recognized as a part of Pakistan until the Pashtuns of that area had been given the opportunity to opt for independence'.<sup>5</sup> Despite Afghan reservations, Pakistan was nonetheless admitted to the UN. This issue gave rise to the slogan of 'Pashtunistan', which was raised largely during the time of Prince Daoud Khan, Prime Minister of Afghanistan. Pakistan obviously resented this.

It is a matter of common knowledge in Pakistan that the Pashtunistan slogan had the backing of India. The United States has been supportive of Pakistan's position on the

Durand Line and Pashtunistan. According to a prominent American research scholar, 'The Pashtunistan campaign is a farcical stunt on the part of the Royal Family to promote its own interests.'<sup>6</sup>

### **Close People-To-People Contact**

Despite differences at governmental level, at the level of the people, the situation was very different. The relationship was characterized by warmth based on historical, religious, cultural, and ethnic bonds. Ethnic Pashtuns straddled both sides of the international border of Pakistan and Afghanistan, with close relations living on both sides. Moreover, they shared a common memory of history. It should, therefore, come as no surprise that, despite differences between the Pakistan and Afghan governments, people's feelings towards each other were not impacted. Pakistani visitors to Kabul would come back with stories of Afghan hospitality and friendship. This was particularly true during the 1960s and 1970s, when large numbers of Pakistanis would visit Afghanistan during the *Jashn-e-Kabul* (Festival of Kabul). They were welcomed warmly. I remember visiting Kabul in early 1970s with my wife during the *Jashn-e-Kabul*. In those days Kabul was a truly peaceful city and welcomed Pakistani visitors with open arms despite tensions between the two governments. For me, it was personally a memorable visit for another reason. My wife Nasreen (Mona) Kasuri and I had the opportunity of meeting with Prince Marshal Shah Wali Khan, *Fateh Kabul*, about whom I had been hearing from my uncle Maulana Muhammad Ali Kasuri and my father, Mian Mahmud Ali Kasuri since my childhood. An account of their association which was formed during my uncle's exile in Kabul has been given above. I was very surprised at that time on learning that a large number of Afghans spoke very good Urdu even then. For example, when my wife and I met Prince Marshal Shah Wali Khan, uncle of King Zahir Shah, he conversed with us in chaste and classical Urdu and autographed his official photograph with a message for my father in Urdu. (After the Soviet invasion in 1971 resulting in millions of Afghan refugees in Pakistan, Urdu is now widely understood in Afghanistan, creating yet another bond between the peoples of the two countries).

### **An Early Case of Pashtun-Tajik Rivalry**

Marshal Shah Wali Khan was one of the uncles of King Mohammad Zahir Shah and President Muhammad Daoud Khan. He was the brother of King Mohammed Nadir Shah and Prime Minister Sardar Shah Mahmud Khan. Marshal Shah Wali Khan commanded an army that defeated Habibullah Kalakani, also known as *Bacha-ye Saqqow/Bacha-e-Saqqa*, and captured Kabul on 10 October 1929. He was bestowed the titles of *Ghazi* and *Fateh Kabul*. It may be of interest to contemporary readers to know that, although Habibullah Kalakani, an ethnic Tajik, was the Emir of Afghanistan for a few months until his removal in 1929, he was and is regarded as a usurper by most Pashtuns. They refer to him derogatively as *Bacha-ye Saqqow/Bacha-e-Saqqa*, since his father had been a water

carrier in the Afghan army. However, the Tajiks considered Kalakani a hero. This can be regarded as an early sign of the Pashtun-Tajik rivalry which we have seen in more recent times, particularly since the United States deposed the Taliban in Afghanistan. What is interesting is the fact that King Amanullah was deposed by Kalakani with the help of certain Pashtun tribes.

Amanullah aspired to modernize Afghanistan. Queen Soraya Tarzi, his wife, played a significant role in improving the status of women in the conservative male-dominated Afghan society. But the modernization process was too rapid for the country and there was a backlash to Amanullah's reforms, amongst some Pashtuns as well as others. Habibullah Kalakani took advantage of the unrest and managed to remove Amanullah from the throne and proclaim himself as Emir of Kabul. This episode is an example of the ongoing tussle between modernization and conservatism in Afghan society. When the Taliban took over the reins of the Afghan government, harsh measures were taken by them to suppress women. The governments that have succeeded the Taliban, however, are working towards promoting girls' education and modernization. They are receiving active support from the US and other Western powers to achieve their goals.

### **The Idea of Pak-Afghan Confederation**

This feeling of closeness between the peoples of the two countries may also help explain that at one time serious efforts were made at government level for a Pak-Afghan Confederation. What is more surprising but reflective of the complex nature of the relationship of Afghanistan and Pakistan is the fact that these efforts were made when Prince Muhammad Daoud Khan was Prime Minister, who was regarded by many as being anti-Pakistan, for his backing of the Pashtunist slogan.

Aslam Khattak, a prominent Pakistani politician, who at one time was Pakistan's Ambassador to Afghanistan, refers to certain concrete efforts in this direction in his book *A Pathan Odyssey*. He mentions how he had discussed the issue of a Confederation with Sardar Muhammad Daoud Khan. When Daoud Khan commented that Pakistan's population was four times larger than Afghanistan's, he was corrected by Aslam Khattak that, it was ten times more, considering the population of East Pakistan, to which Prince Daoud quipped, that East Pakistan may not remain a part of Pakistan for very long! Aslam Khattak also mentions that, after Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy, who was privy to this development had left office and been succeeded by Malik Firoz Khan Noon, he followed up the idea with the new Prime Minister, and queried as to who would head the new Confederation. Sir Firoz Khan Noon, according to Khattak, said in his 'grand way', 'We should have no difficulty accepting King Zahir Shah as the constitutional Head of State. After all, for some time after independence, we had a Christian Queen [Elizabeth II]. Now, we would have a Muslim man!' According to Khattak, 'President (Iskander) Mirza concurred with this.'<sup>7</sup> The author goes on to explain that the talks with Daoud had advanced to such a stage that they planned to implement a face saving for Prince Daoud

by inviting him to visit Pakistan. The idea was that he should meet with the important Pathan leaders in Pakistan, thus enabling him to announce on his return to Afghanistan that he had been assured by the Pathan (Pashtun) leaders that they were happy in Pakistan. This would permit him to abandon the slogan of Pashtunistan and facilitate in resolving differences between the two governments, thereby opening the way to a Confederation. Ironically, the then Chief Minister of West Pakistan, Dr Khan Sahib (younger brother of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the *Khudai Khidmatgar* leader long considered to be a representative of those espousing Pashtun nationalist sentiment in Pakistan), seemed to have the sole objection that, since he was a Pathan, he should negotiate with Prince Daoud Khan. Interestingly, the United States supported the idea of a confederation between Pakistan and Afghanistan and the Americans agreed to help in a major way, particularly in infrastructure development.<sup>8</sup>

This is not the only instance when Prince Daoud Khan came close to abandoning the slogan of Pashtunistan and settling his differences with Pakistan. Another opportunity came when the issue of the Durand Line (the border line between Pakistan and Afghanistan set in the times of the British) came up during the tenure of Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and the two countries were also to settle this issue. Unfortunately, Daoud Khan's removal from power and subsequent assassination during the Saur Revolution led by the pro-Communist Peoples Democratic Party of Nur Muhammad Taraki on 27–28 April 1978 prevented further development.

The unique nature of Pak-Afghan relationship is highlighted here by an interesting anecdote attributed to Field Marshal Ayub Khan in the context of the Pashtunistan slogan, which was being raised by the Afghan rulers at that time. At a banquet held in honour of King Zahir Shah on his visit to Pakistan, President Ayub Khan, himself a Pashtun, while introducing important Pakistani dignitaries who were Pashtuns, is reported to have commented to Zahir Shah, 'We are all the people that Your Majesty would like to liberate.' While I cannot vouch for the authenticity of this anecdote, people used to narrate it with amusement to indicate that the Pashtuns, who were strongly integrated into the armed forces and the power structure of Pakistan, did not require Afghan rulers to look after their interests.

It was because of the close affinity between Pakistan and Afghanistan, that Pakistan accommodated over three million Afghan refugees (at one time four-and-a-half million, the largest number of refugees hosted by any country of the world) following the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979. This also helps to explain why Pakistan is viewed as an indispensable factor in the Afghanistan equation.

The Pashtuns are the largest ethnic group in Afghanistan. But in Pakistan the population of Pashtuns is higher, just as there are more Tajiks in Afghanistan than in Tajikistan. Therefore, the upside of our relationship is that we maintain a large footprint in Afghanistan. The downside is that we come under increased international pressure as the

security situation worsens there. The presence of nearly three million Afghan refugees in Pakistan after thirty-five years of conflict has a bearing on the cross-border infiltration problem. The close people-to-people relationship between two countries also helps in providing an explanation to why General Zia ul-Haq did not face much resistance from ordinary Pakistanis when he assisted the Afghans in their war against the Soviets. In due course it has proved to be detrimental to Pakistan's internal peace and well-being as well as to its economy.

Significantly, Afghanistan's persistent refusal to accept the Durand Line as the international border between the two countries has soured relations since Pakistan's inception. It is, however, worth noting that, during Pakistan's wars with India in 1965 and 1971, the Afghans did not apply any pressure on the western borders. As King Zahir Shah pointed out to me during my visit to Kabul, 'You did not have to keep a single soldier on your western borders and we did not create any difficulty during your wars with India.' One reason for this could have been the feelings of friendship that exist at people-to-people level.

Afghanistan and Pakistan withdrew their ambassadors from their capitals in 1955 until 1957 over Pakistani plans to control its tribal areas. The Pashtunistan issue flared up again in 1960 and the ensuing border clashes further dented the relationship, with serious economic consequences, particularly for Afghanistan. In 1963, the Shah of Iran, Mohammed Reza Shah Pahlavi, facilitated the restoration of diplomatic ties between Pakistan and Afghanistan which crucially led to a decade of peace between the two countries.

Pakistan's leaders viewed Afghanistan's policy not to recognize the Durand Line as the international border as a part of Indo-Afghan nexus against Pakistan. A noted commentator explains the origins of such fears: 'If on Pakistan's birth, coordinated movements opposed to her could be produced in Kashmir and Afghanistan, both of them predominantly Muslim territories and near one and another, the new state might be stillborn, sort of crushed by a pincer movement.'<sup>9</sup> To counter Afghanistan's position, Pakistan adopted a forward policy of supporting Islamist factions in Afghanistan in the 1970s. Ironically, it was under Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's relatively secular dispensation, that some of the top Islamist leaders fighting against Prince Daoud Khan were helped by Pakistan, in order to put pressure on Daoud Khan and counter the Pashtunistan issue. Those providing help, including refuge in many cases, comprised those who later became top leaders of the jihadist movement in Afghanistan, such as Ahmad Shah Massoud and Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, among others. Afghanistan continued to encourage the launching of a series of low-level attacks inside Pakistan while maintaining some degree of plausible deniability.<sup>10</sup>

The Russian invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 led to the decade-long jihad in Afghanistan, sponsored by the US and Pakistan. It reached its apogee with the withdrawal of Russian

forces from the theatre. The Afghan Jihad in the 1980s helped unleash forces and create circumstances which directly led to the events of 9/11. Following the withdrawal of Soviet forces after the Geneva Accord of 1988, the US abandonment of the area to its own fate created a vacuum which was filled by the Taliban who brought the civil war to an end. The Taliban did manage to bring peace to Afghanistan, albeit at a great cost. The Taliban sought to impose an Islamic order based on extremist interpretations of Islam. In the process, many human rights violations were committed, particularly against women. Grave hurdles were put in the way of female education.

Much to Pakistan's chagrin at the time, even the Taliban refused to recognize the Durand Line. They assured that, 'Between the Ummah there could be no borders'. They bluntly rejected Pakistan's pleas to spare the ancient Bamiyan Buddha statues situated in Central Afghanistan, which they destroyed, attracting international condemnation. They did not prevent Osama bin Laden from abusing Afghan hospitality for his campaign of international terrorism. Critically, after 9/11 the Taliban refused to hand over bin Laden and spare their country the certain devastation that followed and that had grave consequences for Pakistan as well. There were some reports at the time that sections of the 'moderate' Taliban were looking for a face saving before handing over Osama bin Laden to an agreed third party. It however proved to be too late to prevent an American attack.

According to *The Economist*:<sup>11</sup>

Post 9/11, while American intervention might have achieved its objective of dismantling the Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and displacing its Taliban protectors, it has spawned new threats and perils for Pakistan, which has suffered immeasurably from its blowback. Admittedly, Pakistan's own policies following Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan, and of interference during the Afghan Civil war promoting its own favourites are also responsible for the disastrous consequences that Pakistan has suffered. While America's fight against Al-Qaeda has been relentless, it left behind a bitter legacy in Afghanistan and the border areas between Pakistan and Afghanistan, which may leave this region in a state of turmoil for a long time to come.

This is the challenge that the rulers of Afghanistan and Pakistan will continue to face even the after US drawdown in 2014. They will have to learn from the past and make serious attempts at removing suspicion and mistrust between the two countries. Given their history of troubled relations, Pakistan-Afghanistan relationship can only be normalized if both countries adopt a strict policy of non-interference in each other's internal affairs, and neither country allows its territory to be used for launching aggression against the other. In my view, no country has a greater stake in the peace, stability, and security of Afghanistan than Pakistan. Over the years, the Afghans have, unfortunately, been encouraged by their own successive governments to hold Pakistan responsible for all the ills plaguing their country because of its apprehensions about a stable Afghanistan reviving the Pashtunistan and Durand Line questions. Our response on some occasions has not helped either.

A relationship based on mutual trust will serve our interest much better than any ideas of 'strategic depth'. This trust is only possible by strictly following a policy of non-interference in each other's internal affairs. In Afghanistan, stability is only possible if

efforts are made by various ethnic and tribal groups to resolve their problems among themselves. Whatever influence Pakistan has with the Afghan Taliban should be used to promote this objective. Undoubtedly, Pakistan has suffered from the blowback of the grave security situation in Afghanistan, particularly in its tribal areas. Over the years, a blame game continues between the two countries, based on divergent perceptions of Afghanistan's security situation.

The best path for Pakistan to take is to cultivate a working relationship with the Afghan government. There have been some misgivings among some sections in Pakistan regarding Dr Abdullah Abdullah's hostility towards Pakistan. I have known Dr Abdullah ever since he was my counterpart. The Afghans, including any future ruler of Afghanistan, are aware of the important role that Pakistan has played in the last thirty-five years following the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan. No ruler in Afghanistan can afford to alienate Pakistan; hence, it is in their own interest to harbour best relations with Pakistan.

After Dr Abdullah and I had relinquished our offices, we met at an international conference in Morocco on 12 November 2010. Dr Abdullah and I were likely to face serious questions. The night before the conference, I suggested to Dr Abdullah that it would be useful for us that before we went on to the rostrum/dais we had a meeting, so that our responses are positive and aimed at bridging differences. Dr Abdullah readily accepted my advice and we met for a breakfast meeting before the conference commenced. This helped a great deal and those who were expecting that Pakistan and Afghanistan would level accusations against each other were greatly surprised. I have found Dr Abdullah to be a pragmatist. I have no doubt that as Chief Executive of Afghanistan he will adopt a positive approach.

### **Exchanges with Ethnic Leaders**

As far as Pakistan is concerned, we have to learn from our mistakes and our misplaced desire in the past to interfere in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. This happened sometimes for reasons beyond our control, as after the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan, as well as following the events of 9/11. The Afghans are a proud people and do not like to be treated as anyone's puppets. Whenever I went to Kabul, I made it a point to meet the leaders of all ethnic groups. I invited the Speaker of the Lower House (Wolesi Jirga), Yunus Qanooni, and Defence Minister Marshal Faheem to visit Pakistan. They promised but never came. On my inquiry, I was told that nobody could travel outside Afghanistan without presidential clearance and President Karzai was not keen to see them travel to Pakistan and develop independent relationships. I strongly feel that we should make it clear that we are not interested in who rules Afghanistan. This should be their internal matter. I hope that the new political dispensation will help in creating conditions of stability in Afghanistan. We will have to be careful in the future and will have to make even greater efforts to prevent non-state actors moving into Afghanistan. This is all the

more important now when Pakistani extremists of the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) have taken refuge across the border in Afghanistan and launch attacks into Pakistan from there. I am happy to note that there is now much better understanding at the official level in Pakistan that it needs to maintain cordial relations with all Afghans, regardless of their ethnic backgrounds. I have, even after leaving office, been consistently emphasizing this point.<sup>12</sup> I have reason to believe that the military and the security agencies realize this and there is a positive trend in issues pertaining to better relations.

## **C**ONTRASTING **N**ARRATIVES ABOUT THE **S**ECURITY **S**ITUATION IN **A**FGHANISTAN

Keeping the above historical background in mind, it may be easier to understand a strange phenomenon that exists between Pakistan and Afghanistan, namely, close people-to-people relations based on religious and ethnic factors, as against a continuing strain in the relationship at the official level. As Foreign Minister, I had to deal at the official level with the Afghan government and faced a lot of pressure due to misunderstandings that existed at government level. Incidentally, I found President Karzai warm and friendly but he minced no words in his criticism when we met alone.

I will briefly touch upon areas of cooperation between the two countries, some that were significant but never made headlines. What made headline news during my tenure, and continues to do so even now, are instances of conflict and recrimination. For example, the visit of Chief of Army Staff General Raheel Sharif (assumed office from 29 Nov. 2013) to Kabul in May 2014 in connection with a meeting of the Trilateral Dialogue with the top brass of the Afghan Security Forces (ASF), and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). It was held in the background of the Afghan governments' allegations against Pakistan of setting up military installations across the border in what the Afghans regard as a violation of the Trilateral Agreement. I found it interesting that General Raheel Sharif also met with Afghan Vice President Yunus Qanooni and General Bismillah Muhammadi (Defence Minister of Afghanistan), both leading Tajiks in the current dispensation. I used to make deliberate efforts during my visits to interact with leaders of all ethnic groups. I wanted to send the signal that Pakistan would like to harbour good relations with all Afghans regardless of their ethnic background.

## **M**Y **F**IRST **V**ISIT **A**BROAD AS **F**OREIGN **M**INISTER

### **Conference on Afghanistan**

Afghanistan remained a very important issue throughout my tenure. Fittingly, my first foreign visit as Foreign Minister was to Afghanistan and it occurred within a few days of taking over as the Foreign Minister. It was at Petersberg in Germany to attend a conference on 'Rebuilding Afghanistan—Peace and Stability', scheduled on 2 December 2002. It was there that I realized the importance that the international community paid to

the role of Pakistan in international politics. The special protocol given to me on that trip and the close bilateral consultations that I held with German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer recognized the important role that Pakistan plays in peace and stability in Afghanistan. A brief anecdote will illustrate this point. We were all staying at Hotel Petersberg, the official guest house of the German government. A banquet was being hosted by the Foreign Minister of Germany for all the guests. As I was getting ready to go down to the lobby, the German protocol officer informed me that I had a separate dinner meeting with the German Vice Chancellor and Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, and that they would take me to the venue. When I arrived at the destination accompanied by Aziz Ahmed Khan, our Additional Secretary dealing with Afghanistan (later Ambassador to India), and my young Deputy Director Rahim Hayat Qureshi (currently Minister at our High Commission in New Delhi), I noticed the German Foreign Minister, Joschka Fischer, sitting with one or two of his staff officers and no foreign guests. I expressed surprise at this and commented that I was under the impression that he would be hosting us at the hotel. Joschka replied that that was true, and that his deputy, the Minister of State, was hosting the other visiting Foreign Ministers and that we were his only guests at this beautiful restaurant. I thanked him and said that it was a great honour for us that we were his exclusive guests. His response to this was that since Pakistan is an important country, he wanted to get to know me better. Subsequently, Joschka and I became quite friendly. He visited me at my home in Lahore.

My visit to Bonn was undertaken for the purpose of attending the multilateral conference on Afghanistan, but the German government turned this into a bilateral visit, where I interacted with top cabinet ministers and parliamentarians. On a personal note, this visit was memorable for me for another reason. The German government provided the highest protocol to us; this was the first time that I witnessed traffic being stopped so that our motorcade could pass. What really impressed me was the German efficiency in traffic control. Although traffic was stopped while our motorcade passed, it caused no discomfort to the public. It appeared that the crossing would be closed for vehicles only a few seconds before our motorcade would approach it. It was the same when I was in London for an official visit. The flow of traffic was not disturbed in any way. This is in stark contrast to what happens in Pakistan. I know we have to ensure the security of visiting dignitaries but what happens in Pakistan is really obscene where thousands of policemen are lined on the roads and traffic is shut down for hours causing huge agony to the public at large.

It was clear that Germany attached the highest importance to Pakistan and felt it was a key country as far as restoration of peace and stability in Afghanistan was concerned. Pakistan can still play that role and I sincerely hope that it will. For that to be realized, we will need to learn from our past mistakes and develop the best of relations with our neighbours. We attempted to work towards this end during our tenure, and improvement was witnessed in difficult relationships that we had with India as well as Afghanistan.

At the Bonn Conference, the participants agreed on the need to promote Reconciliation, Peace, and Stability, and to support Recovery and Reconstruction in Afghanistan. A number of issues were agreed upon, including the creation of an Afghan National Army (ANA), and Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) of former combatants into civilian life. Agreement was also reached on establishing a multi-ethnic, sustainable, and professional police service throughout Afghanistan. The conference reaffirmed its support for the Bonn process.

Exactly a month after assuming office, I visited Afghanistan on 22 December 2002. I was conscious of the fact that for the past thirty years the Afghans had been suffering due to foreign aggression, ambitions of warlords, fanaticism of Osama bin Laden and his cohorts, and greed of myopic politicians. Significantly, during my visit, I signed the 'Kabul Declaration on Good Neighbourly Relations', an important pledge from Afghanistan's neighbours on non-interference in each other's internal affairs.<sup>13</sup> In addition to Pakistan, the Declaration was signed by China, Iran, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, who all expressed a determination to defeat terrorism, extremism, and drug trafficking. On the occasion, President Hamid Karzai stated that Afghanistan would never allow itself to be used for aggression against another country and expressed the hope that all had learnt from their past mistakes and would follow the right course in the future. He added, 'We need to strengthen our bonds of brotherhood and friendship and work for a region that is free of terror, extremism, and backwardness.' He stressed that 'Afghanistan for its part will never allow its territory or bilateral relations with other nations to harm another country and we expect the same.' The UN's Special Representative to Afghanistan, Lakhdar Brahimi, observed that the Declaration was only a beginning and a part of the strengthening trend.<sup>14</sup>

The Afghan Foreign Office spokesman however stated on the occasion that Afghanistan had been a victim of all kinds of interference, and it was in their interest and that of its neighbours to leave that behind.<sup>15</sup> Addressing the press conference after signing the Declaration, I rebutted a question as to whether Pakistan was a host for Taliban remnants on its soil, or would interfere in Afghanistan in the future. I rejected it, stressing Pakistan's efforts in the fight against terrorism. I highlighted the fact that Pakistan had deployed 70,000 troops along its borders with Afghanistan to prevent Taliban infiltration, which should be ample evidence to the international community of the level of our commitment to peace and stability in Afghanistan. According to the critics of Pakistan's policies, infiltration over the porous border between Afghanistan and Pakistan was very common. However, whenever there were calls on Pakistan to do more against border infiltration, my colleagues at the Foreign Office and I decried these as unfair. We would remind the international community of the sacrifices that Pakistan had made in terms of blood and treasure in the American-led 'War on Terror', and stressed that all sides must 'do more' to improve the level and quality of information and intelligence sharing. I admit that there was cross-border movement, but the nature of the porous borders, the non-cooperation by

Afghan officials to support our measures for implementation of border monitoring, the lack of response from the international community to our proposals to fence the border, and last, but not the least, the present three-and-a-half to four million Afghan refugees still living in Pakistan contributed to the state of affairs.

I visited Afghanistan again in August 2003. During my two-day visit, I noticed that Pakistan's image in Afghanistan had taken a further beating. This was a result of the tendency among the Afghan officials and the government-controlled media to routinely blame Pakistan for the spike in terrorist acts within Afghanistan. Moreover, unlike India, Pakistan's participation in Afghanistan's reconstruction had not been apparent enough to earn the goodwill of Afghanistan's general public. Whereas India had invested much more in schools, hospitals, buses, and such apparent projects of cooperation like roads and railways, Pakistan had invested in less numerous projects of far less apparent nature. One of the weak areas in this vital relationship was the poor implementation of the promises and proposals by Pakistan, which suffered in the absence of an effective inter-ministerial mechanism in Pakistan. This is something which affected not only Pakistan's relations with Afghanistan, but also the workings of its external relations with different countries in various fields.

I was informed by President Karzai and Dr Abdullah of the increasing frustration among Afghans with 100 people killed in the week prior to my visit due to activities 'originating from Quetta and Peshawar', which were fuelling the Taliban revival and creating negative perceptions in Afghanistan about Pakistan, and this was seen as standing in the way of Afghanistan's progress and stability. I responded by highlighting Pakistan's commitment to the Bonn process and to not allow its territory to be used for launching terrorism in Afghanistan or elsewhere. Further, I pointed out that Afghanistan's problems were internal and largely self-inflicted. I reiterated to them that all efforts at monitoring and controlling the border by Pakistan had received a cold response from the Afghan authorities. I also pointed out the difficulties we were facing by the continued presence of 3.5 million Afghan refugees which added to the difficulties of managing an already porous border.

The security environment in Afghanistan started deteriorating by 2003 because of the growing powers of regional warlords, poor governance, corruption, the drug problem, and the resurgence of the Taliban in the south of Afghanistan. The failure of the Karzai regime to deal with these problems and shifting the focus to blaming Pakistan for Afghanistan's woes has been a constant refrain of his regime over the years. Another contributory factor to the growing instability in Afghanistan was that American attention had for months been distracted by their planning regarding Iraq, which was ultimately attacked in early 2003. The worsening economic situation also affected the security of the region. The Atlantic Council in its report of March 2008, titled 'Saving Afghanistan: An Appeal and Plan for Urgent Action', stated: 'To add insult to injury, (out of) every dollar of aid spent on Afghanistan, less than 10 per cent goes directly to the Afghans, further compounding reform and reconstruction problems.' This report was prepared under the supervision of

General James Jones, who served briefly as the National Security Advisor to President Barack Obama.<sup>16</sup> As a result, no attention was paid to the denial of basic services to the Afghan people, and the government in Kabul remained ineffective, in part because of the need for political support from the warlords who tolerated no interference in their fiefdoms. The lack of a strong central government has also been responsible for the lack of success in tackling the drug problem, including the involvement of several influential people. The situation in Afghanistan changed little after our tenure was over, and President Obama in a speech in March 2009 stated, ‘Afghanistan has an elected government, but it is undermined by corruption and has difficulty delivering basic services to its people. The economy is undercut by a booming narcotics trade that encourages criminality and funds the insurgency.’<sup>17</sup>

Regardless, Afghanistan continued to blame Pakistan for all its problems in diplomatic contacts with key capitals and started making various allegations against Pakistan. It is appropriate here to recall some of these allegations.

- The Taliban fighters in Afghanistan are receiving support and enjoy sanctuary in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Quetta in Balochistan. Pakistan was doing so because of its misplaced notion that such influence among Taliban fighters provided it with ‘strategic depth’ and prevented India from creating trouble for Pakistan from there in Balochistan. Command and control of the Taliban insurgency is located in the so-called ‘Quetta Shura’.
- The Taliban fighters were being recruited and trained in these areas and elsewhere in Pakistan. In this context, Zalmay Khalilzad, the US Special Envoy for Afghanistan, who is very close to President Karzai, told me as early as August 2003 that the Taliban were doing their ‘planning in Quetta’.
- The President of Pakistan was pursuing a policy of ‘double-dealing’, i.e., supporting the Americans in their relentless fight against Al-Qaeda whereas their position towards the Taliban is equivocal. In their view, the President was taking this position so that he could keep the Taliban option open when the US withdrew from Afghanistan. There is suspicion in some quarters that Pakistan is not breaking with insurgent groups as a hedging strategy is viewed as integral to Pakistan ‘the day after the US leaves Afghanistan’.

Freelance operators, who are working in a loose hierarchical fashion, were supporting the Taliban. They had been working out of Quetta and Peshawar and also enjoying some links and support from the intelligence services, primarily from the Frontier Constabulary, and without the knowledge of local intelligence chiefs of the area.

These allegations continued, and little attention was paid to Pakistan’s difficulties. The very fact that there were millions of Afghan refugees housed in Pakistan, providing an

opportunity for destructive elements to destabilize the Afghan government, was ignored. It was also forgotten that Pakistan had made numerous offers to control and manage the border in order to curtail cross-border activity. I had repeatedly offered to fence the border and even mine it in sensitive areas to prevent movement across it, but we were met with silence by the Afghans as well as the Americans. Some European and NATO representatives who met me understood the importance of better monitoring and control of the border, but seemed helpless in the face of the Afghan government's resistance and American acquiescence to the Karzai government's stubbornness. Among high-ranking Western leaders, only the Canadian Foreign Minister Peter MacKay understood the importance of Pakistan's suggestions and offered concrete help. The Afghans did not cooperate even in Pakistan's efforts to introduce biometric controls on the border.

I am not implying that there were no elements in Pakistan's Intelligence Agencies who had sympathy for the Afghan Taliban, and who regarded the Afghan struggle as one against Western occupation. In fact such feelings were very common at the public level, particularly in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province and in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) bordering Afghanistan. It would be surprising if these had not permeated into elements in the agencies at the relatively lower level. This would be natural also in view of the fact that the ISI along with the CIA had trained the Afghan Mujahideen in their jihad against Soviet occupation. For the Americans it could have been business as usual and they could pack up and leave, as in fact they did, after the Geneva Accord. This could not be the case with some sections of the ISI who would have developed empathy and support for the Mujahideen, a large number of whom later on joined the Taliban. Additionally, it would surprise no one, given India's backing for Pashtunistan and its support of those Afghan rulers in the past regarded as most hostile to Pakistan, that there would be elements in Pakistan's Intelligence Agencies who would wish to avoid a situation in the future by supporting the Taliban. But this could not be widespread and where agency officials were involved it would be at a relatively low level.

Some foreign critics say that the Pakistan Army had decided to have 'friends' installed in Kabul who would provide the army with 'strategic depth' in case of a future war with India. The Army does that, according to them, due to their bitter experience of 1971, when India intervened, not out of love for our Bangladeshi friends but out of spite for Pakistan.

I do not accept this for quite a few reasons. Firstly, the Pakistan Army is a highly organized force and top officers of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) are seconded from the army to the ISI for relatively short terms and are sent back to the army. The future prospects of army officers depend entirely on the goodwill of the Chief of Army Staff and no officer would risk going on a private enterprise in violation of the orders. I was in direct contact with the top army high command, starting with President Pervez Musharraf. I did not find any concerted plan aimed at promoting cross-border movement of extremists into Afghanistan. Indeed, were that the case, Pakistan would not have repeatedly asked for better control on the border, installed 1,000 border check-posts to prevent cross-border

movement; and posted tens of thousands of soldiers, suffering heavy casualties in the process. It was a very difficult situation indeed, where Pakistan had to meet the requirements of the international community, as well as to keep the sentiments of its own population in perspective.

## **KARZAI'S INFLAMMATORY MESSAGE PRIOR TO HIS VISIT**

President Hamid Karzai, on the eve of his visit to Pakistan scheduled for 15–17 February 2006, called up Ambassador Tariq Azizuddin in Kabul on 8 February and conveyed a message through him to the Pakistan government. He said that he was deeply disturbed with the current situation in Afghanistan. There was increasing evidence of Pakistan's involvement in the internal affairs of Afghanistan, and the police in Kandahar and other southern provinces had arrested a number of Pakistanis involved in subversive activities. He added that the resentment against Pakistan in Khost and other southern provinces along the border of Pakistan was rising and could inflame the situation. Despite these developments, he said, Afghanistan was exercising extreme patience. Moreover, since a Pakistani private television channel ran a four-minute clip eulogizing suicide bombings and martyrdom, it was becoming increasingly difficult to defend Pakistan in Afghanistan. He went on to add that the Pashtuns in Afghanistan were also resentful of Pakistan's attitude towards them and that there could be a backlash. Further, he said, the remarks of a minister of the Pakistan government regarding the rights of the Pashtuns in Afghanistan were not only an interference in their internal affairs but were deplorable, and that such an approach could complicate bilateral relations further.

President Karzai conveyed that some Taliban were cooperating with the Afghan government and maintained ties with the Taliban based in Pakistan. They had revealed that the ISI was recruiting the Taliban for carrying out covert operations (including suicide missions) in Afghanistan. He also said that he was certain that the Taliban leader Mullah Omar along with his key accomplices was living in Quetta, and requested President Pervez Musharraf to hand them over to Afghanistan. President Karzai went on to launch an onslaught against the ISI, saying that it wanted to prop up the Taliban in Afghanistan and achieve their missions in Afghanistan through them. These Taliban were also being used to carry out acts of terrorism in Afghanistan.

President Karzai said that his knowledge of the Intelligence Agencies was based on his personal experience while he was in Pakistan waging jihad against the Soviet Union. He quit the Mujahideen out of disgust and proceeded to the United States. He added that Pakistan was welcome to promote its economic and commercial interest in Afghanistan and in Central Asia. But Pakistan 'can never now trample upon Afghanistan's sovereignty as it had done in the past'. President Karzai added that he had received reports of some madrasahs close to the Pak-Afghan border where Afghans were being trained to carry out terrorist activities in Afghanistan. Some of these madrasahs were being run by the Taliban.

The Pakistan government must take measures to shut such outfits down. Karzai informed the Ambassador that he would like to discuss these issues with his Pakistani counterpart with an open mind and a clean heart and that he would also like the President of Pakistan to either agree to a meeting of the intelligence chiefs of both countries, or they should be allowed to sit in their meetings. He was cynical about the statement of the Balochistan Governor that arms and ammunition were being sent from Afghanistan to Pakistan.

## **FIREWORKS AT AIWAN-E-SADR**

President Pervez Musharraf accepted President Karzai's proposal. Chief of Staff to the President Lt General Hamid Javed and I were present for the meeting at the *Aiwan-e-Sadr* (President's House). General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, then DG-ISI, and Amrullah Saleh, then Director, National Directorate of Security, Premier of the Afghan Intelligence Agency also attended the meeting. President Karzai asked Amrullah Saleh to speak. He repeated most of the allegations that President Karzai had conveyed to Pakistan's Ambassador and thus they need not be repeated here. Saleh also referred to a report by the Afghan Intelligence Agency that on a certain date a fairly large number of 'Taliban' had crossed the Pak-Afghan border into Afghanistan from Pakistan. When President Musharraf asked him to reveal the source of his information, he took out some photographs showing a large number of people (I think he mentioned a figure of 200), crossing from Pakistan into Afghanistan. At this, Musharraf commented that entry and exit of people from one side to another is a routine everyday affair. He demanded from Saleh to provide concrete evidence that the people in the images were actually the Taliban. Saleh did not provide a convincing response to this. The Afghan delegates also provided a list of a hundred suspected Taliban and Al-Qaeda militants, including Mullah Omar along with their telephone numbers and addresses. Later, President Musharraf, while replying to queries of media reporters whether such a list had been presented to him, said,

Yes, they have given us a list. I am surprised and shocked why they have given that list to the media, there's no need of releasing such sensitive information to the press. This list was months old and out-dated. It contained defunct telephone numbers, even the CIA knows about it because we have coordinated our actions with them ... there are families living where they said Mullah Omar was hiding in Quetta ... I keep going to Quetta and I know Mullah Omar is not there ... these kinds of nonsensical allegations are not acceptable.<sup>18</sup>

In return, the Pakistani side produced copies of documents of various Afghan Ministries including those of the Ministry of Defence as well as that of Ministry of Tribal Affairs. The ISI also produced intercepts/copies of some letters exchanged between Afghan and Indian Intelligence Agencies regarding facilitation of the visit of RAW personnel to territories adjoining Pakistan's tribal agencies. President Karzai was quite amazed to see copies of Afghan secret documents in Pakistani hands. One such document was a letter from the Afghan Ministry of Tribal Affairs to facilitate the visit of 'friends' from India addressed to the official concerned and directed him that the 'friends' visiting the area

adjacent to Pakistan's FATA (Federally-Administered Tribal Areas) be facilitated in all manner.

President Musharraf asked the Afghan Intelligence Chief what the Indians were doing in Afghan areas that neighbored Pakistan's tribal agencies, adding their suspicions that they were trying to recruit agents to carry out covert destructive activities on Pakistan's western borders. President Karzai looked sheepish and visibly embarrassed. The ISI then produced a document of the Afghan Ministry of Defence with negative references to Pakistan which was meant for circulation among high-level Afghan officers. The President said that it was no wonder that with such indoctrination there were regular instances of cross-border firing.

In response to a media question later, President Pervez Musharraf revealed that he also gave Hamid Karzai an intelligence report, detailing how the Afghan agencies and the Ministry of Defence were trying to stir trouble within Pakistan. 'I passed him a report on what's going on in his Intelligence Agencies and the Ministry of Defence,' Musharraf added that until then the Afghans had taken no action to stop such activities and asserted that President Karzai 'should pull up his own Ministry of Defence.'<sup>19</sup> Additionally, a photograph of Brahamdagh Bugti, who is accused of carrying out acts of terrorism in Balochistan, was shown, in which he was present in Kabul. The Afghans had been denying any knowledge of his presence in Afghanistan. Yet another photograph of Bugti was shown arriving at the Delhi airport from Kabul. President Musharraf asked President Karzai and Amrullah Saleh, why he should believe their assurances that Afghanistan was not involved directly or in connivance with India, to perpetrate acts of terrorism in Pakistan. The meeting proved to be very uncomfortable for all present. Musharraf was forthright in his accusations. One reason for Musharraf's anger was the widespread belief in Pakistan that Amrullah Saleh was pronouncedly anti-Pakistan. This belief was widely shared not just among Pakistanis but was also believed by some Western officials based in Islamabad and Kabul. Moreover, the Afghan Intelligence Agency was dominated by holdouts from KHAD, the Soviet times Intelligence Agency, and had in its ranks many anti-Pakistan elements. Hence it was believed that Saleh and the Afghan Intelligence Agency were misleading President Karzai by feeding him negative information about Pakistan.

It was therefore no wonder that, when the Pakistan and Afghanistan Presidents met at the White House a few months later, in September 2006, they had an acrimonious meeting in the presence of President Bush. The then US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, mentions this in her book *No Higher Honor*. It contains a photograph of that tense meeting, with the two presidents glaring at each other in the White House family dining room.<sup>20</sup> She also mentions in her book that during President Bush's visit to Afghanistan, Karzai vented his anger against President Musharraf, 'to whom he accused of wanting to annex Afghan Pashtuns into Pakistan.'<sup>21</sup> What can be said about this kind of accusation

except to express my astonishment? We already had enough trouble in our tribal areas. We would have to be out of our minds to try and incorporate areas adjacent to our territories where a full-scale insurgency was going on and which would probably be beyond the control of the entire West and the US to subdue.

Interestingly, after the US raid at Abbottabad to capture Osama bin Laden, Amrullah Saleh claimed in many interviews that he had told President Musharraf in this meeting that Osama bin Laden was hiding in Abbottabad and, according to Saleh, 'In a meeting with Musharraf and Hamid Karzai the Pakistani President became furious and smashed his fist down on the table. He said, "Am I the President of the Republic of Banana?" [presumably meaning Banana Republic]. Then he turned to President Karzai and said, "Why have you brought this Panjshiri guy to teach me Intelligence?"' Saleh even went on to say, 'Karzai had to intervene as Musharraf got increasingly angry and began to physically threaten Saleh.'<sup>22</sup> This seems fanciful, to say the least.

President Musharraf was later asked to respond to some of these charges and he did. These charges did not appear in the leaked reports along with other allegations following the meeting in Islamabad. For example, one of Pakistan's leading newspapers carried the report of an interview of President Karzai given to a news agency on 18 February mentioning that he had handed over a list of a hundred terrorists to Pakistan along with their telephone numbers and addresses where Al-Qaeda and Taliban leaders including Mullah Omar were hiding.<sup>23</sup> The interview also carried a list of his grievances about neighbouring countries (read Pakistan) meddling in Afghan affairs. Hence all the Afghan complaints at the meeting had been leaked. Interestingly, the claim regarding bin Laden's presence in Abbottabad did not feature anywhere. Obviously this was a much bigger story, and had this been mentioned to us in the meeting at the President's House, this too would have been leaked. It appears that Saleh's claim that he had informed President Musharraf about this in that meeting only appeared in the media after the raid at Abbottabad.

A few weeks later, in January 2007, President Karzai told a senior American official in Kabul that the grandson of Akbar Bugti, Brahamdagh Khan Bugti, along with two hundred Baloch had crossed over into Afghanistan. Karzai said that he was not interested in having them in Afghanistan as it was too much trouble but added that it would be hard to turn them over to Pakistan. The American official told him that Pakistan was after Bugti's grandson for instigating an uprising in Balochistan. Karzai responded that fomenting an uprising did not make one a terrorist.<sup>24</sup> We were receiving intelligence reports that India was actively involved in this in order to keep Pakistan under pressure and use Afghanistan as a base for this purpose.

Karzai said to some of his Western interlocutors, who would invariably talk to us as well, that Pakistan was providing a safe haven and a training ground for those creating trouble in Afghanistan. In this connection, he mentioned the name of Mullah Omar and some other Taliban leaders saying, 'Pakistan should stop supporting these terrorists.' He implied

or indicated that he was allowing Indian activities, of support for the Baloch insurgents, to get even with Pakistan. Obviously, he was trying to convey to his interlocutors that it was some sort of a push-button operation from Pakistan, and that Pakistan could easily switch off the ingress into Afghan territory were it so inclined. He conveniently forgot that it was next to impossible to seal the border and whenever we made offers to either fence it or even to mine it in areas from where ingress into Afghanistan was possible, he actively opposed it. In fact he tried to prevail upon major Western allies to also not support Pakistan in its offers to regulate the border more effectively. For example, much earlier, Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad on a visit to Islamabad called on me at the Foreign Office on 17 April 2003 conveying the strong concern of the US Administration on cross-border infiltration into Afghanistan. He was at that time Special Envoy of President Bush for both Iraq and Afghanistan. He expressed concerns about the effect this would have on undermining the Karzai government. He said that Gulbuddin Hekmatyar continued to travel back and forth between Pakistan and Afghanistan, and President Karzai had earlier mentioned the name of Mullah Dadullah in this regard. Obviously, Khalilzad, an American of Afghan origin, had been briefed well by President Karzai. He did not respond to Pakistan's well-known offer to try and seal the border.

### **KARZAI ASKS ME: 'WHY DOES PAKISTAN LOOK DOWN UPON THE AFGHANS?'**

Subsequent interactions and visits failed to address Afghan concerns and perceptions in the matter. I had full exposure to this narrative during my visit to Kabul in December 2006, when I paid a call on President Hamid Karzai on 7 December 2006. This turned into a two-hour meeting in which we candidly discussed our mutual concerns. President Karzai greeted me warmly. He wished to be briefed about the recently passed Bill by Pakistan's Parliament regarding the Protection of Women's Rights. I deemed it opportune to not only provide a background of the Bill but also to emphasize the policies of the government to counter extremism and modify the mindset implanted and nurtured by extremists. I informed him that the government was trying to change the thinking by bringing about changes in the educational curriculum, underscoring the point that nobody should have doubts about the government's priorities in dealing with extremism.

In response to a question by him, I clarified certain media reports quoting me as proposing to Western countries to reach a political settlement with the Taliban and withdraw their forces from Afghanistan. I said that the media was placing a spin on these remarks and stressed that, while Pakistan did want a negotiated settlement in Afghanistan and that the Taliban needed to be included in the process, we had no desire to impose a Mullah-dominated dispensation on Afghanistan. Pakistan, I added, could only help in trying to bring about this settlement but it was for the Afghans themselves to decide what sort of dispensation they wanted. I added that the extremist elements in Pakistan were a threat to our country as well and to the peace, security and progress of Afghanistan.

President Karzai took the occasion of the meeting to engage in an outburst saying that there was no problem about the various statements; these could be ignored. A grave issue was the women and children that were being killed by bomb blasts in Afghanistan. That year alone, four thousand Afghans had been killed by suicide bombers who were also targeting schools and hospitals. He said that Afghanistan had evidence of Pakistan's involvement in the violence in the border areas. As a result the Afghans 'who were earlier close to Pakistan were moving away from Pakistan.' He added that Afghan patience was running thin and that there would be no peace and stability in Pakistan if the Afghans were frustrated and unhappy. President Karzai went on to add that if the Western forces left, then Russia, Iran, and other countries would move in to take their place.

I took the opportunity to underscore the point that those who believed that Pakistan was seeking strategic depth in Afghanistan were wrong. I elaborated by saying that Pakistan did not need strategic depth in geographical terms because Balochistan provided that depth to Pakistan. I added that only a strong and stable neighbour like Iran during the 1965 war with India provided Pakistan that kind of depth. A weak Afghanistan would not have any strategic advantage for Pakistan.

President Karzai stunned me by asking why Pakistanis looked down upon the Afghans? Despite my amazement at his question, I told him that nothing could be further from the truth and that many Pakistanis traced back their ancestry to Afghanistan and other Central Asian countries with great pride. I informed him that several Pathan/Afghans had, over the years, settled in northern parts of India (now largely Pakistan). In several other areas the Pathans had large landholdings. In my hometown Kasur, some of the biggest landowners were in fact of Pathan/Pashtun ethnic origins. Hence, there was no question of Pakistanis looking down on the Afghans.

President Karzai, further pursuing his assertion that perhaps it was because during the jihad against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, 'All of us were dependent upon the support from ISI, that gave the agency great influence in Afghanistan and that influence is now being used against the Afghan Government.' He stressed that today's Afghanistan was different. In response to my question, 'Mr President, give me one good reason that Pakistan could have for creating instability in Afghanistan,' President Karzai remarked that Pakistan was apprehensive that a strong and stable Afghanistan would revive the Pashtunistan and the Durand Line issues.

I then had a brief one-on-one meeting with President Karzai in which I again raised the question of why President Karzai thought Pakistanis looked down upon Afghanistan. Karzai's response was that it was because Pakistan was a nuclear power. This surprised me even further but it provided a glimpse into his state of mind. He added that Pakistan also felt that Afghanistan was allowing its territory to be used by India against the interests of Pakistan, and that Islamabad wanted a pliant regime in Kabul to acquire the necessary influence here. He denied that he had allowed India to operate against Pakistan's interests,

which he said were very dear to him since he has spent a lot of time in exile in Pakistan. I told Karzai that Pakistan understood that well. While others would come and go, Pakistan and Afghanistan have to live with each other. I stressed that no Pakistani could wish for destabilization of Afghanistan, since Pakistan itself was engaged against the same forces of extremism. Terrorism was a common enemy of both countries.

I added that the people of Pakistan were raising questions as to who was behind the trouble in Balochistan, and that Pakistan had evidence of involvement from across the border. However, the Pakistani government itself would not go public on the issue since that would further inflame feelings in Pakistan against the Karzai government. People in Pakistan also asked questions as to why Pakistan took upon itself the responsibility of supporting the Afghan Jihad, and in the process damaged its own interest. In this regard, there was also criticism of the policies of President Zia ul-Haq, the fallout of which had deeply and negatively impacted the very fabric of Pakistani society. I told him that Pakistan was now engaged in undoing the negative effects of the Afghan Jihad on its polity. Pakistani people were asking as to why, whenever anything went wrong in Afghanistan, it was Pakistan that was blamed, in spite of its support to Afghanistan. Nearly three million Afghan refugees were still being hosted by Pakistan whose repatriation, Pakistan desired, should take place in safety and honour. I added that the presence of Afghan refugees and their involvement in cross-border militancy was known to everyone.

I recalled to President Karzai his first meeting with President Pervez Musharraf after the elections in Afghanistan and his fulsome praise for Pakistan's help to Afghanistan and his criticism of the role of Russia, Iran, and India. I asked him what had changed now. Karzai did not respond to this, but there was a growing feeling that Karzai's outbursts against Pakistan and later against the US had a purpose. This was to deflect attention from stories regarding corruption and mis governance. I remember Senator Richard Lugar, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, telling me at the Munich Security Conference that the US was very disturbed about widespread corruption in the Afghan government. He particularly referred to one of President Karzai's brothers in this connection.

I explained to President Karzai that Pakistan was conscious of the serious security problems inside Afghanistan, especially in the Pashtun-inhabited areas and conceded that some support might well be coming to them from the Pashtuns living on the Pakistan side of the border. However, the Pakistani government had no hand in it. I added that strong religiosity of the Pashtuns living in the Tribal Areas was an important factor influencing the support of tribal Pashtuns for the Taliban. Pakistan could not be blamed for it. That was why Pakistan had suggested that there was a need to wean away the Pashtuns of these areas, especially the youth, through development. I reminded him that Pakistan had proposed a Marshall Plan for Afghanistan as well as Reconstruction Opportunity Zones (ROZs) from where goods would have free market access to the US. I explained that it

was hurtful when Pakistan was accused of deliberately encouraging insurgency inside Afghanistan. After all, Pakistan was a multi-ethnic state like Afghanistan and, therefore, sensitive to the ethnic issues of the latter. It would never exploit these issues.

I underlined the point regarding the use of Afghan territory by India. I highlighted Pakistan's known concerns regarding a number of Indian Consulates operating in areas adjacent to Pakistan's territories where India could not conceivably have any economic interest. In this connection, I told President Karzai of my conversation with Condoleezza Rice. She had assured me that India would not use her presence to encourage sabotage and violence inside Pakistani territory and, it was obvious that she had spoken to the Indian government on the issue. I went on to tell him that I had asked her why India felt the need to have these Consulates on our border when there were no overwhelming economic reasons. She responded by saying that countries do have Consulates in different cities within one country. I told President Karzai that it was very expensive to sustain these Consulates. As pointed out by me earlier, even the US had either closed or downgraded many of its Consulates, including one in Pakistan, in order to curtail expenditures. I told Karzai that Condi did not counter the arguments advanced by me. President Karzai did not counter my arguments either.

At the conclusion of our discussion, President Karzai said that the Afghans do not entertain any ill will towards Pakistan. Moreover Afghanistan would not do anything that would encourage the negative elements in Pakistan. He went on to add that the Afghans were not so foolish as to turn Afghanistan into a battleground because of clash of interests between India and Pakistan. He went on to say that not only the Afghan government, but even the Americans were monitoring the activities of Indian Consulates. They were grateful to Pakistan for coming to their aid and housing the refugees in their hour of need but added that the Afghans would not become anyone's 'puppets'. President Karzai went on to assure me that he was eager to strengthen their cooperation, brotherhood, and friendship with Pakistan and hoped that there would be greater progress towards creating conditions of stability. President Karzai concluded by saying that he hoped that the frank discussion that took place between us would provide the basis of new understanding between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

I had a distinct impression that despite his blow-hot-blow-cold attitude during our discussion, he was trying to put behind the unpleasantness that had developed after his meetings with President Pervez Musharraf at the President's House in Islamabad in February 2006, and at the White House later, in September 2006. In a calm and friendly tone, he went on to ask me what I thought of Afghanistan's plan of setting up of a Grand *Jirga* (Assembly of Elders). It may be pertinent to mention here that Afghanistan had suggested organizing a meeting of *jirgas* from Pakistan and Afghanistan. I told President Karzai that Pakistan has not rejected the Afghan idea of the holding of the *jirga*. However, due to differing systems in the two countries, and even in Pakistan's tribal areas, where the British had established the institution of Political Agents to maintain law and order

through the tribal Malikis, the emphasis in Pakistan's proposal was more on enlisting the support of locals by giving socio-economic packages for development, rather than launching on a big scale of holding *Grand Jirgas* on a nationwide basis.

Early next day, Pakistan's Ambassador in Kabul brought to my attention the press release put out by the spokesperson of President Karzai. It quoted President Karzai as stating that the continuation of violence perpetrated by terrorists from across the border was a major obstacle. He was quoted further, 'The Afghan people are suffering from terrorists' violence on a daily basis and the patience of our people to continue to bear the situation is running thin. Both countries must work to stop terrorists' violence in order to save the region from becoming a dangerous place to live in.'

During the visit, Afghan Foreign Minister Rangin Dadfar Spanta raised the problems being faced by the Afghan refugees in the registration process, the need for exchange of Afghan refugees in Pakistani jails, difficulties faced by Afghan traders at Wagah and Karachi Port and the need for reviewing the Afghan Transit Trade Agreement (ATTA). I responded that the problems relating to refugees' registration and those in the prison would be looked into on humanitarian grounds. I also expressed the hope that the Afghan authorities would look into the cases of Pakistani prisoners in Afghan prisons and arrange for their release. I told him that we had in principle not allowed land route access to India via Pakistan to any other country. It was only Afghanistan which had been granted the privilege of a Pakistani land route to the Indian market via Wagah. We agreed to review the ATTA within the framework of Pakistan-Afghanistan Joint Economic Commission.

My visit took place under the shadow of increasing tensions whipped up by the Afghan side through their media since the beginning of 2006 when the Taliban militancy gained momentum. President Karzai was more critical of Pakistan than Foreign Minister Spanta, which reflected the pressure on Karzai due to poor governance, corruption, and drug trade. However, in consonance with President Karzai's frank talk, I addressed every issue with equal frankness, leaving in his mind no doubt that the impression they had created around the world regarding Pakistan's position and its cross-border interference would not help bring about normalcy unless the *real* issues in Afghanistan were tackled.

## **PAKISTAN AT THE G-8 CONFERENCE ON AFGHANISTAN IN POTSDAM**

As should be apparent from the above narrative, the level of bitterness in the to and fro between Pakistan and Afghanistan had reached such alarming proportions that it was decided to invite Pakistan and Afghanistan to a meeting of the G-8 Foreign Ministers in the historic city of Potsdam in Germany on 30 May 2007. I met with the Afghan Foreign Minister Rangin Dadfar Spanta. Our meeting was held in the same Conference Room where, after the Second World War, American President Truman, Soviet leader Stalin, and British Prime Minister Churchill met to discuss the post-Second World War situation.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov remarked humorously (or mischievously?) that I was occupying the chair that Stalin sat on.

Besides me, Spanta and Germany's Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier who was our host, the Conference was attended by US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, Commissioner for External Relations and Neighbourhood Policy Benita Ferrero-Waldner, Secretary General of the Council of the European Union Javier Solana, France's Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner, Italian Foreign Minister Massimo D'Alema, Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Aso, and Canadian Foreign Minister Peter Gordon MacKay. The UK was represented by Prime Minister's Special Envoy Mark Lyall Grant, then Director General for Political Affairs in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. He had earlier served as Britain's High Commissioner in Islamabad, and I knew him well.

In my remarks, I welcomed the initiative taken by G-8 to address the common challenges in Afghanistan. I recounted the efforts and sacrifices that Pakistan has made in the last thirty years in Afghanistan including the deployment of 90,000 troops on the border of Afghanistan for maintaining security. I made a reference to the need for repatriation of the refugees and sought support of the international community on this score. I highlighted the fact of abandonment of Afghanistan by the international community in the wake of the withdrawal of Soviet forces in 1989 as a reason behind the Civil War and the emergence of the Taliban, and Al-Qaeda putting down roots in Afghanistan. I concluded by stating that a stable Afghanistan was in the interest of Pakistan.

I recalled that the government had also proposed selective mining and fencing of the border and had introduced biometric system for border crossings. It had also set up nearly 1,000 military posts as opposed to a fraction on the other side by Afghanistan, NATO and ISAF combined. I emphasized the importance of our proposal regarding fencing the border to regulate it better. I also stressed that the international community must mobilize funds and resources to persuade Afghan refugees to return to Afghanistan. The response of Afghan authorities at this had been tardy and that of the international community lukewarm. Some of them did not mind criticizing Pakistan for allegedly turning a blind eye to the Taliban crossing the border but did not support our proposal for fencing or mining it in critical areas to prevent such movement.

There was a deafening silence in response to my proposals from Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and others. The only one to offer help in border fencing was Canadian Foreign Minister Peter MacKay. The Afghan Foreign Minister highlighted the importance of the conference. He touched upon Afghanistan's achievements in the last five years. Besides the holding of presidential and parliamentary elections, six million children had gone to school, and the per capita income had increased. A democratic Afghanistan was committed to combating terrorism and extremism which he described as a common threat that needed a common response.

The focus of discussions at the meeting was mainly on the situation inside Afghanistan. German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier expressed the hope that my meeting earlier in the day with Foreign Minister Spanta would mark the end of the blame game, and the beginning of positive and constructive engagement by all parties to address the problems faced by Afghanistan. He underscored the importance of border management, security, drug trafficking, and reconstruction and revival of institutional and physical infrastructure in Afghanistan.

The US Secretary of State also welcomed the bilateral meeting between Spanta and myself, and hoped that such meetings would enable the two countries to face the common challenges. She said that the common enemies were not just the insurgents, but extremism and the extremist ideas as well. Dr Rice said that this was the first of the many meetings in which the G-8 was engaged. She referred to the fourteen billion dollars that had been spent by the US on reconstruction and economic development in Afghanistan. She went on that progress in Afghanistan would change the face of the world. The need of the day was to fight the common enemy which was extremism and terrorism. She added and that the world had great stakes in the success of Afghanistan.

The Canadian Foreign Minister Peter MacKay also highlighted the importance of building Afghan national institutions including its army, police, and the judicial system. He expressed willingness to assist Pakistan and Afghanistan by providing technical assistance for promoting effective border management and security.

The G-8 meeting represented international commitment to long-term sustainable development of Afghanistan. The discussion focused on the challenges in Afghanistan which needed to be addressed by all of them. Pakistan pledged to work with the G-8 for promotion of peace. Despite the historic settings, the meeting proved more of a talk shop. The Foreign Ministers, while underlining the need to prevent cross-border movement, did not come forward with concrete proposals. I felt that most Foreign Ministers looked towards the US, which at that stage did not provide the required leadership to its NATO allies. NATO felt that accepting Pakistan's proposals would not serve its interests, since it would end up annoying President Karzai, who felt that stricter management of the border would negate Afghanistan's position on the Durand Line. Ironically, while Afghanistan regards the Durand Line as a legacy of the colonial era (past Afghan governments raised this issue), it still expects Pakistan to prevent cross-border movement into Afghanistan in violation of this border.

The attitude of the United States and Hamid Karzai towards each other was different then. When President Barack Obama visited the Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan on 25 May 2014 to meet with US troops deployed there, Obama did not even bother to meet with Karzai, nor did Karzai bother to go to Bagram. The situation then was different when both President Karzai and President Pervez Musharraf were regarded as key actors in the Afghan settlement. This explains the rivalry between Musharraf and Karzai, as well as the

flip-flop policy of the US of praising Musharraf as being their staunch ally and also accusing him of playing a 'double game'.

The US criticism of Hamid Karzai began to appear much later, when all sorts of accusations were hurled at him, and by the end of his tenure, Karzai had become completely anti-US. Karzai wanted to convey to Afghan citizens that he was an independent actor and would not go down in history as another Shah Shuja (who the British installed in Kabul). Karzai said as much in an interview with the famous historian William Dalrymple.<sup>25</sup> Strangely, despite all the complaints on cross-border movement and Karzai's criticism that they were undermining stability in Afghanistan, he resisted fencing the borders since he felt that would be tantamount to accepting the Durand Line as the international border, although it is an internationally acknowledged border by the UN and all member states.

## **PAK-AFGHAN BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP**

During 2004–05, Pakistan continued expressing support for President Hamid Karzai's government, reconstruction of Afghanistan's ravaged infrastructure, and rehabilitation of Afghan refugees. Unfortunately, however, the two sides had also started pointing fingers at one another. Pakistan saw an Indian hand in the growing expression of animosity against Pakistan by the Afghan leadership. Nevertheless, Pakistan considered this stiffening of Afghan position more as an irritant to be addressed rather than an obstacle, and it continued to steer the bilateral relationship in a positive direction.

As a result, a positive thrust was apparent in 2004 when President Musharraf visited Kabul to felicitate President Karzai on his election victory. Karzai was appreciative of Pakistan's help in arrangements made by the UN for participation of Afghan refugees in the elections in Afghanistan held in 2004. Karzai was critical of India, Iran, and Russia. The beginning of 2005 marked a high point of Pak-Afghan relations when President Karzai was invited by Pakistan to be the Guest of Honour at the Pakistan Day Parade held on 23 March 2005. This represented both an expression of the new dynamism of Pakistan's growing trade and other linkages and the success of its two-pronged approach of continuing with cooperation while quietly addressing Afghan concerns.

In early 2000, the two countries developed various mechanisms for cooperation including regular meetings of Foreign Ministers, Joint Economic Commission headed by their Finance Ministers, Tripartite Commission on refugees including the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and the *Jirga* Peace Process in 2006–07. A high-level Trilateral Commission to supervise border security and cross-border incidents had been established. It comprises ISAF (International Security Assistance Force), the US, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. The Commission draws their senior military and diplomatic officers to hold regular meetings to address mutual concerns. Thus, the infrastructure for

promotion of relations had been well established by the time our government completed its tenure.

### **Equitable Sharing of Common Water Resources**

The sharing of water resources between Pakistan and Afghanistan could become an area of conflict that needed to be resolved. I raised that issue during my visit in August 2003 with President Karzai and my counterpart Dr Abdullah Abdullah. I suggested to them that an agreement must be formulated for sharing of waters. Although President Karzai did not provide a concrete solution, he did indicate that my proposal was important and needed to be considered. Dr Abdullah Abdullah's response was fairly positive. I pointed out to him that despite five wars that Pakistan and India had fought, the Indus Waters Treaty continued to survive. I indicated to him that in my view, the reason for war between Pakistan and India in the future could well be on water issues. This would pose an existential threat to Pakistan since two-thirds of its population depended on agriculture. The absence of the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) would have given rise to greater tensions than already prevailing between Pakistan and India.

I suggested that Afghanistan should seriously consider Pakistan's proposal of reaching an agreement on equitable sharing of common water resources on the pattern of the IWT. This had been on the table for some time. My impression was that Dr Abdullah did feel that there was merit in Pakistan's proposal. He told me that he would get back to me regarding our proposal before I left Kabul, indicating that this would require President Karzai's assent. This was encouraging but unfortunately, at the airport, I was informed that the Afghan government could give us a concrete feedback. This left me with the impression that President Karzai did not think it politically advisable to accept this proposal regardless of its merits, while Dr Abdullah Abdullah was more amenable.

### **Pak-Afghan Economic Cooperation: Full Potential of Trade Unrealized**

When I assumed office, trade between Pakistan and Afghanistan was a paltry US \$23 million. Within a few years, it had increased to over US \$1.2 billion. Additionally, the Pakistan government announced a sum of 300 million dollars<sup>26</sup> towards reconstruction of Afghanistan during our tenure, despite the fact that Pakistan is not a rich country. (In 2014, Ishaq Dar, Finance Minister in the PML-N government, at a meeting of the Joint Economic Commission, announced that this aid would be raised to five hundred million dollars as a gesture of goodwill.) Pakistan has continued providing assistance to Afghanistan and invested in several projects in Afghanistan.<sup>27</sup> A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed for the construction of a rail link from Chaman to Spin Bolduk, although nothing concrete has been done about it.

Pakistan also emerged as the largest trading partner of Afghanistan, with two-way trade of 1.2 billion dollars achieved between them in 2005–06. I am sure it is much higher now. In

this context, no less than thirteen custom stations were established to facilitate orderly movement of goods, services, and people. Pakistan also took a number of steps to facilitate Afghan transit trade including exempting Afghan cargo from inspection by Pakistani customs authority. Currently, Pakistan is willing to further facilitate the transportation of Afghan transit goods with the Pakistan Railways and NLC offering concessional rates for carrying them from Karachi to Chaman and Torkham. Significantly, Pakistan also now permits transit of perishable goods from Afghanistan to India. When I was Foreign Minister, during a Cabinet Meeting, the Ministry of Agriculture in its presentation surprised us by showing that when they estimated Pakistan's annual wheat requirements, they also took into consideration Afghanistan's population. This was calculated on the assumption that Pakistani wheat would invariably find its way to Afghanistan because of an almost open movement across the Pak-Afghan border. It is also widely known that potatoes from Pakistan find their way not just to Afghanistan but all the way to Central Asia. This is also true of other items including manufactured goods. It is thus very difficult to calculate the actual value of informal trade between the two countries. Hence Afghanistan is already an important trading partner of Pakistan. If more attention is paid to trade there is further potential for growth.

## **PAKISTAN IS KEY TO SOLUTIONS IN AFGHANISTAN**

### **Pak-India Normalization to Help in Stabilizing Afghanistan**

The regional situation is undergoing a dynamic change in the emerging end game scenario in Afghanistan. Pakistan Army's worst-case scenario is encirclement by a hostile Afghanistan allied to India on one side and by the Indian Army on its eastern borders. This is not an entirely imaginary situation. India supported the Pashtunistan cause soon after Independence. India also supported those governments in Afghanistan that were pronouncedly anti-Pakistan and openly challenged the Durand Line as the international border between the two countries.<sup>28</sup>

It is no secret that, since the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, the army and the ISI (Inter-Services Intelligence) have played a major role on our western borders. The situation became even more volatile after 9/11, with Pakistan itself being subjected to acts of terrorism and sabotage.

Pakistan's concerns regarding India's support from Afghanistan to militants in Balochistan as well as its interference in FATA (Federally-Administered Tribal Areas) should not be a secret, at least to those who have been in the government. This issue, as noted above was forcefully raised in our many conversations with President Karzai, including at the *Aiwan-e-Sadr* (Presidents House) in Islamabad in the presence of the heads of two intelligence services, and concrete evidence was shown to him. It has also been raised with India many times in private conversations. It was raised publically at the highest level between Prime

Ministers Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani and Dr Manmohan Singh at a meeting in Sharm-el-Sheikh on 16 July 2009. It formed a part of the Joint Statement released at the end of the meeting. It made a specific reference to Balochistan and refers to information that Pakistan had with regard to (Indian involvement) information that Pakistan had 'on threats in Balochistan and other areas'.<sup>29</sup> The statement delinked progress in containing terrorism from the India-Pakistan dialogue.<sup>30</sup> Unfortunately, as Dr Sanjaya Baru, who was Prime Minister Singh's Chief Media Advisor in UPA-1, in his book *The Accidental Prime Minister*, points out that when he came back, while the Opposition was vociferously attacking him, he was abandoned even by his own party. He writes: 'After a full fortnight, the first official statement from the Congress merely stated that the Prime Minister was capable of defending himself.'<sup>31</sup>

An example of the growing Indian footprint in Afghanistan includes an Indian pledge of US \$2 billion, making it the fifth largest bilateral donor in Afghanistan. This is significant, given the fact that India is not known to be a traditional donor country. India's important programmes in Afghanistan have included infrastructure projects such as the road from Zaranj to Delaram in South-West Afghanistan to facilitate movements of goods and services to the Iranian border and onward to the Chabahar Port in 2009.

There is recognition by all sides that Pakistan has the ability to help ensure a final settlement or to sabotage one. This imposes a greater responsibility on Pakistan to do all that it can to bring about conditions of peace and stability in Afghanistan. It needs to learn the correct lessons from its involvement in Afghanistan since 1979 following the Soviet invasion. Moreover, it needs to recognize the fact that its involvement has not brought much benefit to Pakistan. Pakistan must stress on the point that it wishes to maintain good relations with all Afghan ethnic groups. Who rules Afghanistan should be their internal matter; I am happy to note that now the Foreign Office, the Army, and the Intelligence Agencies, all recognize the importance of this issue.

According to various reports, the Al-Qaeda have almost been wiped out from Afghanistan and neighbouring regions in Pakistan. During his visit to the Bagram Air Base, President Obama announced on 25 May 2014 that there will be a total withdrawal of troops by 2016. This stance would prevail even if a Bilateral Security Agreement is signed, as expected, by the new government in Afghanistan. (It has since been signed). Furthermore, the last American Prisoner of War, Bowe Bergdahl, in Taliban custody has been released in May 2014. This was a result of tedious negotiations between the US and the Taliban, in exchange for the release of five Taliban prisoners that had been held at Guantanamo Bay. Pakistan may well have played a role behind the scenes, as it did in facilitating a dialogue between the Taliban and the US, and the establishment of an office of the Taliban in Doha.

These efforts may not have borne immediate fruit, largely due to President Karzai's strong reaction to the hoisting of the Taliban flag, and putting-up the nameplate of 'Islamic Emirates'. He interpreted these as attempts by this office to pose as the office of

government in exile. Moreover, he dubbed it as 'foreign conspiracy', implying the US and Pakistan. This was one of the reasons which prompted President Hamid Karzai to delay the signing of the Bilateral Security Agreement with the US. The release of Bowe Bergdahl indicates that the interaction between the Taliban, Pakistan, and the US did not end. In fact, one way that Pakistan can play a positive role is to use whatever influence it has with the Afghan Taliban to bring them to the negotiating table with the new Afghan government as well as with the US. This effort must be made in order to prevent another civil war following American exit. A future civil war is bound to draw in many external actors. It will be a lethal civil war since all sides are now better armed and prepared than in the past.

It is absolutely essential that the Taliban be brought into the power structure so that they do not feel left out. Ways can still be found, despite the new elections which the Taliban boycotted, to accommodate them. They can be appointed as governors of important provinces or even to important ministerial slots and necessary constitutional amendment made to bring this about. This will serve everyone's interest best. In the ultimate analysis, this has to be an Afghan decision and the process to be productive must be Afghan-owned and Afghan-led.

Pakistan must impress upon the Taliban that, if they attempt to make a bid for total power over all of Afghanistan, they will have the entire international community ranged against them. In the past, only Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE had recognized the Taliban regime, while almost the entire international community, particularly the West led by the US, and China and the entire Muslim world had supported the Mujahideen earlier. It must make clear to them that times have changed dramatically and, were Pakistan to support the Taliban in their desire to capture the entire country, Pakistan itself will be isolated internationally. Even the Muslim countries will not support such a venture.

Pakistan must try and impress upon the Taliban that Afghanistan has changed, particularly on issues related to women's empowerment and female education. Even public opinion in Pakistan would be opposed to a rollback to the pre-9/11 situation. The Taliban should also understand that Pakistan will need to abandon its policy on the use of non-state actors and of asymmetric warfare as an instrument of foreign policy in the region including in Afghanistan. In today's age, support to non-state actors in whatever form, manifestation or guise cannot continue. It must be abandoned also because it has already hurt Pakistan's security, international image, and its economy. There seems to be consensus in public opinion in Pakistan on this issue.

There are clear indications that the Pakistan Army recognizes that non-state actors have caused Pakistan immense damage, as shown by air attacks and ground operations in North Waziristan. As a consequence, the level of understanding between the Pakistan Army and ISAF/NATO seems to be improving. Chief of Army Staff General Raheel Sharif, Afghan

Chief of General Staff General Sher Muhammad Karimi and Commander ISAF General Joseph Dunford held talks in Kabul in May 2014.

Pakistan, Afghanistan, and NATO/ISAF have agreed to coordinate closely during the drawdown of NATO forces from Afghanistan later this year; consensus on this emerged during a high level meeting held at Afghan Defence Ministry in Kabul.<sup>32</sup> An ISPR spokesman said in a statement issued at the end of the meeting, 'Participants reviewed the current security situation in Afghanistan. Besides the transfer of security responsibility to Afghan National Security Forces in the wake of US/ISAF drawdown, enhanced bilateralism between Pakistan and Afghanistan with particular emphasis on coordination arrangements along Pakistan-Afghanistan border was also deliberated upon during the meeting.'<sup>33</sup>

It is now clear to all the parties, particularly the US, that after more than a decade of war following 9/11, this conflict cannot be settled by military means alone. This would underline the need for a negotiated settlement advocated above. According to a study conducted by the Watson Institute of Brown University, 'The final cost of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq would be 4.4 trillion dollars not including medical cost of the injured veterans or rebuilding aid to Afghanistan. Questions are thus being asked in the US whether it was worth it to intervene in Afghanistan or Iraq.'<sup>34</sup>

I always found President Karzai warm and friendly. I must however mention that his mercurial character and tendency to blame Pakistan for Afghanistan's problems remains a constant refrain with him even now. Interestingly, the US which helped Karzai immensely faced similar charges on many occasions. He would criticize Pakistan and later, the US. This he would do so that attention of the international community was diverted from his poor governance, increasing narcotics trade, and rising corruption. Karzai although has always acknowledged that Pakistan had suffered immensely, and that he would always remember the generosity of the Pakistan government and its people for hosting millions of Afghan refugees including him. Perhaps it was in the same spirit that he mentioned Pakistan as a 'twin brother' and India only as a 'great friend' in an interaction with a Delhi-based think tank. On another occasion, he referred to Pakistan and Afghanistan as conjoined twins.<sup>35</sup> He has stated, 'If there is war between Pakistan and America we will stand by Pakistan.' He put his hand on his heart and described Pakistan as a brother country. The US obviously reacted with dismay.<sup>36</sup>

I also feel that Karzai's attitude towards the ISI has a lot to do with his own experience in Pakistan when the ISI was backing him and others during the Afghan Jihad. He continues to feel that the ISI has the power to do anything it wants in Afghanistan and that the people will readily accept his accusation. It is no exaggeration that during the Afghan Jihad, the ISI acquired a larger-than-life reputation. The US handed over the conduct of its covert war to the CIA. Naturally, therefore, on the Pakistani end, it collaborated closely with the ISI. The two Foreign Offices, both in Islamabad and Washington, had relatively

little to do with the covert operations in Afghanistan. I feel that President Karzai, who had seen the influence of the ISI during his stay in Pakistan, continues to believe that the ISI operated in exactly the same manner even after the exit of the Soviet Union from Afghanistan, despite major changes having taken place following 9/11 and despite the development of difference between the ISI and CIA. The challenges confronting Pakistan call for an imaginative, honest, and competent leadership to put its house in order, and hold a dialogue and build consensus amongst the various stakeholders in the country on the issue of terrorism. It can build its internal narrative by emphasizing the need for economic development to meet the rising aspirations of the youth which forms a large majority of its population. It is now considered axiomatic that no country can reach its economic potential in the absence of peace within and peace without.

As former Foreign Minister at a particularly difficult time following the events of 9/11, I recognized the fact that passions and sentiments play an important role in human relations. Foreign Policy cannot be conceived in a vacuum or formulated without public support. It is however not impossible to mould public opinion. In this regard, Pakistan must maintain a constant narrative aimed at explaining its policies which may sometimes seem to be at odds with what may appear to be the prevailing public sentiment. This can be achieved by an effective and constant narrative. Furthermore, government officials and politicians often underrate the intelligence of ordinary people. If the rulers speak to the people honestly and frankly, it is possible to formulate and execute a foreign policy based on the long-term interests of the nation.

### **Recent Positive Developments**

There are positive signs that the new government of Afghanistan and the current civil and military leadership in Pakistan have decided that it is in the best interest of both the countries that they learn from mistakes of the past. It appears that the new leadership in Afghanistan is not burdened by President Hamid Karzai's legacy, who found it difficult to forget his own interaction and the powerful role that the ISI played in the Afghan Jihad. Afghan President Ashraf Ghani's recent visit to Pakistan was a huge success. The symbolism of his visit to the GHQ (General Headquarters) in Rawalpindi, where he was received by General Raheel Sharif and where a Guard of Honour was presented to him, could not go unnoticed. It is also positive that President Ashraf Ghani is supported by leaders of the Tajik, Uzbek, and Hazara communities who are in fact very much a part of the current dispensation in Kabul.

President Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah augur well for Afghan unity. The non-Pashtuns had for some time been demanding a parliamentary form of government somewhere along the lines of France, in which power is shared between the President and the Prime Minister. Let us hope that this form of government is successful because it could well provide a formula for power sharing leading to cooperation between the majority Pashtuns and the non-Pashtuns of whom Tajiks form the largest number.

Another factor which is a cause of optimism is that the United States, Britain, and other Western countries are making conscious and concerted efforts to bring the Governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan closer together. The recent extended visit of General Raheel Sharif to Washington, in which he spent an unprecedented fourteen days, is significant. This visit is an indication of the fact that the Chief of Army Staff was able to talk to all the major stakeholders in the Administration, the Pentagon, and the CIA. He met with Secretary of State John Kerry. The two met on Thanksgiving Day, which is a national holiday in the United States. This is as an illustration of the importance that the US attached to the visit of the General Raheel Sharif and of the growing confidence between the Pakistan Army and the US following the Zarb-e-Azb operation in North Waziristan.

The Secretary of State today describes the Pakistan Army as a 'truly binding force'. Compare this with the statement that the Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee Admiral Mike Mullen made at a hearing of the Senate Armed Services Committee in September 2011. He stated, 'The Haqqani Network, for one, acts as a veritable arm of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence Agency,' and added 'The country's main intelligence agency the ISI was actively supporting Haqqani network militants blamed for an assault on the US embassy in Kabul last week The US military's top officer bluntly accused Pakistan on Thursday of "exporting" violent extremism to Afghanistan through proxies and warned of possible US action to protect American troops.'<sup>37</sup>

Pakistan and Afghanistan have indeed travelled a long way. It appears that both the United States and Pakistan understand the dangers of things going wrong in Afghanistan and the negative impact it has had on both countries. The danger would be particularly high in the period following the drawdown of NATOISAF forces in Afghanistan.

The Chief of Army Staff General Raheel Sharif as well as the current DG-ISI Lt General Rizwan Akhtar have paid visits to Kabul soon after President Ashraf Ghani took over. This is also an indication that attempts are being made to improve institutional linkages between the armies and intelligence agencies of both the sides. This would indeed be of great benefit in bringing peace and stability to the area. It seems that even China and the US who are competitors in other regions are on the same page regarding Afghanistan.



## Pakistan and the United States: ‘The Odd Couple’

Pakistan and the United States have a peculiar relationship. No wonder they are often termed as the ‘Odd Couple’ of modern international relations. It has been said of them that they cannot even make love without insulting each other.<sup>1</sup>

Despite numerous areas of convergence, there exists a disconnect between the interests and security policies of the two countries. This has been a major factor in their roller-coaster relationship. It is no wonder that Pakistan, from being the ‘most allied ally’ became the ‘most sanctioned ally’ of the United States, and then, once again, a ‘major non-NATO ally’. The two countries are now sometimes even referred to as ‘frenemies’. We therefore need to understand what it is that makes them repeatedly come together, despite the reservations entertained by both sides on important issues. Pakistan and the United States share a long history of working together ‘despite dreaming different dreams’.

### **HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

The relationship between the two countries started on a high note with the triumphant visit to the USA of the first Prime Minister of Pakistan, Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan, in 1950. President Truman later acknowledged that Liaquat Ali Khan and his wife had made an excellent impression on him.<sup>2</sup> Pakistan sought and obtained military and economic assistance from the US to redress its defence vulnerabilities and cope with India militarily, in return for membership in Western alliance systems, SEATO and CENTO in 1954–55, thus making Pakistan a ‘most allied ally’ of the United States.

Liaquat Ali Khan’s visit came under a lot of criticism from progressive and leftist elements in Pakistan. The exact motivations for the Prime Minister’s preference for a visit to Washington, rather than to Moscow, from where an invitation had been wangled, have been detailed earlier in Chapter 2: ‘Pakistan’s Security Dilemma: Quest for Strategic Balance’. Suffice it to say here that the intrinsically pro-Western tilt of the Pakistani elite, the conservative background of the Aligarh Muslim Movement which created many of Pakistan’s Muslim League leaders, the antipathy of the masses towards ‘Godless Communism’, the memories of displaced Muslim refugees from Central Asia as a result of Czarist expansionism in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and last, but not least, the

perceived pro-Soviet tilt of ‘Socialist Nehru’ and ‘Marxist Menon’, were all factors which influenced Liaquat Ali Khan’s decision to go to Washington instead of Moscow. There was, of course, the cold calculation that the United States had the necessary means and, in the opinion of the leaders then, the required motivation in the Cold War calculus to support Pakistan economically and militarily against a much larger India, some of whose leaders had been predicting an early demise for Pakistan.

After Liaquat Ali Khan’s visit, the next important leader to strengthen relations with the US was President Ayub Khan. In the intervening period, the governments had been weak and had lasted only a few months. This situation had elicited Nehru’s famous jibe. When he was asked who Pakistan’s Prime Minister was, he answered, ‘Noon’ (with reference to Prime Minister Firoz Khan Noon), but did not know who Pakistan’s Prime Minister would be in the afternoon.

The Americans by all accounts were impressed with Ayub Khan’s ‘engaging personality and Sandhurst training’.<sup>3</sup> They found him to be a particularly useful ally in this part of the world on the periphery of the former Soviet Union, especially after the downfall of the Hashemite Kingdom in Iraq in 1958 following a bloody coup in which King Faisal lost his life. Nixon is reported to have briefed the American National Security Council after his visit to Pakistan in 1953 as Vice President that ‘he would like to do everything for Pakistan; Pakistanis have less complexes than the Indians.’<sup>4</sup> President Eisenhower also got along well with Ayub Khan and the defence relationship gained momentum. Kennedy too, in spite of being under the influence of pro-India advisors like John Kenneth Galbraith, a celebrated Harvard professor and later Ambassador to India, got along well with Ayub Khan. In fact, the only state dinner ever held for any visiting Head of State at Mount Vernon, the home of George Washington, United State’s first President, was for Ayub Khan.<sup>5</sup>

It seems that the US’ romance with Ayub Khan continued under both Republican and Democratic administrations. During Ayub Khan’s early years, the relationship between the US and Pakistan broadened considerably. But disenchantment followed after the Sino-Indian conflict in 1962, when the US rushed weapons to aid India with strong objections from Pakistan. The Indo-Pak War of 1965 further strained Pak-US relations. Pakistan felt a sense of betrayal, since the US, by imposing sanctions on both India and Pakistan, had caused greater suffering to Pakistan, which was heavily dependent on the US.

President Nixon’s so-called ‘tilt’ towards Pakistan in the 1971 Indo-Pak War is not hidden. Nixon was grateful to Pakistan’s President General Yahya Khan for assisting the US in establishing the first direct high-level American-Chinese contact, leading to Kissinger’s meeting with Chairman Mao Zedong and the Chinese leadership. It subsequently led to the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. The adverse consequence of facilitating the United States in this initiative was to earn Soviet hostility

towards Pakistan, leading to an active pro-India position by the Soviets in the 1971 war, with damaging consequences for Pakistan.

When Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto assumed office in early 1972, following the elections in 1971, Pak-US relations did not immediately deteriorate as is commonly believed. In fact, Bhutto's visit to the US in 1973, although nothing to match Ayub Khan's warm reception earlier, could still be regarded as successful since it led to a resumption of economic assistance and the lifting of an arms embargo. The US, however, strongly objected to Pakistan's professed desire to build nuclear weapons. India's first nuclear test in 1974, which it cynically called the 'Smiling Buddha', and Bhutto's remarks that Pakistan would 'eat grass but still build the bomb', started resonating in public perception. In 1976, US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger visited Pakistan to offer economic and military assistance if Pakistan gave up its nuclear ambitions. When Bhutto did not agree, the Symington Amendment was brought in to deny Pakistan economic assistance. In addition, the US imposed sanctions on Pakistan and also successfully applied pressure on France to cancel the contract for the supply of a reprocessing plant to Pakistan. Meanwhile, Bhutto had moved closer to China, and despite American pressure, continued his efforts to further Pakistan's nuclear programme.

The relationship was strained further when President Jimmy Carter revived the policy on nuclear non-proliferation, with a focus on Pakistan. While on a visit to Iran and India in 1977, Carter did not visit Pakistan. This was the year that Bhutto was overthrown, which was a clear message that relations between Pakistan and the US were strained. The old love affair of Pakistan and the US was revived with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. General Zia ul-Haq who had become an international pariah following Mr Bhutto's execution provided unconditional support to the US-backed Mujahideen to force the Soviets out of Afghanistan. Congressman Charlie Wilson became a great supporter of the jihad in Afghanistan in the American Congress. He lobbied hard for provision of funds. The jihad succeeded but the legacy of that period was a mixture of despotism and support to militancy.

After the Soviet Union's exit following the Geneva Accord of 1989, the US abandoned Pakistan. Hence, Pakistan was left with the humongous task of dealing with the multitude of Afghan refugees and Muslim militants who had been trained by the CIA and the ISI to force Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. This cold shoulder meted out to Pakistan by the US after it had used Pakistan for its strategic goals in Afghanistan was another cause of heartache for the Pakistanis, adding another chapter of perceived betrayal in the relationship between the two countries.

The years between 1988–99 was a period when civilian governments led by Prime Ministers Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif could not develop a grip over the country's foreign policy and deal with the troubled legacy of the Afghan Jihad. Due to lack of stability and troubled civil-military relations, economic reforms could not take root as was

the case in many other countries at the end of the Cold War. This situation distracted these governments from focusing on crucial foreign policy issues. As a result, the grip of the establishment on issues relating to India, Kashmir, Afghanistan, and the US grew stronger. Despite the best efforts of the two Prime Ministers to improve relations with India, no headway could be made.

I have already referred to a sense of grievance in Pakistan about the US having not just abandoned Pakistan, but in fact penalized it through sanctions after it had achieved its own objective with the help of Pakistan at different times. This perception exists not just at the public level but also among Pakistan's policy-making circles. In this connection, it would be appropriate to refer to a leading US commentator and writer,<sup>6</sup>

[A]s long as Pakistan and the US were partners in tormenting the Soviet Union, the US winked and looked the other way at Pakistan's nuclear-weapons programme. After all, India was developing a nuclear arsenal, and it was inevitable that Pakistan would follow suit. But after the Soviets retreated, Pakistan was ostracized under a Congressional anti proliferation measure called the Pressler Amendment, stripped of military aid some of which had previously been budgeted ... and civilian assistance most of which had previously been used to promote civil society and buy good will ... After 9/11, Pakistan was tasked by the Americans with simultaneously helping to kill terrorists and using its influence to bring them to the bargaining table. Congress, meanwhile, was squeezing off much of the financial aid that lubricated the bilateral relationship.<sup>7</sup>

I may note here that, even before 9/11, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) had adopted counterterrorism measures and imposed sanctions against Osama bin Laden, Al-Qaeda, and the Taliban. These Resolutions were adopted under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, making compliance with them mandatory upon all members of the UN, including Pakistan. Accordingly, contrary to the popular narrative, Pakistan's counterterrorism efforts were initiated much before 9/11. The UNSC Resolution 1267 of October 1999 had established a Counterterrorism Committee comprising all members of the UNSC to monitor sanctions against the Taliban and subsequently against Al-Qaeda from 2000. These Resolutions thus imposed a series of demands on member states of the UN, including Afghanistan, that the Taliban must not allow territory under their control to be used for terrorist training; that they must hand over Osama bin Laden to the appropriate authorities; and that all countries must freeze all resources that could benefit Al-Qaeda financially. Following India's nuclear tests, Pakistan also conducted its own nuclear tests in May 1998. This led to the imposition of sanctions by the US against Pakistan.

In order to normalize relations after Pakistan had joined the US in the 'War on Terror', President Bush, on 22 September 2001, lifted the multiple layers (five layers) of sanctions on Pakistan. Thus, the way was once again cleared for US economic and military re-engagement with Pakistan. The sanctions that were lifted included: the Pressler Amendment, which prohibited American military assistance and transfers of military equipment or technology to Pakistan unless the US President certified that Pakistan did not possess a nuclear explosive device; the Symington Amendment, which blocked foreign assistance, arms export, international military education and training, etc., for any

country developing nuclear enrichment equipment without safeguards; and the Glenn Amendment, which prohibited assistance under the Foreign Assistance Act for any country which transferred nuclear material to another country or received it or which has exploded a nuclear device. Additionally, Section 508 of the Foreign Assistance Act barred assistance to any country whose duly elected head of government had been deposed by a military coup.

To relieve the democracy-related sanction under Section 508 affecting the grant of Foreign Military Financing (FMF), Economic Support Funds (ESF), International Military Education and Training (IMET), and other programmes of assistance, a bill moved by Senator Brownback was adopted by the Congress on 16 October 2001, known as the Brownback Amendment. It was subsequently signed into law by President George Bush. Sanctions, such as the missiles sanctions, which imposed restrictions on a large number of Pakistani entities by blocking US export licence and contracts for military equipment, were lifted in September 2001. According to US law, the President is authorized to waive any sanctions if he certified that such a waiver would (a) facilitate the transition to democratic rule in Pakistan and that; (b) it is important to US efforts to respond to, deter, or prevent acts of international terrorism. President George W. Bush exercised this waiver in subsequent years. The waiver of these sanctions was a major Confidence-Building Measure which led to normalization of the bilateral relationship that had been troubled with many layers of sanctions put on Pakistan over the years.

### **‘Pakistan Succumbed to Just One Call from Washington’**

The perception that Pakistan succumbed to just one call from Washington gained currency as the position of President Pervez Musharraf became weaker. His opponents thought they had a handy instrument to bludgeon him with. This was due to the fact that the public had imbibed heavy doses of anti-Americanism as a result of the perceived sense of betrayal referred to above. Additionally, a dramatic story sells well. What could be more dramatic than succumbing after just one call from Washington? It does not matter that Richard Armitage continues to deny having ever threatened in the manner that he was quoted as having done.

According to the popular narrative, President Musharraf decided to join President Bush in this war when he was asked, ‘Are you with us or against us?’ The reality, however, was much more complex as stated below by then Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar. He has given details of the sequence of events following 9/11 and the timing of Pakistan’s reaction. ‘Pakistan’s strategy was decided on the evening of 12 September—still forenoon in Washington—on the basis of objective analysis of contingencies and anticipation of the likely course of events and *before and not after*, any requests were received from the US.’<sup>8</sup> He added, ‘The impression that Pakistan had totally acquiesced in US demands was incorrect. Actually, Pakistan’s role was to be in certain acceptable limits.’ He quotes President Musharraf as telling the Americans that the Government of Pakistan (GoP) was

making substantial concessions by allowing use of its territory and that he would pay a domestic price. His standing in Pakistan was bound to suffer. He needed to show that Pakistan was benefiting from his decision to counter balance this perception.<sup>9</sup>

To understand the situation from the perspective of those who felt the immediate heat and had to shape a response, it is worth quoting Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar. I have also quoted him because with the advantage of hindsight, everybody has an opinion on how the situation should have been handled. Many are of the view that Pakistan should not have bothered about US sanctions or international isolation and ought not to have supported the US in Afghanistan. Abdul Sattar's account makes it clear that the number of people giving such advice was very small indeed.

His account is supported by even a cursory look at news reports, editorials, and articles in leading newspapers that supported the stance which President Musharraf had taken after 9/11.

There was, however, one long-term negative consequence of the belief or propaganda, that General Musharraf succumbed after just one telephone call from America after 9/11. This narrative became more strident and grew more vocal when the President's position weakened following the Lawyers' Movement that was launched in 2007 after the removal of Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry. If the President had indeed succumbed to just one call from Washington, as the narrative went, it could not be in Pakistan's interest.

This narrative became a handy tool for such people who held that this was not Pakistan's war but the US' war. They failed to consider that Pakistan had few options in the presence of mandatory United Nation Security Council Resolutions, failure to comply with which would have resulted in crippling sanctions. Pakistan paid a heavy price for this narrative. Militants and extremists found safe havens in North Waziristan and inflicted countless casualties on innocent Pakistani men, women and children, as well as on security forces. They did not even spare mosques, imambargahs, or religious shrines. The losses to Pakistan became so great that ultimately Operation Zarb-e-Azb had to be launched in North Waziristan in June 2014. I strongly believe that if PML-N or PPP had been in power in September 2001, they would have adopted the same position. They would have been conscious of Pakistan's international isolation had they not taken the same stance. In fact, Mian Nawaz Sharif showed similar pragmatism at the time of the first Gulf War, when the US attacked Iraq and public opinion was in favour of Saddam Hussein. Pakistan sent its troops to Saudi Arabia to show its support against Saddam Hussein.

Going back to Abdul Sattar's account:

Over a period of about two weeks, the President held lengthy and interactive discussions with a dozen groups of prominent people from various walks of national life, including leaders of political parties, the intelligentsia, media luminaries, *ulema* and *mashaikh*, influential persons from the area adjoining Afghanistan, labour leaders, women, youth, and minorities. He gave them a candid analysis of the cost and benefit of the policy options. Their response was reassuring. They were realistic in their assessment of the gravity of the situation and the need for

circumspection. Most, some 90 per cent, agreed with the Presidents conclusion.<sup>10</sup> Only the *ulema*, religious scholars, differed. A majority of them opposed cooperation with the US, arguing that right was on the side of the Taliban and therefore religious duty required Pakistan to support them, regardless of costs and consequences. The deductive reasoning was obviously flawed. Moreover, other religious scholars put forward convincing refutation by citing instances from early Islamic history showing that a leader had the duty to take into account the countervailing circumstances in specific situations before deciding a policy in the best interest of the community. Particularly weighty and relevant were the sagacious decisions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to enter into a treaty with the Jews of Medina after the Hijrah, and the Hudaibia peace agreements with the non-Muslim rulers of Mecca despite the objection of some eminent Sahaba<sup>11</sup> ... The clairvoyance of Pakistan's analysis was soon borne out by the events, as world consensus solidified in favour of the United States. The Security Council and the General Assembly adopted unanimous resolutions on 12 September, which condemned the terrorist outrage, extended condolences to the United States, and called for bringing the perpetrator, sponsors and organizers to justice. NATO invoked the treaty provision for joint defence. Turkey and the states of Central and South Asia including India, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka indicated willingness to provide logistical facilities as did several Arab countries.

The US records of the restricted National Security Meeting, chaired by President Bush on 11 September, quote Secretary of State Colin Powell, 'US had to make it clear to Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the Arab States that the time to act was now.'<sup>12</sup> He urges Pakistan to take the following steps: to stop Al-Qaeda operatives at its border and end all logistical support for bin Laden; to give the United States blanket over flight and landing rights for all necessary military and intelligence operations; to provide territorial access to the US and allied military intelligence and other personnel to conduct operations against the Al-Qaeda; to provide the United States with intelligence information; to continue to publicly condemn terrorist acts; to cut off all shipments of fuel to the Taliban and stop recruits from going to Afghanistan; and, if the evidence implicated bin Laden and Al-Qaeda, and the Taliban continued to harbour them, to break relations with the Taliban government.<sup>13</sup>

Having decided on its strategy in advance, Pakistan was in a position to give a prompt and positive response when the US demands were received on 13 September. Pakistan did make substantial concessions and General Musharraf made the point that the people needed to see Pakistan benefiting from that decision.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, on 14 September, President Musharraf convened the Corps Commanders' Meeting, a meeting of the country's highest military body, to discuss the situation and the US demands. There was no dissent, only the raising of some issues of tactics and what Pakistan must demand in return. The impact of 9/11 was so overwhelming that the question of denying support to the US appeared foolhardy, regardless of the perceived importance of the Taliban regime to Pakistan's interests. Pakistan hoped to convince the Taliban to extradite Osama and avert the oncoming disaster<sup>15</sup> but that was not to be.

The 9/11 atrocity has been described as an event that changed the world, and as 'a crack in time'.<sup>16</sup> The event was so momentous that I remember exactly where I was when I heard the news. I must confess that I did not have the faintest idea at that time of the negative impact this would have on Pakistan or that I would become Foreign Minister within a year, at such a turbulent and challenging time for Pakistan in international relations. I did

not realize how difficult it would be for Pakistan's diplomacy to meet the demands of the international community, and the ramifications for Pakistan were such that demands had to be implemented in their entirety. As it turned out, this was a very difficult undertaking and we had to constantly factor in the reactions of the Pakistani public and the expectations of the international community. It was a delicate balancing act and the only reason we were able to do this relatively well was because all the key players were on the same page. The economy was doing well and, despite criticism of American actions and dislike for US policies towards the Muslim countries in general, the public by and large continued to show understanding for the predicament and difficulties that Pakistan faced. We were also able to communicate effectively to the people of Pakistan that we were not following American policies blindly as was demonstrated by our opposition to the US attack on Iraq; our position against the use of force against Iran on the nuclear issue; and our commitment to the Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline. In all the above issues, our position was diametrically opposed to that of the United States. These issues have been addressed comprehensively in the following pages.

### **Bin Laden's Escape from Tora Bora**

After 9/11, the US accused the Taliban, who were in power in Afghanistan at the time, of protecting Osama bin Laden. President Bush ordered a massive aerial bombardment to target the militants in Afghanistan on 7 October 2001. The aim of this operation was to locate Osama bin Laden and topple the Taliban from power in Afghanistan which had become a terrorist safe haven.

Bush rejected the Taliban's appeal for discussions. After a week into the military campaign, the Taliban made a further appeal for negotiations. Whether they were serious or not is now an academic issue. Suffice it to say that the US again refused negotiations because many in the Bush Administration felt that the Taliban had to go. Kabul was the first city to be captured by the Northern Alliance on 13 November, followed by Herat, Jalalabad, and Kunduz. Kandahar was the last city to fall in December. Thereafter, the UN Security Council authorized the stationing of NATO-ISAF (International Security Assistance Force) in Afghanistan. These forces remain in Afghanistan until today.

In early December severe fighting ensued near the Tora Bora caves. It was believed that Osama bin Laden was hiding there but he escaped and the US failed to capture him. The escape from Tora Bora amounts to the failure of US intelligence to follow the leads that had been provided by local anti-Taliban elements. Bin Laden and his supporters had escaped to the forbidding territory around the Tora Bora Mountain. 'Tora Bora is a fortress of snow-capped peaks, steep valleys, and fortified caves. Its miles of tunnels, bunkers, and base camps, dug deeply into the steep rock walls, had been part of a CIA-financed complex built for the Mujahideen.'<sup>17</sup> Some six weeks after the 11 September attacks and nearly two weeks after the bombing of Afghanistan that started on 7 October, American military leaders thought that 'air power, suitcases full of cash, and surrogate militias, could

get Osama bin Laden.’<sup>18</sup> They failed, despite the month-long American bombardment of Tora Bora in which a large number of Afghan fighters and civilians lost their lives.

By the middle of December 2001, Osama bin Laden had left Tora Bora, accompanied by his bodyguards and aides, and crossed the border into Pakistan. There are no prizes for guessing that this is where they would go from Afghanistan. Since 1979, the CIA and the ISI had set up training camps for the Mujahideen, some of whom later extended support to Al-Qaeda. Hence bin Laden and his supporters were very familiar with the area and the local populace.

The Americans failed in not only capturing Osama bin Laden but also Mullah Mohammed Omar, the Taliban ruler of Afghanistan, as well as his chief lieutenants. It remained a major controversy during my time as Foreign Minister as to where bin Laden was. To pass on all responsibility on Pakistan and to deflect from their own failure in capturing him, the US and its major allies continued to assert that he was in Pakistan. They alleged that the mayhem in Afghanistan was caused under the directives of the ‘Quetta Shura’. Pakistani intelligence, on the other hand, informed us that he was constantly moving around and was likely to spend more time on the Afghan side where he enjoyed a large support base. The US however continued to maintain that bin Laden was in Pakistan but without providing any actionable intelligence regarding his whereabouts. They made the world believe that he stayed in Pakistan from where he directed all his activities. In February 2005, during a visit to Japan, which has been Pakistan’s close partner in economic cooperation, when Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi jokingly asked me about the whereabouts of Mullah Omar, the Taliban leader, I retorted that he was last seen in Afghanistan escaping on a Japanese-made Honda motorbike. I said to him, ‘Your Excellency should know better’. Both of us had a good laugh.

This situation, however, created major difficulties for Pakistani diplomacy internationally. Internally it had a major destabilizing effect, particularly from 2007 onwards, as President Pervez Musharraf’s grip started to weaken. In reaction to Pakistan’s policy of supporting the US that was pursued not only by President Musharraf but also by subsequent governments, internal terrorism started rising. It reached alarming proportions during the tenure of the PPP government and continued into 2014, with the PML-N government in power.

Several members of the Al-Qaeda and the Taliban fled from Afghanistan into Pakistan. Because of the pressure from the international community following the events of 9/11 and Pakistan’s alliance with the United States, the country was committed to tracking down senior Al-Qaeda leaders. The conflict in Afghanistan led to the exodus of a large number of Afghans into Pakistan. Even before 9/11, millions of Afghans had shifted to Pakistan because of the ongoing internal turmoil and civil war that had gripped Afghanistan since the Soviet invasion in 1979. Additional waves of refugees poured into Pakistan after 9/11.

The failure of the Americans to capture bin Laden or Mullah Omar, proved to be a psychological boost for Al-Qaeda and the Taliban. There was a ray of hope for them in the fact that the Americans did not know enough about Afghanistan. Despite their overwhelming military power, the US understood neither the terrain nor the people of Afghanistan. The fact that the Al-Qaeda leadership had survived the initial onslaught also proved costly in the long run for the US and other NATO countries which had sent troops to Afghanistan.

### **‘Osama bin Laden in a Pakistani Jail’**

Before I end this account, I must accept my embarrassment along with other Pakistanis on Osama bin Laden’s discovery in Abbottabad in May 2011 in an American raid that resulted in his death. The complete facts have yet to come out, but to date no responsible US official has accused either the Pakistan Army or Pakistan’s government of complicity. This takes me down memory lane. When I was Foreign Minister, I was in my office when an official entered dramatically and announced that Osama bin Laden had been arrested. I almost jumped out of my seat. Before I could ask any questions, he handed me a photograph of bin Laden in a Pakistani jail. When I looked up I saw that the official was smiling. I could not for the life of me understand why he was grinning and asked him so. He urged me to look at the photograph again. On close observation I realized that it was not bin Laden but a lookalike. He told me that the US intelligence had informed their counterparts in Pakistan that they had spotted ‘bin Laden’ through their satellites. He was sitting in the front seat of a car somewhere near Chitral (in Northern Pakistan) bordering Central Asia. On receiving the news, Pakistani security forces immediately got into action and arrested the inmates of the car along with the person whom they thought was bin Laden.<sup>19</sup>

When Osama bin Laden was actually captured and killed in Abbottabad on 2 May 2011, I could not help but think of this episode, where they had caught the wrong person. If Pakistani intelligence had managed to capture the so-called bin Laden on a tip-off from US intelligence sources, then its stands to reason that if they had known of his presence in Abbottabad, they would not have acted differently.

### **‘Welcome to the Club of Foreign Ministers’**

When I became Foreign Minister, among my foreign counterparts, the first to call me was US Secretary of State Colin Powell. He began with the words, ‘Welcome to the Club of Foreign Ministers’. I did not understand the significance of the phrase ‘Club of Foreign Ministers’ until later, when I realized how often Foreign Ministers meet each other. This is because they have to interact on a bilateral level as well as on multilateral fora.

When I assumed office as Foreign Minister, there was general disenchantment with what was regarded by many Pakistanis as the self-serving nature of our relations with the US. A lot of people felt that the United States only used Pakistan when it suited its own interests.

The truth however is always more nuanced. The Americans entertained misgivings regarding Pakistan's policies and objectives. They suspected that because of the primacy of the Kashmir cause in Pakistan, its government maintained an ambivalent attitude towards the 'jihadis'.

It was against this backdrop that our government strove to bring about a degree of sustainability to this relationship. We realized that this could only be done if the people of Pakistan felt that this relationship served Pakistan's interests as well. That is why one of the guiding principles during our time was to build a stable, broad-based, long-term, and durable relationship with the United States. The broadening and deepening of our connection with the US had to go beyond counterterrorism and had to be based on an institutional framework. We felt that beyond tackling matters relating to terrorism, we needed to include issues of concern to an ordinary citizen in the new framework. We tried to achieve this through a Strategic Partnership Agreement with the United States. Although, this ultimately came about in a more formalized form during President Bush's visit to Islamabad in March 2006, which aimed to promote cooperation in different fields including economic development, science and technology, education, energy, agriculture, and a regular strategic dialogue.

I was also conscious of the criticism that influential sections of Pakistani public opinion levelled against our policies, as being too subservient to the demands of the US. It was obvious that, with such perceptions, our relationship could not be sustained in the long run. Where our fundamental interests were concerned we adopted an independent posture despite the strains that this imposed on our relations with the US. For example, we firmly opposed US' efforts to obtain UN Security Council backing for its attack on Iraq. We felt the Pakistani public would be outraged by such an eventuality. Similarly, we were conscious of the extremely negative consequences for sectarian harmony in Pakistan if Iran was attacked on the nuclear issue, and we expressed our views clearly to the Bush Administration. Pakistan also supported the Iran-Pakistan Gas Pipeline Project, despite US opposition, because we are gravely short of energy. We took a keen interest in the activities of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. All of these issues required delicate political and diplomatic handling by the government and posed challenges to me as Pakistan's Foreign Minister. The international support that the US received after the 9/11 attacks, and the fact that Pakistani public opinion had become extremely suspicious of US intentions in our region as well as towards the larger Muslim world, meant that Pakistan had to somehow find the right equilibrium to avoid international isolation—and at the same time not to be out of sync with the aspirations of our own population.

### **First US Visit: Seventy-Six High-Level Interactions**

Within two months of assuming office, I went on my first visit to the United States at a crucial point in Pakistan-US bilateral relations. It was an unusually long visit, from 19 January to 6 February 2003. It was prolonged because the French Foreign Minister,

Dominique de Villepin especially requested me to attend a meeting of the Security Council on the issue of a possible attack on Iraq by the United States. This meant that I would have to stay almost a week extra in the United States before my bilateral visit to the US commenced.

I was keen that this visit should be used to maximum advantage, and our experienced and competent Ambassador in Washington, Ashraf Jahangir Qazi, made sure that it was. I met almost everybody who mattered in the United States Administration, from President Bush downwards, including Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of State Colin Powell, Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld, National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice, Attorney General John Ashcroft, Secretary for Homeland Security Tom Ridge, and several Cabinet Members. I also met major Congressional leaders and interacted with leading think tanks, including the Brookings Institution, the American Enterprises Institute, Near East South Asia Centre for Strategic Studies, and National Defence University. I had a luncheon meeting at the Rand Corporation. I had sessions with editorial boards of major newspapers and media outlets and gave interviews to CNN, PBS, *Washington Post*, *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, and *Washington Times*. I was keen to get Pakistan's narrative across, since the country had been in the news for so long and not always for positive reasons. At the conclusion of the trip, I felt satisfied that Pakistan's perspective on major issues had been communicated and hoped that it would result in a better understanding of our point of view. My office informed me that during this trip I might have created some sort of a record. I had had seventy-six high-level interactions.

In the following narrative, some issues shall be discussed in-depth since they remained the focus of our dialogue with the US during the five years that I was Foreign Minister. These related mainly to the issue of cross-border movement by militant elements from Pakistan to Afghanistan; normalization of relations between Pakistan and India; non-proliferation and matters related to civil nuclear cooperation; defence cooperation between Pakistan and the United States; the issue of Pakistani prisoners at Guantanamo Bay; Pakistan's opposition to the war on Iraq; possible attack on Iran on the nuclear issue; American political and economic support including market access to Pakistan to meet or at least dilute the criticism about Pakistan extending support to the United States in Afghanistan; and last, but not the least, reimbursement under Coalition Support Fund (CSF).

Before I begin, it would be appropriate to mention the issue of the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System (NSEERS). This had come up quite unexpectedly before my first visit and I shall therefore deal with it first.

### **The Issue of National Security Entry-Exit Registration System**

In the United States, post-9/11, the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System (NSEERS) was introduced. It threatened to adversely impact the position of many Pakistanis (and other nationalities) living there. The reason for the introduction of the

NSEERS was the paranoia that had been created after 9/11 regarding US homeland security. Whatever the reasons, this aroused great concern among the Pakistani diaspora living in the US. Reflecting these concerns, I took up this matter with the US government at the very highest level. I raised this issue in my meetings with Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of State Colin Powell, Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge, and Attorney General John Ashcroft, as well as with Congressional leaders. I highlighted this matter on print and electronic media. I emphasized that the Pakistani community residing in the US were gravely disturbed and fearful regarding their status. I highlighted further, that our opponents were very happy about the negative impact of this on the new 'special relationship' that was developing between Pakistan and the United States. Moreover, I communicated, the emerging state of affairs was a cause of great embarrassment to the Pakistan government.

When I raised the issue of NSEERS with Secretary of State Powell, he conceded that 'the sword of Damocles' would hang over those whose applications were pending with the concerned officials. He did however point out that while he understood the concerns of the Pakistanis, the US had security concerns of its own. Attorney General Ashcroft stated that the system would be irreversible since it was mandated by the American Congress and would include all countries whose nationals required US visas. However, I was given to believe by various US officials that the deadline for the registration would be extended and very few Pakistanis would be deported, and also that various officials had been instructed to use their discretionary powers to grant release to those Pakistanis whose status applications were pending. My intervention caused a sense of relief for the Pakistani community living in the US.

### **The Issue of Nuclear Non-Proliferation**

Various American leaders regarded non-proliferation as a very serious matter and suggested that evidence of proliferation activity would be detrimental for Pak-US relations. There was increasing concern on this in the Congress. Powell even stated that if nuclear proliferation was established, it would lead to re imposition of the sanctions. It was also stated by Dr Rice that the US Administration would have little choice as US laws would kick in and Pakistan would be held responsible even if non-government actors were involved. At my meeting with CIA's Director, George Tenet, the proliferation issue was stressed.

On issues of great concern to the US, such as allegations of Pakistan's assistance to the North Korean nuclear programme, I presented our position that Pakistan was fully abiding by its commitment in terms of preventing export of nuclear technology. Moreover, Pakistan was taking all steps to prevent proliferation and there were multilayered security rings to protect its assets. I added that without any credible proof, such allegations were not worthy of attention and only served as a distraction from core issues of bilateral interest. I do not have to therefore point out how embarrassed all of us in the government

were when the A. Q. Khan affair broke out. Much to Pakistan's detriment, this news for many weeks dominated the international media scene. This issue has been dealt comprehensively in the section titled 'The A. Q. Khan Saga' later in this chapter.

### **US Facilitation of Pak-India Dialogue**

At this stage it would be appropriate to mention that the US was attempting to bring India and Pakistan closer together. I cannot be sure what exactly they were communicating to the Indians but it was obvious that they were in constant touch with them. For example, after US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage returned from New Delhi to Washington, a leading Indian newspaper commented: 'Less than 24 hours after his return from New Delhi, Armitage met Pakistan's Foreign Minister Khurshid Mahmud Kasuri in Washington and briefed him about his talks in New Delhi.'<sup>20</sup> We can only know the details if one of my Indian counterparts decides to write a book in which his version is given. It does not, however, require much imagination to figure out that the Indians were emphasizing the need to prevent cross-LoC (Line of Control) infiltration and the Americans were faithfully conveying this to us. I was stressing on the centrality of the Kashmir issue for a durable peace between Pakistan and India. Subsequent developments continued to demonstrate America's sustained interest in promoting peace between Pakistan and India. It is also obvious that, just as the Americans were conveying Indian concerns to us, they were also conveying our concerns to India. The US and the UK were emphasizing to the Indians the need for resolving outstanding differences including Kashmir. In fact, Dr Rice conceded to me during this visit that President Bush had promised to play a facilitative role on the issue of Kashmir. This was of course borne out sometimes later when Secretary of State Colin Powell informed me that we could expect some positive statements from the Indian side. These statements did begin to appear—the most important being Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's famous statement of extending the 'hand of friendship'.

In order to emphasize what Pakistan had to do, American officials lost no opportunity to emphasize to us the need to prevent all cross-border movement. In fact, Secretary of State Powell told me that cross-border infiltration had not stopped in the manner expected despite the assurances of President Pervez Musharraf. He said that the situation seemed terribly dangerous to him. He added that it appeared that 'the ISI is not following the President's instructions' with regard to the LoC, to which I responded that the ISI was under the discipline of the army. The officers posted there had a fixed tenure and went back to their assignments in the army. Their promotions and career prospects would be negatively impacted were they seen to be on a frolic of their own. There was however a possibility of non-state actors who had acquired training during the Afghan Jihad managing to get through to the other side.

The CIA Director George Tenet also told me that there was a need for Pakistan to follow up on its commitment on cross-border infiltration. While on the hand some members of

the Congress including Senator Joseph Biden, now Vice President, and the late Congressman Henry Hyde, Chairman of the House International Committee, were 'unconvinced' by Pakistan's assurances that LoC crossings had stopped, on the other, Vice President Dick Cheney felt that the situation with India had 'quietened down for the moment'. I am purposely giving different opinions in the American political set-up; those who understand the workings of this system should not be surprised by this. The level of American interest can be gauged from the fact that it did not remain limited to the executive branch. The media and the Congress also started taking note of the need to resolve the issue of Jammu and Kashmir. I pointed out that peace between Pakistan and India was vital for regional peace and security but such a peace could only be sustained by a fair and just solution to the Jammu and Kashmir dispute. It would have to be a solution that was acceptable first and foremost to the Kashmiris, and then to the Pakistanis and the Indians.

During my visit to Washington in 2005, in my exchanges with Secretary of State Rice, besides a review of bilateral relations, the need for an active engagement by the US on a solution of the Kashmir problem was discussed in detail. I briefed her on the outline of a possible agreement with India on Jammu and Kashmir starting with the identification of various areas in Jammu and Kashmir and determining their status, demilitarization, self-governance and the setting up of a Joint Mechanism. I pressed upon her that the US had an opportunity to leave a mark on history. She responded positively and agreed that a solution on the lines mentioned by me and as stated by President Musharraf in his public pronouncements was possible, and that the US would be actively engaged in promoting that solution.

During the visit, Pakistan's cooperation in the war against terrorism also was discussed. I have already mentioned that President Bush in a letter acknowledged Pakistan's cooperation in countering terrorism. Vice President Cheney warmly appreciated renewed ties after 9/11 which he found 'especially valuable in Afghanistan' and in 'rounding up key members of Al-Qaeda'. He admired Pakistan for taking 'tough decisions' and said that the US wished to be helpful as it wanted the new government in Pakistan to succeed. National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice also appreciated Pakistan's role in the war against terrorism, which in her words was 'America's highest priority'. On bilateral relations, she stressed that the two countries had an important agenda ahead of them. I emphasized to Rice as well as to other interlocutors in the United States that President Musharraf's decision to support the United States after 9/11 had made him the target of militants in Pakistan who were accusing Musharraf of siding with America against fellow Muslims, the Taliban. I underlined the fact that Pakistan needed to show some progress on the issue of Jammu and Kashmir and that President Bush must keep his promise to President Musharraf to play a facilitating role with regard to the Jammu and Kashmir dispute. This would partly mollify public opinion in Pakistan.

I also underlined the political and economic cost to Pakistan that cooperation with the US in the war against terrorism had entailed and which necessitated American political and economic support to Pakistan. I also emphasized the need for enhancing mutual trust in bilateral relations. The Americans, in their response, underlined their interest in building a long-term multidimensional relationship with Pakistan and assured that the US would extend all possible assistance in addressing Pakistan's concerns.

### **Rumsfeld Takes a Hard Line on Iraq**

In my meeting at the Pentagon with Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, I highlighted the need to correct the imbalance in conventional forces in South Asia. On the question of pending items of defence supplies which I had raised, the logjam was broken and he promised to look into other pending items. He tried to solicit my support on the possibility of Pakistan joining the countries supporting the US on Iraq. I expressed my apprehensions about the negative consequences in the Muslim world of the use of force against Iraq (on the issue of it possibly possessing Weapons of Mass Destruction [WMDs] which were never found). In order to get Pakistan's support, he indicated to me that the number of countries supporting the US position was growing. These included Middle Eastern countries, though he pointedly refused to name them. When I asked him whether any evidence had in fact been found to prove that Iraq actually possessed WMDs, he deflected the conversation by stating that it was not possible that UN Inspectors could cover such a big country. He asserted rather firmly that the question was not of discovering anything, but whether Iraq was ready to cooperate. It was clear to me following this meeting that, regardless of the outcome of the UN Security Council Resolution, the US had decided to attack Iraq with or without UN support, as it ultimately did along with the 'Coalition of the Willing'.

I found Secretary of State Powell more restrained. In his talks with me, Powell adopted a more reasonable approach and communicated that the US wanted to resolve the Iraq issue peacefully but Saddam Hussein would not be allowed to delay US action for 'months after months'. It must be mentioned here that when he found out that he had been misled by the intelligence provided to him, he regretted informing the United Nations that Iraq was harbouring Weapons of Mass Destruction.<sup>21</sup>

### **The US Congress Supportive**

I interacted with many Congressional leaders during this as well as during my subsequent visits to United States. The attitude of the Congressional leaders towards Pakistan after 9/11 was generally positive. I would like to particularly mention three Congressional leaders who were sympathetic towards Pakistan's predicament post-9/11. One was Senator Richard Lugar, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee who characterized bilateral relations as 'important and vital'. Second was Congressman Tom Lantos, who later became Chairman of the House Committee on International Relations and the only

Holocaust survivor to ever serve in the Congress. He felt that Pakistan 'had made a very constructive choice' in siding with the US. The third was Senator John Warner, Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, a gentleman of the old school and once married to the famous actress Elizabeth Taylor. He displayed a lot of warmth towards me and insisted on showing me around the Congress. In response to my request to speed up on Pakistan's defence requirements submitted earlier through the appropriate channels, he assured his support. Moreover, he wanted his message to be conveyed to President Musharraf, that he agreed on Pakistan's need for military equipment and would do whatever he could in this regard.

### **Cross-LoC Movement**

In this context, US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, who met both President Musharraf and me in Islamabad in May 2003, told Musharraf, 'Sir, you have given orders to stop infiltration in 6–8 weeks. Can I tell India that from now on this is permanent? It is my job to get a response. You don't have to say anything. We will say that the US assessment is a dramatic fall in infiltration and that will be permanent.' The President responded that Armitage could do so, adding that our request to President Bush was to put pressure on India for the start of an engaged dialogue on Kashmir. Earlier, in July 2002, during a visit to Islamabad, Secretary of State Powell was cautioned by President Musharraf that the Indian strategy was to 'have the LoC sealed, undermine the Kashmir resistance, hold elections in IAK [Indian Administered Kashmir] and then declare that the problem was over.' He added, 'We cannot allow this strategy to succeed. If the goal is dialogue and the resolution of the Kashmir problem then we can go along. If the strategy is to deny this, we cannot go along with the Indians or anyone else.'

United States Ambassador Nancy Powell in her meeting with me at the Foreign Office on 12 December 2002 underlined the need for continued efforts from Pakistan to ensure that cross-LoC activity was not supported by the Pakistan government. US National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice, in May 2003 in Washington, disputed the DG-ISI's claim that there was no cross-border infrastructure on the Pakistani side of the LoC by stating, 'We [the US] do not see it that way. We have not seen any moves that can be associated with dismantling the infrastructure.' Deputy Secretary of State Armitage, in a meeting with me on 8 May 2003 in Islamabad and a week later in Washington on 14 May 2003, also raised the question of training camps, declaring, 'I did not affirm to the Indians that they were there. I told them that these camps were dismantled.' Rice, however, in a meeting with me in Washington the following day said that there was a lot more to do regarding cross-border terrorism. As a result of all these developments, Armitage admitted to President Musharraf in Washington on 24 June 2003, 'For a while the US thought that Pakistan was on the back foot on the LoC issue. Now things have changed. India's position could be seen in the same manner.'

The US Senate Foreign Relations Committee also held a hearing on ‘Pakistan and India: Steps towards Rapprochement’, chaired by Senator Richard Lugar, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.<sup>22</sup> It consisted of two sessions. While the first one was closed as the CIA officials testified during that session, the second session was open, with participants including Ambassador Frank Wisner, former US Ambassador to India, Professor Stephen Cohen of the Brookings Institution, and Michael Krepon, President of the Henry Stimson Center. Senator Lugar described it as a hopeful time in India-Pakistan relations, adding that only India and Pakistan were capable of resolving their issues. It was more important than ever, according to him, that the US sustains active engagement in South Asia to encourage continuation of the positive momentum. It was also crucial that both parties prevented extremists from hijacking or disturbing the process. In his words, the continuing hostilities between Pakistan and India bred Islamic extremists in the region by providing a fertile ground for terrorist recruitment. He added that normalization requires that both sides make difficult political decisions on matters of long-standing dispute. He praised the two sides for their bold moves but cautioned against the attempts of entrenched interests and hawks in their own countries to undermine or complicate diplomatic openings. He encouraged Indo-Pakistan nuclear discussions and other CBMs. Significantly, he stated that the US should make it clear to New Delhi that progress in its relations with India could only continue if it works to ease tensions in Kashmir and build confidence amongst the Muslims there.<sup>23</sup> He cautioned that problems originating from the subcontinent could have serious consequences for the US, adding that the stakes in South Asia had become too high to risk a return to military confrontation or creation of new sources of Islamic extremism.<sup>24</sup>

## AFGHANISTAN

It was obvious that Afghanistan would feature prominently during this and subsequent interactions with various American leaders. President Bush appreciated Pakistan’s ‘great work’ with reference to Afghanistan. He conveyed his warm greetings for President Pervez Musharraf whom he mentioned as ‘my friend, a good man’. United States Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld touched upon the problems on the Afghan border areas adding, ‘The degree of cooperation we can achieve will have a direct impact on the situation.’ CIA Director George Tenet, who was very influential in the US Administration, was equally supportive of Pakistan. It was said about him that he was the first person to meet President Bush every morning at the White House and brief him about intelligence matters. He felt that the US owed an immense debt of gratitude to Pakistan’s ‘heroic’ contribution. This time the US would not walk away from Pakistan as it realized the risks involved. He added that the months ahead would be important and it was necessary to enhance the level of mutual cooperation. While discussing Afghanistan, Secretary of State Powell assured me that irrespective of Iraq, the US would not abandon Afghanistan and would stay in close touch with Pakistan and the Karzai government. Senator Joseph Biden,

who is currently Vice President of the United States, however, told me that the Bush Administration had made ‘a mess of Afghanistan’. It may be recalled here that Pakistan’s eminent scholar and analyst on Afghanistan and Central Asia, Ahmed Rashid has quoted Senator Biden in his book, ‘America has replaced the Taliban with the warlords. Warlords are still on the US pay roll but that has not brought a cessation of violence.’<sup>25</sup> Not much attention was paid by the Bush Administration to this criticism. Leading commentators and analysts are equally critical today of the policies of the Obama Administration in Afghanistan.

I had also put forward Pakistan’s case for developing its economy through trade and market access. I repeatedly reiterated to my interlocutors that Pakistan was looking for market access rather than aid. Senator Joseph Biden, however, was not optimistic about the Bush Administration giving any trade concessions to Pakistan. He felt that aid was more likely than trade under the Bush Administration in response to my statement that Pakistan was more interested in trade rather than in aid. Unfortunately, even in 2014, not much headway seems to have been made in this direction. Freer market access would make a great difference in fighting poverty and extremism by providing greater employment.

While this was the general undertone of the first high-level contact by the civilian government, the dichotomy between what was being said publicly and behind closed doors was already emerging. While US officials stressed in public that Pakistan had taken steps to control Al-Qaeda and Taliban militants, in private some of them said that Pakistan could do more to combat them in the border areas but it had chosen not to. In fact, to apply pressure on Pakistan, calculated leaks were made to the media by some elements in the administration.

Stephen Hadley, United States’ National Security Advisor who was Condoleezza Rice’s replacement told me that there was a high level of suspicion in Afghanistan regarding Pakistan’s intentions. Afghanistan had conveyed to the US that public demonstrations and violence in Afghanistan following a *Newsweek* report about the desecration of the Holy Quran was instigated from quarters in Pakistan. Hadley added that fighters involved in Kashmir, in addition to India, were also making trouble for Afghanistan and the US.

Moreover, while we supported every initiative that would help the Afghans to achieve national reconciliation and reconstruct their country, the situation in Afghanistan had negative blowback effects in Pakistan. Some Al-Qaeda members escaped into our territory, placing a heavy responsibility on us to counter this challenge for which we deployed nearly one hundred thousand troops. While we shared the expectation of the Americans and the international community in rejecting extremism and terrorism, we had differences on how best to counter these forces. Sometimes we faced difficulties because charges against Pakistan made by the Afghan leadership were given great credibility,

though the real assessment of the situation would suggest that the fault lay more at Afghanistan's and not at our end.

### **The Issue of Pakistani Prisoners in Guantanamo Bay and in Afghanistan Raised Forcefully**

Another issue of concern which continued to rankle and cause grief in Pakistan was that of Pakistani prisoners in Afghanistan and detainees at the Guantanamo Bay. There were about 1,100 Pakistanis who were arrested by the Northern Alliance following the defeat of the Taliban. I repeatedly raised this issue in my meetings with President Hamid Karzai as well as with my counterpart Dr Abdullah Abdullah. Through our persistent efforts, we were able to secure the release of many detainees, who were handed over to Pakistan. Unfortunately, there were still quite a few prisoners in the custody of General Abdul Rasheed Dostum, the Uzbek warlord. Reports appearing in newspapers spoke of their pitiable plight. We were ultimately able to secure their release as well.

The issue of Pakistani detainees at Guantanamo Bay attracted a lot of attention in Pakistan and also internationally. We were very disturbed that they were being kept so far away from their families and there were also reports of physical and/or mental torture. I took this issue up as my top priority and constantly raised it in my interactions with various US officials, starting from my very first meeting with Colin Powell at the State Department.<sup>26</sup> I also raised this issue in my joint press conference at the State Department with him. As a result of our efforts, a Pakistani delegation including representatives of the Foreign Office, Interior Ministry, and the ISI (Inter-Services Intelligence) visited Guantanamo Bay in August 2002 where fifty-eight Pakistanis were held at the US naval base. They were interviewed by the delegation to establish their Pakistani identity. The Pakistani government pointed out to the US that these detainees were not hard-core Taliban and should therefore be released out of human rights consideration. Through our efforts, gradually most of these Pakistanis were released, and by 2007, only six of them were left in the detention camps.

### **PAKISTAN'S OPPOSITION TO THE WAR AGAINST IRAQ**

Dust had hardly begun to settle following the US invasion of Afghanistan and occupation of that country following the ouster of the Taliban, when we started hearing of US intentions to attack Iraq on the allegation that it possessed chemical weapons. There were grave misgivings throughout the Muslim world regarding US intentions. A large number of people, not just in the Muslim world, but also in Europe, regarded it as a part of the Neocon Agenda aimed at promoting American global leadership and arguing that what was good for the US was good for the world, almost echoing the simplistic notion that what was good for General Motors was good for America. Some of its top proponents had in fact called for a regime change in Iraq during the Clinton years. This was based on the

recommendations of the American think tank, the Project for the New American Century (PNAC).<sup>27</sup> Some of the main proponents of this policy included Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz, and Robert Zoellick, all of whom held important positions in the Bush Administration.

I have referred to my discussions with Donald Rumsfeld, who had by then become Secretary of Defence in the Bush Administration, during my first visit to Washington. I subsequently gathered that Donald Rumsfeld and Vice President Dick Cheney were among the most influential members of the Bush Administration. On my first visit to the US as Foreign Minister, when I went to the Pentagon, Rumsfeld solicited my support for a US attack on Iraq. When I pointed out to him the negative consequences of such an action throughout the Muslim world, he retorted that a large number of countries, including some Muslim countries had promised to support US action. When I asked him to name the countries, he tried to deflect the conversation. He was not interested in providing any proof that Iraq actually did possess WMDs (Weapons of Mass Destruction).

The US in order to justify its actions in Iraq had noted that a 9/11 hijacker, Mohammed Atta, had confessed to having a meeting with the Iraqi intelligence in Prague. Atta had claimed that Iraq provided chemical weapons training to Al-Qaeda and was involved in the 9/11 attacks. In the backdrop of the events leading to the American invasion of Iraq on 19 March 2003, the Bush Administration argued that Iraq was a threat to the US as well as a grave and growing danger to global peace. It maintained that the policy of containment was not working in Iraq. Moreover, it was Saddam Hussein's choice to go to war. No great love for Saddam Hussein was harboured by Pakistanis. Traditionally, he was regarded as a friend of India's. Regardless of this fact, I was conscious of the negative reaction of the Pakistani public to any such action. The government was also mindful that the doctrine of pre-emptive strikes against sovereign states would encourage states with hegemonic ambitions to try to attain their designs through aggression. The US seemed to have taken a decision of attacking Iraq, notwithstanding that it would whip up anti-American sentiment in the entire Muslim world.

At the time, Pakistan was also a non-permanent Member of the UNSC. We opposed the use of force in Iraq against the backdrop of the diplomatic moves by the Bush Administration to table a draft UNSC Resolution authorizing the use of force in Iraq. France and Russia, two permanent UNSC Members with veto powers, had taken a position that the UN inspectors were carrying on their work, and that Iraq did not pose an imminent threat to world peace. Pakistan held similar views and took the position that UNSC Resolution 1441 unanimously adopted in November 2002 provided a framework. The possibilities of this framework had not been explored. We also felt that the inspections conducted by the United Nations Monitoring, Verification, Inspection Committee (UNMOVIC), and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) were yielding results.

Also, that there was an alternative to the use of force which should be resorted to as a last measure.

The position that we adopted brought me very close to the three main actors in the United Nations opposed to the attack on Iraq. These included French Foreign Minister (later Prime Minister) Dominique de Villepin; Vice Chancellor and Foreign Minister of Germany Joschka Fischer; and Russian Foreign Minister Ivan Ivanov. They were particularly interested in securing the support of Pakistan which was the only nuclear power in the Muslim world, and at that time a Member of the UNSC. In view of the pressures that Pakistan was facing, some in the Foreign Office used to joke that this was not a particularly good time for Pakistan to have been elected as member of the Security Council.

Although Pakistan faced immense pressure from the US, there was strong public sentiment in the country for respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq. Pakistan believed in a peaceful resolution of the issue. I remained in regular contact with many Foreign Ministers over this matter including those of China, France, Russia, Germany, and Mexico. This was necessary because at one stage the US spread the rumour that Pakistan was after all going to support the US in its endeavour to secure the UNSC Resolution. I had to assure my counterparts that this was not the case and that Pakistan was steadfast in its resolve to oppose the resolution allowing an attack on Iraq. I remember receiving a late night call from my Mexican counterpart, Luis Ernesto Derbez wanting to know from me if Pakistan had changed its stance. It appeared to me that Mexico was wavering in the face of US pressure and had been told that Pakistan was going to change its position (as I had been told by Secretary Rumsfeld that many Muslim countries would support US action in Iraq). I assured my Mexican colleague that Pakistan would not support aggression against Iraq. Mexico did not change its position; it seemed that the US was scrambling for support, having already decided to attack Iraq. We had to formulate a policy to discourage the United States and make them realize that it would not get the necessary UN support. I did my best to convince all my US interlocutors that Pakistan would not find it possible to support the US, given the fact that the Pakistan government was already facing resistance from some sections of Pakistanis, following the government's decision to support the US on Afghanistan.

A high-level meeting to discuss this urgent issue was held at the Foreign Office and was presided over by President Musharraf. The meeting, inter alia, considered what Pakistan's voting position should be in case the Americans brought a new draft resolution for a vote. It was decided that, were the Americans to force the issue and table a resolution, Pakistan would not support it. Clearly, Pakistan's position on the Iraq issue was based on principle but also on a prudent and pragmatic assessment of Pakistan's national interests. Although Pakistan emphatically rejected the doctrine of pre-emption and the notion of an attack on Iraq, it did not lead the charge against the US. This was left to the charismatic French Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin who, because of his eloquence, good looks, and

his passionate opposition in the Security Council towards US plans of attacking Iraq, became some sort of an international rock star. The Americans were livid with him, so much so that many US leaders declared that French Fries would henceforth be called Freedom Fries in the United States. Over time though, passions of the US regarding France seem to have cooled down.

I addressed the UN Security Council meeting during the debate on Iraq on 5 February 2003 in New York, following the presentation of 'US evidence' of Iraq's failure to destroy Weapons of Mass Destruction. It was a memorable moment and I even remember the exact seating order at the meeting. Secretary of State Colin Powell was seated right opposite me and he was accompanied by CIA Director George Tenet. Powell was trying to justify an attack on Iraq by advancing arguments in favour of Iraq's possession of Weapons of Mass Destruction. I was one of the twelve Foreign Ministers who took part in the debate. Pakistan, together with France, China, and Russia, focused on the need to achieve a political settlement and expressed the hope of finding a solution within the framework of UNSC Resolution. I added we could not ignore elements of security, such as ensuring the welfare of the Iraqi people, and preserving the unity and territorial integrity as well as the political and economic stability of the region. In the end our policy paid off, with the US realizing that it could not get the necessary support in the UNSC. The US decided not to table a new Resolution, not only suspecting a veto by one of the permanent members but also fearing that they would fail to obtain the affirmative votes of nine states essential for the adoption of a UNSC Resolution.

Nevertheless, the US with the support of the 'Coalition of the Willing' did go ahead and attacked Iraq despite its failure to get UN support. With the exception of the United Kingdom, Australia, and Poland, the 'Coalition of the Willing' was a mishmash of thirty-odd nations, most of them too insignificant to offer the United States nothing but symbolic support. Even in the UK, which did provide material help, the majority populace were opposed to the attack. Huge anti-war demonstrations were held in London and other European cities including Paris, Rome, and Barcelona. This led to a surge in anti-US sentiments and reinforced the deep suspicion of Pakistanis about US policies in the Middle East.

Pakistan expressed deep solidarity with the people of Iraq. In April 2003, humanitarian assistance was provided by Pakistan to Iraq in the form of rice, wheat, tents, medicine, and surgical equipment.

Unfortunately and predictably, the justifications advanced by the Bush Administration for using force in Iraq proved to be wrong. Importantly, assurances given by the US government to its people, that the war would involve a minimum number of troops, also proved to be false. The US claims of finding WMDs and restoring peace in the Middle East also came to naught.

Joseph Stiglitz, a distinguished economist, has asserted that expenses incurred by the US in Iraq as well as Afghanistan far exceeded initial US estimates.<sup>28</sup> The legacy of the huge expenditure that the US spent on these wars will continue to impact its economy for decades.<sup>29</sup> Alas! Iraq continues to pay for the follies of US leaders. The fallout of the war is visible in the emergence of the Islamic State (IS) in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)—the latest manifestations of the horrors unleashed on innocent Iraqi civilians.

## **THE A. Q. KHAN SAGA**

I remember President Pervez Musharraf and I perspiring visibly in Kuala Lumpur, not because of the high humidity levels of the city, but because of what President Seyed Mohammad Khatami of Iran told us. It was during a meeting on the sidelines of the Non-Aligned Movement's (NAM) Summit in Kuala Lumpur in February 2003, when Khatami dramatically requested everyone to leave the room, except President Musharraf and me. He informed us rather sheepishly that the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) Inspectors had discovered during their inspection of an Iranian facility (almost) weapons-grade enrichment of contaminated parts. Khatami tried to suggest that these were provided by Pakistan. Both President Musharraf and I were startled at this revelation. Barely controlling his temper, Musharraf retorted sharply to Khatami, 'How do I know that the Iranians have not done it themselves?' This was the beginning of the episode that came to be known as the A. Q. Khan affair.

It is necessary to provide a background of the A. Q. Khan saga that was at the heart of President Khatami's revelation. Dr A. Q. Khan had enjoyed freedom of movement and action during most of his working career. We have to remember that, since leaving Holland and arriving in Pakistan in 1975 on the invitation of Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, A. Q. Khan was privy to the country's highest secrets. His activities were not questioned and his travels were considered national secrets.

General Zia ul-Haq provided A. Q. Khan with enhanced secrecy and additional security so that A. Q. Khan's pursuits were not detected by US intelligence agents, who were present in large numbers in Pakistan during the Afghan Jihad. Dr A. Q. Khan was not subject to government accountability. According to a briefing given to the president where I was also present, Dr A. Q. Khan had used his freedom of unchecked movement to transfer sensitive nuclear technology to some countries, namely, Iran, Libya, and North Korea. It appeared that these secret leakages reached their peak between 1988 and 1999. This was a time of troubled civil-military relations in Pakistan. According to some international observers, it was during this period that he and some of his associates were involved in the proliferation of nuclear technology.<sup>30</sup>

There is also evidence that intelligence officials were beginning to become suspicious of his activities as early as 1989. Apparently, Iran had been approaching the Pakistan

government through various channels but these efforts were rebuffed. Since I was not in office at that time, I have no personal knowledge of this or of his subsequent activities. Given the nature of such clandestine activities, I doubt whether I would have known much even if I had been in office. It is a different matter though, that as Foreign Minister of Pakistan, I was left to deal with its potentially dangerous consequences.

According to reports, Dr A. Q. Khan visited Iran in 1986. He went to see the Bushehr Reactor Plant there. Henceforth, secret dealings between Iran and him began. According to published reports, in the 1990s A. Q. Khan began delivery of centrifuge technology to North Korea, and in 2000 to Libya. Over the years, many Western countries, particularly the United States which was keeping a close watch on A. Q. Khan's movements, became aware of his activities. Subsequently, the US government in March 2003 placed sanctions on Khan Research Laboratories (KRL) at Kahuta. Even those who attacked A. Q. Khan's activities were not able to provide concrete evidence that his activities were sanctioned by any official of the Pakistan government. According to reports, 'It is clear that no evidence has come from any directive given to A. Q. Khan to provide nuclear technology to these countries.'<sup>31</sup>

On 5 February 2004, a special Cabinet Meeting was convened to discuss the issue of nuclear proliferation by Dr A. Q. Khan and his associates. Director General, Strategic Plans Divisions (DGSPD) Lt Gen. Khalid Kidwai gave a detailed presentation to the Cabinet, illustrating the significant points of the investigations of the affair. Apparently, A. Q. Khan and some of his colleagues were involved in clandestine proliferation activities involving a number of countries. A day earlier, A. Q. Khan had met with the President of Pakistan and had publically admitted his guilt in a televised appearance. He offered his unqualified apology to the nation. At the same time, he had submitted a mercy petition that was accepted, subject to his carrying out the terms of pardon, which included cooperation so that appropriate follow-up action in this regard could be undertaken. The Cabinet was of the view that, given Dr A. Q. Khan's past contributions and service to the nation, and his admission of guilt, the issue should be resolved in a manner that such proliferation activities become impossible in the future.

Speaking to me about A. Q. Khan's network, US National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley told me that, while some progress had been made in this connection, great gaps in facts still remained. Questions on the network's dealings with Iran, North Korea and other countries of concern needed to be answered.

On 11 February 2004, President Bush gave an address at the National Defence University. In view of the significance of the subject and its ramifications for Pakistan, I am quoting Bush at length here:

A. Q. Khan is known throughout the world as the father of Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme. What was not publicly known, until recently, is that he also led an extensive international network for the proliferation of the nuclear technology and know-how. A. Q. Khan operated mostly out of Pakistan, and sold the blueprints for

centrifuges to enrich uranium as well as nuclear designs stolen from the Pakistani government. He and his associates provided Iran and Libya and North Korea with design of Pakistan's older centrifuges as well as more efficient models and the network in some cases provided these countries with centrifuges. This picture of the network was pieced together over several years by American and British intelligence officers who followed Khan's transactions, monitored the network's travels and mapped their operations, recorded their conversations, penetrated their operations and uncovered their secrets. The government of Pakistan was interrogating the network's members, learning critical details to help them prevent it from ever operating again. President Musharraf has promised to share all the information he learnt about the Khan network and assured us that his country will never again be a source of proliferation.

It was because of the close relationship between Pakistan and the US at that time that this matter took one year before it made worldwide headlines and, despite serious ramifications, Pakistan was able to contain the damage. The government and in particular the Foreign Office realized that difficult decisions needed to be taken. International concerns had to be addressed, for which we needed US and EU support. We had to handle the whole affair in a manner so as to regain trust and credibility regarding our nuclear programme. We shared information with China, taking into account their sensitivities. We also briefed Japan which was particularly sensitive on this issue in view of its own history. We also apprised a number of other countries of the steps that we were taking.

The Foreign Office had to work hard to contain the global media fallout. The international media really went to town over the affair. *Time* magazine published it under the title, 'The Merchant of Menace: How A. Q. Khan Becomes the World's Most Dangerous Nuclear Trafficker'. We had to restore Pakistan's credibility by follow-up actions to reassure the world that something like this would never happen again. We were able to contain the damage because of diplomatic efforts as well as the fact that Pakistan had been conducting a proactive foreign policy and enjoyed good relations with major world powers.

Following the A. Q. Khan saga, various initiatives were taken by the Pakistan government in the area of non-proliferation to regain its credibility. Khan's network was dismantled and he was made to apologize to the nation, although we had to pay a heavy price in political as well as domestic terms. In Pakistan Dr A. Q. Khan is regarded as the Father of the Bomb and was considered a national hero. Our political opponents took full advantage of our discomfort and flung at us the fact that Dr A. P. J. Abdul Kalam, the Father of India's Bomb, was made the President of India, whereas our hero had been humiliated by us and put under house arrest. The international community did not recognize our dilemma. This was one of the most difficult and embarrassing moments for the government, both at the domestic and international levels.

The Foreign Office issued instructions to all our ambassadors, particularly those posted in major world capitals, to contain the damage. In this regard, Tariq Osman Haider (known affectionately as 'T.O. '), Additional Secretary, UN Desk, with inputs from our key ambassadors and the Strategic Plans Divisions (SPD) made a major effort to prepare Pakistan's case for briefing our ambassadors abroad and the missions in Islamabad.

Tariq Osman's office was next to mine at the Foreign Office. Both of us would work until late and very often T.O. would peep into my office to see if I was still there. He had always something interesting to tell me about the latest developments.

I would like to emphasize that, in view of the sensitive nature of the subject and the information to which I am privy by virtue of having remained a Member of the National Command Authority, I have been very careful in penning my thoughts here. The information provided in this section is available in the public domain.

### **Strengthening of Pakistan's Nuclear Oversight**

It may be in order here to give a brief account of the steps taken by Pakistan for the strengthening of security of Pakistan's nuclear facilities. After the nuclear tests conducted in May 1998, the government began to consider a formal Command and Control System in 2000. Since then, Pakistan's Nuclear Control infrastructure has undergone four phases.<sup>32</sup> The first phase was the determination of the need for a formal Command and Control System. In the second phase, General Pervez Musharraf, in his role as Chief Executive of the country, initiated reforms between 1999 and 2001. Pakistan had become a nuclear country and no longer needed to keep its programme covert. The 9/11 attacks led to a third phase between 2001 and 2003. The fourth phase followed Dr A. Q. Khan's house arrest and confession.<sup>33</sup>

Scientists who had previously enjoyed unlimited and unaccountable authority now had to report to the Strategic Plans Division (SPD). Pakistan was fortunate to have a competent officer in the person of Lt Gen. Khalid Kidwai as Director General for the Strategic Plans Division (SPD). He remained Director General SPD for fifteen years until his retirement in February 2014. In meetings of the National Command Authority, of which I was a member, he used to give us comprehensive briefings about the status of Pakistan's nuclear programme as well as the measures that were being taken to ensure the safety, security, and secrecy of the programme.

Pakistan's credentials in the area of non-proliferation improved as a result of the concerted efforts of the SPD and the Foreign Office and other related agencies. The SPD took a number of measures to improve the security of its nuclear installations, starting with a comprehensive 'Personnel Reliability Programme' for all scientists and officials working on sensitive projects. It also introduced a 'Human Reliability Programme' which took into account the emotional stability of all military personnel involved with nuclear-related matters and installations. In recent years, the SPD have screened all relevant personnel, who are also vetted by the ISI, the Military Intelligence, and the Intelligence Bureau. Various other measures were taken to protect our nuclear installations through multilayered security rings. Pakistan's nuclear assets are dispersed in places where access is impossible, and are physically protected by the Special Security Division of the SPD

and the Pakistan Army Strategic Force Command. Its strength in 2007 was approximately twenty thousand comprising two divisions and a number of brigades.<sup>34</sup>

I remember an incident which should highlight the importance we paid to the issue of non-proliferation and of rectifying the damage resulting from the A. Q. Khan affair. In February 2004, I was attending the Munich Security Conference which had become an important event on the international calendar. It is regularly attended by Foreign and Defence Ministers as well as senior members of the defence forces of various countries. The conference deals with matters pertaining to worldwide security policy. In recent years it has increasingly involved itself not just in Euro-Atlantic issues but it has also expanded its scope to Central European and Asian countries. At the conference, I had the option of either listening to US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's speech which was billed as the most important event at the conference, or of projecting my own views and that of Pakistan across to a wider audience. When I saw Jim Hoagland from *The Washington Post*, I chose the latter.

Jim Hoagland is a two-time Pulitzer Prize winning journalist and Associate Editor of *The Washington Post*. He had been very critical of Pakistan following the A. Q. Khan affair and had written several uncomplimentary articles on Pakistan. When I expressed my desire to meet Hoagland, one of the young officers thought it would be a waste of time to brief Hoagland since his mind against Pakistan was already made up. However, being a strong believer in the power of communication, I embarked upon convincing Hoagland that Dr A. Q. Khan's act was an individual act and that Pakistan's government or any of its agencies had no part to play in it. I hoped that through him I would be able to convince the larger international community. I emphasized to Hoagland that there were many processes involved in the nuclear weapons programme and the delivery system including, inter alia, aero dynamics, trigger mechanism, miniaturization, etc. Dr A. Q. Khan was concerned only with centrifuge enrichment. It was only in that area that he had control and in which proliferation had taken place. I argued that if any other Pakistani agency was involved, there would be signs of proliferation in other areas as well.

Much to my delight, my efforts with Jim Hoagland were not wasted. He wrote a relatively positive article in *The Washington Post*. He began the article by quoting me, 'Nobody could touch him. Imagine an American government doing this to Charles Lindbergh, or Albert Einstein, at the height of his popularity. Dr A. Q. Khan is that kind of a national hero in Pakistan.' The writer noted that I was keen to drive home a message that even sceptics like him would welcome. In this regard, some passages from my discussion with Hoagland are worth noting here: '[W]e are a responsible nuclear nation; we had to demonstrate to the Pakistani people and to the world that not even A. Q. Khan is above the law. The United States should take this into account and engage Pakistan more fully on nuclear and defence matters.' I said, 'Look, we knew we would be accused of knuckling under to the Americans,' and added that, 'We are not doing that. The Pakistani people

must understand that there will be no nuclear rollback. We have scheduled new missile tests to make that point. We are a declared nuclear power and the world must accept it. We are, however, taking steps to control our nuclear assets more carefully and halt proliferation.’<sup>35</sup>

Furthermore, I said to Hoagland, ‘one of the most important measures in this respect is the establishment of the National Command Authority (NCA). NCA is composed of civilian and military leaders who are involved in major decision-making regarding nuclear policy, procurement, planning, and use. Since the NCA is headed by the President and since 2009 by the Prime Minister, it is the highest decision-making authority in the country. The Foreign, Defence, Interior, and Finance Ministers, Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, Chiefs of Army, Navy, Air Force, and the Director General of the Strategic Plans Division (SPD) are members of the NCA. It is designed to ensure that in times of crisis the Pakistani leadership should possess a complete picture of the situation, including both conventional operation and nuclear planning. The NCA has the final authority to launch a nuclear strike.’<sup>36</sup>

The NCA consists of two committees: Employment Control Committee (ECC), and Development Control Committee (DCC). Both committees were at that time chaired by the President. Now they are chaired by the Prime Minister. The Foreign Minister is the Deputy Chairman of the ECC, which defines nuclear strategy and has the power to decide on nuclear use (God forbid!). The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee is the Deputy Chairman of the DCC. The Strategic Plans Division (SPD) serves as the Secretariat of the National Command Authority and is responsible for implementing its decisions. It plays a key role in the nuclear management in the country. The SPD functions under the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee and reports directly to the Prime Minister. It acts on behalf of the NCA and assists the Prime Minister in exercising control over the SPD. It ‘performs the role of developing nuclear policy, Arms Control Agency, and Nuclear Security watchdog’.<sup>37</sup> The SPD has earned a good name for its efforts to protect and strengthen the safety and security of Pakistan’s nuclear materials, and has taken strong national measures in this regard. It also maintains effective security of radioactive materials.

The A. Q. Khan revelations accelerated the changes to the Command and Control infrastructure. Various measures were introduced to ensure nuclear security, including personnel reliability. Special emphasis was laid on a Personnel Evaluation Programme which monitored employees, before, during and after employment. The NCA ensures that the Command and Control System never allows unauthorized use of weapons. While adopting similar procedures as those used by major nuclear nations, Pakistan is cautious about the international cooperation that could compromise its weapon design, command, and control structure. Pakistan did get assistance in the security and safety of nuclear assets. It also has a Special Force Command to respond to sabotage of nuclear weapons or

materials. To strengthen our non-proliferation regime, we followed the best practices that the major nuclear nations had adopted to protect their nuclear assets. Pakistan was happy to receive help from whatever quarter it found useful. I think it is appropriate to mention that we were very careful in agreeing to accept help because we realized it could be a double-edged weapon. We therefore took all possible measures to ensure that despite discussions on nuclear safety, the secrecy of our programme was not compromised in any manner. I used to take a keen interest in the workings of the NCA because of its national security implications.

It may be added that the UN Security Council Resolution 1540 mandated all countries to develop effective measures to prevent trafficking of sensitive nuclear materials. The 'Export Control Act on Goods, Technologies, Material, and Equipment Related to Nuclear and Biological Weapons and their Delivery Systems Act 2004' was adopted by Pakistan. The following month Pakistan provided a report to the UN Security Council on the measures taken to implement Resolution 1540.

As a result of the investigation on the A. Q. Khan affair and the position adopted by the government as well as its proactive outreach to the media, giving our side of the story was not just a damage control exercise but it was also to restore Pakistan's credentials as a responsible nuclear state. The US and the EU, while appreciating Pakistan's investigation and handling of the affair, accepted Pakistan's position that the responsibility for this nuclear trafficking lay solely with Dr A. Q. Khan. President Barack Obama in a press conference after the Nuclear Summit in April 2010 in Washington stated that, while he was concerned about nuclear security everywhere and loose nuclear material floating around, he added, and I quote, 'I feel confident that Pakistan has secured its nuclear weapons'.<sup>38</sup>

Given the unfortunate A. Q. Khan saga, Pakistan's efforts to obtain a civil nuclear agreement on the peaceful uses of nuclear technology with the US has not made much progress. It is however a different matter altogether that, given the current state of our relations following the attack on Salala check-post in November 2011 and Pakistan's strong reaction to that incident, nobody in the United States was even prepared to consider it. The state of relations between the two countries has improved remarkably since 2011 largely due to the launching of the Operation Zarb-e-Azb in North Waziristan by the Pakistan Army and also the convergence of US and Pakistani views on Afghanistan following the drawdown of US troops in that country.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said to me during one of our conversations on the subject, 'Once Pakistan overcomes its history maybe the US would adopt a different approach.' This of course assumes that the United States or for that matter other major powers adopt an objective approach on such matters. I do not however doubt that once Pakistan has sorted out its internal issues, it is only a matter of time before Pakistan will achieve success in convincing the international community to adopt a more non-

discriminatory approach. Pakistan's case for such treatment becomes compelling in view of the measures taken in recent years to strengthen the safety and security of its nuclear installations and materials. I would conclude this by recording my appreciation of the help that China has provided to Pakistan in the field of civil nuclear technology.

### **Concerns About Attack on Iran**

The Iranian nuclear issue had assumed alarming proportions. A section in the United States obviously backed by the Israeli lobby wanted to ensure that Iran should never become a nuclear power. Pakistan also did not want Iran to become a nuclear power in violation of its commitments under the NPT (Non-Proliferation Treaty) since it also felt that it would inevitably lead to the use of violence against Iran by USA and/or Israel. After the A. Q. Khan affair, Pakistan came under added pressure to isolate and contain Iran because it would be held responsible (at least partially), were Iran to develop such a weapon (due to the A. Q. Khan affair discussed above).

Although we were extremely disturbed by the A. Q. Khan scandal, I tried to sensitize the American and European leadership to the dangers of attacking Iran and of the negative consequences for sectarian harmony in Pakistan if Iran were attacked. We were worried about the consequences for Pakistan's internal stability if the United States actually did attack Iran. I attempted hard to convince US leaders that the use of force against Iran would have catastrophic consequences. I attempted to sensitize the leadership of both Iran and the United States to avoid brinkmanship. This has now been amply revealed by leaked telegrams of the WikiLeaks, details of which are contained in 2011 newspaper reports under headings such as 'Kasuri worried about US attack on Iran'.<sup>39</sup>

The Iranian nuclear issue remained a burning topic during my entire tenure. It still is, despite some progress that seems to have been made following the election of President Hassan Rouhani in 2013 and the resumption of dialogue on the issue. In view of the relationship between Pakistan and Iran based on close historical and cultural roots as well as geographic contiguity, I was asked by both the Iranians and the EU representatives to try and bridge their differences on this issue. The Iranians asked me if I could play a role in bringing them and the United States closer on the nuclear issue. In this connection Ali Ardashir Larijani (the powerful Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, currently Speaker of the Majlis, who also contested against Ahmadinejad in the Iranian Presidential Elections) visited me in my office where we had a marathon meeting. We drafted what was meant to be a message to Washington. Iran was prepared to assure that it would not manufacture nuclear weapons and would place its programme under close scrutiny of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). This message was given to the United States; unfortunately, we could not make much progress.

I remember talking to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice on this issue when she came to call on President Pervez Musharraf in New York on the sidelines of UNGA meetings.

Although she heard me out, it was clear from her demeanour that the US was not interested in holding discussions with Iran. Perhaps the Israeli lobby exercised far greater influence during the Bush Administration than in the Obama Administration, when talks with Iran have resumed on more or less the same terms that Iran was prepared to offer then. The present Rouhani government's agreement with P-5+1 in Geneva, a shift away from the hardliner stance of Ahmedenijad's government, has generated hopes for greater economic prospects, particularly in the energy sector.

While on the subject, we had an interesting insight into India's attitude on Iran's nuclear programme. During one of President Musharraf's visits to Brussels, at a luncheon hosted for him by Prime Minister of Belgium, Guy Verhofstadt, where some Cabinet Ministers were also present, the issue of the Iranian nuclear programme was raised by a Belgian Minister. We were quite startled when the Prime Minister or perhaps the Foreign Minister told us that, in one of their interactions, India's Foreign Minister K. Natwar Singh had remarked, if Pakistan and India could have a nuclear bomb, what was the harm in Iran having one? This position was at complete variance with the public position that India took at a meeting of the IAEA in Vienna where India voted in favour of the resolution supported by the Western countries while Pakistan abstained.

## **BOMBING OF LEBANON AND TENSIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES**

### **A Candid Conversation with Condoleezza Rice**

*'Rockets will have "Made in Iran" Written All Over Them'*

In 2006, the Israelis attacked Lebanon and innocent Lebanese were being killed on a large scale. The entire Muslim world was in a state of rage against Israel and the United States for its perceived acquiescence. In Pakistan, following attacks on Afghanistan and Iraq, the Israeli attack on Lebanon with perceived US backing gave rise to many conspiracy theories. People began to speak of a fundamental difference between the West, led by the United States, and the world of Islam. Some began to feel that the 'twain shall never meet'. This gave rise to what came to be known as the theory of the inevitable Clash of the Civilizations, in this case the Western and Islamic civilizations. Speaking at that time at a seminar, I disagreed with this theory and argued that there was a fundamental flaw in the concept, rising as it did against the backdrop of 9/11 and the situations in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Lebanon. What was being projected as a clash of civilizations was in fact a clash of international interest groups.<sup>40</sup> I went on to add that an overwhelming majority of the Muslims were moderate and peace-loving and there was resentment among them against military operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Lebanon.

The Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) appealed to the Muslim countries to show their solidarity with Lebanon in this hour of crisis. In addition to me, the Turkish and Malaysian Foreign Ministers also visited Beirut to express solidarity. In order to travel to

Lebanon by air, permission needed to be taken from the Israelis. I thus decided to first go to Syria and then drive to Beirut by car. I had to spend the night in a small village on the Lebanese-Syrian border and left early in the morning for security reasons.

In Beirut I was driven to the areas that had been heavily bombed. But the morale of the people was high. On seeing me they cheered for Pakistan for its solidarity with Lebanon. I drew attention to the underlying cause of instability in this part of the world, which was of course the issue of Palestine. Lebanon had been attacked because of Hezbollah support for the Palestinian cause.

One episode will remain etched in my memory. While these killings were going on, I attended a meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in Kuala Lumpur as did US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. I delivered an extremely emotional speech, urging the United States to pressurize the Israelis to put an end to their attacks on civilians. Since Pakistan enjoyed a close relationship with the United States at that time, my speech had a great impact. After the meeting was over, Secretary of State Rice expressed a desire to see me alone. I repeated in private what I had said publicly, adding that the indifference of the US towards this great human tragedy was creating grave problems for us. I told Dr Rice that President Bush will quietly retire to his ranch in Crawford, Texas, but she would have to go back to academia and face many questions. This is perhaps the reason why Dr Rice in her memoir *No Higher Honor: A Memoir of My Years in Washington* mentioned that I could 'appear somewhat puffed-up'.<sup>41</sup>

My relations with my counterparts of other countries were warm, cordial, and in most cases quite informal. This was the case with Rice's predecessor Colin Powell. I remember, during one of my luncheon meetings with Powell at the State Department, I turned to him and asked, 'Colin, why have you invited two Taliban to this lunch in my honour?' He was startled by my remark. I pointed out rather dramatically towards our Ambassador Ashraf Jahangir Qazi and another officer accompanying me who was also a Pashtun. Colin burst into laughter, realizing that I was referring to a common American fallacy. They assumed that all Pashtuns were Taliban. Colin Powell also empathized with Pakistan's position and understood the difficulties we were facing following the decision of the Pakistan government to support the US and abandon the Taliban in Afghanistan, with whom previous Pakistan governments had maintained good working relations. This was necessitated by the support that the Taliban had among large sections of Pakistani Pashtuns, particularly in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). Colin Powell also understood my concerns in highlighting the plight of Pakistani prisoners languishing in Guantanamo Bay and in Afghan prisons, largely in the custody of the Uzbek warlord General Abdul Rasheed Dostum.

Condoleezza Rice in her capacity as National Security Advisor was considered, at least by the Pakistan Embassy in Washington at that time, as being less sympathetic towards Pakistan than President George Bush, Vice President Dick Cheney, Defence Secretary

Donald Rumsfeld, or Secretary of State Colin Powell. I remember querying one of the officers at the Embassy as to why he thought that this was the case. The officer smiled and remarked that there was a rumour going around that Rice had an Indian boyfriend. I did not really believe the story and thought that this was a convenient excuse, and that the officer was only trying to tell me that they found Condi Rice more difficult to deal with as compared to other leading members of the Bush Administration who were supportive of Pakistan. In my next meeting with British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw that was held soon after, I asked him light-heartedly whether he had heard this rumour. He laughed heartily and narrated an incident to me.

One Sunday morning, he was having tea with his wife at their residence in London when the telephone rang and the operator told him that it was Dr Rice from Washington. He looked at his watch and was amazed that Dr Rice was at her desk as early as 6 a.m. He then asked me humorously, 'How could a woman who worked even on Sundays and was at her desk at 6 a.m. have a boy- friend, whether from India or anywhere else?' I asked Jack Straw how often he spoke to his counterpart in Washington. He said, 'Maybe four or five days a week.' I had already realized that the US and Britain worked in close coordination with us, whether it was on the issue of India or Afghanistan or on matters connected to proliferation issues at the United Nations. Jack Straw was only confirming what I already knew from my own experience in Islamabad.

Over time, Condoleezza Rice developed much greater understanding of Pakistan's issues and limitations. For example, even on the issue of civil nuclear cooperation with Pakistan, as mentioned previously, she did not rule out such cooperation in the future and said to me during one of our conversations on the subject that, 'once Pakistan overcame its history', maybe the US would adopt a different approach. She was obviously referring to the A. Q. Khan affair.

I come back to my meeting with Dr Rice in Kuala Lumpur. After I had cooled down, Secretary of State Rice asked me whether, in view of our close relationship with Iran and the fact that I had been trying to bring Iran and the United States closer on the issue of the Iranian nuclear programme in the past, I could pass on a message from her to the Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Muttuqi. She said that, currently the rockets that Hezbollah were firing on Israeli towns were short-range missiles which could not reach Tel Aviv. She feared that in the event that the rockets did reach Tel Aviv, these could only be long-range Iranian rockets and would have 'Made in Iran' written all over them. In case that were to happen, Israel and a section of the Neocon lobby in the United States just might get the pretext they were looking for to attack the Iranian nuclear sites. Secretary of State Rice must have known that a meeting between me and the Iranian Foreign Minister was scheduled in Kuala Lumpur that day. As soon as my meeting with Rice was over, I asked my staff to contact the Iranian Foreign Minister. I immediately informed Muttuqi what Dr Rice had discussed with me. He silently heard me out but did not comment. The message

not only got through to him, it also seemed that it had an impact. There were no attacks on Tel Aviv.

### **‘Weekday Meeting’ at a ‘Weekend Retreat’**

During my visit to Washington, I was keen that President Pervez Musharraf, who had been invited by President Bush to visit Washington later in the year, be received at Camp David. Normally, meetings with visiting Heads of State and the US Government take place at the White House in Washington. For reasons of optics, the Foreign Office was very keen that the President be received at the Camp David retreat rather than at the White House in Washington. It was believed in Islamabad that this would raise the level of the visit in the minds of Pakistanis. Only very important visitors are received at Camp David. For example, President Franklin Roosevelt had his meetings during the Second World War with British Prime Minister Winston Churchill at Camp David. Similarly, President Jimmy Carter chose it as the site for Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadaat’s meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin.

Dr Condoleezza Rice was then National Security Advisor and regarded as being closest to President Bush. I was advised to raise this matter with her. But Condoleezza Rice resisted my idea despite my emphasis that the profile of the visit needed to be raised and which would have a positive impact in Pakistan. She asked me rhetorically how it would be possible for President Bush to fly to Camp David which was basically a weekend retreat to receive President Musharraf on a weekday. I argued that President Musharraf’s schedule could be altered. She replied that President Bush’s schedule had to be fixed much in advance and could not be changed at short notice.

But I was not prepared to give up easily. I knew there was one person more influential in Washington than Condoleezza Rice and that was Vice President Dick Cheney. My meeting with him had already been scheduled and, luckily, it was immediately after my meeting with Dr Rice. I repeated my arguments to Cheney, that President Musharraf be received at Camp David rather than at the White House. Cheney heard me out and said that he would need to do some work on this but would let me know soon. Quite amazingly, within fifteen minutes I received the message that President Musharraf would indeed be received at the Camp David retreat. This only proved my assessment of Cheney’s immense influence. Everyone at the President’s House and the Foreign Office were very pleased with this news. Newspapers around the world also carried the news that Pakistan’s President Pervez Musharraf would be received by President George Bush at Camp David rather than the White House. *The Times of India* commented, ‘The venue for Bush-Musharraf meeting has been changed after the just-concluded visit of Pakistan Foreign Minister, Khurshid Mahmud Kasuri, to Washington’.<sup>42</sup>

As I had anticipated, even before President Musharraf’s visit to the US commenced, it had attracted international attention. It highlighted the fact that the US attached great

importance to its relations with Pakistan. 'Choosing Camp David for the talks with Musharraf indicates the importance the administration gives to its relations with Pakistan and to the current peace process in South Asia,' stated a senior US official. 'We really want these talks to succeed.'<sup>43</sup> It was also noted that 'Musharraf is the first South Asian leader invited to the presidential resort, which is usually used for meetings with close US allies or for important talks on key international issues.'<sup>44</sup>

The announcement was made by Secretary of State Colin Powell during his meeting with me at the Foreign Office in March 2004. This was seen as a major development in Pakistan and hit banner headlines. 'In ... a significant development Secretary Powell announced the US Administration's decision to designate Pakistan as a Major Non-NATO Ally. 'I advised the Foreign Minister [Khurshid Kasuri] this morning that we will also be making notification to our Congress that will designate Pakistan as a Major Non-NATO Ally for purposes of our future military-military relations.'<sup>45</sup>

### **Pak-US Relations Broadened**

As I had explained earlier, in order to combat the cynicism in Pakistan about the nature of the Pak-US relations, it was necessary to broaden the scope of the relationship and not limit it to antiterrorism. It was necessary that the people of Pakistan see that this relationship served the purposes of ordinary Pakistanis. This was the goal that we tried to achieve through this high-profile visit of President Musharraf to Camp David in June 2003. President Bush announced a five-year US \$3 billion package: half of it was for defence and the other half for the 'economic needs of the people of Pakistan'. As a consequence of the improving relations between the two countries, cooperation was extended to spheres beyond terrorism and ranged from defence, education, science and technology.

Pakistan and the US signed a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) in June 2003 and started negotiations on a Bilateral Investment Treaty. Pakistan also started to strongly press for increased market access and a Free Trade Agreement. Furthermore, President Bush had committed in June 2003 to provide US \$3 billion to Pakistan in economic and defence assistance over a five-year period. Pakistan was in fact receiving US \$700 to US \$850 million annually, which included two major components: Economic Support Funds and Foreign Military Financing. This was in addition to designating Pakistan Major Non-NATO Ally in March 2004 and agreeing to sell F-16s to it. The US also reinforced Pakistan's efforts in the reform of public education at all levels. The Fulbright Programme designed by the US for furthering mutual understanding and education had the largest number of students from Pakistan under this programme. This strengthening of Pak-US relations after 9/11 was evident in the expanding economic ties, defence cooperation, and collaboration in the social sectors. By 2004–05, the US had become our largest trading partner, with the total volume having crossed over US \$5 billion. It had also become the biggest foreign investor in Pakistan.

## **DEFENCE COOPERATION**

Defence cooperation between the United States and Pakistan involved military equipment of US \$1.3 billion in 2004 and the sale of F-16s in March 2005, as well as supply of radars, surfaceto-air missiles, vehicle-mounted stinger missiles, harpoon missiles, torpedoes, and special technical equipment to boost Pakistan Air Force's capacity for active engagement. The F-16 deal included thirty-six F-16s C/D, 500 AMRAAM missile targeting pods, and other ammunition. Despite this, we were acutely aware of the lack of balance in the conventional capabilities of Pakistan and India; hence, we asked the US for timely delivery of advanced defence material and technology transfer where US equipment were being supplied.

### **Delivery of F-16s to Pakistan at Last!**

The United States Ambassador Ryan C. Crocker had indicated to me in early October 2005 that the US Administration was planning to notify the Congress about the supply of F-16 aircraft to Pakistan. The notification would be made by 24 October 2005 at the latest. There would be a 30-day notice for consultation with the Congress for approval before implementation. He also informed me that the Indian government had been notified of this decision by US Under Secretary of State Nicholas Burns on 5 October 2005, but requested me to maintain confidentiality in this regard until the matter was made public.

While we were in the process of discussions regarding the delivery of the F-16s, in October 2005, an earthquake of unprecedented magnitude hit parts of Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK) and the northern regions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK). The earthquake caused huge loss of life and property in Pakistan, and international assistance and aid were solicited by us. Some in the government felt that the agreement should be made and announced because the issue of the sale of F-16s to Pakistan had been kept hanging for a long time and it had almost acquired an emotional undertone; it had become some sort of a benchmark in public mind about the state of Pak-US relations. Others however felt that a low-key announcement should be made (or perhaps even delayed a bit) due to the havoc caused by the earthquake.

Notwithstanding the delay in public announcement requested by us, this was a watershed development. These sales had been blocked for over a decade as a consequence of Pakistan's efforts to acquire nuclear weapons capability. Significantly, this was symbolic of the revived friendly relations with the US. Their decision to sell F-16s to Pakistan underscored a shift beyond the problems impeding the relationship since 1998 nuclear tests. It was an expression of an improvement in the relationship beyond the cooperation in the war against terrorism, by enhancing defence cooperation, supporting Pakistan's economic development, and educational reforms.

We accordingly started finalizing our requirements for a package in governmental consultations. Following these discussions, a package of aircraft and equipment involving

the purchase of 18 F-16 C/D with an option to buy 18 more, besides midlife upgrade of 26 F-16 A/B in a third country, Turkey, a trusted friend of Pakistan, was finalized. Pakistan requested the US for a package, which, besides the planes, also included Beyond Visual Range (BVR) missiles, targeting pods, stand-off precision smart weapons, and air-to-air missiles. United States decision was a practical demonstration of their appreciation of our security needs. Moreover, it provided essential precision capability to the PAF (Pakistan Air Force) to effectively strike against terrorist elements without risking collateral damage and the consequent adverse public reaction.

When the US Congress decided to debate the administration's proposal, the latter indicated its intention to seek Congressional approval to transfer 2 F-16s under the Excess Defence Articles Arrangement before the end of 2005. As expected, a critic of Pakistan, Congressman Gary Ackerman, introduced a joint resolution on disapproval of the F-16 deal. Fortunately, this resolution did not gather sufficient support in the Congress but it obviously illustrated that Pakistan had plenty of critics in the US Congress, think tanks, and the media.

In my meeting with President Bush in June 2005, I specifically mentioned the sale of F-16s to Pakistan, expressing the hope that the deal would go through in a smooth manner. The improved relations between the two countries could be gauged from the fact that after I had finished my presentation regarding the F-16s, President Bush in a lighter vein commented that as a fighter pilot he preferred brand new aircraft! He promised early delivery of the overhauled F-16s and subsequently new ones. Many young people today are not aware that non-delivery of F-16s after Pakistan had paid for them had tarnished public perception of the US as a reliable partner of Pakistan. This deal therefore had great psychological significance. It indicated that relations between the US and Pakistan were moving towards betterment, and also that the US had finally accepted Pakistan's status as a nuclear power.

### **Declaration of Pakistan as a Major Non-NATO Ally**

The first half of 2005 was another instance of Pakistan receiving mixed signals from the US. We were being told to 'do more' on the Pak-Afghan border; at the same time, we were granted the status of a Major Non-NATO Ally (MNNA), yet another illustration of the complex nature of relations between Pakistan and the US.

I received a call from US Secretary of State Colin Powell who informed me that, in view of the close relationship between Pakistan and United States, the latter had decided to designate Pakistan the status of a Major Non-NATO Ally (MNNA). This designation is based on US' assessment of a particular country's importance in the US security calculus. Its benefits include supply of best available defence material, priority in delivery of defence articles, jointly managed R&D production and logistical support programmes, and financial assistance through the defence export loan guarantee. The designated state

enjoys a distinct advantage in negotiating the approval process while purchasing defence equipment from the US. Other states with this designation include Japan, Australia, Egypt, New Zealand, South Korea, Jordan, Bahrain, and Israel. The US President can designate a country as an MNNA or terminate a designation with thirty days' advance notification to the Congress.

An interesting exchange of opposing viewpoints with regard to announcement of this designation occurred between the Foreign Office and the Ministry of Defence. One viewpoint held that Pakistan's designation as MNNA would place the country in an advantageous position in negotiating future defence sales, and that the announcement of designation as MNNA during Secretary of State Powell's visit would be politically appropriate as it would help offset burgeoning negative perceptions of Pak-US relations resulting from deepening Indo-US ties. The other point of view held was that, given its likely negative impact on public opinion, it was imprudent that Secretary of State Powell should make the announcement during his visit without prior suitable projection in the media. It was therefore suggested that the announcement be combined with a visible gesture, such as supply of defence equipment like F-16s for Pakistan by the United States. DG-ISI Lt General Ehsan ul-Haq, who was in Washington at the time, was also briefed about the discussion. He subsequently held a final meeting with the concerned American officials.

There was a spate of allegations against the Pakistan government by the US that the former was not doing enough to control terrorists originating and operating from Pakistan. These allegations included that the inter alia, Taliban and Al-Qaeda operatives are based on the Pak-Afghan border and conducting operations against the US and Afghan forces from there; that according to critics, Osama bin Laden and Mullah Omer were hiding in Pakistani territory; that the terrorist infrastructure of militancy operating in Indian Kashmir has not been dismantled by Pakistan; and that the London bombings of July 2005 were conducted by Britons of Pakistani origin trained by militant organizations in Pakistan.

Both India and Afghanistan were involved in spreading these allegations against Pakistan, and urging the US to put pressure on us to 'do more'. Following Pakistan's designation as a Major Non-Nato Ally (MNNA), the Congress cleared sale of military equipment US \$1.3 billion in November 2004, which was followed in March 2005 by an announcement of the sale of F-16s. Pakistan also conveyed its reservations to the US over the long-term implications of US-India defence purchases plan, including high-technology military equipment and missile technology. We believed that such transactions could adversely impact the conventional balance in the region with negative security consequences for Pakistan since the size of India's conventional armed forces was much larger than that of ours.

## **Reimbursement of Coalition Support Fund**

Another related issue was the reimbursement to Pakistan under the Coalition Support Fund (CSF), a system initiated in 2002 by the US to reimburse Pakistan and other US allied countries for their operational, logistical, and military support in counterterrorism efforts to the US. Under the fund, Pakistan was to be reimbursed for deploying up to eighty thousand Pakistani troops (subsequently the number increased even more) for tightening the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan, and for providing access to its logistical facilities and intelligence sharing. Eleven billion dollars were reimbursed to Pakistan under the CSF programme between 2001 and 2012.

As allegations started appearing that Pakistan needed to do more, the question of CSF became a subject of critical comment in Washington in later years. They reached a crescendo after we had left office, around the years 2012–13, despite the Defence Department's assertions that each claim was reasonable and credible with documentation adequately accounting for the support provided. Some commentators, upset with Pakistan's perceived lack of cooperation in the war, demanded greater scrutiny and felt that Pakistan was being grossly overcompensated. Pakistan's point of view, supported by sympathetic commentators in the US, was quite clear. Pakistan believed that CSF was actually a reimbursement for expenses incurred by Pakistan. We pointed out that before 9/11 Pakistan did not feel the need to maintain any soldiers in FATA; and that remained the case even during the 1965 and 1971 wars against India.

## **ECONOMIC COOPERATION**

### **Reconstruction Opportunity Zones**

The government came forward with what it thought was a useful proposal to wean militants away from terrorism. It is generally accepted that one of the main reasons for extremism is poverty. The best way to redress poverty is job creation and opportunities. Historically also, the areas now constituting FATA (Federally Administered Tribal Areas) have remained backward in every sense of the word. The government decided to convince the US government regarding what it called Reconstruction Opportunity Zones (ROZs), which envisaged free market access into the US for products manufactured in FATA and the adjoining areas on the other side of the border in Afghanistan. This would additionally have encouraged economic cooperation between Pakistan and Afghanistan. When we first raised the issue with the visiting US leaders, the proposal received a warm welcome. It was therefore decided that when I visit Washington, I should raise it with my interlocutors. I briefed the leaders that I met during my visit to Washington, including President Bush at the White House. Bush was genuinely interested and it was decided that he would be given a comprehensive briefing when he visited Pakistan in 2006. It was for this reason that our proposal regarding ROZs was discussed during Bush's visit to Pakistan.

We briefed President Bush that the main objective of this proposal was to provide training and work in textile and other industries which could be set up in the area. We expected to attract a lot of capital, provided the investors were assured duty-free market access to the United States. We felt that this would prove to be an effective measure against militancy. However, despite initial optimism, the proposal could not make much headway in the US Congress. North and South Carolina were not convinced, although textiles produced here could not have been a threat to the sophisticated textile industry of the Carolinas. We sincerely felt that such a scheme would prove successful at an effort aimed at DDR (Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration of ex-combatants).

United States' Under Secretary for Political Affairs, Nicholas Burns, visited Pakistan ahead of President Bush's planned visit to Pakistan. In his meeting with President Musharraf, the optics and substance of President Bush's upcoming visit were discussed. President Musharraf underlined the importance of the proposed strategic partnership between the two countries, and Pakistan's continuing interest in Free Trade Agreement and the need for US to support Reconstruction Opportunity Zones (ROZs). I handed to Nicholas Burns, a list of deliverables. These included a Joint Statement on strategic partnership; the holding of strategic dialogue under the partnership; commencement of early negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement, establishment of ROZs in areas along the border with Afghanistan; a Joint Commission on Higher Education; Bilateral Investment Treaty; Declaration of Principles on the Implementation of the Integrated Container Cargo Control programme through fixed scanners at selected Pakistani seaports; an MoU (Memorandum of Understanding) about US assistance in promoting trade links between Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia; the Competitiveness Fund of USAID and Pakistan's Ministry of Finance aimed at enhancing Pakistan's economic competitiveness; and the Fulbright Programme, which included an outlay of \$150 million, with US contributing approximately \$100 million and Pakistan the remaining \$50 million.

### **Earthquake Relief and Reconstruction**

I have already referred to the devastating earthquake that hit Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK) and parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Here it is appropriate to point out that the US also pledged \$510 million in earthquake relief and reconstruction. In an unprecedented gesture, it was announced that former US Presidents, George W. Bush and Bill Clinton, as UN Secretary General's Envoys for the Earthquake Disaster, would visit Pakistan in early 2006, in order to express their solidarity with the government and the people of Pakistan. Ultimately, only George Bush visited Pakistan. I accompanied him to the disaster-hit areas. Bush was very impressed by the response of the people of Pakistan, the Pakistan Army, and the Pakistan government. He remarked to me that this was one of the best relief operations he had seen. He wished that the US response to Hurricane Katrina had been equally prompt and efficient. We were to receive similar accolades from other world leaders as well. In light of this calamity, American compassion and concern for the

earthquake victims and generous assistance for relief and reconstruction in the affected areas left a deep impression on Pakistanis. The humanitarian mission of the Chinook helicopters was appreciated so much that they were called the 'Angels of Mercy'.<sup>46</sup> Their dedicated crew will be remembered for their tireless efforts and for the risks they undertook in supplying critically needed relief in inaccessible areas.

### **Civil Nuclear Energy Cooperation**

Another point in bilateral discussions between Pakistan and the US was cooperation in civil nuclear energy to help address Pakistan's growing energy needs on the lines of United States' civil nuclear cooperation with India. For Pakistan, it instead proposed a high-level meeting to inaugurate an energy working group to explore ways to enhance Pakistan's energy security. The Americans were not going to agree to our demand at this point because of the A. Q. Khan affair, a topic that was still very much alive. I felt that once this topic simmered down with non-proliferation lobbies, Pakistan demonstrated seriousness regarding non-proliferation, and measures were adopted by us to secure our nuclear assets, the US and other countries could be persuaded to change their opinion. I have already referred to Secretary of State Rice's statement indicating some flexibility in this connection. At a round table discussion with Pakistani journalists on 19 July 2010, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton reacted similarly. In a transcript provided by the US State Department, Clinton stated:

In our dialogue with the Pakistani government, we have clearly said we will work with them on civil-nuclear energy. It took years to do it with India. But we are committed to pursuing it and trying to overcome the obstacles that might stand in the way, because we think it is important to get as much of a varied source of energy all connected to the grid ...<sup>47</sup>

However, Pakistan could not remain oblivious to the civil nuclear energy agreement signed between India and the United States. Interestingly, despite India's own agreement with the US, against the advice of non-proliferation lobbies all over the world, it continued to object to China's cooperation with Pakistan in the field of civil nuclear energy.

### **Pakistan's Reaction to the Indo-US Agreement on Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy**

Pakistan viewed with concern the developments related to the US visit of Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in July 2005. The visit marked the high-point in US-India strategic relationship. Earlier, in June of the same year, the two countries had signed a 10-Year Framework Agreement for Defence Relationship aimed at enlarging cooperation in military fields including defence coproduction, joint research, and missile defence.

The Joint Statement issued after talks between President Bush and Prime Minister Singh declared their intentions of establishing a 'global partnership'. The highlight of the visit however was a landmark agreement on the US decision to extend full civil nuclear cooperation to India. This paved the way for India to benefit from cooperation on peaceful

uses of nuclear energy despite its rejection of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). As a follow-up to the agreement, the US also decided to lift curbs on exports to six Indian civil nuclear and space units making it easier for India to buy nuclear fuel and reactor components for civil nuclear energy needs.

From Pakistan's standpoint, this partnership and the provision of advanced weapons to India clearly upset the balance in the region. In order to provide India access to nuclear technology, the US went so far as bending its laws. This was a matter of great concern for Pakistan. Enhanced US partnership with India created a public perception of a favourable US policy towards India. This also created political difficulties for Pakistan. The government was accused of going overboard in its pro-US policies of providing help to the US in Afghanistan, whereas the US was now doing a nuclear deal with India and ignoring Pakistan.

Pakistan adopted the position that it should be treated as a partner rather than a target of the global non-proliferation regime. It expressed the hope that other countries would help Pakistan in its acquisition of nuclear technology to tackle its growing energy needs. While expressing our concerns about the implications of the US-India Civil-Nuclear Cooperation Agreement, it remained our hope that in the fullness of time we would also be able to sign a similar agreement with the US.

Interestingly, several countries of the forty-eight-member Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), including France, United Kingdom, and Russia, were supportive of the US-India nuclear deal. Even Germany and Japan, who were regarded as strong opponents of hosing down the NPT regimes, fell in line because of US pressure. In my interaction with leaders from North European countries, it was clear that Austria, Finland, Sweden, and Norway were unhappy about the deal. However, over a period of time, those initially opposed to the deal reluctantly changed their mind in 2008 after arm-twisting by the US.

China, while stating its position of principle, did not block the endorsement of the NSG for the agreement either. It is important to mention that we were not in a position to oppose the agreement beyond a certain point, because we ourselves had been demanding access to peaceful nuclear technology. As a Non-Signatory State of the NPT, with an established nuclear weapons programme, Pakistan could not overplay concerns about erosion of the nonproliferation regime. Significantly, we also enjoyed the ongoing cooperation with China and we needed to avoid a situation in which Pak-Sino cooperation could become controversial.

## **MEETING PRESIDENT BUSH AT THE OVAL OFFICE**

### **Preparation for the Strategic Partnership Agreement**

In June 2005, less than three months after US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice's visit to Pakistan, I visited the United States. This visit was a continuation of my bilateral visits

to Washington in the earlier months of the year, undertaken for exchange of views not only with my counterpart but also with the Congressional leaders. I also interacted with the media and think tanks and held meetings with the Pakistani community.

An indication of the rising international profile of Pakistan at that time can be seen from the fact that, when I called on President Bush at the Oval Office, we had a full and substantive discussion on the entire gamut of our relationship. It went beyond the optics of a mere visit. Senior White House Staff besides the White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card were present, along with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Assistant Secretary of State (South and Central Asian Affairs) Christina B. Rocca, and other senior officials. From our side, we had our distinguished Ambassador in Washington, General Jehangir Karamat, Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Director General (Foreign Minister's Office) Muhammad Sadiq, Second in Command at our Embassy (later our very active and popular Ambassador to Afghanistan), M. Aslam Khan, Syed Zulfiqar Gardezi, and others.

Responding to my briefing on the dialogue process with India, Bush remarked that President Pervez Musharraf and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had to 'make it happen'. He added that the solution to the bilateral disputes would depend upon the extent to which the two leaders were willing to go. Bush stressed that he would like to assist but also added that there could be no excuse for not taking hard decisions. He said that the two countries had come a long way in the past three years, and that the US would be willing to play the role of facilitator, provided there was a credible desire to move forward from both sides. I was very keen to raise another issue with President Bush. This concerned the expansion of the UN Security Council. I felt that the current permanent membership of the Security Council was also facing criticism from Members of the United Nations. Attempts at increasing centres of privilege would be unhelpful and unpopular. I raised this issue because many countries including South Africa, Germany, Japan, and India were making bids to become Permanent Members of the United Nations Security Council. While responding to my views on the question of UN reform, President Bush said that the US Congress considered the UN a 'failed' institution. Thus the goal of reforms should be to render the UN more efficient. What was needed was a set of comprehensive reforms that should not focus on UNSC expansion alone. I found his remarks reassuring since they were similar to our own views.

It was during my June 2005 visit that the groundwork for President Bush's visit to Islamabad for signing a Strategic Partnership Agreement was done. I also found the Bush Administration committed to forging a long-term relationship with Pakistan. The visit also provided an opportunity to discuss each other's concerns candidly but in a friendly atmosphere.

## **BUSH VISITS PAKISTAN**

## **All Lights Turned Off**

The United States' Under Secretary for Political Affairs, Nicholas Burns, visited Pakistan ahead of President Bush's visit to South Asia. In Pakistan, the optics and substance of President Bush's upcoming visit were discussed.

Accompanied by First Lady Laura Bush, President Bush visited Pakistan during 3–4 March 2006. He arrived in Islamabad from India late in the evening and was received by me and my wife. President Musharraf sent his daughter as a token of his friendship for Bush. His entourage included Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card, National Security Affairs Advisor Stephen J. Hadley, as well as senior National Security Council and State Department officials. Exceptional security measures were taken at the Islamabad Airport. Dramatically, a number of decoy planes first landed in total darkness. All airport lights had been switched off, and a container was placed in such a way so as to block the view of the airplane.

## **A Matter of Protocol**

Before President Bush's arrival there was a debate on who should be receiving him at the airport. Many felt that President Musharraf should receive him. On the other hand, the Foreign Office and I believed that on the principle of reciprocity, since US Presidents did not receive visiting Heads of State at the airport in Washington, President Bush must be received by a senior official and not by President Musharraf. The only times that Pakistan broke away from the internationally recognized protocol were when the Heads of State or government of Saudi Arabia, China, and Turkey visited Pakistan. At the popular level, China, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey were our tried and tested friends; hence breaking protocol for these three countries was taken well by the people. With the USA on the other hand, except in the early days of the Cold War or the period after Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1971, our relations were subject to constant ups and downs leading to a negative perception about the constancy of US friendship for Pakistan.

While this debate was going on, we received news that Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had broken protocol and had personally received President Bush at Delhi Airport. This strengthened the hands of those who wanted President Musharraf to receive President Bush at the airport. The President's House at this point left it to the Foreign Office to decide the matter. It was finally decided that my wife and I would receive President Bush and the First Lady. Because President Musharraf and President Bush enjoyed friendship on a personal level, it was also decided that Musharraf's daughter, Ayla Musharraf Raza, would accompany us for the reception. Having been received by Manmohan Singh in Delhi, when President George Bush alighted from the aircraft, I noticed that his eyes were seeking President Musharraf. At this point I introduced Bush to my wife Mona and to Ayla.

The following morning, the two Presidents held a one-on-one meeting, followed by delegation-level talks. The two Presidents along with the First Ladies then met with the survivors of the devastating earthquake. A joint press conference followed. In his opening remarks, President Musharraf welcomed President Bush and the US First Lady to Pakistan and said that the two sides had laid the foundations for a strong, sustainable, broad-based and long-term relationship. This included US-Pakistan strategic dialogue in an institutional manner and cooperation in trade, investment, defence collaboration, and education, as well as in the fight against terrorism and extremism. President Musharraf expressed his gratitude to President Bush for his efforts towards resolution of disputes in the region and requested President Bush to remain involved in facilitating a resolution of all disputes including Kashmir. He concluded by saying that he looked forward to an era of extensive cooperation and of strategic relationship with the US.

In his opening remarks, President Bush praised President Musharraf for taking the bold decision of fighting terrorism and extremism after 9/11. He stated that Pakistan was an important partner in taking a stand on proliferation. He expressed his gratitude to President Musharraf for Pakistan's decision to join the Container Security Initiative and curtail the spread of dangerous materials shipments, adding that both countries would work together and ensure that dangerous weapons did not end up in the hands of the terrorists. President Bush stated that the US supported democracy in Pakistan. The most effective way to defeat terrorism was to replace their ideology of hate with that of hope. He added that the elections scheduled for 2007 needed to be fair and transparent. Bush lauded President Musharraf and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh for their courageous and visionary leadership, and encouraged both India and Pakistan to continue towards finding a solution for their disputes including Kashmir.

Answering a question about the specific options to address Pakistan's energy concerns and whether the US would offer Pakistan a civilian nuclear deal, Bush replied that he had discussed a civilian nuclear programme with President Musharraf, but added that, Pakistan and India had 'different histories'. This was a clear reference to the A. Q. Khan affair. I do not have to add that President Bush's answer expectedly drew a hostile reaction from the media and public in Pakistan. The media pointed out the next day that it was India that had first conducted its nuclear explosion in 1974 (the 'Smiling Buddha') in violation of its commitments under the Atoms for Peace Programme. Regardless of this, it was clear that the US had other priorities, the most important being the rise of China, and the US decision to help India neutralize China in this respect.

### **Strategic Partnership**

I have already explained our desire to broaden our relationship with the US beyond counterterrorism. During Bush's visit to Pakistan (3–4 March 2006) this aim was achieved. The two countries affirmed a Strategic Partnership Agreement. The Joint Statement issued on 4 March 2006 focused on strengthening the foundations of a strong,

stable, and enduring relationship. Moreover, we would work towards building an institutional framework for cooperation in diverse fields including trade and economy, defence and security, health and education, science and technology, and counterterrorism and non-proliferation.

In their Joint Statement, the two leaders reiterated their condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. They resolved to maintain their close cooperation on counterterrorism and to increase their efforts to reduce the threat of terrorism regionally and internationally. The two leaders underscored the need for a comprehensive strategy for addressing the threat of terrorism and extremism.

In implementation of the Joint Statement, Pakistan and the US, during our time in government, operationalized various institutional groups including the Strategic Dialogue, in covering an entire range of bilateral, regional, and global issues of mutual interest. This was inaugurated in April 2006, and another round was held before the end of our tenure.

President Bush's other engagements in Islamabad included meetings with leaders of the Pakistani public and private sectors, and participation in a cricket event. In the evening, President Musharraf hosted a state banquet in honour of President Bush and First Lady Laura Bush which culminated in a cultural show. President Bush and his entourage left Islamabad the same evening.

## **FATA: PAKISTAN ACCUSED OF PLAYING A DOUBLE GAME AND OF 'RUNNING WITH THE HARE AND HUNTING WITH THE HOUND'**

### **Pakistan's Dilemma**

Following 9/11 and Pakistan's decision to support US efforts in curbing Al-Qaeda, there was a backlash from the militants in Pakistan's Tribal Areas on Afghanistan's border. They were against Pakistan's support to the US in their War on Terror. They were also opposed to Pakistan government's efforts to round up Al-Qaeda leaders through Pakistan's armed forces. Pakistani militant organizations believed that it was their religious duty to aid their brethren across the border and launch jihad against foreign occupation. As Pakistan's cooperation in America's counterterrorism efforts continued, these militants turned inwards, against the Pakistani state. Their argument was that this war was undertaken by Pakistan at the behest of the Americans. As a result, the militants unleashed a reign of terror inside Pakistan. They attacked civil and military targets in Pakistan including attacks on the life of President Pervez Musharraf on at least three occasions.

Terrorist attacks would, however, increase exponentially in later years. Initially, Pakistan thought that it had broken the back of Al-Qaeda by arresting many of its top leaders, but in retrospect it seems that Al-Qaeda regrouped and enhanced its linkages with other militant groups in Pakistan from the security of the mountains of FATA. Pakistan's dilemma at that

time arose from the fact that, whereas, this policy met with a backlash from the militants, at the same time, the UN and the international community at large showed huge sympathy for the victims of 9/11. They supported the US demand that the Taliban government hand over Osama bin Laden and others whom they considered responsible for the 9/11 attacks.

Following the 9/11 attacks and their international condemnation, various UN Resolutions compelled Pakistan to reverse its support to the Taliban. Pakistan had to evolve a policy of dealing with extremism and terrorism, which occurred slowly and gradually. Accordingly, Pakistani armed forces were deployed on the western border to prevent Al-Qaeda and other militant elements from crossing over into Pakistan. Many Al-Qaeda members were captured by Pakistan. It was decided that these militants would be first offered to their country of origin and if these countries were not prepared to have them, the US would be allowed to subject them to interrogation.

Pakistan and the US decided to go in for comprehensive intelligence sharing. Many key Al-Qaeda members were arrested. One of the most dramatic arrests in this regard was that of top Al-Qaeda mastermind, Khalid Sheikh Muhammad, on 1 March 2003 in Rawalpindi. He was subsequently handed over to the US authorities. President Bush in a letter addressed to President Musharraf expressed his 'deep satisfaction' over the arrest and termed it as 'an important step forward in the War on Terror and a significant example of our close cooperation'. There were many among the Pakistani populace who were unhappy with Pakistan aiding the US.<sup>48</sup> They included a large number of jihadi elements who had fought against the Soviet Union when it invaded Afghanistan. They had been given immense support by the CIA and the ISI. Pakistan's decision to side with the United States after 9/11 also obliged President Musharraf to adjust Pakistan's policy towards various militant groups that had emerged after the Afghan Jihad. To prevent cross-border movement meant that Pakistan had to maintain a large number of check-posts. It established almost one thousand check-posts, which were almost ten times more than those maintained by Afghan and ISAF forces on the other side of the border. Pakistan found it irksome that it was constantly being told to 'do more' despite all its efforts. It suffered many more casualties than NATO and ISAF forces on the other side. This was also the time when Pakistan was being accused of double-dealing and, while it was credited with making genuine efforts to round up Al-Qaeda elements, it was also accused of turning a blind eye towards the Taliban, about whom it was believed that they were regarded by Pakistan's intelligence agencies as its strategic assets in the future in Afghanistan. These accusations continued long after our government left office in November 2007. Such accusations continued even during the tenure of the PPP government which left office in early 2013. During the nadir of Pak-US relations, Admiral Mike Mullen, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, even accused the Haqqani Network based in North Waziristan in FATA of being 'a veritable arm of the ISI'.<sup>49</sup> As Minister of Foreign Affairs, I do not know about all the operational details in this connection. I, however, know that intelligence and other covert agencies do play murky

games everywhere in the world, and these include the CIA, MI-6, RAW, KGB, MOSSAD, and others.

As a Pakistani, I strongly believe that we need to learn from our past mistakes, as should other countries, if we aspire for peace in the region. Pakistan has paid a heavy price for some of the policies it had followed since the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan and after 9/11. As Foreign Minister, I repeatedly suggested at various international fora that Pakistan was prepared to fence and, where required, even mine the border in selected areas to prevent cross-border movement. Surprisingly, despite constant complaints of cross-border movement, my offer received very little support from the US or other Western countries. What is even more amazing is that we received no support even for an effective functioning of a biometric system to check unwanted movement across the border. I made this suggestion as early as August 2003 in a meeting with my Afghan counterpart Dr Abdullah Abdullah. I made similar suggestions at a meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the G-8 countries held at the historic city of Potsdam. Interestingly, at this meeting, despite my repeated offers to fence, and in some sensitive areas even mine the border, my offer fell on deaf ears. There were no takers, except the Canadian Foreign Minister Peter MacKay, who saw merit in Pakistan's argument that Pakistan could not be blamed for allowing militants to cross the border and at the same time not support its proposal for preventing their crossing the borders by adopting effective measures. Mackay offered concrete help on behalf of Canada in this respect.

Over the years, the US War on Terror has produced several disappointments and negative consequences. The Al-Qaeda and Taliban had established safe havens in FATA, particularly in North Waziristan from where they operate terrorist training camps and produce explosives, besides promoting their radical ideology and nurturing their leadership. While this may be partly true, it is clear that they largely train and operate in Afghanistan because of the absence of governance in that country, particularly in areas contiguous to Pakistan. The US has however admitted that Al-Qaeda has been greatly weakened and has been shifting its attention to the Arabian Peninsula and elsewhere. Unfortunately, over the years, Pakistani militants have grouped together under the banner of Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) to create mayhem. Some of these militants don't care if they blow up people in Pakistan, India, Afghanistan, or elsewhere. This has caused huge complications for Pakistan. No wonder that the current Chief of Staff of the Pakistan Army, General Raheel Sharif, had to issue a strong statement in 2014, referred to in detail elsewhere, regarding the need to eliminate sanctuaries. Pakistan also had to contend with constant criticism of its supposedly 'à la carte approach' in going after terrorist groups. This has created difficulties in recent years in relations with the US.

The US nonetheless still recognized Pakistan as a front-line ally in the War on Terror. It had identified Pakistan along with Afghanistan as one of the potential support bases and sanctuaries for terrorists and the 9/11 Commission had called for a long-term commitment with Pakistan. The Bush Administration appreciated military operations by Pakistani

forces against foreign militants and Al-Qaeda elements in the Tribal Areas and the arrests made by Pakistani security agencies of over seven hundred Al-Qaeda militants, including Khalid Sheikh Muhammad, Abu Zubaida, Ramzi bin Al-Shibh, and Abu Farraj al Libbi. The two countries had also set up a Joint Working Group on counterterrorism and law enforcement which coordinated efforts against terrorism.

The Pakistan-Afghanistan-US Tripartite Commission was set up in 2003 for security cooperation along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. At the same time, Pakistan had made it clear that it would not allow foreign troops to operate on its soil. Whenever its territory was violated, Pakistan reacted very strongly. Luckily, there were a very few violations during our tenure. I always emphasized in my interactions with various US officials that the struggle against terrorism cannot be won through military means alone and that the root causes of terrorism also needed to be effectively addressed. The United States did not like what I said; at that time it seemed allergic to any reference to 'root causes' which it interpreted as justifications for terrorism.

We faced many difficulties in our relationship with the US on the issue of terrorism. Over the years, after moving along a positive trajectory, relations between Pakistan and the US had reached a difficult phase despite a strong desire from both sides to forge a broad-based strategic partnership. The real traction of the relationship remained cooperation in counterterrorism and security fields. In early 2007, lingering suspicions began to be aired by Afghanistan that Pakistan was not doing what it could and should to prevent infiltration across the border with Afghanistan or in eliminating the safe havens located on its side of the border. Afghanistan was interested in strengthening the perception that Pakistan may not have fully severed its links with the Taliban and that some sections of its security establishment may in fact be supporting them. President Karzai was keen to transfer all blame for his failure in governance to Pakistan's perceived policies. He partly succeeded and Pakistan received a lot of criticism on this. Pakistan also unfortunately became a punching bag for both the Republican Party and the Democratic Party in the US because of the Democrats' criticism that the Bush Administration had not only failed in Iraq but had also failed in stabilizing Afghanistan. As the Republicans and the US security establishment did not wish to take any chances on Afghanistan, sounding tough on matters related to Afghanistan and blaming Pakistan for the American failure in Afghanistan became the explanatory narrative in Washington in those days.

### **Peace Agreements with Militants?**

Despite US advice to the contrary, the Government of Pakistan signed a number of peace agreements with the militants during 2004–06. These agreements represented Pakistan's holistic strategy, which combined calibrated use of force with political, economic, and administrative measures for social and economic development of the Tribal Areas. The main idea behind this strategy was to enlist the support of the locals and make them responsible for maintaining peace and security and preventing cross-border infiltration as

well as to ensure that sanctuaries and safe havens were denied to the terrorists. There has been a lot of criticism of our policies and it seems that they have not produced the results that we had wanted. The government then, as now, wanted to use peaceful means to restore its writ in the area. Widespread criticism now prevails that this provided time and space for militants to strengthen their power base. Ironically, the same debate is raging even now, despite the best efforts of the government to deal with the TTP through peaceful means by engaging them in dialogue. There are strong opponents of this policy now as there were in the past.

Pakistan concluded agreements with the tribes. The Shakai Agreement made with Nek Muhammad in South Waziristan on 27 March 2004, was abrogated when Nek Muhammad was killed in June 2004 by an American Hellfire missile fired from a drone. The Sararogha Peace Deal in South Waziristan was concluded with Baitullah Mehsud on 22 February 2005, and the Miran Shah Peace Accord in North Waziristan with Hafiz Gul Bahadar, Maulana Sadiq Noor and Maulana Abdul Khaliq in September 2006.<sup>50</sup> As a result of pursuing this policy, we were constantly accused of running with the hare and hunting with the hound, and of double-dealing. I faced immense criticism from the American media in my interaction with it. We responded by informing the international community that these agreements represented Pakistan's holistic strategy which combined calibrated use of force with political, economic, and administrative measures for social and economic development of the Tribal Areas. We did meet with some success initially. As a result of this policy, the local population rose against terrorist elements affiliated to Al-Qaeda in South Waziristan and dealt a severe blow to these groups. It is clear that, notwithstanding these measures, these areas could not be completely cleared of Al-Qaeda and the Taliban.

But according to critics, these agreements amounted to an appeasement of the Taliban. The government was unable to force the tribes to implement their side of the agreements because of the unpopularity of the entry of the Pakistani forces into FATA. Instead of ensuring peace, these agreements have been criticized for strengthening militancy. Ironically, many years later, in 2014, similar criticism was also levelled against the current PML-N government's policies. The rationale for these agreements was that the government wanted to give peace a chance. As a result, even after our government's tenure ended, more agreements were signed. Notwithstanding these agreements, the troops remained there to ensure that there was no violation of the agreements. When the agreements were broken, the troops came into action and the army resumed fighting the militants. This fighting still continues in some areas of FATA.

After the 2013 general elections, the new governments, both at the Centre and in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, wished to give peace a chance. However, their critics maintain that negotiations have not worked before and will not work again. They quote the 2009 Swat Peace Agreement, where military force had to be sent when the terms of the agreement

were violated by militants. In 2014, the National Assembly unanimously passed resolutions in favour of negotiations to resolve the issue. This has however not met with much success, forcing Pakistan Army's COAS General Raheel Sharif to issue a statement that, unless the militants give up violence, the military will be forced to eliminate their sanctuaries in the Tribal Areas. For the peace process to have succeeded, the civil and military leadership needed to be on the same page. This never happened. After our tenure ended, and there was frustration in the armed forces that, while they were being killed at the hands of the militants who had grown in strength, the ruling PML-N party had adopted a policy of negotiations less out of conviction and more out of its desire to keep itself out of harm's way of the militants. They wanted to avoid the fate of the ANP which had become the target of the militants prior to the 2014 elections.

The Pakistan Army has had to launch Operation Zarb-e-Azb in North Waziristan to clear the area of both foreign and local militants. The US decision to stop drone attacks during the much publicized negotiations of the current government with the TTP (towards the end of 2013 and beginning of 2014) helped the army launch its operation. In the past there was a sense that the US government did not wish the negotiations with the TTP to succeed, and that some of its drone attacks were aimed at preventing negotiations from reaching a successful conclusion. For example when on 2 November 2013 a US drone killed the Pakistani Taliban Chief Hakimullah Mehsud, there was suspicion that it was aimed at sabotaging the planned peace talks between the government and the TTP. Condemning the drone attack, Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali stated that this drone attack was aimed at sabotaging efforts to establish peace in the country.<sup>51</sup> The counter-narrative of those in favour of peace talks began to lose support among the Pakistani populace as a result of the violence unleashed by the militants. The final straw seems to have been the attack at the old terminal of the Jinnah International Airport in Karachi in 2014.

The federal government was compelled to give its consent for the operation against the TTP after the failure of its negotiations with them. There are reports of differences within the government on this issue. Now that the operation has been launched, it requires full political ownership. The timing of the operation is significant in the context of the 2014 US drawdown. The main objective at the moment seems to be to protect Pakistan from the after-effects of the NATO-ISAF drawdown which may lead to civil-war-like conditions in Afghanistan, particularly in areas adjoining Pakistan. Pakistan needs to regain control of its tribal agencies on the Afghan border to prevent fallout from the instability in post-NATO Afghanistan spilling over into Pakistan. Furthermore, Pakistan needed to clear its tribal belt of any safe havens for terrorists going over into adjoining countries. The pressure for Pakistan to do so now comes not just from the West and Afghanistan but also from Pakistan's closest friend China. It has in private been complaining of extremists and separatists from the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region, which borders Pakistan, finding safe havens in Pakistan's tribal agencies.

It seems that the peace agreements may have provided temporary respite to the government which had been compelled to maintain a heavy military presence on Pak-Afghan border following the events of 9/11. In view of the fact that ultimately a military operation in North Waziristan has had to be launched, the critics who had maintained that these peace agreements would provide space to extremists to extend their tentacles seem to have been proven right.

The signing of the peace agreement by Pakistan in September 2006 with the tribal elders in North Waziristan was a turning point which triggered criticism for Pakistan, including, for the first time, public denouncement of it by the Bush Administration. In December 2006, the US Ambassador to Pakistan, Ryan Crocker, made a demarche with me underscoring heightened US concerns about the situation in Waziristan. He said the peace agreement in North Waziristan was not working; the space left by the Pakistan Army was being filled by the Taliban and Al-Qaeda, who were regrouping for an offensive. He disagreed with our viewpoint that the implementation of agreement needed time, and called for firm action from us against the militants, stressing that they were taking advantage of the prevalent situation.

Moreover, the National Intelligence Estimates Report released in early 2007 warned that the greatest security threat for US homeland security came from Pakistan's Tribal Areas, where Al-Qaeda and the Taliban had gained a capability comparable to what they possessed at the time of 9/11 attacks. While releasing the report, Director of National Intelligence, John D. Negroponte, in a presentation before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, said that Al-Qaeda continued to maintain active connections and relationships radiating outward from its leader's secure hideouts in Pakistan to affiliates throughout the Middle East, North Africa, and Europe.

Pakistan countered these allegations by highlighting that the worsening situation in Afghanistan was primarily the result of the failure of that country's government to ensure law and order and provide good governance. President Hamid Karzai used Pakistan as a scapegoat to deflect attention from his government's own shortcomings. Pakistan was keen to repatriate Afghan refugees and was ready to selectively fence the border to prevent cross-border movement. We also highlighted our plans to expand the Frontier Corps and to effectively implement development programmes for FATA.

Our government was, however, confronted with something most governments in Pakistan have had to contend with in challenging times. Given the polarization in the country and the lack of consensus over implementation of some aspects of foreign policy, certain sections of the media and the politicians disputed the government's viewpoint. The only difference now lies in the fact that, previously, the pressure came largely from the US, NATO, and ISAF (International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan), while today there is mounting pressure from within Pakistani society to take effective measures to bring terrorist activities to an end. In its efforts to do this, Pakistan has become the greatest

victim of terrorists who do not spare even women and children. The latest and the most ghastly example of this is the Peshawar massacre, perpetrated by the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, in which they butchered almost 150 people, mostly children, in an attack on the Army Public School in Peshawar to avenge, as they claimed, the Pakistan Army's operations in North Waziristan. Following the tragedy and, even earlier, following the Operation Zarb-e-Azb, Pakistani society seems much less divided and now overwhelmingly support the operations launched by the Pakistan Army.

### **Dick Cheney Visits Islamabad to Voice Concerns about the Waziristan Situation**

In a further attempt to push Pakistan to 'do more', the Bush Administration felt that it was time to send Vice President Dick Cheney to Islamabad to address US concerns. There was much hype in the media about Cheney's one-day visit to Pakistan in late February 2007. Some in Islamabad felt that an appropriate atmosphere for the Vice President's visit had been created by David Sanger's article in *The New York Times* on 26 February. It wrote that Cheney was to deliver 'a tough message' to the President, threatening that the Congress could cut aid to Pakistan unless Al-Qaeda and Taliban were pursued more vigorously. The article also referred to some comments made during Congressional testimony that US forces might take action on the Pakistani side of the border against terrorist hideouts. The media speculated that these developments represented a rift in Pakistan-US relations.

During his visit, Cheney conveyed American concerns over Afghanistan and apprehensions about Al-Qaeda regrouping in the Tribal Areas to President Musharraf. He reiterated the United States' publicly stated concerns over a planned Taliban offensive in the spring. He suggested a plan of an 'extensive and simultaneous bombing of hideouts' and compounds in Waziristan stretching over several days. President Musharraf roundly rejected any such plan as untenable.<sup>52</sup> I remember President Musharraf telling us that Cheney had shown him some pictures on his laptop of terrorists undergoing training at camps in Waziristan.

President Musharraf reaffirmed Pakistan's strong resolve to continue fighting against extremism and terrorism, particularly against Al-Qaeda and the Taliban. He reiterated to Cheney that most Taliban activities originated from Afghanistan and that the solution of the problems lay within Afghanistan. Pakistan was an unfortunate victim of the blowback from the Afghan conflict. President Musharraf underscored that defeating terrorism and curbing militant activity inside Afghanistan was the shared responsibility of Pakistan, Afghanistan, US forces, NATO and ISAF.

After Cheney's departure, President Musharraf spoke to President Bush who assured him that the US had no plans to bomb terrorist safe havens in Waziristan. Regardless, the US media started blaming Pakistan for its inability to deliver in FATA, which was increasingly seen as the new theatre of conflict.<sup>53</sup> Media reports suggested the need to consider

attaching conditions to military aid to Pakistan, and even advocated hot pursuit or incursions across the border into Pakistan's Tribal Areas. Western media also started questioning whether the security interests of Pakistan and NATO were aligned and whether the Pakistani state, specifically its intelligence agencies, still maintained ties with some militants.

Our counter-narrative underscored that the international community expected too much and too soon from Pakistan. The US had been essentially asking Pakistan to deliver what was undeliverable. Many in Europe were recognizing that defence, diplomacy, and development needed to be synergistically applied as a part of a holistic Afghan strategy. Some strong sections of public opinion in Pakistan also stressed that a resolution of the Kashmir issue would help release positive energy to address regional problems more effectively and create a better atmosphere for Pak-US cooperation.

### **Reforms in FATA**

Ultimately, the solution to FATA's problems lies in economic development of the area and its integration into the mainstream. During 2002–07, the Pakistan government introduced various reforms in FATA. The Political Parties Order, 2002, was extended to the Tribal Areas enabling political parties to function in the area. The Frontier Crimes Regulations (FCR) imposed by the British to keep FATA in check, was reformed to establish FCR tribunals in FATA. Unfortunately, this did not have much of an impact in combating terrorism in FATA. The underlying cause of instability was poverty leading to massive unemployment, ideal breeding ground for recruitment of terrorists. It is for this reason that I had been emphasizing in my interactions with my US interlocutors to take effective measures for combating the real causes giving rise to terrorism. Following extensive consultations between Washington and Islamabad, Pakistan presented a proposal on the Reconstruction Opportunity Zones (ROZs) to provide a duty-free access for products from areas bordering between Pakistan, Afghanistan, FATA, and some parts of Balochistan.

## DRONE ATTACKS IN FATA

Very few drone attacks were carried out during our tenure. The number of drone attacks increased phenomenally after the induction of the Obama Administration in the US. We would not allow US troops to operate on our territory. Whenever the US did, we reacted very strongly. I remember, in January 2006 we summoned US Ambassador Ryan Crocker to the Foreign Office to protest against the drone attacks at Damadola in Bajaur area killing eighty people. There were large demonstrations all over the country, including in Karachi and other cities, amidst allegations that those killed were not terrorists but innocent civilians. The demonstrators on the streets of Pakistan shouted '*Amrika Murdabad*' (Death to America).

In response to the drone attacks, militants carried out a suicide bombing on military barracks in the Malakand district. Forty-two soldiers were killed and dozens were injured. This was the first major attack by the militants on the security forces, since, in an attempt to deflect mounting criticism against the US, the government had leaked that the attack was in fact conducted by Pakistani forces. After the militant attack on military barracks, the government decided to retreat into ambiguity over the drone issue.

According to later stories, obviously leaked to the American media, there was some sort of an arrangement between the US and the ISI. I do not know about the veracity of these stories since we at the Foreign Office had no means of getting to the bottom of this. All I can say is that the operating assumption when I was Foreign Minister was that the government had not given permission for drone attacks. Later, Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gillani in the PPP government that succeeded us seemed to confirm my assumptions. While talking to diplomatic correspondents, he conceded, 'The previous government gave the US permission for surveillance and reconnaissance flights by US drone aircraft but not to launch missile attacks.'<sup>54</sup>

In August 2008, at a meeting with the US Ambassador in Islamabad, Anne Patterson, Yousaf Raza Gillani gave the US the go-ahead to continue its drone campaign in Pakistan's tribal regions. According to a leaked cable, Gillani told Patterson, 'I don't care if they do it as long as they get the right people. We'll protest in the National Assembly and then ignore it.'<sup>55</sup> This was widely reported by Pakistani media at that time.

It would be appropriate here to quote the counter-version which was carried by leaked stories in the American media. According to these reports, the attacks were launched on a case-by-case basis, with permission from Pakistan. As a result, between 2004 and 2007, only ten drone attacks took place: one in 2004, three in 2005, two in 2006, and four in 2007.<sup>56</sup> According to a story in *The New York Times* in April 2013, Pakistan had given permission for drone attacks in certain Tribal Areas under the terms of a secret deal struck with the CIA in 2004. The understanding was that if CIA killed Nek Muhammad, a

Pashtun tribesman fighting the Pakistan Army in Wana, the ISI would allow armed drone attacks over the Tribal Areas. Under the deal, Pakistani intelligence officials insisted that they be allowed to approve each drone strike thus giving them tight control over the list of targets. They also insisted that drones fly only in the narrow parts of the Tribal Areas hence ensuring that they would not venture where Islamabad did not want the Americans to go.

According to the report, this included areas where Pakistan's nuclear facilities were located. The report goes on to add, 'The ISI and the CIA agreed that all drone flights in Pakistan would operate under the CIA's covert action authority which meant that the US would never acknowledge the missile strikes and that Pakistan would either take credit for the individual killings or remain silent.'<sup>57</sup> As mentioned above, we at the Foreign Office were not in a position to confirm or deny the story. All this leaking, whether information or disinformation, belongs to the murky world of intelligence operations. Even if the leaked reports are partially or wholly correct it would seem that according to the alleged 2004 'permission', the ISI had still managed to retain a degree of control over the drone operations. It seems that the PPP government that followed our government adopted a more permissive policy towards drone attacks as confirmed by Prime Minister Gillani's statements referred to above. In a similar vein, a February 2008 cable from the American Embassy in Islamabad reported that Pakistan's Army Chief, General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, had met with the US Centcom Commander, Admiral William Fallon, and asked the US military for 'continuous Predator coverage of the conflict area' in South Waziristan where the Pakistan Army was fighting the militants at the time. 'Kayani knows full well that the strikes have been precise, creating few civilian casualties, and targeted primarily at foreign fighters in Waziristan,'<sup>58</sup> asserted a February 2009 cable signed by Anne Patterson, then US Ambassador to Pakistan.

In my opinion, drone attacks have actually undermined Pakistan-US cooperation in counterterrorism. Public opinion in Pakistan is clearly against drones which makes it difficult for the government to own them publicly. In recent years, the Americans have not shared drone technology or kept Pakistan as much in the loop as its government would have liked. These attacks are deeply unpopular in Pakistan because the public views them as US violations of Pakistan's sovereignty. Various studies have revealed that a large number of Pakistanis consider the US as an enemy because of the continuing drone strikes. In the early years of drone attacks, there was cooperation and information sharing between the US and Pakistan, as originally intended, and relatively few strikes occurred during the Bush Presidency.

During the Obama Presidency, drone attacks have spiked with nearly 320 additional drone strikes in Pakistan, killing more than 3,000 people including 900 civilians and at least 176 children. Thus the drone attacks became very unpopular in Pakistan and there were huge demonstrations held all over the country. Imran Khan, leader of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-

Insaf (PTI), led a march into Waziristan on 6 October 2012.<sup>59</sup> Those in the march included political workers and human rights activists not only from Pakistan but also from the US and the UK and other European countries. It would not be incorrect to say that Imran Khan played a major role in galvanizing opposition to drone attacks within Pakistan as well as worldwide. Significantly, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navanethem Pillay, on the inaugural day of the 23rd Human Rights Council Session in May 2013 in Geneva stated that she was profoundly disturbed at the human rights implications of the use of armed drones in the context of counterterrorism and military operations.<sup>60</sup> Her statement is in line with Pakistan's publicly stated position on drones. Pakistan has consistently maintained that besides violating its sovereignty, the drone strikes are counterproductive, entail loss of civilian lives, and breach the human rights of the citizens of FATA.

The Foreign Office, commenting on the counterterrorism strategy outlined by President Obama in his speech in May 2013, acknowledged that 'force alone cannot make us safer'. This was in fact a reflection of Pakistan's own long-standing position that a comprehensive strategy was required to address the root causes of terrorism and extremism. Nonetheless, the Obama Administration has maintained that if a host state like Pakistan is unable or unwilling to act against non-state actors on its territory that pose a direct and imminent threat to the US, then United States would use drones in self-defence to eliminate these terrorist elements.<sup>61</sup>

I would like to conclude by stressing that even if the claims of drone strike supporters that these strikes are precise and cause little collateral damage are taken to be correct, continuance of such a policy is counterproductive. This is due to the fact that, regardless of such claims, a large majority of the people of Pakistan do not accept the veracity of these claims and also regard drone strikes as a violation of the country's sovereignty. A way out of this would be for the US to help enhance Pakistan's capacity for action in inaccessible areas and better intelligence cooperation so that actual action, where required, is taken by Pakistani forces rather than by US drones.

I know that during the last few years there has been a great deal of mistrust between the ISI and the CIA, which has hindered such cooperation. Recently, however, there has been an improvement in the relations between the Pentagon and the GHQ in Rawalpindi. No less important, public opinion in Pakistan is itself fed up of terrorist attacks inside the country and is in favour of peace by whatever method. This really means that if peace cannot be negotiated with extremists in the Tribal Areas, military means have to be used. This is precisely what happened when finally Operation Zarb-e-Azb was launched in North Waziristan against the militants after the collapse of the peace talks that Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's government was conducting. This military operation was supported by the two major political parties of Pakistan, the PML-N<sup>62</sup> and the PTI.<sup>63</sup> Previously, their leaders, Nawaz Sharif and Imran Khan, had favoured negotiations with

the militants to achieve peace. Currently, both these parties along with all major political parties of Pakistan including the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM), and the Awami National Party (ANP) are supporting the Pakistan Army in its operations in North Waziristan. This support has become even more resolute after the latest horrendous attack on school children in Peshawar.

### **Pakistan: A Friend or a Foe?**

As Foreign Minister, I faced mounting pressure from Pakistan's friends in the West. The American press, think tanks, and many in the Congress increasingly questioned whether Pakistan was 'a friend or a foe'. We faced a difficult situation because, while our government understood that we needed to promote relations with the US, we, at the same time, had to remain sensitive to our own national core concerns. The government had to cover its flanks and be mindful of the criticism that it faced internally of succumbing to US pressure to 'do more'. This was also the time when some in the US had begun to grow weary of what they called 'Musharraf's Janus-faced'<sup>64</sup> approach to militancy, after initially embracing him as a front-line ally. Despite the support of the Bush Administration, the 9/11 Commission's recommendations took a critical view of Pakistan's policies. The 'do more' campaigners in the West were becoming more and more strident in their demands.

There was a strong feeling in Pakistan that while the US wanted Pakistan to be sensitive to its concerns, it did not show similar sensitivity to Pakistan's regional security concerns, including its problems with India, growing Indian footprint in Kabul, and its involvement in insurgency in Balochistan. Moreover, American response to Pakistan's concerns about India-US Agreement on Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy and its refusal to consider a similar agreement with Pakistan did not go down well with the Pakistani populace.

In this cascade of changing reality and shifting perceptions, the vulnerability of our policies became apparent at home. An important factor which weighed in this game of perceptions after 9/11 was the changing world view. Thus, it became a challenge to convince the many opponents at home as well as the interlocutors abroad of our policy decisions. Interactions at various levels and forums sometimes raised more questions than provided answers. The narrative amongst a section of the population after 9/11 maintained that Pakistan had been fighting a US-led war which had claimed thousands of innocent lives. It did not perceive the situation as a struggle to ensure that Pakistan remained safe from terrorist forces challenging the writ of the state. I felt it necessary to interact with the international media and think tanks to put across Pakistan's concerns and priorities to combat a barrage of criticism that we were facing.

Given the baggage of history and past policy choices, it was clear that interaction between the two sides, even when cordial and candid, left much to be desired. Pakistan's cooperation and efforts in the 'War on Terror' were often described as too little and too

late by the Americans and as yielding ‘too much to the Yankees’ by critics at home. I was thus often reminded of Henry Kissinger’s words that ‘being America’s ally can be more dangerous than being its enemy’.

At this juncture, it is worthwhile to recall the statement that Secretary of State Hillary Clinton made at a Congressional hearing in April 2009. She acknowledged the US role in creating the problems that afflict Pakistan today. She rightly pointed out that the Pakistani people sensed being used by the Americans. She added that military cooperation had been the hallmark of US policy with Pakistan over the years and that the bilateral relationship had been based on short-term US interests and fears, including containment of the communist threat, rollback of the USSR from Afghanistan and counterterrorism after 9/11.<sup>65</sup>

While recognizing the US responsibility in leaving Pakistan in the lurch in the 1990s, Secretary of State Hilary Clinton, during her visit to Pakistan in October 2009, also spoke about those who question ‘our [US] motives, who perhaps are sceptical that we are going to commit to a long-term relationship with Pakistan’. She added, ‘I find it hard to believe that nobody in your government knows where there they (Al-Qaeda leaders including Osama bin Laden) are and could not get them if they really wanted to.’ Such remarks are a clear manifestation of the distrust characterizing US-Pak relationship, largely as a result of what Washington perceives as the double-faced approach of Pakistan’s establishment towards the Taliban, Haqqani Network, and Lashkar-e-Taiba.

Pakistan progressively adopted a policy of peace and cooperation with its neighbours including active involvement in Afghanistan to working with the US and the international community for a stable and peaceful Afghanistan. From a position of confrontation with India, Pakistan adopted a policy of dialogue and working towards conflict resolution of all outstanding issues including Kashmir.

Significantly however, this emerging strategic realignment came at a price. The price at home was the political Opposition’s criticism of government policies being changed due to American pressure and the resistance from various circles that were used to old methods. They had vested interest in continuing the way things were done in the past. This included the government’s changing policy towards non-state actors. As a consequence, Western commentators felt that either change was slow to come or that it was not real. Behind this façade of change there was a continuity of old policies. Some felt that it was still business as usual. Others thought that Pakistan’s policies were not a strategic reversal but merely political expediency. Therefore, while praising President Musharraf for this change, the American media also began to brand Musharraf as ‘a friend and a foe’ and accused him of double-dealing.

### **How the Government Handled Lingering Negative Perceptions on Both Sides**

Among sections of the Pakistani populace who adhere to conspiracy theories, the US is responsible for most of Pakistan's problems. It is accused of helping the insurgency in Balochistan in order to weaken Pakistan, the only Muslim nuclear power. The US is doing this in much the same manner, as the narrative goes, as it did in Sudan that is territorially one of the largest Muslim countries. The US, according to such elements, also fuelled secessionist tendencies in Indonesia, the world's most populist Muslim country. This led to the separation and independence of East Timor. Moreover, the US wants to punish Pakistan for its closeness with China, and is strengthening India so that it is able to confront Pakistan and China both and so on and so forth.

It is immaterial that this is a gross over simplification of the situation, nor are those who fall victim to such conspiracy theories prepared to listen to the counter-argument, that were Pakistan actually destabilized, it would pose problems not just in the region but would be detrimental to US interests also.

The conspiracy theory narratives have been responsible for fuelling strong anti-US sentiment in Pakistan in the last few years. This is matched in the US, where sections of the media, and sometimes even the think tank community, accuse Pakistan of pursuing a 'double game', of 'running with the hare and hunting with hounds', and of being 'an ally from hell'. Pakistan's negative public image in America was and remains a problem in its relations with the US where public opinion matters a great deal and think tanks and policymakers are often compelled to tailor their positions in accordance with the views of their backers and constituents. Pakistan's current unfavourable image in the US becomes a major limitation on the capacity of US policymakers to sustain a long-term relationship with Pakistan. Just as in the case of Pakistani perception of the US in certain circles, those in the US accusing Pakistan of all sorts of wrongs conveniently forget that it has suffered huge human and material losses following its discussion to support US after 9/11, which no amount of American aid can ever compensate.

Our government took several positive initiatives to remove such perceptions in the United States. Admittedly, our task was made all the more difficult because of the A. Q. Khan affair, scepticism in the US think tanks and the media about Pakistan's support in counterterrorism, and negative publicity from human rights violations and suicide bombings. For decades, starting from Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan, the policies that Pakistan pursued along with the US in its wake, led to not just Soviet Union's ouster from Afghanistan but also to millions of refugees pouring into Pakistan. This negatively impacted our economy, ecology, society and polity. Its very contiguity to Afghanistan became a public relations disaster for the decades that Afghanistan has remained in the news. Unfortunately, Pakistan was coupled with Afghanistan on maps splashed by the electronic media all over the world. This lumped Afghanistan and Pakistan in the same basket as far as the uninformed international public was concerned. President Musharraf tried in earnest to address some of the misperceptions about Pakistan. In my capacity as Foreign Minister, I also tried my utmost to raise Pakistan's image. I addressed think tanks,

met with editorial boards, gave interviews to major American and world television channels. I also stressed upon the progress that we had made on gender and minority issues in spite of facing major difficulties and setbacks.

Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz, a successful international banker before coming to Pakistan, had also tried to project Pakistan positively and had very ably led Pakistan towards economic growth and development. His team, headed by the dynamic Finance Minister, Dr Salman Shah, managed to yield high growth rates during the tenure of the government. It was only as a result of these consistent efforts that we were able to contain the damage in the US which was looking for an easy excuse by blaming Pakistan for all its failures in Afghanistan. Additionally, Pakistan's proactive foreign policy and continuous high-level visits of heads of state and government and foreign ministers from all over the world, members of the US Administration, Congressional leaders, highest Pentagon officials, and senior military commanders of Pakistan and the United States helped in promoting mutual understanding and bilateral cooperation. It also helped in dispelling at least some of the negative perceptions prevalent in both the countries regarding each other.

The inherent contradictions in Pak-US relations came to the fore in 2011, a year of crisis which plunged the relationship to an all time low. The first incident of the '*Annus horribilis*' was the Raymond Davis episode. A CIA contractor, Raymond Davis gunned down two men in broad daylight in Lahore in February 2011. Then the US Navy Seals killed Osama bin Laden in Abbottabad in May 2011. US aircraft bombed and killed twenty-four Pakistani soldiers on the Pak-Afghan border at Salala in November 2011, in what the Americans described as 'friendly fire'. The Salala episode caused massive anger among Pakistanis, leading to the evacuation of the Shamsi Airfield and closure of NATO supply lines. They were finally opened after seven months, on 3 July 2012, when US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton apologized. The year 2011 also witnessed controversy over the language of the Kerry-Lugar-Berman Bill and the 'Memogate' scandal. The two countries have since realized the need to cooperate more than ever now, as the US forces near the drawdown in Afghanistan. Pakistan and the United States both need to recognize that it is in their mutual interest to help stabilize the situation in Afghanistan. Many American thinkers have also started advising the US Administration that Pakistan is too important a country, with a huge nuclear arsenal, to be looked at only from the perspective of Afghanistan.

### **Pakistan-US Relations: Likely to Endure Despite Problems**

In recent years, drone strikes and their consequent collateral damage and the suicide attacks that they have provoked, the approach of the US towards India and Pakistan on the peaceful uses of nuclear technology, perceived American support for Israel on the Palestinian issue, global policies of the US particularly in the Middle East, and the more dramatically, not just the invasion of Iraq but its disastrous consequences on the Iraqi people have all contributed to fuelling anti-US sentiment among the Pakistani populace as

well as in the Muslim world. The attack on Afghanistan has created major problems for Pakistan and this has further exacerbated negative sentiments towards the United States. This poses major problems for diplomacy. It is in Pakistan's own interest to maintain good relations with the US notwithstanding the difficulties mentioned above. For this, both need to be sensitive to each other's concerns and priorities. One of the major successes of Pakistan's foreign policy over the last five decades has been its ability to maintain strong relations with both the US and China. There are areas of convergence between the US, Pakistan, and China; the most important would seem to be their common interest in promoting peace and stability in Afghanistan.

In reviewing the bilateral relationship during our tenure, it is fair to say that Pakistan achieved mixed success. There were several areas where the US played a helpful role. For example, in facilitating regional peace between India and Pakistan and in helping to contain the negative consequences of the A. Q. Khan affair, which could have been far worse for Pakistan. The US was also keen on Pakistan's return to democracy, and facilitated the return of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leader Benazir Bhutto to Pakistan. The US game plan went astray because of her tragic assassination.

With respect to counterterrorism during our time, there were both pluses and minuses. The United States appreciated Pakistan's efforts to control Al-Qaeda elements, and admitted openly on many occasions of Pakistan's help in capturing some of its top leaders. Despite having very close relations with Pakistan, the US was not satisfied with the policies that the Pakistan government had adopted in the Tribal Areas bordering Afghanistan. The problem that we faced was America's strong keenness for Pakistan to launch a full-fledged attack on all the tribal agencies. Whereas Pakistan was trying its best to prevent the movement of militants across the border and had stationed a large number of its troops in the area, it was not possible to fully comply with America's desires, since large sections of Pakistani public opinion was hostile to US occupation of Afghanistan. This was more so after its decision to support the Northern Alliance and to allow its troops to enter Kabul despite Pakistan's advice to the contrary. The US accused Pakistan of providing sanctuaries to the Haqqani Network in North Waziristan. My own assessment in this respect is that, had the United States not strayed into Iraq and focused on Afghanistan, it would have achieved far greater success in stabilizing that country, leaving little room for the Afghan Taliban. As the US focused more and more on Iraq, it provided time and space to the Afghan Taliban to regroup.

The US attributed Pakistan's dragging its feet on the issue of terrorism to the 'rogue elements' in the intelligence agencies. The US wanted the Pakistan government to adopt a more robust policy in dealing with the extremists. It had come to believe that the best hope to achieve this objective, and to maintain long-standing US ties with Pakistan lay in a strong civilian political dispensation so that it could control these 'rogue elements'. This perhaps explains some of the earlier amateurish and unsuccessful efforts of the PPP

government under President Asif Ali Zardari to bring the ISI under the control of the Interior Ministry. But it could not achieve much because of its poor record in governance.

It also seems that the US has begun to understand that its former approach towards Pakistan would not be helpful in improving relations with Pakistan. In recent times, US Special Envoy for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Richard Holbrooke, was keen that America forge a strategic partnership with Pakistan on the same lines as with China and India and not perpetuate a transactional relationship based on military and economic aid but also on commonality of strategic interests or perceptions on key issues of mutual concern. Holbrooke correctly figured that the key to ending the Afghan war was not the defeat of the Taliban on the battlefield but a change in Pakistan's strategic calculus by helping its masses achieve upward economic mobility. He rightly felt that the US needed to engage in dialogue with Pakistan more. They need to not only discuss security issues but also a host of other issues of concern. Holbrooke correctly advocated that US-Pakistan engagement has to be more broad-based. Vali Nasr, in his book *The Dispensable Nation* has provided insights into Holbrooke's efforts in this regard.<sup>66</sup>

Now that the US 'drawdown' is moving quickly to its logical conclusion by December 2014, there is need for Pakistan and US to coordinate their efforts to bring peace and stability in Afghanistan. Pakistan has to do whatever it can and use all the influence it has with the Afghan Taliban to bring them to the negotiating table with the government in Kabul after the elections as well as with the US. Pakistan it seems is already doing that and did play a role in having the Doha office opened for this purpose. Unfortunately, those efforts did not succeed for reasons that are well known. We need to also work with all Afghan ethnic groups and should not repeat the mistakes we made in the past.

The US must also accept that there cannot be a purely military solution in Afghanistan. It needs to be prepared to engage with the Afghan Taliban constructively and also convince the new government following the elections in 2014 to do the same. Pakistan on its part needs to convince the Afghan Taliban that they adopt a more positive attitude towards the new government. It needs to sensitize them to the fact that Afghanistan has changed in many respects, particularly on gender issues and on matters of female education. Pakistan also needs to convey to the Afghan Taliban that it would not be in a position to back them the way it did prior to 9/11. This would result in severe opposition from the international community. It is in Pakistan's interest to do all it can to avoid another civil-war-like situation breaking out in Afghanistan following the US drawdown in 2014. I am uncertain whether the US or the West can completely disentangle themselves from Afghanistan. Now that the Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) has been signed, the situation with respect to the support from the international community for Afghanistan will greatly improve.

It is essential for Pakistan to ensure that its territory is not used as a safe haven for promoting terrorism which leads to destabilization of any other country. Frankly speaking, this issue concerns not just the United States, but most of Pakistan's neighbours including India, Afghanistan, and Iran. Even China is worried about militants from its territory

seeking refuge in Pakistan's Tribal Areas as I was informed during my recent visit to China very discreetly by my hosts. It seems to me that the Pakistan Army, which has been dealing with the situation on the Western border ever since the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, has begun to realize that Pakistan cannot afford to provide safe havens to terrorist elements in the Tribal Areas.

In a very important speech, delivered on Martyr's Day on 30 April 2014, Chief of Army Staff General Raheel Sharif declared in unequivocal terms that, whereas the armed forces support a peaceful resolution in FATA, that the terrorist elements must accept unconditionally to remain within the confines of Pakistan's Constitution and its legal framework, failing which the entire might of the armed forces would be used to ensure that the area was freed of such elements. In the past, when the extremists defied the writ of the state in Swat, the armed forces had to resort to force and cleared the Swat Valley of the presence of such elements in 2008 and 2009.

To conclude, it would be fair to say that the relationship has gone through many ups and downs and we need to focus on how we can avoid this in the future and lay the foundations for a broad-based and mutually beneficial relationship. It seems, anyway, that the two will remain engaged, willy-nilly, with each other despite the difficulties in their relationship. Both have their own constraints which are likely to keep them together.

Pakistan's economy had been doing rather well and, in 2007, with a GDP growth of 8.6 per cent, was regarded as second only to China's which grew in that year by 9.2 per cent. In December 2005 Goldman Sachs included Pakistan in the list of 'Next Eleven' (N-11) emerging economies. This list included Pakistan, South Korea, Mexico, Turkey, Indonesia, and some others. Pakistan's economy, however, took a dip because of poor governance during the PPP regime that took office in 2008. It is estimated that it will take at least two to three years to recover and is thus likely to remain dependent on US goodwill for its help with the IMF, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and the World Bank (WB). Moreover, Pakistan's governing elite have got used to paying negligible income tax. The tax-to-GDP ratio is pathetically low. Even with political will, some time will be required before the damage can be repaired. Similarly, the US is likely to need Pakistan's support, not just in stabilizing Afghanistan, but also for most of the reasons that have kept the two countries together during the last five decades. The crisis in the Ukraine, which has increased tensions between the US and Russia, is also likely to increase Pakistan's importance for the US (although it needs to be pointed out that Pakistan's relations with Russia are also improving).

A recent book by Daniel S. Markey, a leading American specialist on the area does not predict Pakistan and the United States coming out of their mutual embrace anytime soon due to 'Pakistan's huge and expanding population base, its growing nuclear arsenal, its geostrategic importance and its relationship with China and India all of which are likely to force themselves on to US geostrategic map'.<sup>67</sup> I have already referred in detail to the

recent hugely successful visit of General Raheel Sharif to Washington where he met almost everyone of consequence. In fact, Secretary of State John Kerry referred to the Pakistan Army in positive terms and called it a 'truly binding force'.

There is great convergence of views on the unfolding scenario in Afghanistan in the context of US drawdown, as well as the recognition of the need for stability in Afghanistan for both Pakistan and the US. Recent disturbing trends in the Muslim world, such as the rise of the ISIS, or the 'Islamic State of Iraq and Syria', have also highlighted the important role that Pakistan, strategically a very important Muslim country, can play in stabilizing conditions in the wider region. The United States can, of course, play a useful role, behind the scenes, in bringing Pakistan and India to the negotiating table once again as it has done on earlier occasions.

Over the years, Pak-US relations have been marked by periods of engagement and estrangement. It would be fair to say that, whenever the two countries have engaged with each other meaningfully, they have benefited; and whenever their relations have been strained, the interests of both countries have been hurt. Thus, despite difficulties, Pakistan and the US are likely to find areas of convergence and the need to maintain a truly robust bilateral relationship.



## Pakistan's Diplomatic Outreach: Proactive Engagement with the World

During my tenure as Foreign Minister, Pakistan's foreign policy remained focused on the promotion of regional and global peace and security as well as on the country's economic and social development. Amidst turbulent times, Pakistan managed to improve its relations with all its neighbours and the major world powers. It is not possible to do justice to all of Pakistan's vital bilateral and multilateral relations as well as to major regional and international issues in a single volume. The book is largely about Pakistan's difficult relationship with India and attempts to normalize this relationship. It also deals with Pakistan's difficulties on Pak-Afghan border, particularly following Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan, and the events of 9/11 in the USA and its resultant consequences on the trilateral relationship between Pakistan-Afghanistan and the US.

For this reason, Pakistan's vitally important relationships with the Islamic World, particularly with Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Iran, and Pakistan's closest ally China, and near neighbours like Russia and close economic partners like the EU, Japan, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, and Belgium have not been adequately dealt with. I have also touched upon, but not as much as I would have liked to, countries like the UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman and Bahrain, Norway, and Denmark where millions of Pakistani expatriates work and repatriate their earnings to Pakistan strengthening our economy in a very significant way. I would have also liked to deal at much greater length with our relationship with Bangladesh, once a part of Pakistan and very close to my heart. A single volume would not suffice in covering all these topics. All this would require an entirely new book. It is, however, necessary to briefly refer to these and some other important relationships.

### **CHINA: STRENGTHENING A STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIP**

It is pertinent to mention that Pakistan had recognized China as early as 1950, and over time the two countries drew closer. This is despite the fact that Pakistan was from its very inception pro-West in its foreign policy orientation. It became a member of several defence alliances with major Western powers. The Chinese seemed to instinctively understand Pakistan's motivation in joining these alliances, i.e., to redress the balance

between the defence and economic disparities between Pakistan and its much larger and hostile neighbour India. Later, in 1961, Pakistan supported China's entry into the United Nations. China was isolated at that time and Pakistan supported the 'One China' policy, which brought the two countries even closer.

After the Sino-Indian war over the disputed border between the two countries, the United States sent massive doses of military aid to India. This naturally alarmed Pakistan, which found the need to rely more and more on China. Later, as a result of the Civil Aviation Agreement between the two countries, the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) became the first international carrier to link China to the outside world. Both Pakistan and China continue to have unsettled borders with India. In a nutshell, the respective relationships of Pakistan and China towards India provided the strategic underpinnings to their relationship with one another. Pakistan needed China's help to strengthen its defence capabilities whereas China found it expedient to strengthen Pakistan. This was the unwritten basis of their relationship. Later, however, a lot of public support in both the countries provided an enduring basis for the relationship to thrive. Pakistan and China supported each other at various international fora and they have a common interest in creating conditions of stability on their extensive border regions. The recent unfortunate developments in Xinjiang and some other parts of China due to terrorism, only underline the need for the two countries to further strengthen their relationship.

It may be recalled that the Sino-Pak boundary agreement was negotiated between October 1962–63, whereby, the boundary between China's Xinjiang and the contiguous areas, the defence of which was under the control of Pakistan, was demarcated. With this agreement, China ceded nearly 750 square miles of grazing lands which had been under the use of shepherds in Hunza. Pakistan also recognized approximately 2,000 square miles of territory adjoining the Northern Areas as belonging to China. The agreement is not recognized by India which also claims sovereignty over part of the land that has been ceded to China. The Indian claim that Pakistan ceded a part of Kashmir territory to China is not accepted by Pakistan since a recognized boundary did not exist between Pakistan and India in this region.

The agreement was of great political significance to both the countries. It also meant that, in the Chinese assessment, Kashmir did not belong to India. It was also an expression of the overall strengthening of relations between Pakistan and China. The two countries entered into a number of agreements regarding trade as well as air travel, which was China's first such agreement with a non-Communist country at that time. It was misunderstood by Washington and considered as an evidence of Pakistan drifting towards Communist China.<sup>1</sup>

Chinese veto on Bangladesh's admission to the UN, pending the release of Pakistani Prisoners of War (POWs) after the 1971 war, who had been threatened with war crimes trials, is noteworthy and has left a deep impact. Details of China's role and the help it

provided on that occasion has been dealt with in Chapter 9, 'The Foreign Office' and are, therefore, not being given here. It helped in further strengthening Sino-Pak relations. Pakistan's relationship with China did cause concern among certain sections of the international community in the initial years. Ironically, Pakistan's two close allies, the United States and China, did not get along. For Pakistan to get along with both was undoubtedly a difficult undertaking. Incidentally, the US later found our close relationship with China useful in their efforts to establish their own relationship with China. It was from Pakistan that Henry Kissinger took off secretly for Beijing 'wearing a black hat, a trench coat and dark glasses'. Pakistan played a key role in the initiation of *détente* between US and China, leading to the visit of President Nixon to Beijing in 1972.

It has become customary for leaders of China and Pakistan, to describe their relationship as 'higher than the Himalayas, deeper than the oceans, sweeter than honey, and stronger than steel'. I do strongly believe that this also represents the public sentiment. I was deeply touched by an incident recently. I was in Hong Kong on a private visit. Some friends took me across the border to Shenzhen, a city that has come up in a matter of a few years and has become a major economic zone of China. It is a tribute to the remarkable development that has taken place in China in the last three decades. I was taken to the biggest departmental store in Shenzhen where, because of the language bar I was at a loss to communicate. With the help of my friends I was able to explain that I wanted to speak to someone who could converse in English. After a few minutes, a young man appeared; he asked me in halting English where I came from. When I told him that I was from Pakistan, his face beamed with pleasure and he exclaimed, 'Pakistan, a friend!' I reciprocated equally warmly.

Although I have experienced a lot of warmth on my official visits to China, this experience left a deep impression on me since this was purely a private visit and far away from Beijing and its diplomatic niceties. I also cannot forget that during an official visit to China, Prime Minister Wen Jiabao said to me that I would become the first non-Chinese leader ever to be taken to a secret Chinese space facility. The next day I was shown the model of a communication satellite, which was being built jointly by Pakistan and China at the China Academy of Space and Technology.

The period 2002–07 was characterized by high-level exchanges of Heads of State and Government and Foreign Ministers in both directions. The important visits during my tenure were by Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao and Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing in April 2005 and by President Hu Jintao in November 2006 who came on a four-day state visit to Pakistan. Similarly, President Musharraf visited China in February 2006, Shaukat Aziz in April 2007 and I visited China in April 2004 and March 2007. In April 2005, the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Good Neighbourly Relations signed in Islamabad took the relations to a higher level. Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao stated that the treaty marked a new stage in Pakistan-China friendship.' As the result of these high-level exchanges, China and Pakistan were able to upgrade their relationship qualitatively.

As Foreign Minister, I was always conscious of the fact that we needed to underpin our relationship with economic cooperation and people-to-people contacts for lasting results. Hence, during our tenure, we signed, inter alia, a Five-Year Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreement, a Free Trade Agreement, as well as the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Good Neighbourly Relations in Islamabad in April 2005. We instituted various programmes, including regular exchange of youth delegations between the two countries. I am happy to note that these exchanges have been maintained. Over the years, cooperation between the two countries has continued to flourish. Major projects are under way including the Islamabad Sports Complex, Heavy Electrical Complex, Guddu Thermal Power Plant and, of course, the Chashma Nuclear Power Plants for peaceful uses of nuclear technology. This is a manifestation of the multifaceted support that China has provided to Pakistan and has built an edifice of cooperation over the years which has strengthened Pakistan's economy and its industrial base. Besides, defence cooperation between the two countries has been comprehensive, while taking place through professional channels and in a low-key manner. It has involved joint production of advanced weapons systems, including modern and sophisticated aircraft, ships, and tanks. There has also been a system of regular exchange of delegations between the armed forces of the two countries. A comprehensive framework agreement on defence cooperation was signed in February 2006 when President Pervez Musharraf visited China. Discussions were held on acquiring FC-20 (F-10) and AWACS (Early Warning and Control System), while reviewing work on F-22P frigates and JF-17 aircraft.

Some of the important projects between the two countries include the co-production of the most advanced aircraft, JF-17, as well as guided missiles frigates and tanks. China has been Pakistan's most trusted friend, and despite pressures, has been a partner in peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

### **Nuclear Power Plants**

Just before China was going to join the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), and thus become subject to its constraints regarding commerce in nuclear energy, our very able Ambassador to China, Riaz Muhammad Khan, later Foreign Secretary, was in constant touch with me to help expedite the finalization of this agreement at our end. This was to help secure Pakistan's future cooperation with China following its decision to join the NSG. In diplomatic parlance it is called a 'grandfather clause'. This is a provision in which an old rule continues to apply to some existing situations, while a new rule will apply to all future cases. Those exempt from the new rule are said to have 'grandfather' rights or acquired rights. China had earlier supplied two nuclear reactors of 300 MW (megawatts) each (Chashma 1 and Chashma II). Besides, Chashma III, a reactor of 340 MW, is in the process of completion, while the construction work on Chashma IV has also started). As a result of the 'grandfather clause', despite opposition from United States and India, China has been able to continue with this cooperation with Pakistan in peaceful uses of nuclear

energy. Due to the progress it has made in this field, a ground breaking ceremony was held in December 2013, for the construction of a nuclear complex in Karachi which will house two nuclear reactors, each with a capacity of 1,100 MW, thus providing 2,200 MW of additional energy by 2019.

## **The Silk Route**

Cultural, religious, and trade exchanges have existed between China and South Asia since ancient times. This linkage was through the ancient Silk Route, which was a unique example of cooperation, not just in trade and commerce but also of ideas and culture.

The Silk Route is a series of trade and cultural transmission routes that were central to cultural interaction through regions of the Asian continent connecting the West and the East by linking traders, merchants, pilgrims, monks, soldiers, nomads, and urban dwellers from China to South Asia, Persia, and Europe. This network of roads, goods, people, and cultural exchanges helped the peoples of the region to understand their history and culture better. The Silk Route comprised several routes. There was the Karakoram route which was mainly a single route running from China through the Karakoram. It exists in modern times in the form of the Karakoram Highway connecting Pakistan and China. On the Silk Route, cities of significance included Yazd (Iran), Kashgar (China), Herat and Kabul (Afghanistan), Jaisalmer (India), Peshawar, Taxila, and Multan (Pakistan).

As Foreign Minister of Pakistan, I wanted to reactivate the ancient Silk Route which used to start from Delhi and run via Ferozpur, Kasur, Lahore, Peshawar, Kabul, and onwards to Central Asia and China. For this reason, during my tenure as Foreign Minister, major highways were constructed right up to the Indian border, Gandasinghwala in Kasur district. It remains my conviction that when Indo-Pak relations normalize, this route will become operational not just for their trade, but it shall also serve as link to South Asia and Central and West Asia as well as China.

## **China-Pakistan Economic Corridor from Gwadar to Kashgar**

Our government attached a lot importance to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) which envisages a road, railway, fibre- optic communication, and pipeline linkages between Gwadar in Pakistan and Xinjiang in Western China. According to latest reports, work on this project has started in earnest. This has great potential for Pakistan and it can become a major economic corridor linking South Asia to China and Central and West Asia. The economic corridor across 3,000 km of Pakistani territory will link the port of Gwadar on the Arabian Sea with Xinjiang province in China. Once completed, the CPEC will link China directly to the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea providing an easy and quick access to the Middle East and Africa. Currently, a massive amount of China's trade with Europe goes through the Strait of Malacca which in case of hostilities could be blockaded. Thus CPEC provides China a much more secure and a much shorter route for its trade with Middle East and Africa. For Pakistan it can become a game changer because

CPEC will require huge investment from China. This will encourage other foreign and local investors to come forward with new projects. These investors have hitherto been constrained because of insecurity caused by terrorist activities generated by Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan. The launching of a major military operation by the Pakistan Army in North Waziristan coupled with CPEC can make all the difference in attracting new capital to Pakistan.

The handing over of the Gwadar Port to China by taking it over from the Singapore Port Authority was a major development. The Gwadar Port was inaugurated in March 2002, and its first phase was completed in 2005. The construction of the port and its handing over to China recently, as well as the emphasis being placed on the corridor between the governments of Pakistan and China, have created quite a few ripples in the international community.

India seems to be particularly unhappy and feels that the Gwadar Port is a part of a 'string of pearls', namely, a string of Chinese port facilities/bases which surround India. In the view of some Indian analysts, 'the corridor will give China access to the Indian Ocean and thus enable it to challenge India in its maritime backyard and open a new threat from it.'<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, they argue that the 'corridor transportation links with Pakistan will also allow China to rapidly come to Pakistan's aid in the event of a war with India.'<sup>3</sup> Some others in India feel that 'with its gift of geography, it is difficult to keep Pakistan away from the thick of geopolitics.'<sup>4</sup> In my opinion if Pakistan-India relations were to improve and the two countries were able to create a new paradigm, as we were trying to do during our tenure, the increased road, rail and pipeline connectivity would also help India access Central and West Asia through Pakistan. We would be able to take full advantage of our pivotal geostrategic situation were we to allow India access through Pakistan to Afghanistan and Central and West Asia. This, however, will become possible when Pakistan and India are involved in a serious peace process aimed at normalizing relations between them and at resolving outstanding disputes between them including Jammu and Kashmir, as we were trying to do and which I think is eminently doable (details of a possible solution to Jammu and Kashmir and Siachen and Sir Creek disputes are given elsewhere in the book).

The position of the United States is much more nuanced and it feels that the Pakistan-China Economic Corridor and the increased roads and rail linkages between Pakistan and Afghanistan which are also a part of the Chinese plan, would help stabilize Afghanistan where US had made a lot of investment. The US would not like Afghanistan to fail in the way that Iraq has, following the withdrawal of US forces from that country. US may, however, feel that the Gwadar Port would enable China to access the Arabian Sea and that China would then be in a position to monitor all American naval activity.

It is in Pakistan's interest to have good relations with both China and the United States. It has been one of the successes of Pakistan's foreign policy that it has been able to maintain

very close relations with both China and the United States at the same time even during the time of great tension between the two as was the case during the Korean and Vietnamese wars. Therefore, once the work on the CPEC starts in earnest, it will pose new challenges to those in charge of Pakistan's foreign policy. I see no reason why it would be difficult to meet these challenges now or in the future when there are many more complementarities between China and the United States than was the case in the past when there was almost none. I am a firm believer that there is no such thing as a zero-sum game in the international politics. There are many win-win situations in international politics and it is possible, given the necessary vision and positivity of approach. I hope that the CPEC will prove to be an example of this.

### **Chinese Experience and Lessons for Pakistan**

In September 2013, I was invited to China to attend an International Conference on Peace and Disarmament, where I led a delegation of the Regional Peace Institute (RPI), an Islamabad based think tank that I chair. The theme of the conference was Cooperation between China and South Asia. A large number of delegates from South Asian countries were invited. It was interesting to note that out of one hundred delegates invited, almost one-third were from Pakistan. This is an indication of the importance that China continues to attach to its relationship with Pakistan.

China does express concerns about the rising terrorism in Pakistan. On more than one occasion I was asked on the quiet about it. My hosts were disturbed about this and fearful of its impact in areas bordering China. It is no secret that extremists from Xinjiang have found sanctuary in Pakistan's Tribal Areas, and Afghanistan would be foolish to believe that Pakistan's relations with China, as indeed with the rest of the world, will not be impacted by such developments. The Chinese are a sensitive lot and their concern about conditions in Pakistan was made known to me only in one-on-one conversations.

The Chinese leadership, both in the Communist Party of China as well as in the government, acknowledges not just the strategic importance of Pakistan and its role in the Muslim world but also the positive role that Pakistan played in the early days of the founding of the People's Republic as also in bringing China and the United States closer to each other. Were the conditions in Pakistan to become stable and peaceful, China, which has graduated to a higher industrial and technological level could facilitate the transfer of basic Industry to Pakistan as has happened with respect to Vietnam, Thailand, and some other countries. We must recognize that a sophisticated generation of younger Chinese leaders are taking over, who are more amenable to the attractions of soft power. Pakistan has a lot to offer in this regard, but for various reasons has fallen far behind other countries in the region, such as India and Bangladesh. It is essential that Pakistan show its softer image to the rest of the world, including China. This can be done by holding regular expos, conferences, and cultural events. In this context, we need to do all we can to promote greater opportunities to our artists, poets, writers, and musicians. This would help

a great deal in further nurturing this relationship. China has been working at promoting its soft image through focusing on its exports, culture, cuisine, calligraphy, cinema, art, and fashion. A liberal visa regime would also help.

## **China and India**

There is a feeling among some circles in Pakistan that Indo-China relationship will remain hostage to border disputes between the two countries. In the South Asian region, China's economic engagement has been most intense with India. Their trade is worth almost seventy billion dollars and is expected to touch 100 billion within a few years.

Furthermore, unlike the Line of Control (LoC) in Kashmir between Pakistan and India, where the situation became volatile in 2013 and 2014 after remaining calm for a long period (since the cease fire announced during our tenure), there has been no bloodshed on the Line of Actual Control (LoAC) between China and India, in the disputed area since the 1962 war. This is despite the fact that the LoAC, unlike the LoC, is not demarcated.

I noticed in the think tank community in China, that they had no desire to increase tensions with India. Their entire focus seems to be on economic development of China. In response to a question by some delegates on Indo-China ties, the two Chinese panellists—a former diplomat and a former general—responded that there is no such thing as a zero-sum game between nations with competing interests. In my interactions, I found my Chinese interlocutors more interested in stabilizing conditions in Pakistan and felt that Pakistan ought to normalize its relationship with India in the interest of peace, stability, and development. In 1996, President Jiang Zemin gave similar advice to Pakistan during his official visit.

It is important to point out that a new opportunity for Pakistan and for other countries has been created. While China's economy has been growing at an astonishing rate and particularly its coastal regions have become an envy of the world, it is now shifting its focus towards the relatively less developed border areas. This is bringing it closer to South Asia. Xinjiang borders Pakistan and Afghanistan while Tibet has contiguous borders with Nepal, Bhutan, and north-eastern part of India. Yunnan is contiguous to Myanmar. Pakistan should take advantage of this policy to benefit economically through linkages with areas where China is going to invest heavily. In this connection, I have already mentioned that Pakistan and China have recently agreed, to develop an economic corridor from Gwadar to Kashgar. There seems to be concrete progress on this area. I would, nevertheless, like to mention that Pakistanis are very good at signing Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) and then forgetting all about them. If this project actually reaches its completion (currently there are positive signs) it could become a game changer. There have been statements from important ministers regarding China's intention to invest thirty-five billion dollars in the energy sector alone and another fifteen billion in other sectors.

At this point, I would like to emphasize the need to avoid turf wars between different ministries. The economic corridor project is so important that it will only make progress if the Prime Minister takes personal interest and supervises its implementation and overrides bureaucratic wrangling that will occur in the nature of things.

## **Human Resource Development and Educational Reforms in China**

Educational reforms in China have shown remarkable results. A large part of their focus is on the quality of education countrywide, rural transformation, and social inclusion. An important lesson from the Chinese experience is the focus of its leadership on economic development of the country above all other considerations and continuity of policies. Starting with Premier Deng Xiaoping in 1978, his reforms and economic policies were carried forward by President Jiang Zemin (June 1989–November 2002), and Prime Minister Zhu Rongji (March 1998–March 2003). There was encouragement in the private sector, reduction of trade barriers, and opening up of the economy which enabled China to join the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2001. Furthermore, it helped China in the growth of its exports. Chinese leadership put greater focus on continuity of policies while responding to the changes in international economic situation with long-term vision, which is reflected in their five-year and ten-year plans. No wonder, when the new leadership takes over in China for ten years, they give their own priority. President Xi Jinping has given the people a new vision in the form of the ‘Chinese Dream’, which also spells out the means to translate that dream into a reality in the form of the policies for next ten years. Here is an important lesson for Pakistan, where our leaders specialize in undoing and discrediting everything that the previous government may have done. This entails great economic cost and negatively impacts Pakistan’s international image and reputation. It is not just the Chinese experience but also the experience of many South-East Asian countries which have achieved remarkable growth rates and development by a continuity of policies. Apart from unprecedented economic progress and infrastructure development, China has succeeded in uplifting the economic plight of millions. This is unfortunately not the case in Pakistan and India that houses half of the world’s population who are living below the poverty line.

Pakistan and China are bound together by unique fraternal ties that have withstood global and regional upheavals but it is not often understood that ‘nations have no permanent friends or allies; they only have permanent interests’.<sup>5</sup>

## **Pivot to Asia**

I am reminded of the famous quote by Napoleon Bonaparte, ‘China is a sleeping giant. Let her sleep, for when she wakes she will move the world’. China has begun the process of shaking the world through its unprecedented economic development since 1979. If China’s rate of economic growth continues to be what it has been in the last few years, it’s quite possible that China may become the largest economy in the world in dollar terms

relatively soon. It is already world's largest economy in terms of purchasing power parity. The talk then about the G-2 comprising the US and China makes sense if they agree on important issues; some commentators have already started hinting at that possibility.

It has been said that the balance of the world power is changing rapidly. In the past, the Mediterranean was of prime importance followed by the Atlantic. But the focus of the United States and other emerging powers will now shift to the Pacific. In view of the reliance of China on the sea lanes for maritime trade, the United States has been trying to strengthen its relationships with the Pacific powers, including Japan, South Korea, Indonesia, Vietnam, and the Philippines. In view of China-India competition, the US is keen to rope in India on its side.

Certain new developments need to be mentioned here. The American strategy in its priorities for the twenty-first century has emphasized, inter alia, the importance of Asia-Pacific. There are many commentators who believe that the US and China are destined to clash in the future. In the words of President Carter's National Security Advisor, Professor Zbigniew Brzezinski, these two countries have shared important interests in the past. However, in the future, while likely to cooperate economically, US-China relationship with respect to security and ideology is going to become more competitive. In this regard, Brzezinski has referred to two overlapping regional troubled triangles which are centred on China. The first pertains to China, India, and Pakistan. The second is tied to China, Japan, North and South Korea, and Taiwan, with countries like Australia playing a supporting role. In the first, Pakistan could be a major point of contention and in the second North Korea could become a focus of insecurity.

Indians fear Sino-Pak collusion and the Chinese feel vulnerable to India's potential capacity to interfere with Chinese access through the Indian Ocean to the markets of the Middle East and Africa. It is interesting in this respect to notice the Chinese reaction to American efforts to increase their influence in the Asia-Pacific region, the American 'pivot to Asia'. The official reaction has been relatively muted but the media, both social and conventional, have been far more aggressive in its reaction to American efforts to 'interfere' in areas of prime interest to China. The growing rivalry between China and Japan on the issue of Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands, and between China and the Philippines on islands which were previously considered as useless pieces of rock, is linked in the Chinese mind to covert American backing to these claims. The visit of US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, described in some circles as her 'swan song', being her last visit as Secretary of State, has come in for a lot of negative comments in the Chinese media. It would be fair to say that, as China becomes more powerful economically, the reaction of the Chinese public will become vociferous and negative. This will also affect official Chinese position in the long run.

According to a leading publication, 'the lesson of history is that everybody loses if the world allows legitimate worries to get out of hand and is unable to accommodate the rise

of a new world power. More than 2,000 years ago, Greece was torn apart by Sparta's failure to manage the rise of Athens. A hundred years ago, Europe was torn apart by its failure to manage the rise of Germany and, as a result, we had to suffer two World Wars in the earlier part of the twentieth century. If the twenty-first century is to be more peaceful than the twentieth, America and China must learn to cooperate better.<sup>6</sup> I hope that wisdom and sagacity will goad the leaders of the present century to learn from the lessons of the past. History never before in history have countries wielded such destructive power as today's weaponry makes possible. This imposes tremendous responsibility for world leaders. I am optimistic enough to believe not just in their wisdom but also in the pluralistic ethos of modern states, whatever the nature of their political systems, which does not allow their leaders to employ unfettered power. Hopefully therefore, Zbigniew Brzezinski's prediction regarding the competitive nature of China-US relations will not deteriorate to a level that it begins to pose a threat to international peace and security.<sup>7</sup>

### **'Get Closer to China; Call OIC Meeting' Syndrome**

In times of difficulty, there is a tendency among leaders of sections of public opinion in Pakistan to ask the government of the day to either get closer to China (with which Pakistan is already very close) or to call a meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), as if this were a magic wand, by the waving of which all difficulties would disappear.

The perception of the Pakistani people about various countries tends to be coloured by emotionalism. In inter state relations, it is not emotions that count; what counts is the national interest of the state concerned. Pakistan is lucky that there are in fact some countries where this feeling of closeness and brotherhood at people-to-people level does prevail. As far as the Muslim states are concerned, there is of course the concept of the 'Ummah' (Islamic Brotherhood), which at a popular level evokes a lot of resonance.

I found that whenever Pakistan faced problems with India or the United States or when something occurred that particularly outraged the sentiments of the Muslims or perplexed them in any manner, there would frequently be calls voiced by different sections to further strengthen Pakistan's relationship with China or to call a meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (for the purpose of mobilizing the Ummah), as if these would provide ready answers or quick fixes. This was touching as long as it came from the man on the street. I was however often surprised when senior politicians made such suggestions. This could only be for two reasons. Firstly, because they could not offer any worthwhile suggestions, and secondly, and more cynically, because they just wanted to embarrass the government of the day, implying that if only the government became closer to China or mobilize the Ummah more effectively, problems would either disappear or be resolved according to the wishes of the Pakistanis or the aspirations of the Ummah.

During our time at the Foreign Office, whenever Pakistan's relations with the US were strained, the immediate advice that some people in the media and even the think tanks would give us would be to become closer to China. The apparent idea behind this proposal has always been that since China is an 'enduring all-weather friend, and is thus an alternative to the troublesome and overbearing Americans'.<sup>8</sup> In trying to respond to this suggestion, it is necessary to look at the various dimensions of Pakistan's relations with the People's Republic of China.

Generally speaking, there are four baskets in which one can place this relationship. Firstly, there is cooperation in the Strategic and Defence fields. This includes China's cooperation on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy as well as collaboration in developing and manufacturing weapons systems for the air force, navy, and the army. In fact the Chinese have provided considerable support for the consolidation of the Pakistani state. This is an area where relationship is very close indeed. The second basket refers to cooperation at the international fora where China supports Pakistan on issues of concern to it. Pakistan strongly reciprocates and supports China in countering the separatist movement in Xinjiang and extends fullest cooperation in this regard. It also supports China on other issues of interest including Taiwan and Tibet. Western commentators in particular feel that Pakistanis see China 'as a hedge against India, a rival to both nations'.<sup>9</sup> The third basket concerns trade and economic and commercial cooperation. Pakistan has signed a Free Trade Agreement with China; the bilateral trade is worth around ten billion dollars, and Pakistan's exports constitute less than three billion dollars out of this bilateral trade. This is an area where there is a need to promote further cooperation, particularly in the energy sector and infrastructure development. Despite the war and territorial disputes between the two countries, China's trade with India had expanded to about seventy billion dollars in 2010 and is expected to increase further. Pakistan has great economic potential and there have been long periods since 1947, when Pakistan's economy has actually grown faster than the Indian economy. It is, however, unfortunate that that due to mis governance the situation has been deteriorating. It is my firm conviction that with two or three years of good governance in Pakistan, its economy will expand quickly. As a result of the ground work that has been done in the area of economic cooperation between Pakistan and China, Pakistan can gain immensely by the progress taking place in China. The fourth basket is the political relationship. One highlight of this relationship has been the regular exchange of delegations and visits by the political leaders, officials, parliamentarians, scholars, and diplomats of the two countries. A tradition of close consultations between the two countries is also designed to exchange views on the emerging strategic and global issues.

Pakistan must however realize that China is a rising global power and is often referred to as an emerging superpower. It is important for Pakistan to realize that despite all the importance that China and Pakistan attach to their relationship, and despite the fact that they have many common interests regionally and globally, the downward economic slide as well as increase in violence and terrorism in the last three to four years has to be

arrested. If this is not done, Pakistan's international standing is bound to be effected negatively. It must also be realized that as China's economic and political power has grown it has acquired a strong interest in maintaining a robust relationship with the United States, Europe, and East Asia.

It is very important for China to maintain peaceful conditions in the Xinjiang province which has a sizable Muslim population. Xinjiang lies in the region bordering Pakistan, and shares strong historical, cultural, and religious connections. Therefore, China's interest is Pakistan's stability is very strong, and desires that Pakistan enhance its ability and capacity to deal with terrorist threats originating from militants groups particularly in FATA (Federally Administered Tribal Areas). According to some recent reports the local authorities in Xinjiang stated that the leader of the Uighur separatist group involved in a terrorist attack in Kashgarh, in which twenty people were killed, was trained in FATA. The Chinese Foreign Office has always been supportive of Pakistan and, even in this instance it tried to distant itself from these reports. It is however in Pakistan's own interests to take these reports seriously.

Xinjiang province covers one-sixth of the territory of China, and comprises a population of twenty million, half of which is Muslim. The Pakistan government has always been keen to address Chinese concerns in this matter. As good friends, however, they have raised the issue of terrorism in private discussions with Pakistani government officials.

China, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia are three countries for which Pakistanis harbour very strong feelings. In the case of Turkey, these feelings are widespread on both sides and are rooted in history. There is a special connection between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia since it contains two of Islam's holiest cities Mecca and Medina. Saudi Arabia has always helped Pakistan whenever required—whether it be in the immediate aftermath of nuclear tests or of the devastating earthquake of 2005 or the floods in 2010. Individual stories about how Pakistanis may have been received in these countries may vary from person to person but they are generally very positive. This, however, makes common Pakistanis feel that attitude of all the countries towards Pakistan in case of national crises must be judged as if these relationships were between individuals and not between states. Even in respect of China, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia, their reactions to various situations obviously cannot always be the same as that of Pakistan. I remember that it made some Pakistanis of a particular bent of mind feel very uneasy regarding a statement attributed to visiting Chinese President Jiang Zemin advising Pakistan to normalize relations with India. Similarly, some Pakistanis felt uncomfortable when China welcomed the grant of Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status by Pakistan to India. Turkey, China, and Saudi Arabia are not opposed to Pakistan's normalization of relations with India. At the common level, however, this was not easily understood and politicians who understood all this did not mind misleading the people because they had agendas of their own. It is not often realized among the masses that most countries conduct diplomacy in their own national interest and the world of diplomacy is dictated by considerations of realpolitik.

The OIC (Organization of Islamic Cooperation) is one of the largest inter governmental bodies, with a membership of fifty-seven states. The organization was established in Morocco at the time of the first summit in 1969 to discuss the Muslim response to arson committed at the Al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem. The OIC aims at promoting solidarity among Muslim states and addresses common interests and issues. It has established three high-level Standing Committees: the Standing Committee for Information and Cultural Affairs (COMIAC), Committee for Economic Cooperation (COMCES), and Committee for Scientific and Technological Cooperation (COMSTEC). These are chaired, respectively, by the President of Senegal and Prime Ministers of Turkey and Pakistan.

The OIC has not lived up to the expectations of the Muslim world, nor proved effective to implement the decisions taken at the appropriate fora. An example of this is the ‘Ten-year programme of action to meet the challenges facing the Muslim Ummah in the 21st Century’, which was adopted by the third extraordinary summit in Mecca. Pakistan with other leading Muslim countries, including the host, played an effective role in the finalization of the Mecca Declaration which talks about the challenges facing the Muslim world. It considered the issues of solidarity and joint Islamic action. ‘In the intellectual and political fields, there are major issues, such as establishing the values of moderation and tolerance, combating extremism, violence and terrorism, countering “Islamophobia”, achieving solidarity and cooperation among member states, conflict prevention, the question of Palestine, the rights of Muslim minorities and communities, and rejecting unilateral sanctions.’<sup>10</sup> This was a new vision for the Ummah, which the leaders of the OIC decided to adopt through a ten-year programme of action. It may be mentioned in this regard that Ummah is a word extensively used in the documents of the OIC as members of the worldwide community of Muslims. It is an Arabic word meaning ‘community’ and is used to express the idea that all Muslims are brothers and are a part of a unified Muslim world. Not much progress has however been achieved regarding the political issues—such as Palestine—and occupied Arab territories, conflict resolution among Muslim countries, development of socio-economic and scientific issues—calling upon Muslim countries to ensure that their contribution is at least 1 per cent of the GDP in such programmes. This is a glaring example of the inability of the OIC to achieve these objectives, though it must be stated that in countering prejudice or fear of Islam or the Muslims, particularly after 9/11 in the West, there has been considerable progress. Likewise, the peaceful rallies in various parts of the world against Danish cartoons have helped sensitize the Western opinion that ‘Islamophobia’ is a form of intolerance on the same lines as anti-Semitism or xenophobia generally.

In the early years of Islam with its fine example of tolerance and unity, the Ummah became a force for international peace and security. Disunity amongst the Muslim countries led to their decline and colonial domination. This compelled Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani (1838/39–97) to talk about pan-Islamism as a way of countering the trends which had led to colonial domination. His vision was based on the early glorious practices of

Islam. This concept of Ummah was further popularized by Allama Muhammad Iqbal in his inspirational poetry regarding the unity of the Ummah.

*Manf-e-at ek hai is qaum ki nuqsan bhi ek  
ek hi sab ka nabi deen bhi iman bhi ek  
haram-e-paak bhi Allah bhi Quran bhi ek  
kuch bari baat thi hote jo Musalman bhi ek*

(Your nation's weal, your nation's woe, In common you all share, Your Prophet and your creed the same, the same Truth you declare

And one Kaaba, one God, and one great Quran;  
Why can't the Muslims then unite and be one?)

Over the years, Pakistan has consistently cultivated relations with other Muslim countries. It has also extended unequivocal support to the Palestinian issue and has supported all Middle East peace efforts. Pakistan believes in promoting bilateral relations with the Muslim world and makes an effort not to take sides in disputes between them. Pakistan also hosted various OIC meetings in that period including the Conference of Foreign Ministers in May 2007 in Islamabad. The conference was termed as the session of peace, progress, and harmony. An inter-ministerial brainstorming session was held on the opening day of the conference on countering discrimination and intolerance against Muslims and defamation of Islam. What I am trying to stress here is that relations with the Muslim world during our tenure retained its warmth and vitality and Pakistan actively participated in OIC.

It is a measure of the strength of the failure of belonging to the Ummah that the nuclear tests conducted by Pakistan in May 1998 were generally welcomed by Muslim countries, even though most of them enjoy close economic, political, and trading links with India. Many people in the Muslim world felt a sense of pride that a fellow Muslim country, a member of Ummah, had become a nuclear power. At the same time, it has to be admitted that because of disunity and internal conflicts, the Islamic world is not as strong as it could have been, given their natural resources including oil, strategic locations, and with the presence of more than one and a half billion Muslims the world over.

What Pakistanis and commentators fail to recognize are the inherent limitations of an inter-governmental organization like OIC; this is accentuated by the absence of an effective mechanism within the organization to implement and enforce its decisions. There are differences between the important Muslim countries.

This was witnessed most dramatically during the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s and the invasion of Kuwait by Saddam Hussein in 1990. OIC has not managed to develop the way EU and other such organizations have. These organizations have enough presence to

influence economic cooperation, foreign policy positions and decisions. Moreover, they possess a powerful secretariat to enforce its decisions. Hence, OIC, while enjoying a significant position within the Muslim world, is able to only extend moral and political support to its member states. Without going into the reasons for this state of affairs, it is necessary to note here that because of disunity amongst member states, differences between various Muslim countries over issues such as the military presence of the United States in the Gulf, along with regional and nationalistic aspirations of some member states, although the OIC adopts strong resolutions, it unfortunately fails to effectively implement them.

## **RUSSIA**

It is needless to say that Pakistan and Russia have had a very difficult relationship in the past. The legacy of Pakistan's Cold War alliances and Pakistan's crucial role in the defeat of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan leading to its break-up, in the view of many analysts, at least in Pakistan, continues to cast a shadow over Pak-Russia relations.

To provide the reader with a sense of how bad the situation was at one time, it would be instructive to refer to the U-2 incident. During a visit to the US in July 1957, Prime Minister Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy informed President Eisenhower of Pakistan's agreement to the establishment of a secret intelligence base at Badaber near Peshawar for use of US aircraft. Ayub Khan, who was the Defence Minister at the time reportedly made this decision based on his assessment of Pakistan's security imperatives and the need to obtain US military and economic assistance including B-57 bombers. The base was used for aerial reconnaissance of the Soviet Union and enjoyed extra territorial rights which exempted it from jurisdiction of local laws. It was operated by 1,200 American military and technical personnel from the United States and no Pakistani was allowed access to it. Moscow was outraged when in May 1960, it shot down a high-altitude American U-2 spy plane which took off from Badaber and arrested its pilot Francis Gary Powers. Pakistan was warned 'not to play with fire', but Ayub Khan ignored the Russian warning and the agreement ultimately lapsed in 1968.

Not only was Pakistan a close ally of the United States, in its efforts to contain the former Soviet Union, it also took a major part in providing help to the Mujahideen who fought steadfastly against Russian invasion of Afghanistan and extracted major costs in blood and treasure. It is therefore no surprise that Russia also adopted an Indo-centric approach as a result of Pakistan's pro-Western tilt. Despite this tilt, however, Russia was not averse to providing economic and technical assistance to Pakistan in agriculture, flood prevention and control in the late 1950s. The high point of the relations between the two countries was the Tashkent Declaration following the Indo-Pakistan war of 1965. This provided a golden opportunity for Russia and Pakistan to rethink the future course of their relations. It must be understood that the attitudes in Russia and Pakistan towards each other began to

change after India and China fought a war with each other in 1962. This was followed by a massive supply of weapons by the United States to India. It was during this period that the Soviet Prime Minister Alexei Kosygin visited Pakistan in 1968 and offered to sell some weapons to Pakistan. This was followed by General Yahya Khan's visit to Moscow in 1969. This resulted in a deal for Pakistan to buy some helicopters from the USSR.

The late 1960s for this reason did provide a window, however limited, to Pakistan. It was during this period that the offer for gas and oil exploration was made a few years earlier and resulted in an agreement between Pakistan and Soviet Union for oil and gas exploration, when Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was Minister for Fuel, Power, and Natural Resources. The Soviet Union also set up a steel mill in Pakistan.

The sale of weapons to India by the United States, following the 1965 war between Pakistan and India upset Pakistan a great deal. Tensions increased between the two countries. It is largely this factor which provided an opportunity, however fleeting, to both Russia and Pakistan to change course. But this was not to be because Pakistan's ruling classes were far too pro-Western in their education and background and inclined against the USSR which was then the leader of the Communist world. This background may also help us understand why Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan preferred to visit the US despite an earlier invitation to visit Russia. It would be pertinent to mention that at that stage of our history even the popular sentiment, including that of the religious parties, largely went along the views of the ruling establishment. There were, of course, some voices from the relatively smaller sections of the left-wing opinion in Pakistan, whose voices were largely mirrored at that time effectively by *The Pakistan Times* and *Imroze*, the two influential newspapers of the day, and owned by Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din, one of the most important Opposition leaders then. It would be appropriate to say, that a large majority of the public opinion in the earlier days did not have a positive opinion about what was then described as 'Godless Communism' and its main protagonist, the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Union, realizing the characteristics of the internal polity of Pakistan, as well as its dependence on Western weapons and economic aid (which it was receiving on concessional terms) developed a special relationship with India. The Soviet Union became almost the sole weapon supplier to India which became a lucrative market for Russian armaments.

It was in this historical context, although of course much later, when I was Foreign Minister, that I made a tongue-in-cheek remark to President Vladimir Putin, when I received him on behalf of President Pervez Musharraf. He had been delayed by a traffic jam in New York for his meeting with Putin on the side lines of the UNGA session. Taking advantage of the time allowed before President Musharraf arrived, I asked him whether India had a veto power over Russian sale of weapons to Pakistan. President Putin's emphatic remark in New York on the occasion was that India did not have a veto over Russian sale of defence equipment to Pakistan. There is a background to this. Previously,

Russia not only had a monopoly on the Indian armament market, but India was perceived as an ally of the Soviet Union, despite India's pronounced non-alignment. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, India was quick to grasp the ground realities of the emerging international situation and began to seek closer relationship with the United States and with the West, generally. In the process, it also began to diversify its sources of defence procurement. In my interaction with the Russians, it became clear from their body language that they were not happy with the position that India was now adopting. They were, however, acutely conscious of the fact that India was a much bigger market than Pakistan for its weapons. The Russians did, however, sell helicopters to Pakistan for civilian purposes, and the Indians were not happy about it. They were aware that these could be converted for military use without much effort.

During the 1980s, Pakistan's relations with the Soviet Union deteriorated dramatically as a result of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. It is correct that Pakistan took an active role in organizing the Afghan Mujahideen with the help of the West, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar, and the Gulf States. China was also not happy with the Russian invasion of Afghanistan.

It would be pertinent to point out, that besides the US urging, Pakistan's establishment was anyway preconditioned to opposing the extension of Soviet power right up to Pakistan's borders. There is a lot of controversy today in Pakistan on its support to the Afghan Mujahideen. The disastrous consequences of this are visible now, and Pakistan paid a terrible price following the policy adopted then and after the 9/11 attacks in the US. Pakistan has suffered almost 50,000 casualties, both among innocent civilians and security forces. A large number of books have been written on the subject of terrorism following 9/11 and the role that Pakistan has played. I believe that the route of their policy can be traced much earlier, following the Soviet invasion in 1979 and Pakistan's decision to oppose this extension of Russian control in our immediate vicinity. I have said earlier that Pakistan's ruling classes were preconditioned to opposing this expansion of Russian influence, because most of Pakistan's middle classes, and not just the ruling establishment, had grown up reading in their history books that the Czarist Empire, and later on the Soviet Union, always desired to expand its influence to the warm waters of the Arabian Sea, blocked as it was in the North by the severity of the cold weather. The conflict between the two great rising empires of the time, Czarist Russia and the British Empire, came to be known as the Great Game. The British felt threatened by Russian advance towards their territories. India, as we all know was then regarded as the Jewel in the [British] Crown.

It was against this historical background that the Pakistani ruling classes reacted in the early 1980s. To this must be added that General Zia ul-Haq's desire was to earn legitimacy after his coup d'état followed by Mr Bhutto's hanging which rendered Zia an international pariah. Of course, there was no doubt regarding US intentions to settle scores in Afghanistan with former Soviet Union over Vietnam.

## **Pak-Russian Relations after 9/11**

The world they say changed after 9/11, and Pak-Russia relations were no exception to this change. As a result of various UN Resolutions against terrorism following 9/11, Pakistan also had to undergo fundamental changes. This opened the door to a new thaw in relations with Russia. Russia also realized the key role that Pakistan could play in Central Asia which is regarded as its backyard or its 'near abroad'. Furthermore, Russia, threatened by internal terrorism in Chechnya, Dagestan, and the Caucasus also found in its interest to support the emerging international consensus against terrorism. Thus, despite a close relationship with the United States, both Pakistan and Russia found it to their mutual advantage to normalize their relations. In the wake of the resistance by the Mujahideen in Afghanistan, Pakistan never wished to be confronted by a similar situation where at one time, 4.5 million Afghan refugees found shelter in Pakistan. At present also, about 2.5 to 3 million Afghan refugees reside in Pakistan, although, official figures show that they number about 1.5 million. This is due to the fact that a large number of Afghan refugees have managed to get Pakistani National Identification Cards (NIC) and even passports in connivance with low-level officials.

When I became Foreign Minister, our government realized that it was in our own interest to improve our relations with Russia. Pakistan and Russia were on the same page in their opposition to the US attack on Iraq. I remember, I interacted closely with the then Russian Foreign Minister Ivanov, German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, and French Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin, later on Prime Minister, who became some sort of a rock star at that time for his flair and good looks and passionate advocacy against the US invasion of Iraq. Pakistan later on also opposed the idea of an attack on Iran over its nuclear programme. I remember President Putin taking a keen interest in understanding our position on Iran's nuclear programme. He seemed very interested and indeed pleased by our posture on this as well as on the Iraq war. Pakistan's international stature was going up for these and other reasons and Russia took due notice of this.

President Pervez Musharraf visited Russia in 2002 in response to an invitation by President Putin. It was during this visit that the foundations were laid for the formation of institutionalized relations between Islamabad and Moscow. It was a result of this institutionalized structure that various Joint Working Groups (JWGs) started to meet. These included the Joint Working Group on Counterterrorism, Joint Working Group on Strategic Stability, and Inter Governmental Joint Commission. These JWGs have held regular meetings since their formation in 2002. There have been four rounds of discussions on counterterrorism between Pakistan and the Russian Federation.

The fourth meeting of the JWG on Counterterrorism was held in Moscow in 2009, while the fifth meeting was hosted recently by Pakistan in Islamabad on 27 January 2014. According to published reports, during the fifth meeting, the two sides shared views on regional and national threats and effective ways to counter them. The two sides also

discussed mutual cooperation in countering drug trafficking and money laundering as well as combating organized crime. Thus, we can say that there was a new phase of relations in the early years of the twenty-first century marked by high-level visits and cooperation on counterterrorism.

Pakistan's objectives of promoting relations with Russia and forging cooperation in various fields have remained largely unrealized. Opportunities for cooperation between the two countries exist in such sectors as oil and gas, expansion in Steel Mill capacity, satellite technology and even in the defence sector, but these have not been concretized while bilateral trade has also not realized its full potential.

We made conscious efforts to upgrade our relations with Russia. This resulted in the visit by Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov to Pakistan in April 2007 after a gap of thirty years. In the intervening period, relations between the two countries remained extremely tense due to the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 and Pakistan's decision to support the Afghan Mujahideen. This visit remains in my mind because most meetings held at this level largely deal with strategic issues as well as those concerning bilateral and international relations. As against this, a fair amount of time was spent at a luncheon meeting hosted in his honour at the President's Camp Office in Rawalpindi, on the technical details of Al-Khalid tank, which was Pakistan's main battle tank.

I was surprised by the amount of interest the Russian Prime Minister took in this tank and his desire to know how Al-Khalid operated in different terrains and climatic conditions. From the Pakistani side, Lt General Hamid Javed, Chief of Staff to the President, gave him a detailed and impressive briefing on the merits of the tank. General Hamid Javed had previously been Chairman of the Heavy Industries Complex at Taxila, where under his supervision Al-Khalid was developed and manufactured. He gave him details about the gun of the tank as well as the night vision equipment it employed, and its capability of firing anti-tank rounds and guided missiles. Since this conversation was so unusual, I was curious to find out the background of the Russian Prime Minister. I thought he either had some past connections with the KGB or with the Russian armed forces. On inquiry, I was informed that he was an engineer by training. It goes without saying that General Hamid Javed was very happy with the interest shown by the Russian Prime Minister regarding the Al-Khalid tank, as he had been involved in its development.

The Russian Prime Minister's visit generated a lot of enthusiasm at the time and we were planning for President Putin's visit to Pakistan. We recognized Russia's role and influence in maintaining international peace and security as a permanent member of the UN Security Council and as an important player in the end game in Afghanistan. I remember meeting the Russian Foreign Minister regularly at various international conferences, and he expressed his keen desire to take part in the expansion of the Steel Mills in Karachi. They were prepared to assist Pakistan in tripling the capacity of the Steel Mills. I remember that Russia was taking keen interest in this process along with some Arab partners.

Unfortunately, the entire process was thwarted as a result of the Supreme Court decision in the Steel Mills case causing disappointment for the Russians. After we left office, the Russian Foreign Affairs Minister Sergei Lavrov continued to show interest in the Steel Mills. During his visit to Pakistan at the beginning of October 2012, three Memoranda of Mutual Understanding were signed in the areas of metallurgy, energy production, and railroad transportation.

An interesting development took place in the Russia-Pakistan-India triangle. India successfully prevailed upon President Putin to postpone his visit to Pakistan scheduled for October 2012 until after India-Russia Summit meeting that was due in November 2012. Although the Russians were unhappy with the request, in view of the much larger Indian market for Russian armaments, they relented. There was, however, a compensation for Pakistan. Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov, who was to visit India on 4 October, landed in Pakistan instead.<sup>11</sup> Additionally, much to India's annoyance, Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov, postponed his planned visit to New Delhi in connection with a high-level defence meeting to receive the Chief of Army Staff, General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani in Moscow instead. This tango was noted with keen interest by observers of Pakistan-Russia-India relations.<sup>12</sup>

The trend of improved Russia-Pakistan relations was continued when Russia recently lifted an embargo in weapon sales to Pakistan. It began negotiating the sale of Mi-35 multi-role helicopters to Islamabad. According to an Indian analyst, the Defence Cooperation Agreement takes arms sale further. 'In recent years, Russia, China, and Pakistan have met several times to "coordinate" their strategies'.<sup>13</sup> Russia's cooperation with Pakistan to deal with the instability in Afghanistan is significant for several reasons. For one, the new partnership marks a shift away from their long-standing differences on Islamist militancy in that country. Importantly, their cooperation signals differences in the approach of India and Russia to tackling terrorism. Unlike India, which wants Pakistan isolated for its role in global terrorism, Russia appears to have come around to working with Islamabad on the issue.<sup>14</sup>

Thus, one can say that Pakistan and Russia have begun to feel the need to improve relations with each other. Pakistan feels that Russia will be an important player following the drawdown of US forces in 2014. Russia and Pakistan have a common interest in ensuring peace and stability in Afghanistan. Both countries are fearful of instability and insecurity in Afghanistan since it has a negative impact on both countries, although, for different reasons, Russia is acutely conscious of the impact of Afghan insecurity in the Central Asian states, which were previously a part of the Soviet Union, and also in Russia itself which has been a victim of terrorism. Pakistan is trying to develop more cordial relations with different ethnic groups residing in Afghanistan including with the former Northern Alliance and other Central Asian countries. Pakistan and Russia must coordinate

their policies to prevent the outbreak of another Afghan Civil War, following the US drawdown in 2014.

## **Events in the Crimea**

I will just make a brief reference to the events in the Crimea. The Crimean Peninsula is a major land mass located on the northern coast of the Black Sea. On the south is the Ukrainian mainland and on the west lies the Russian region of Kuban. Those of us who have read European history are aware of what came to be known as the 'Eastern Question' in the eighteenth century. The Eastern question largely related to the problems following the decline of the Ottoman Empire. In a nutshell, the desire of the Russians to station their fleet in the Black Sea caused a war between great powers of the day who opposed Russian ambitions. There were lots of twists and turns in the story, including a war that was fought between Russia and other great powers of the time: United Kingdom, France, and Austria, ostensibly in defence of the Ottoman Empire but largely to keep Russia out of the Black Sea.

The Crimea was originally wrested from the Ottomans by Catherine the Great of Russia in 1783. The Crimea, therefore, has a lot of resonance in Russian history. What we are concerned with however, is the possibility of a new Cold War breaking out. I hope that the situation does not deteriorate further. Pakistan took a decisive stand in favour of the West in the first Cold War, and while historians of the future may be in a position to better judge its long-term consequences for Pakistan, contemporary opinion in our country seems to trace the roots of many of our current problems to the position we took during the Cold War. One of the immediate consequences of an increase of tension between the West and Russia could be the closing of the Northern Distribution Network (NDN), for NATO's exit from Afghanistan during the drawdown currently under way, and its greater reliance on the route through Pakistan, at least in the next couple of years. Furthermore, the US has a deep interest that Afghanistan doesn't become another Iraq after the US withdrawal. Pakistan can contribute greatly in creating stability in Afghanistan, which is also in the Russian interest.

If we were a less sentimental nation, Russia should have loomed larger than it does on the Pakistani political horizon; it is in fact a near neighbour but most Pakistanis gleefully refer to Pakistan's role in the demise of the former Soviet Union. In fact, I remember mentioning to former German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, during our visit to Germany, that anecdotally a piece of the Berlin Wall adorns the office of the head of Pakistan's Intelligence. It has a plaque underneath it with the words: 'To the one who struck the first blow'. The plaque was presented by the German Intelligence Chief to his Pakistani counterpart. In the interest of historical accuracy it is necessary to point out that despite the anecdote narrated above, many sources say that it was actually presented to Colonel Sultan Amir Tarar, known as Colonel Imam, an officer of the Pakistan Army in charge of special operations in the Afghan Jihad by the Americans after the dissolution of the Soviet

Union.<sup>15</sup> (By some accounts by President H. W. Bush himself at the White House.) I reminded Chancellor Schröder of Pakistan's indirect contribution in unifying Germany by playing a role in the disintegration of the former Soviet Union. He acknowledged this with a smile. They say that the world changed after 9/11. For Pakistan, the world changed after the Russian invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. All our past alliances with the West — the Baghdad Pact, CENTO, and SEATO—were aimed at containing the former Soviet Union. Following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, Pakistan became the closest ally of the United States. The ISI acquired veto power of sorts on covert activities inside Afghanistan even though the Afghan Jihad was financed largely by the US and Saudi Arabia. While the United States may have been tempted to settle scores over Vietnam, Pakistan's ruling elite was preconditioned to stop Russian advances. It is, of course, not just by accident that General Zia ul-Haq, found Western support helpful in perpetuation of his power. Pakistan has made concerted efforts to normalize relations with Russia. The Russian Prime Minister visited Pakistan during our tenure after forty years.

The legacy of Pakistan's Cold War alliances and its crucial role in the defeat of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan ultimately leading to its break up continued to cast a shadow over Pak-Russia relations. We could, however, envision the beginnings of a new phase of relations. The early years of the twenty-first century was marked by high-level visits and cooperation on counterterrorism. Pakistan's objectives of promoting relations with Russia and forging cooperation in various fields have remained unrealized. Opportunities for cooperation between the two countries exist in such sectors as oil and gas, expansion in the Steel Mills capacity, satellite technology, and even in the defence sector, but they have not been concretized. Bilateral trade has also not realized its potential.

## **COMPLEX RELATIONS WITH SOME LEADING MUSLIM COUNTRIES AND CHALLENGE FOR PAKISTAN**

### **Turkish-Saudi-Iranian Relations**

Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Iran have a complex relationship in view of historical, cultural, and religious factors. Even the relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan is very complex and has been dealt with in a separate chapter. I will, however, make a brief reference to that relationship here because people-to-people relations are deep-rooted and thus impact government-to-government relations as well. It would be appropriate to make a reference here to the historical background of the relations between Turkey, Iran, and Saudi Arabia. It would be helpful to the reader in understanding the complex relationship between these countries. This has some bearing on the current tensions particularly between Saudi Arabia and Iran and the role of Turkey in some recent affairs in the Middle East, e.g., the Syrian and Yemen crises.

Pakistan should try not to be involved in their disputes or conflicts based on historical memory. As Foreign Minister of Pakistan, I attempted to conduct Pakistan's relations with these on a purely bilateral basis. The only role that I thought Pakistan could play was that of bringing them together, whenever that was possible. Pakistan cannot afford to let its foreign policy become a prisoner to their conflicts, bickering, and animosities that have their roots in the past.

The rise of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in the Arabian Peninsula coincided with the decline of the two greatest empires of their times—the Byzantine Empire (also known as the Eastern Roman Empire), and the Persian Empire. Emperor Heraclius defeated the Persians in Nineveh (now Northern Iraq) in ad 627 and set up the Persian Emperor Khusrau's palace in Ctesiphon, close to what later became the City of Baghdad. The Byzantines ousted the Persians from Egypt, Syria, Palestine, and Anatolia and made a triumphal re-entry into Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul) in ad 629.<sup>16</sup> The Arabian peninsula during the time of the Byzantine and Persian Empires was regarded as the backwaters and relatively unknown to those wielding power in Constantinople and Ctesiphon, the capitals of the two empires.

The Persian and Byzantine Empires had been at war with each other for a very long time and in the process had weakened themselves. One could say that in a sense a power vacuum had been created that was waiting to be filled. This power vacuum was undoubtedly filled. Within one hundred years of the Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) death, the then known civilized world, including its two greatest empires, the Byzantine and Persian Empires were within the fold of Islam!

Lesley Hazleton in her book, *The First Muslim—The Story of Muhammad* (PBUH), sums it up all beautifully:

Any such powerful vacuum begs to be filled, and for Arabia, newly united under the banner of Islam, the timing was perfect. If Arabia was all but *terra incognita* (unexplored territory) to the Byzantines and Persians, the reverse was palpably not so. Even before [Prophet] Muhammad (PBUH) was born, well-connected Meccan merchants had established roots in the lands and cities they traded with. They owned estates in Egypt, mansions in Damascus, farms in Palestine, date orchards in Iraq, and thus had a vested interest in these lands. The collapse of the existing political structure was practically an open invitation for a newly established power to enter and take over.

By the year 634, Arab forces would be at the gate of Damascus. In 636, they would decisively defeat Heraclius at Yarmuk, to the Southeast of the Sea of Galilee. In 638, they would deal a similar blow to the Persians at Qadisiya in Southern Iraq. One year later Omar would lead them into Jerusalem, and by the year 640, they would control both Egypt and Anatolia. Barely a century after the Muhammad's (PBUH) death, the Muslim empire was to encompass nearly all or both its Persian and Byzantine predecessors, and, far more, marching from Spain in the west to the borders of India in the east, with its capital with newly built city of Baghdad.<sup>17</sup>

Thus, we may be better able to understand how the Turks, who regard themselves as the successors of the Byzantine (having taken over its territories in ad 1453 after Mehmed the Conqueror defeated the last Byzantine Emperor Constantine XI) and Ottoman Empires, and the Iranians of the ancient Persian Empire, find it difficult to digest the rise of the

Arabian Peninsula in the seventh century ad after Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). There is, however, little that they can do, because, Muhammad (PBUH), the Holy Prophet of Islam upon whom the Quran was revealed, was born in the Arabian Peninsula. He inspired the people of the world without any regard to their historic, geographic, or ethnic differences. On the other hand, the Arabs have two historical memories. One is that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was from among them. Second is the fact that the first four Caliphs, the *Khulfa-i-Rashideen* (Rightly Guided Caliphs) were also from Arabia. They are considered as role models for Muslims throughout the Islamic world. The two early Muslim Empires, the Umayyad and the Abbasid, emerged from the clans of these four Caliphs.

The situation became even more complex because during the decline of the Umayyads and the Abbasids, their territories were absorbed into the Ottoman Empire. The Arabs consider the Turks as occupiers of their land. The Turks on their part find it difficult to forget that the Arabs supported the European colonial powers to win back their independence during the period of the Ottoman decline. It is a further issue that the old Ottoman territories were divided in a most cynical manner by the European colonial powers that replaced the Ottomans after the First World War. Many of the problems that we see today in the Middle East can be traced to the cynical manner in which these territories were carved into new nation states without any regard to ethnic, cultural, religious, or other relevant considerations.

In a nutshell the Indian Muslims, particularly North Indian Muslims (large proportions are now in Pakistan), shared old cultural connection with Iran and strong sentimental connection with the Ottoman Empire (this sentimental need became greater after the decline of the great Mughal Empire in India). The Ottoman Caliph or Sultan became a symbol of unity for the Muslims of the world.

After the decline of the Ottoman Empire and the rise of the Saudi Kingdom in the Arabian Peninsula, a lot of affection was now centred on the person of the King who, particularly among the Sunnis, was held in high veneration as the guardians of the two holiest sites in the world of Islam. The first is the *Masjid Al-Haraam* in Mecca, inside which the Holy Kaaba, the most sacred place for Muslims, is situated. Muslims have to pray facing the Kaaba wherever they may be living in the world. The other site is the *Masjid-e-Nabwi* (the mosque of the Prophet) in Medina. This is the first mosque established by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) after his *Hijrat* (migration) to Medina.

Many in the outside world may find this difficult to understand but the Muslims of South Asia, now divided between Pakistan, Bangladesh, and India, have been deeply imbued by pan-Islamist feelings. It is only that they are more openly expressed in Pakistan after 1947.

The South Asian Muslims including those living in Pakistan have a distinctive history of their own. The overwhelming majority of the people here believe in Sufi Islam (based on peace and brotherhood), which, in the minds of the believers among South Asian

Muslims, is in perfect harmony with core Islamic beliefs of humanity, peace, purity, obedience, and submission to the Will of Allah. There are also large numbers belonging to the Deobandi school of thought, as well as the Ahl al-Hadith. My paternal family belongs to the latter school of thought. Then there are of course the Ahl-e Tasheeh (Shias or Shiites). Unfortunately, for reasons that cannot be discussed here at length, sectarian feelings were fanned, largely to fulfil the political and economic needs of the Mullahs, who gained strength following the oil wealth in the Gulf. The Iranian Islamic revolution, led by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini stimulated the conflict between the Saudis and the Iranians, exacerbating the underlying, and in some cases, dormant tensions.

On Afghanistan, I would like to say that despite all the differences that the two governments have had ever since Pakistan became independent in 1947, there is again much more that unites the people of the two countries than divides them—despite the issue of Pashtunistan. How else would one explain the phenomenon that, soon after Pakistan became independent, at the level of the people at least, there was a feeling that Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran, and the three contiguous Muslim countries should somehow unite in a confederation? The more ambitious, perhaps the more sentimental ones also wanted to include Turkey as well. This should not surprise anyone as I have made brief references to this phenomenon of Pan-Islamism among the people of the region elsewhere in the book. In this connection the role of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and Allama Iqbal has been discussed and the concept of the Ummah has been referred to. Serious efforts were made at government level for Pak-Afghan confederation even during Prince Muhammad Daoud Khan's Prime Ministership, regarded by many as anti-Pakistan for his backing of the Pashtunistan stunt. Aslam Khattak, a prominent Pakistani politician, who at one time was Pakistan's Ambassador to Afghanistan, refers to these efforts in his book *A Pathan Odyssey*. Despite all the differences that we see being played out in the open between the Shias and the Sunnis in Iraq and Syria and the rise of the 'Islamic State', it would be apt to conclude this by quoting an eminent scholar, who said,

... But whether sacredness inheres in the Prophet's blood family, as the Shias believe, or in the community as a whole, as Sunnis believe, nobody in the West should forget that what unites the two main branches of Islam is far greater than what divides them, and that the vast majority of all Muslims still cherish the ideal of unity preached by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) himself—an ideal the more deeply held for being so deeply broken.<sup>18</sup>

Suffice it to say that Turkey, as the former colonial power in the area, had a difficult relationship with many Arab countries. Iran and Saudi Arabia have had differences with each other and not simply on a sectarian basis. Pakistan has had exceptionally close relationship with all these three countries for various historical, cultural, and religious reasons, which, ironically, divide the three countries mentioned. The Foreign Office has pursued a policy since Independence enabling Pakistan to forge a close relationship with all three countries with a varying amount of success at different periods.

During my tenure, the situation was becoming even more complicated in view of the focus on Iran's nuclear programme and, what some Arab countries regarded as Iran's efforts to secure a toehold in the Arab World, by posing as the champion of the Palestinians, as well as by giving support to Hamas in Gaza, to Hezbollah in Lebanon, to various groups in Iraq and to Shiite Islam generally. I have already in the chapter on my family described the connections and background of my grandfather, the late Maulana Abdul Qadir Kasuri, who at one time was one of the top leaders of the Ahl al-Hadith in the subcontinent (and considered very close to the version of Islam in Saudi Arabia), on the basis of which he had been offered a cabinet slot by the founder of the Saudi dynasty, King Abdul Aziz ibn Saud. At the same time, he was also one of the top leaders of the Khilafat Movement in India, which sought to support Turkey in its hour of defeat. My grandfather Maulana Abdul Qadir Kasuri wanted my father to join the Turkish army to help strengthen Turkey, which was facing difficulties from Western powers in the earlier part of the twentieth century. He had already encouraged my father's older brother to go to the Court of Ameer Habibullah in Kabul after completing his Tripos at Cambridge (instead of joining the Indian Civil Service as was common for people of this background then), in order to convince the Afghan Ameer to attack British India. What was true of my paternal family's passion for both Saudi Arabia, as the land of the Prophet, and for Turkey's Caliphate, as symbolizing the unity of the Ummah at that time, was also true of other Muslims throughout South Asia. In fact, the feeling for Turkey and the Khilafat Movement was so strong that even Mahatma Gandhi supported the Khilafat Movement as a means of getting closer to the Indian Muslims so as to bring Muslims and Hindus together to struggle jointly against British colonial rule.

I was thus sensitized to this complex relationship much before I assumed office. Strong sentiments regarding relationship with Turkey and the Arabian Peninsula, as also of pan-Islamism, were reflective of the feelings of the Muslims of the subcontinent of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Pakistanis thus felt strong emotional bonds with all three countries. For all these and other reasons, I was convinced that, while we would like to forge the closest of relationships with all the three countries, we ought not to allow Pakistan to get dragged into their animosities; the only role that we could play was to try and reduce their differences. Although, at one time or another, depending on the situation as well as those who held office at any given time, it might look that Pakistan was bending in one direction (the pendulum always swung back). It is, therefore, by and large correct to say that, notwithstanding the unfortunate internal rifts in the Islamic world, Pakistan has managed to build and maintain robust ties with all these states by pursuing a balanced and a nuanced approach, prudently staying clear of the various disputes and rivalries between them. At least, I tried to do that, as will become clear to those who have followed my views on Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline or on the issue of a possible attack on Iran over the nuclear issue. At the same time, I developed excellent relations with the Saudi and Turkish leadership.

## **Saudi Arabia: A Reliable and Trusted Friend**

The Saudi King, as the custodian of the *Haramain Sharifain* (Mecca and Medina), enjoys a special status among Muslims all over the world (particularly among the Sunnis). As regards Pakistan, Saudi Arabia has been a trusted and reliable friend, and has stood by Pakistan on all important international issues. It has consistently supported Pakistan's position on Kashmir on all international fora, or, whenever the Pakistani nation faced a crisis, be it the 1965 or 1971 wars, support for the Afghan Jihad following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, or the difficult times that followed Pakistan's nuclear tests. Every time Pakistan was faced with a natural calamity, be it earthquake or floods, Saudi Arabia's support was unflinching.

The efforts of Shah Faisal and Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto to unify most of the Third World countries under the umbrella of the Organization of Islamic Conference (now Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)) saw the Pak-Saudi relationship strengthen even further with a spree of cities and monuments being named after the Saudi King. An example of this is the Faisal Mosque, one of the largest in the world. The name of Lyallpur was changed to Faisalabad in 1977. It is Pakistan's third-largest city now. Saudi-Pak relations remained close during the Afghan war in the 1980s, which saw a convergence of strategic interests in Afghanistan. Pakistan also lent its wholehearted support to Saudi Arabia in the Persian Gulf War (when Saddam Hussein was also threatening Saudi Arabia) in 1990–91. Pakistani soldiers were sent in 1979, to protect the Holy Kaaba, which had been besieged by radicals. Importantly, however, all such support was extended by Pakistan because of a convergence of interests between the two states on these issues.

It should thus be clear that the relationship with Saudi Arabia is exceptionally close, and we at the Foreign Office paid special attention to it. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, have over the years developed extensive political, strategic, and commercial relations. Saudi Arabia and Pakistan are also leading members of the OIC. Pakistan maintained close military ties with Saudi Arabia in the 1970s and 1980s, when nearly 15,000 Pakistani soldiers were stationed in Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia is also a large source of petroleum supply for Pakistan and in the recent years the two countries have developed cooperation in trade, education, and agriculture. Saudi Arabia also supports Free Trade Area Agreement (FTA) between Pakistan and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). There were close consultations over international and regional issues. It also hosts approximately 1.5 to 2 million Pakistanis in the Kingdom who send a large amount of foreign exchange to Pakistan as home remittance. Cooperation and partnership between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, has not been restricted to military and economic spheres.

I always found King Abdullah to be a very affectionate man. He was a true friend of Pakistan and showed a lot of fondness whenever I met him. He and the Saudi Foreign Minister had obviously been briefed about my family's background. It was because of this that Prince Saud bin Faisal, during one of our meetings, light-heartedly remarked to me

that he is going to tell the Americans to stop chasing him for his religious beliefs and ‘instead chase the Foreign Minister of Pakistan’. It may be pertinent to mention that, at that time, the increasing Saudi/Wahabi influence and their role in the funding of madrasahs in Pakistan and elsewhere in the Muslim world was under great scrutiny because the Western media was holding the madrasah mindset responsible for increasing militancy all over the Islamic world.

I had an unforgettable experience when I visited Saudi Arabia with President Pervez Musharraf in March 2004. As a mark of special favour, the doors of the *Khana-e-Kaaba* are opened for visiting heads of state and other important dignitaries from the Muslim world. It may be useful to explain to those who are not Muslims that the Kaaba is a simple cuboid structure located within the most sacred mosque in the Islamic world, the *Masjid Al-Haraam*, and this is the most sacred location in the world. It is considered a matter of great fortune for a Muslim to be allowed into the Kaaba.

The doors of the *Khana-e-Kaaba* have been opened in the past (although very rarely) for other visiting heads of state of Pakistan. On this occasion, however, something completely extraordinary and unexpected happened. After we had finished with our *nawafil* (supplementary prayers) inside the *Khana-e-Kaaba* and were preparing to go out into the courtyard of the *Haram Shareef* (Grand Mosque), our escort directed us towards a spiral staircase that went up to the roof of the Kaaba. It took us some time to grasp that he was actually offering to take us to the roof of the Kaaba, something which we could never have expected. As we went on to the roof, the spectacle from up there was quite extraordinary. People were bowing towards it from all directions! We hastily offered our *nawafil* since our escort seemed to be in a great hurry. We were later informed that this was a very special and rare gesture, indeed, by King Abdullah, to indicate that he attached special importance to Saudi Arabia’s relationship with Pakistan. Pakistani newspapers continued to publish stories regarding this event for many days.

In view of its special relationship with Pakistan, Saudi Arabia has even played a mediating role in Pakistan’s internal politics, between mutually antagonistic political actors. It was for this reason that Ambassador Riaz-ul-Khateeb of Saudi Arabia tried to mediate between Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) leadership during the political crisis at that time (following allegations of rigging during the 1977 elections and PNA’s decision to boycott it). It was also for similar reasons that Mian Nawaz Sharif was provided with refuge after his government was removed by the then Chief of Army Staff, General Pervez Musharraf.

The post-9/11 world order has brought the two states even closer, as both found it in their national interest to suppress militancy in Afghanistan by allying with the United States. This opened a new chapter in the Pak-Saudi relationship, resulting in greater economic support as well as provision of oil on favourable terms. The Saudis also helped in this manner when Pakistan was faced with sanctions after the nuclear explosions in Chagai in

1998. Awarding King Abdullah the highest civilian award of Pakistan in 2004 was indicative of the close relationship between the two states.

It was as a mark of this special relationship with Saudi Arabia, that its Ambassador in Islamabad, Ali Awadh Al-Aseeri would come to my office frequently before Friday prayers. After the prayers at the Foreign Office mosque, we would walk back together to my office and have informal conversations on issues of interest to both countries.

The two governments faced quite a few difficult situations during his tenure. I remember Ambassador Aseeri approaching me in the autumn of 2005 to inform me that former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's son Hassan Nawaz was suffering from a very serious and debilitating disease, which required immediate treatment abroad. He asked me to convey the request of the Saudi Government to President Musharraf that, as a special relaxation in the terms of the agreement between President Musharraf, the Saudi government and former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, Nawaz Sharif should be allowed to proceed to the UK with his son and other family members, so that Hassan Nawaz could get the necessary treatment. Ambassador Aseeri asked me to assure the President that Nawaz Sharif would go for a brief period to the UK for the treatment of his son, and would not involve himself in politics while he was there. He also informed me that Mian Nawaz Sharif would soon return to Saudi Arabia.

I conveyed the message to President Musharraf, adding that other sources had also confirmed to me that Nawaz Sharif's son was very sick and needed medical treatment. I suggested that the President agree to the request of the Saudi government on humanitarian grounds. I told him rather emotionally that we all have children and family and, therefore, understood the plight of one whose child required immediate medical treatment. Musharraf promised to look into the matter. Shortly after, Nawaz Sharif was allowed to take his son from Saudi Arabia to London. We were all, however, very surprised when Nawaz Sharif attacked the government in his first public meeting almost immediately after his arrival in London on 30 January 2006. This was at total variance with what the Saudi Ambassador had assured the Pakistani government. I am certain that the Ambassador himself was embarrassed.

On 10 September 2007, Mian Nawaz Sharif returned from exile in the UK to Islamabad. He was almost immediately deported to Jeddah. Two days earlier, in an unprecedented joint press conference in Islamabad, Saad Hariri, the Lebanese politician (who later on became Prime Minister of Lebanon, and is the son of the late Rafic Hariri, who was also Prime Minister) and the Saudi Intelligence Chief Prince Muqrin bin Abdulaziz (now Crown Prince), disclosed that Nawaz Sharif had indeed gone in exile for ten years as a result of an agreement between Mian Nawaz Sharif and the governments of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

A difficult situation was to arise when Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto decided to come back to Pakistan before the elections. President Musharraf tried to explain to the Saudi

government that she did so against his express advice and against the terms of the agreement between the two. The Saudis, however, felt that, after Benazir Bhutto's arrival in Pakistan to take part in the election campaign, they could not keep Mian Nawaz Sharif away in Saudi Arabia. There was little doubt in their mind that this would put Mian Nawaz Sharif at a disadvantage. It was no secret that the Saudi government did not feel particularly comfortable with the PPP. The Saudi Ambassador asked me to visit Saudi Arabia urgently to talk to my counterpart Prince Saud Al-Faisal in this connection. He left me in no doubt that the Saudi government was under immense pressure from PML-N supporters to allow Mian Nawaz Sharif to return to Pakistan. The ambassador told me that Nawaz Sharif had given assurance that if he were allowed to go back to Pakistan he would desist from attacking President Musharraf. In any event the Saudis felt (as the Ambassador informed me) that they would find it politically impossible to prevent Mian Nawaz Sharif from returning to Pakistan after Benazir Bhutto had done so, since that would deprive the PML-N of a level playing field. I could understand the dilemma of the Saudi government and advised President Pervez Musharraf that he should allow Mian Nawaz Sharif to come back. Even on earlier occasions, I had told him that in view of the government's performance, his own stock and that of the government was high with the people (this was before the Lawyers' Movement was launched), and that he could take the political risk of letting both of them come back to Pakistan before the election. In any case, I did understand the Saudi dilemma and the ambassador's insistence that Mian Nawaz Sharif be allowed back after Benazir Bhutto's arrival.

I found the President hesitant in even agreeing to meet the Saudi Ambassador, let alone accept his advice, conveyed through me, to let Mian Nawaz Sharif return. One day, Ambassador Aseeri told me rather enthusiastically that President Pervez Musharraf was going to Saudi Arabia on the invitation of the Saudi King and that I was going to accompany him to discuss this matter with the Saudi government. The President did go but I was not included in his delegation. He was accompanied, I believe, only by his Military Secretary. This must have been the only occasion when I did not accompany President Musharraf on his visits to Saudi Arabia.

Recently, questions have been raised over Saudi Arabia's influence in Pakistan's shift in policy in Syria regarding the Assad regime, and also about Pakistan being entangled in the Saudi-Iran turf war. The Pakistani Foreign Office continues to be dismissive about such accusations. Pakistan must stay the course and the only role it can play is to try and bridge differences between the two countries. I am sure Saudi Arabia understands the negative domestic fallout in terms of increased sectarian tensions, if Pakistan were seen to be openly siding with one side in the Syrian Civil War. These reports of a major change in Pakistan's stance from Syria seem to be slowly losing steam. I know this is difficult for any government in Pakistan but as I mention elsewhere in the book (in the section titled 'The Palestine Initiative' in the next chapter) that we were able to do this during our tenure.

I would like to conclude by saying, that Saudi Arabia enjoys the unique privilege of having great acceptability not only among successive governments but also overwhelming support among the general masses in Pakistan.

## **THE GULF REGION**

Similarly, we continued to enjoy friendly relations with the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, and Bahrain. In the context of the UAE, which came into being after decolonization in 1971, I would like to mention that the founding father of the UAE, Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahyan, earned a special place in the hearts of Pakistanis. He was a frequent visitor to Pakistan and supported Pakistan on all major international issues. A large number of Pakistanis went to the UAE to work in various capacities and had played a major role in banking, industry, construction, and development at various levels.

I attended his funeral along with President Musharraf, where a large number of heads of Muslim states were present. UAE has been a close development partner of Pakistan. There is also a close military and intelligence cooperation between the two countries and Pakistan helped train the UAE armed forces.

Pakistani manpower played an important role in the development of Qatar. Over a period of time, Qatar started playing an important role in regional politics. Progress has been made in leaps and bounds in the areas of education and media development. During one of my visits, I reminded the Emir of Qatar Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, that although Pakistani manpower had played a major role in the earlier days of Qatar's development, recently we had noticed a decline in the number of Pakistani workers in Qatar. I solicited his help in the matter and he promised to take necessary measures. The number of Pakistani workers in Qatar has gone up. The wife of the Emir of Qatar, Shiekha Mozah bint Nasser Al-Missned, was among the earliest women in the Gulf to play an important role in women's education and economic development. Qatar has been able to attract some of the top universities to the Emirates.

Kuwait, Oman, and Bahrain play host to a very large number of Pakistani expatriates who work in different areas including banking, medicine, engineering and other fields requiring skilled and unskilled manpower. We also had helped train some of the defence forces in the area. We initiated discussion with the GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) on Free Trade Agreement which we had hoped would be finalized soon.<sup>19</sup>

## **TURKEY: SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH PAKISTAN**

Pakistan and Turkey have strong emotional bonds, based on religion and culture. After the Muslim rule in India ended, with the collapse of the great Mughal Empire (1526–1857) following the advent of the British in India, Muslims in this part of the world, then known as Muslims of South Asia, or Indian Muslims, looked towards the Ottoman Caliph as a

symbol of pan-Islamic unity. It was in this backdrop that when, during the First World War, a danger to the very existence of the Ottoman Empire arose, there was an unprecedented wave of sympathy and concern among the Muslims of India. The Khilafat Movement galvanized Muslims throughout South Asia. My own grandfather, the late Maulana Abdul Qadir Kasuri, as a leader of the Congress Party and of the Khilafat Movement, took an active role in this Movement. The Ali brothers (Maulana Muhammad Ali and Maulana Shaukat Ali) strove to unify Muslim sentiment against the efforts of the Allies to dismantle the Ottoman Empire. The sentiment was so strong that even Mahatma Gandhi thought it politically useful to take an active part in this movement. He thought that he could, in this manner, unify Muslims and Hindus in his struggle against British imperial rule in India. The depth of the sentiment to help Turkey can be gauged by the fact that women contributed even their jewellery to help their Turkish brothers in distress. This had never happened before on such a scale as, traditionally, jewellery was regarded as insurance against a rainy day.

No wonder that, when I visited Turkey as Foreign Minister, I was told with great emotion by my then Turkish counterpart Abdullah Gul (until recently President of Turkey) that the memory of the Khilafat Movement still remains with the Turks. Some of the jewellery donated by the Muslim women of South Asia went into the capital to set up one of Turkey's largest banks, besides the purposes for which it had been originally donated.

It is important to notice that Turkey, being itself a former colonial power, was not popular in many Arab Muslim countries. Pakistan, however, shared no such prejudice against Turkey and had strong fraternal ties with it. Turkey influenced Pakistan to join the Western military alliances immediately after independence. It was also Pakistan's partner in American-led regional alliances, such as the Baghdad Pact and CENTO. Along with Iran, both countries formed the Regional Cooperation for Development (RCD), now the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), which also incorporates Azerbaijan and the Central Asian Republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan. The peoples and governments of Pakistan and Turkey harbour feelings of affection for each other. Despite this, neither the ECO nor its precursor, the RCD has lived up to its promise.

During our tenure, we attempted to further strengthen this relationship through regular high-level visits and consultations. My personal relationship with the Foreign Minister of Turkey, Abdullah Gul, was warm and friendly. I was very pleased when he was elevated to the Presidency of the Turkish Republic. We were always impressed by Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan (now President). Turkey has made tremendous progress under the new government. I remember once commenting to President (then Foreign Minister) Abdullah Gul that, despite the efforts that Turkey was making to become a member of the European Union, I was doubtful that it would happen in the foreseeable future because it was a Muslim Country. I was struck by his reply. He smiled and said to me that all the efforts that I was referring to that Turkey was making to get into the EU, had already enabled it to

upgrade its systems, its institutions, and its governance. Once Turkey achieves that level of progress, it would matter little whether it actually does become a part of the European Union or not. And Turkey seems to have achieved the desired goals in many spheres.

The post 9/11 War on Terror further brought our two states together, with Turkey abiding by its NATO obligations and Pakistan supporting the NATO offensive in Afghanistan. One of the most important developments during this period was the initiation of regular trilateral meetings between Turkey, Afghanistan, and Pakistan on the issue of peace in Afghanistan and on other matters of mutual interest. There was a particular background to this development. Prior to 9/11, Pakistan had supported the Taliban government in Kabul, while the Northern Alliance, composed largely of non-Pashtun ethnic groups, such as the Tajiks, Uzbeks, and the Hazaras, were considered close to Turkey. Abdul Rasheed Dostum, a leading Uzbek warlord of the Northern Alliance, had in fact been provided refuge in Turkey. We therefore thought that Turkey could be a good interlocutor, trusted as it was both by the Northern Alliance as well as by Pakistan, and felt that Turkey's role would become particularly important as the endgame in Afghanistan reached its conclusion. Turkey, like Pakistan, had been a close ally of the West during the Cold War and in later years; as such, we thought that even the US would feel comfortable dealing with Turkey. We felt that a dialogue between the Afghan government, the Taliban, and the Americans was very desirable and that it could take place in Turkey. This is not the place to go into later developments on this issue. I have, however, thought it appropriate to give the basic reasons why we felt that Turkey could play an important role in this respect. I am glad that the Trilateral Dialogue was institutionalized during our tenure and that the current government continues to give importance to this Dialogue. These meetings have continued with regularity since we left office.

It may seem surprising to some Europeans to observe how Turkey's Islamic identity is reasserting itself today. I see in this a continuing struggle for the soul of Turkey, a struggle that bears some similarity to that in Pakistan. Kamal Ataturk's vision of a modern Turkey was a great inspiration for Pakistan's founder Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

The rise to power of Tayyip Erdogan's Justice and Development Party (AKP) has led to a new era of profound Pak-Turk friendship. President Musharraf in 2004 became the first Pakistani leader ever to address the Turkish Parliament, opening avenues for further partnership and strengthening of existing ties. This culminated in more trade with Turkey and greater Turkish investment.

Another symbolic gesture reinforcing the relationship between the two states is the naming of roads over the respective founding fathers of Pakistan and Turkey in their corresponding cities. There has also been an increasing trend in student exchange programmes between the two states. Of late, Turkish plays are being broadcast on many entertainment channels in Pakistan (besides other countries as well) leading to further cultural fusion. Sufi music, which Turkey relates with, is already widely popular in and

indigenous to Pakistan. Pakistan-Turkey ties have deepened enormously under Prime Minister Erdogan's (now President) rule. However, he is facing imminent threats from the Gülen Movement led by Fethullah Gülen. Pakistan has an abiding interest in a stable and strong Turkey and hopes that the turmoil that we have recently witnessed will not stand in the way of Turkish peace, prosperity, and development.

## **IRAN: OLD CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL BONDS**

Pakistan-Iran connections go back to pre-Islamic times. Both regions have had strong influences on each other in the form of language, literature, art, and architecture. Persian was the court language of the subcontinent for centuries, and not just under the Mughals. Pakistan and Iran also enjoy deep cultural and linguistic ties. Allama Iqbal, the national poet of Pakistan, is also Iran's national poet. He penned part of his poetry in Farsi, the national language of Iran, which is one of the languages that has influenced Urdu, the national language of Pakistan. The script of both languages is in fact the same. Today, Iran has twelve cultural centres in Pakistan run by the Iranian government and Persian is taught in many Pakistani schools. Much of the Mughal architecture on display in various cities, such as Lahore, has also been influenced by aesthetic ideas originating in Persia. A great number of Shiite Muslims in Pakistan visit the Holy Shrines in Iran, and aspire to pursue even better relations with Tehran.

It was thus no wonder that the first Head of State to pay a state visit to Pakistan in March 1950 was the then young and dashing Shah of Iran, Muhammad Raza Shah Pahlavi. The city of Lahore, where I was born, was adorned as it has never since been; huge crowds of enthusiastic Pakistanis congregated to welcome the Shah. The Shah turned out to be a true friend of Pakistan and, during Pakistan's wars with India he was known to have extended help. Many Pakistanis were therefore at a loss to understand the implications for Pakistan of his overthrow following the Islamic revolution.

In my thirties in early 1979, I accompanied Air Marshal Asghar Khan, who had been invited by the Shah of Iran, after Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's ouster following the PNA (Pakistan National Alliance) campaign protesting against the rigging during 1977 elections. At the time, there was a general feeling that Air Marshal Asghar Khan, who had emerged as the most popular leader during the PNA campaign, would be the next Prime Minister of Pakistan.

During our meeting, I was amazed at the Shah's deep knowledge in which he gave us a *tour d'horizon* of international affairs, during our three-hour meeting with him, which ranged from the situation in Angola and Mozambique, in the news at that time, to Afghanistan, then not in the headlines. No less amazing was his equal ignorance of the situation right under his very nose in Iran, when even a visitor like myself could gather in the lobby of the Intercontinental Hotel in Tehran that the things in Iran were fairly unstable.

After the Shah fell from power, there was uncertainty in Pakistan about the attitude of the new dispensation under Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini towards Pakistan. Both countries realized that, in view of many historical and cultural connections between them, they needed to have close bilateral relations.

The Iranian President Seyed Mohammad Khatami paid a visit to Pakistan in December 2002, where he was warmly received. The President of Iran was a scholarly man and it was a pleasure talking to him. During his stay at one of the public gatherings, he said that the world was now tired of terrorism, and the Islamic World was calling for mutual dialogue instead of a clash of civilizations.<sup>20</sup>

It was at this time that we started talking seriously about the Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline. I met Iranian Foreign Minister, Dr Seyed Kamal Kharazi, in December 2002 on the sidelines of the Bonn Conference on Afghanistan. Pakistan with its fast-growing population is energy deficient and it seemed to us that the Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline, besides meeting the ever-growing energy needs of the subcontinent, would also have great geostrategic significance. During this period, there were many visits to and from Iran on the issue of the gas pipeline and a lot of progress was made on this proposed project. During my visit to Iran in August 2004, we made 'substantial progress'<sup>21</sup> in my meetings with Foreign Minister Dr Seyed Kamal Kharazi. I also met with President Khatami, former President Hashmi Rafsanjani, and Supreme National Security Council Secretary Hassan Rouhani, who is now the President of Iran. All of them emphasized the need for strengthening Iran-Pakistan relations and pursuing the Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline project.

Luckily, later, Mani Shankar Aiyar, who has been a friend since the 1960s, when both of us were students at Trinity Hall, Cambridge, became India's Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas in early 2004 and retained that office for almost two years. Mani agreed with me regarding the importance of the pipeline. Both of us also felt that it would help the peace process between the two countries which had started in earnest, after Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's visit to Islamabad in January 2004. The Congress Party, of which Mani is a member, won the elections a few months later. However, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, under pressure from the US, became less enthusiastic on the pipeline issue. Mani is very strong-willed and I think he did not like the change in the stance of Manmohan Singh on this issue. On one occasion I emphasized upon Mani to try and convince his government of the strategic importance of the pipeline and its value to the Pakistan-India peace process. Sometimes later, I read in the newspapers that he had issued a very strong statement in favour of the Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline. The portfolio of the Ministry of Petroleum was soon taken away from him and he was given a relatively less important cabinet slot. On this occasion, as on others, I think he paid a political price for standing by his convictions.

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad took over as President of Iran in August 2005. He was perceived as a hardliner but he too was totally convinced of the need for this pipeline. It was during this time that final details regarding pipeline, including the price that was linked to Japanese Crude Cocktail benchmark, were finalized. The price we agreed on then was lower than what was later on agreed upon by the PPP government.

We had made so much progress that in my visit to Tehran in December 2006 for a bilateral meeting with my Iranian counterpart, Manouchehr Mottaki, I was told that President Ahmadinejad would like to meet with me in Kermanshah. This was not routine since I had gone for a bilateral meeting with my counterpart and would call on the President if he was present in Tehran. I was, however, pleasantly surprised when I was told that the President will send a special aircraft to fetch me to Kermanshah for the meeting. During the meeting, President Ahmadinejad informed me that he wanted to specially tell me, in view of the interest that I had taken in the project, that he was soon going to invite President Musharraf and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to Tehran to finalize the project since all the details had been completed. Unfortunately, for this project as for the Pak-India peace process as well, soon afterwards there was an agitation following the removal of Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry and the country's political situation deteriorated. For this reason, that meeting never took place. Later, India changed its stance. It was widely believed that this was under US pressure and in lieu of the Indo-US nuclear agreement.

To complete this story of the pipeline, believe it or not, President Asif Ali Zardari, after full five-year tenure, decided to sign the agreement on this project almost in the last days of his Presidency.

He perhaps wanted his successor to handle the US pressure. Let us hope that the relationship between the West and Iran improves and the two sides are able to reach an agreement on the Iran nuclear issue. This will hopefully help finalize this project which has been hanging in the air for a long time.

Pakistan's historical and cultural affinity with Iran enabled me in presenting to the world the Iranian perspective and Pakistan's point of view on the contentious issues that continue to make headlines even today. I was independently asked by both, the Iranians and the European Union representatives, in view of our close ties, to try and bridge their differences on nuclear issue. The Iranians independently asked me if I could play a role in bringing Iran and the United States closer on the nuclear issue. In this connection Dr Ali Larijani, the powerful Iranian Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council (currently the Speaker of the Majlis who also contested against Ahmadinejad in the Iranian presidential elections) visited me at the Foreign Office in 2005 where we had a marathon meeting. Dr Larijani gave me a comprehensive background of Iran's position on the nuclear issue as well as its desire to work cooperatively with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) authorities in Vienna. He said Iran was prepared to show all the

flexibility it could while maintaining its legal right to pursue nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. He thanked me for the interest that I was taking in bridging differences between the European Union and Iran on this issue and requested that in view of Pakistan's close relationship with the US, we play a similar role in bringing Iran closer to the US.

We sat for almost four or five hours in my office discussing the issue since the Americans were repeatedly saying that no options were off the table, indicating that a resort to force could not be ruled out, I was of the opinion that it would be a disaster for peace and stability in the area particularly after the US had already attacked Afghanistan and Iraq. We drafted what was meant to be a message to the United States from the government of Iran. I promised to try and convince US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to use her influence, which I knew was considerable, with President Bush. This message was given by me to Secretary of State Rice in New York when she came to call on President Musharraf in his hotel suite. Unfortunately, we could not make much progress since the gulf between Iran and the US had widened because of the hard-line position taken by the Bush Administration towards Iran under President Ahmadinejad. Under the Obama Administration, a greater degree of engagement with Iran has taken place on more or less similar terms that were being offered then to the Bush Administration inclusive of appropriate inspections and verifications. Pakistan was also worried that if an attack did take place on Iran's nuclear facilities there would be very negative domestic fallout in the form of increased sectarian tensions inside Pakistan. We already had enough trouble on our hands regarding our borders with Afghanistan and the last thing we wanted was increased sectarian fallout from an attack on Iran also.

## **MEETING WITH THE ISRAELI FOREIGN MINISTER: A POLITICALLY RISKY ENTERPRISE**

### **'Why are You More Palestinian than the Palestinians Themselves'**

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel announced withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza in mid-2004. The withdrawal took place in 2005 against the protest of Israeli settlers, and amidst jubilation by the Palestinians. There were reports of 'Palestinians celebrating, night after night, for four nights, shooting wildly in the air and starting fires.'<sup>22</sup> The Israeli withdrawal was widely welcomed in Pakistan and the rest of the Muslim world. It was, optimistically, interpreted as a major step towards realization by Israel that it will have to withdraw from occupied territories. Pakistan had already declared its support for King Abdullah's plan, originally proposed by him when he was Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, and which was ultimately adopted by the Arab League. It envisaged that all Arab countries would recognize Israel after it withdrew from the occupied territories, including East Jerusalem, and a 'just settlement' of the Palestinian refugee crisis. This is also known as

the 'Land for Peace' formula. Pakistan which has supported the cause of the Palestinians felt that it needed to welcome this development.

It was against this backdrop that a proposal for my meeting with my Israeli counterpart began to be talked about at the highest level. The USA and India had agreed to a Joint Statement issued by Indian Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh and the then US President George W. Bush, in July 2005, in which they agreed to a framework for civil-nuclear cooperation between the two countries. Pakistan wanted a similar deal with the US but in the background of the A. Q. Khan saga the US was showing resistance to such a proposal. The loudest opposition came from the Jewish lobby in the United States. It was felt that an attempt should be made to neutralize this lobby and that a high-level public contact between Pakistan and Israel would help. Additionally, an animosity towards Pakistan had brought India and Israel together and there had recently been reports of growing defence cooperation between India and Israel which could impact Pakistan's security negatively.

Pakistan had been, and still is, a staunch supporter of the Palestinian cause and there is great support for it at the public level. Sometimes, at international level, we were accused of being 'more Palestinian than the Palestinians'. It was therefore realized that this issue was of a very sensitive nature and required delicate handling. It was, however, decided that Pakistan would only agree to recognize Israel if it complied with the terms of King Abdullah's Arab League' proposal of 'Land for Peace'.

As one of Pakistan's closest and most dependable friends, it was therefore no surprise when Turkey offered its good offices for the first ever public contact between Pakistan and Israel at the Foreign Ministers' level. I met Silvan Shalom, then Israel Deputy Prime Minister and its Foreign Minister, in a most dramatic manner. In order to preserve the secrecy of the mission, I flew in a special six-seater Lear Jet 60 from Malta, where I had gone for a bilateral visit, accompanied by DGFMO (Director General, Foreign Minister's Office) Khalid Mahmood. Even he did not know until the last moment about our destination until I told him about our planned trip for a meeting in Istanbul. While this visit was being planned, as an elected representative of the people, I was aware that this was a politically hazardous move. I knew instinctively that the religious and right-wing political circles would try and derive maximum political benefit and criticize the decision. It was, however, decided at the highest level that Pakistan's national interest demanded that we go ahead with the decision.

I knew that this would be an important meeting as Pakistan was the only Muslim nuclear power, and Israel, in the interest of its own security, wanted to normalize relations with Pakistan. I also knew that many in Israel regarded Pakistan as a potential threat. Such views find resonance in an interview of Israel's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Avigdor Lieberman in which Pakistan 'has been designated as Israel's greatest strategic threat.'<sup>23</sup> There had been reports in the newspapers that Israelis were unhappy with the range of

Pakistan's missiles. It is no secret that Pakistan had been supporting Arab countries on different fronts, including defence, over the years. Pakistan sent a number of pilots and ambulance units in the 1973 war to the Arab countries, particularly to Syria. Some of these PAF pilots were involved in shooting Israeli planes in air combat. The Syrians have not forgotten this gesture of solidarity on the part of the Pakistani government with them at the time of mortal danger to it, and that was the reason why they very generously hosted Mir Murtaza Bhutto, son of late Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, in Damascus for many years during his exile there, where he married Ghinwa Bhutto.

At the same time, we knew that Israel was also a nuclear power with advanced technology in the defence sector and could hurt us by collaborating with India. Indeed there had been reports of such collaboration. The Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom, and Defence Minister Shaul Mofaz had visited New Delhi and discussed increased defence cooperation between the two countries. They also agreed to sign many defence deals and conduct joint air exercises. During the Israeli Prime Minister's visit, the two countries finalized the agreement for the purchase of three Israeli Phalcon Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) for the Indian Air Force. There had been reports in recent months that India and Israel had concluded an agreement regarding the sale of Heron II medium-altitude, long-endurance, unmanned aerial vehicles, and were working jointly to extend the range of the Barak point defence system for the Indian Navy.<sup>24</sup>

We should not forget, however, that Pakistan has always taken pride in its close and fraternal relations with Arab countries and the Muslim world who were greatly upset at Israeli policies in Palestine. We would, therefore, require all the diplomatic skills and tact to achieve our objectives vis-à-vis our own security without adversely affecting our relations with the Arab/Muslim world. It is obvious that planning such a meeting required complete secrecy. Very few people, besides President Pervez Musharraf and his senior staff members, Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz, and the then DGISI General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani knew about it. It is pertinent to mention here that Foreign Secretary Riaz Muhammad Khan had been in the loop from the very beginning regarding the meeting in Istanbul and had been involved in planning it. After my visit, there were reports that the United States had helped facilitate this visit. This is incorrect. The Israeli Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom, in response to a query by a Pakistani newspaper journalist, said that the meeting came as a surprise to the United States and added that the US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice called him after the meeting and congratulated him for this and said that the news had come as a pleasant surprise.<sup>25</sup>

An eerie atmosphere prevailed when we landed. The Istanbul airport was engulfed in pitch darkness. In order to preserve the secrecy of my visit, all the lights had been put off. Foreign Policy Advisor to the Prime Minister and the Member of the Turkish Parliament, Egemen Bağış, currently Minister for European Affairs, received us in a special vehicle

far away from the main airport building. It seemed like a James Bond 007 operation. Egemen Bağış informed me that the Turkish government had taken all possible precautions to preserve the secrecy of the meeting. I was touched by the special arrangements made by our Turkish host.

On 31 August 2005, a dinner was arranged for us under a full moon, on the rooftop overlooking the historic Topkapi Palace Museum. The weather was perfect. The dinner lasted nearly two hours and we had three representatives from each side. Our Ambassador in Turkey, Lt General (ret'd) Syed Iftikhar Hussain Shah, joined us at dinner and the ensuing talks. This getting-to-know meeting largely focused on two issues: Palestine and Kashmir. Reasons were listed in it of why the Palestinians had a special place in the hearts of the Pakistanis. This was in response to Israeli Foreign Minister's opening question, 'Why did it take you so long to have this meeting?' and 'Why are you more Palestinian than the Palestinians themselves?'

The Turkish side at the dinner was represented, inter alia, by Turkish Senior Minister Mehmet Ayden. From our side, besides myself, Lt General (ret'd) Syed Iftikhar Hussain Shah and Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Director General, Foreign Minister's Office were present. The Israeli side was represented by their Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom, Director General Ministry of Foreign Affairs (equivalent in their set-up to our Foreign Secretary) Ron Prosor, and Chief of Staff to the Minister Jacob Dayan. We agreed on the details and the format of the meeting fixed for the next day at which besides the two Foreign Ministers, two officials, one each from Pakistan and Israel, would be present. These were the same as those present at the dinner the preceding night.

The bilateral meeting the next day was comprehensive. Bilateral and regional issues were discussed at the meeting. In response to my question regarding selling of highly sophisticated defence equipment to India, the Israeli Deputy Prime Minister told us that their relationship with India was not against Pakistan. I just wanted to sensitize him regarding our security concerns. It may be appropriate to mention here that Pakistan had in the past suspected Indian-Israeli collaboration against Pakistan and it had been decided at the highest level in Islamabad that we needed to sensitize Israel on these issues. We, however, found an appropriate opportunity for this meeting only after the decision by Israel to withdraw from Gaza which was widely welcomed. We also reiterated our position on Palestine and on the question of Jerusalem as well as the need for Israeli pull-out from the West Bank. The Israeli Deputy Prime Minister mentioned two areas of possible cooperation, viz. sophisticated technology and agriculture, both of which held great potential for Pakistan. We also discussed the possibility of continuing with the contacts between the two countries. Although our meeting was the first public meeting at such a high level, the two countries had maintained discrete contacts in different world capitals over several decades. We also discussed the possibility of a Pakistani delegation visiting Gaza. This could not be possible without Israeli facilitation.

As expected, our meeting hit headlines in the national and the international media. The *International Herald Tribune* commented on this meeting under the headline: 'Powerful handshake stirs Muslim world—Pakistan seeks broader ties with Israel'. The comment stated that both countries—Islamic Pakistan and Jewish Israel Ahmadinejad resemble each other. Both countries are based on an ideology with a religious community as the foundation of their nationhood; both are security driven; both have nuclear weapons, although Israel does not admit it publicly. Both countries also have to grapple with threats from neighbours. It was speculated that the two sides may meet at neutral venues but that normalization will be a slow and gradual process.

We had a Joint Press Conference in Istanbul, in which I explained that the purpose of this gesture was to underscore the importance that we attached to Israel ending its occupation of Gaza. We also expressed the hope that this would be the beginning of the process of vacation of Israeli occupation and the establishment of a Palestinian state living side by side with Israel in peace and security. I added that our gesture should demonstrate to Israel that Pakistan and the Islamic world will respond positively if Israel is ready to accept the imperatives of peace by respecting the fundamental rights of the Palestinian people to live in freedom and peace in their homeland. I referred to the visit of the Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to Pakistan earlier in the year, in which he had said that he would like President Pervez Musharraf to use his good offices with the international community for a just and peaceful resolution of the Palestinian dispute. I informed the media that prior to holding this meeting, President Pervez Musharraf had spoken to President Mahmoud Abbas. I would like to point out that General Musharraf had said that he had informed Saudi Arabia and the Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas about the visit. He had also stated that Pakistan would soon send a delegation to visit Jerusalem and Gaza.<sup>26</sup>

In response to the question, whether Pakistan would recognize Israel following this meeting, I stated categorically that Pakistan would do so only after the establishment of a viable and independent Palestinian state, with Jerusalem as its capital. I made it clear that the meeting did not mean recognition of Israel and our position on the Palestinian issue remained unchanged. I also noted that the solution of the Palestinian problem will weaken and extinguish extremism and terrorism in the region.

Pakistan's decision to establish public contact at the level of Foreign Ministers was significant. It was, however, a very difficult decision indeed. We were of course aware of the fact that any public contact with Israel would be very unpopular with the people in general— more so because we would not be in a position to explain the real motivations behind that decision. I have already referred to the immediate cause, namely, to try and get civil nuclear technology from the US by neutralizing the opposition of the Jewish Lobby in the US to such a deal. Equally important was to sensitize Israel to our concern regarding negative impact on our security of the various defence agreements for supply of sophisticated defence materials by Israel to India. The two countries had maintained

covert diplomatic contacts in different world capitals over the decades. Under President Zia ul-Haq, intelligence cooperation had existed between Israel and Pakistan and the former provided the latter weapons in the CIA-Afghan pipeline to strengthen the fighting capacity of the Mujahideen.<sup>27</sup> Congressman Charlie Wilson informed President Zia that the Israelis had shown him the vast stores of Soviet weapons they had captured from the PLO in Lebanon. The weapons were perfect for the Mujahideen. If he could convince the CIA to buy them, would the President have any problem passing them on to the Afghans? Zia, ever the pragmatist, smiled and said, 'Just don't put any Stars of David on the boxes.'<sup>28</sup>

Pakistan was not the only Muslim country to have had such cooperation with Israel. Iran obtained weaponry from it during 1980–83, during the Iran-Iraq war, which were paid for by Iranian oil delivered to Israel. Various accounts place the estimates of this Israeli sale to Iran as being substantial.<sup>29</sup>

Israel had been very keen on establishing diplomatic relations with Pakistan. Both the countries realized that in different ways they could damage each other's interest. In fact, after Pakistan conducted its nuclear tests, the Israeli media referred to Pakistan as an 'Islamic superpower'.<sup>30</sup> It is for reasons of an adverse public reaction that different governments in the past, as well as the government of which I was a member, had not been able to establish diplomatic relations.

It is a matter of public knowledge in Pakistan that the Israeli lobby in the United States is very powerful and has the capacity to influence American government policies towards Pakistan and India. This is despite the fact that almost since the creation of Pakistan all governments had made attempts at strengthening Pakistan's relations with the United States so as to maintain a balance of power between Pakistan and its much bigger neighbour India.

We were also conscious of the fact that a large number of Muslim countries had accepted the reality of Israel and, since the Camp David agreement in 1979, some of them, including Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Oman, and Qatar, have had overt and covert contacts with Israel. Pakistan's close friend Turkey had of course recognized Israel in 1949. The peace plan of Prince Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz announced in February 2002, who at that time was the Saudi Crown Prince, which was ultimately accepted by the Arab League, spoke of the principle of Land for Peace, namely, that the Arab countries would recognize Israel if it vacated Palestinian territories occupied by it. Our first public contact with Israel was made, not surprisingly, in the immediate aftermath of Israel's withdrawal from Gaza.

In the nearly seven years that Sir Zafarullah Khan was Foreign Minister, he continued to urge Egypt to seek a peaceful solution to the conflict, despite his eloquent advocacy of the Palestinian and Arab causes at the UN. Recently, Syeda Abida Hussain Pakistan's former Ambassador in Washington (1991–93), advocated the recognition of Israel. When there

was a domestic uproar, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif defended his Ambassador. According to different reports, in Benazir Bhutto's time contacts with Israel were maintained.<sup>31</sup>

All the Muslim countries, including Iran, have moved from seeking the destruction of Israel to seeking its withdrawal to the pre-1967 borders,<sup>32</sup> notwithstanding the rhetoric of the last Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. After all, revolutionary Iran had even purchased weapons from Israel.<sup>33</sup>

Pakistan also believes that the Palestinian question is the core problem in the Middle East and must be resolved in accordance with UN Resolutions and the Arab peace initiative calling for the establishment of a Palestinian State with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Let me state that, despite all the reasons given above, it was not possible for Pakistan to recognize Israel without the creation of a viable and an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital. I said as much in my press conference with the Israeli Foreign Minister in the presence of our Turkish hosts in Istanbul to the international media, some of whom were expecting an announcement that Pakistan would recognize Israel.

## **B**ANGLADESH

I have very fond memories of Bangladesh (pre-1971, East Pakistan). My father, Mian Mahmud Ali Kasuri, one of Pakistan's leading politicians and lawyers, had many friends in Bangladesh and often visited Dhaka (in those days Dacca) in connection with his political activities. He was reputed to have mastery over jurisprudence, being perhaps the first Indian to top the Bar exams in England. He had a flourishing practice in cases related to constitutional law as well as civil and criminal matters. His law practice often took him to East Pakistan, where he appeared before the East Pakistan High Court in Dhaka. Quite a few of his cases were *pro bono* and he never charged a fee in any case relating to human rights violations or to habeas corpus matters, where people had been imprisoned for political considerations or reasons of conscience. Thus, people from different backgrounds in East Pakistan came into contact with my father. Additionally, there was hardly an eminent politician in East Pakistan who did not meet my father during their visits to the then West Pakistan (current-day Pakistan).

I remember a time in the late 1950s or early 1960s, when it had not become customary to stay in hotels, about twenty prominent politicians of different political parties who had come to Lahore (perhaps in connection with restoration of democracy during Ayub Khan's regime) stayed with us in our newly built house in Gulberg in Lahore. When I think of it today, it is difficult to imagine how so many people could have been accommodated into one house. My father's house was really an open house, as has been mentioned in the book earlier. I recollect from memory those who stayed with us included some of the most eminent politicians of East Pakistan. These included Ata-ur-Rahman Khan and Abul

Hussain Sarkar, both later Chief Ministers of East Pakistan; and Mahmood Ali, then President of Pakistan's first secular party, the Ganatantri Dal (I remember the name of the party because Mahmood Ali frequently visited our house). Of course, there must have been many from the East Pakistan wing of the National Awami Party (NAP), such as Professor Muzaffar Ahmad and Ahmed ul Kabeer, among the guests staying with us. On my visits to Dhaka as Foreign Minister, I was always greatly moved by feelings of goodwill I found among politicians, journalists and the many others I met, from different walks of life and backgrounds, who remembered my father with great respect and affection.

My earliest memory of visiting Dhaka with my father is probably in the late 1950s or early 1960s. He had gone to Dhaka in connection with an important meeting of the National Awami Party (NAP) of which he was President for West Pakistan. Our generous and gracious hosts in Dhaka were Mr Ahmed ul Kabeer, the owner/editor of an important Bengali newspaper *Sangbad*, and his sophisticated and beautiful wife Leila, who must have been in her late twenties or early thirties at that time. She informed me with great pride that she had graduated from Durham University in the United Kingdom. The most interesting days of my visit to East Pakistan on this occasion would be our trip to Leila's tea gardens in Sylhet. Despite the separation of the two wings and creation of Bangladesh in 1971, I would meet Leila whenever I visited Bangladesh as Foreign Minister.<sup>34</sup> She has also visited me in Lahore. I also remember an overnight boat ride between Dhaka and Khulna with my father. If my memory serves me right, it was to visit Mr Masih-ur Rehman, who later on became a Member of Parliament. The rivers of East Pakistan seemed more like oceans to me. I hope that the waters of those rivers have not depleted due to global warming and climatic changes in the recent years.

I must mention here something about Maulana Abdul Hameed Khan Bhashani. He was a true man of the people, who grew up in rural Bengal. He was a flamboyant and fiery leader. Bhashani often stayed at our house in Lahore when he visited West Pakistan. There are many interesting stories I remember about him. Even before the split of the NAP into the pro-Moscow and the pro-Beijing groups, he had developed a close relationship with Beijing. During the presidential campaign of 1965, which pitted *Maadre-Millat* (Mother of the Nation) Mohtarma Fatima Jinnah, the sister of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, against Ayub Khan, a strong suspicion had developed in the ranks of National Awami Party that Bhashani was surreptitiously supporting Field Marshal Ayub Khan under the influence of Beijing. My father was one of Miss Jinnah's chief supporters. On one occasion, Maulana Bhashani, during his stay with us in Lahore, complained that he was feeling unwell and wanted to be hospitalized. My father and many of his friends suspected that this could well be a political illness. My brother Umar Kasuri told me that he had been asked to keep a close watch outside the Albert Victor Ward of Lahore's famous Mayo Hospital. My brother, along with others, decided to visit Maulana Bhashani's room in the Albert Victor Ward late at night. When they entered the room, they were surprised

to find it empty. The Maulana had vanished without a trace. Later, it transpired that, in the dead of night, he had been taken in a helicopter to meet Field Marshal Ayub Khan in Islamabad. A lot of stories started circulating. One of them was that Field Marshal Ayub Khan offered Maulana Bhashani a plate of *halwa* (sweet dish) informing Bhashani that Ayub's Khan's wife had especially cooked it for him. Pulling the Maulana's leg, I heard my father asking him on one occasion, 'I am told that the *halwa* was very good.' The Maulana simply smiled and said nothing.

Later on, the NAP did actually get divided, with Professor Muzaffar Ahmad leading the pro-Moscow wing and Maulana Bhashani the pro-Beijing wing. It may be pertinent to mention that, as tensions between China and Russia started to mount in the 1960s, left-wing parties throughout the world faced similar difficulties. The Communist Party of India got similarly divided; even the minuscule Communist Party of Pakistan could not avoid this fate.

Another East Pakistan's personality I used to see at my father's house sometimes was Mr Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy, who had been the Muslim League Chief Minister of United Bengal prior to the Partition in 1947. His courageous efforts along with Gandhiji to calm the situation following the communal riots in Calcutta have been mentioned in great detail earlier. Later, in 1956, he became the Prime Minister of Pakistan. In the pen sketches of people whom I came across at my father's residence, I have written about him at much greater length. (In Chapter 1, under the section titled 'Fane Road Residence: An Open House: Early Influences', where I also wrote about other leaders from East Pakistan who were associated with my father, and who, in many instances, stayed with us.) Mr Suhrawardy was one of the top lawyers of united Pakistan, and, although he was much older than my father, they came across each other fairly often in the courtrooms, since my father had been at the top of his profession from a relatively young age, almost since Independence in 1947.

Mr Suhrawardy was one of Pakistan's most outstanding politicians, although at times he could be quite provocative as well. He made highly controversial remarks during the Suez Crisis in the wake of the invasion of Egypt in late 1956 by Israel, almost immediately followed by Britain and France in an attempt to regain control of the Suez Canal and to remove President Nasser from power. Mr Suhrawardy was staunchly pro-Western and disregarded popular sentiment in Pakistan against the Anglo-French invasion of the Suez Canal. When he supported Britain and France and was attacked by those representing popular outrage in Pakistan, he pooh-poohed their sentiments by saying that he was serving Pakistan's national interest. He also dismissed widespread support by Muslim countries for Egypt by disparaging their weakness at that time and remarked, 'Zero plus zero plus zero is after all a zero.' It would be fair to say that Pakistan stood completely isolated in the Muslim World at that time.

After the death of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, many Muslim Leaguers were disenchanted by the policies of those who succeeded him. Following his disenchantment with the Muslim League which many others shared, Mr Suhrawardy left the Party. Others who shared this disenchantment included Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din, my father Mian Mahmud Ali Kasuri and Sardar Shaukat Hayat Khan who along with other progressive elements in the Muslim League founded the first Opposition political party of Pakistan, the Azad Pakistan Party. Mr Suhrawardy, after leaving the Muslim League, joined the recently formed the Awami League. Later, along with A. K. Fazlul Huq and Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani, he led the United Front (Jugtu Front), an alliance of Opposition parties, which inflicted a humiliating defeat on the Muslim League in the 1954 elections. In 1956, the Awami League formed an alliance with the Republican Party. As the new Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mr Suhrawardy staunchly supported an alliance with the United States.

Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy was a multifaceted personality. He was fond of good living. He possessed a biting sense of humour, which I have mentioned earlier. He certainly had a fondness for good-looking women. Earlier, I have mentioned his determination to somehow get closer to Princess Margaret at a Buckingham Palace Ball. In a similar vein, during his visit to Afghanistan as Prime Minister, Prince Daoud Khan remarked to him, 'Your Excellency speaks beautiful French.' Suhrawardy closed his eyes and said, 'Your Royal Highness, once upon a time when I was a young man, I was in Paris. Believe me that the urgency to learn French was constantly great.'<sup>35</sup> Apparently, during the visit, Daoud Khan had arranged a musical evening. To Mr Suhrawardy's misfortune all the singers were male. Aware of the Pakistani Prime Minister's weakness for beautiful women, Prince Daoud Khan remarked that he would have to make do under the circumstances, adding, 'Your Excellency will have to make up for it somewhere else.'

No wonder that, with my family and political background, I took great care to develop a special relationship with Bangladesh. I had never forgotten that there was a time when we were one country, and had and still have so much in common. I developed an exceptionally close relationship with Morshed Khan, who remained Foreign Minister of Bangladesh for most of my tenure (initially, because he was Foreign Minister of Bangladesh). He and his wife visited us many times in our home in Lahore, as we did theirs in Dhaka. During meetings of the SAARC, our personal relationship proved to be very useful. I remember during one of my visits to Dhaka, despite hints from certain quarters, I decided to meet the then leader of the Opposition, the Awami League Leader and current Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wajed. In the context of Bangladesh politics, the Bangladesh National Party was considered close to Pakistan while the Awami League was not. I felt that I needed to do my bit to try and help forge a better relationship between Pakistan and the Awami League leadership.

Both Sheikh Hasina's father, the late Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, and my father, the late Mian Mahmud Ali Kasuri, were well known politicians in undivided Pakistan and knew each other very well. As already mentioned, my father was greatly respected in Bangladesh and I assumed that Sheikh Hasina would be aware of this. He had defended many Bengali political prisoners belonging to different political parties before the courts in the then undivided Pakistan. I was pleasantly surprised when, as I was leaving her residence after the good meeting we had had, one of those present at the meeting knocked on the window of my car. He said that he had brought a message from Sheikh Hasina. He almost whispered in my ear that this meeting ought to have taken place much earlier. I was touched by this.

The separation of East Pakistan has left a deep scar on the psyche of countless Pakistanis. I remember two incidents on the eve of the separation of the two wings which have remained etched in my memory. I was in the lobby of the Intercontinental Hotel (now Pearl Continental), Rawalpindi, and could not believe that, at a time when the country had been dismembered, copies of a document were being distributed to journalists, both foreign and local, inside the hotel lobby. On inquiry, I was told that this was the new Constitution that General Yahya Khan was trying to have promulgated. This was truly astounding, and highlighted the world of make-believe that General Yahya Khan and his colleagues were living in. At a time when people on the streets were out to lynch them for what they regarded as their role in the disintegration of Pakistan, they wanted to dictate a new Constitution of their own choosing. One does not need to be a genius to understand that the reaction, nay revulsion, to this stupidity was so great that, within less than half an hour, representatives from the Information Ministry were begging journalists to return them the document that General Yahya thought would become the new Constitution of Pakistan.

The other memory that remains with me is the walk that I had on this gloomy occasion on the footpath outside the Intercontinental Hotel, Rawalpindi, with Dr Kamal Hossain, who was very close to my father and who later became Foreign Minister of Bangladesh. He said to me rather sombrely that, were Pakistan to disintegrate, the Western Wing would be subjected to military dictatorship and Bangladesh might fall prey to chaos. He was proven partially right. The military in due course took over, not just in Pakistan but also in Bangladesh as well. Both wings have experienced their quota of chaos as well. Maybe, there are strong common traits in our temperament which, despite painful separation, have led to not very dissimilar consequences.

It is an unfortunate fact that due to hostile relations between Pakistan and India and the 1,200-mile separation between the two Wings of Pakistan, with Indian territory in between, some people did not think that the experiment of unity between the two wings on a purely religious basis would last for long. For example, Mr Aslam Khattak, a senior Pakistani politician and at one time Pakistan's Ambassador to Kabul talks of serious efforts that were made for a confederation between Pakistan and Afghanistan, which

started when Prime Minister Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy and Prince Muhammad Daoud Khan were in power. These efforts continued when Malik Feroz Khan Noon took over as Prime Minister. It was envisaged that both the countries would retain internal autonomy but they would form a central government for looking after defence, foreign policy, foreign trade and communications and the Prime Minister ship would rotate.<sup>36</sup> Mr Khattak mentions that Prince Daoud was so serious about the confederation between Pakistan and Afghanistan that he started discussing modalities and details of the envisaged confederation. At one stage Prince Daoud thought aloud and said that one was living in a democratic age in which populations of countries had to be considered and he wondered how Pakistan with a population four times Afghanistan's would agree to share power at the confederal level. Mr Khattak while correcting him said that Pakistan's population was in fact ten times larger than Afghanistan when one took into account East Pakistan's population. Prince Daoud said that while he hoped that he was wrong, he felt that Pakistan as constituted would not last for long.

I do not agree with this observation by Prince Daoud Khan who was perhaps influenced by what he may have heard from the Indian leaders. There are many countries with vast ethnic, cultural and religious differences and they have not only survived but continue to thrive. In such situations, for the federation to survive, it is essential to adopt an inclusive approach and be sensitive to cultural, ethnic or other differences. In retrospect, and with the advantage of hindsight, the language issue could and should have been handled differently. It is also no secret that East Pakistan's leaders objected to the principle of the parity between the two wings for purposes of representation, since East Pakistan at that time had a higher population. United Pakistan's real failure lay in its inability to create a strong and an inclusive political structure. Furthermore, India took full advantage of the vast distance between two wings of Pakistan. There is no doubt regarding India's intentions in this respect and the Indian intelligence organization, RAW, makes no attempt to hide it either and takes full credit for the developments of 1971. The following passage is revealing: 'RAW had two priorities after its formation,' writes B. Raman, a former RAW official, in the 2007 book, *The Kaoboy of RAW: Down Memory Lane*. 'The organization worked to strengthen its capability for intelligence gathering on Pakistan and China and for covert action in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). Some experts are clear that RAW's efforts in East Pakistan, which was created from the partition of the Indian state of Bengal and completely separated from the rest of Pakistan, were aimed at fomenting independence sentiment.

Suhrawardy, one of Pakistan's tallest politicians, once famously remarked, 'The English language, PIA (Pakistan International Airlines) and I are the only links between East and West Pakistan.' In view of his political stature and the support and respect he enjoyed in both the Wings of Pakistan, it is one of the big 'ifs' of history as to what would have happened in 1971 were Mr Suhrawardy alive at the time. The situation may not have taken the turn that it did because it is unthinkable that Mr Suhrawardy would have either stood

aloof or that his efforts would have been utterly in vain. Unfortunately, he died eight years before the tragic events of 1971 unfolded.

These days, in the wake of Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wajed's decision to try those who had supported Pakistan before a War Crimes Tribunal, the relations between Pakistan and Bangladesh have become tense. The Tribunal also sentenced some others to death, including Abdul Quader Molla, a top leader of the Jamaat-i-Islami, who was ultimately executed on 12 December 2013 despite appeals by various reputable human rights organizations. Given the background and the different perceptions regarding the cause of the 1971 tragedy, there was a negative reaction in Pakistan to this development. The Jamaat-i-Islami and some other political parties organized demonstrations against the execution and bitterly criticized what they considered to be a very passive reaction by Pakistan government.

The National Assembly of Pakistan passed a resolution against the hanging. Bangladesh reacted negatively and summoned Pakistan's High Commissioner to protest over the resolution describing it as an 'Uncalled for resolution ... tantamount to interference in the domestic affairs of Bangladesh.' Demonstrations were also held in Bangladesh against the trials, convictions, and the executions, and international observers commented that it could lead to further polarization in Bangladesh. Given the history of the two countries, the fact that they were at one time united and that some political parties continued to operate after separation in both Pakistan and Bangladesh, the reactions and developments that ensued following conviction by the tribunals and the hanging of Abdul Quader Molla were predictable. Those like me, who wish Bangladesh well, can only hope that the polarization in Bangladesh is not further accentuated and that both Sheikh Hasina Wajed and Begum Khaleda Zia will show the required statesmanship and provide a healing touch to a situation which could deteriorate even further.

I am very happy to note that Bangladesh had done very well in many areas. It has made remarkable progress in women's empowerment, microfinance, and family planning. It has become one of the world's largest exporters in garments. Pakistan could learn more effectively from the experience of Bangladesh in areas such as family planning, both countries having so much in common, both rooted in a shared history and religion.

My interest in Bangladesh remains intact and the country holds a special sentiment for me. This was perhaps the reason why I felt perfectly at home when, on one occasion, I travelled with Prime Minister Khaleda Zia from Dhaka to Kuala Lumpur in her official aircraft. I am always keen to catch up on news coming from there. I am lucky that I am able to get different perspectives from my friends, who include former Foreign Minister Morshed Khan and Farooq Sobhan, former Foreign Secretary of Bangladesh, whom I got to know very well when he was studying at Oxford and I at Cambridge. We have many common friends and he often comes to Lahore. Even after leaving office, I have remained

in close touch with Morshed Khan, meeting him in places as diverse as London, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Lahore, and Islamabad.

Morshed and I enjoy several commonalities. Both of us started our political careers with the Tehrik-e-Istiqlal, which was once a major political party of United Pakistan and was led by Air Marshal Muhammad Asghar Khan, who is also widely respected in Bangladesh for the courageous stance that he took in the 1971 war opposing military action there. Moreover, our wives have the same name, Nasreen, and both were born in Calcutta before Partition, where my wife's family, although belonging to Punjab, had major business interests.

I have no desire to go into the causes of the separation with our brethren in East Pakistan. I know there are diverse opinions of its causes. To understand how it happened, one needs to write in much greater detail about the politics of united Pakistan. This is not the place for that. My book is basically on the foreign policy of Pakistan. But when I began to write on Bangladesh emotional memories from three years when I was young came back. Hence, I cannot help but reminisce about the years when we were one country. This day of separation is observed with great solemnity in Pakistan every year. There is a deep sense of sorrow, including the widespread feeling that, were it not for mistakes committed by some leaders in West Pakistan, the country might still have been united.

There is a feeling of regret, even among those who blame India for taking advantage of the differences between the Pakistan Peoples Party and the Awami League and not allowing enough time for backchannel negotiations which were going on with some of the Awami League leaders then based in Calcutta (Kolkata). They feel that, if these negotiations had been given time, the leaders of the two wings would have found a settlement; but this is in the realm of speculation. It is perhaps because of the sense of remorse felt by ordinary Pakistanis that President Zia ul-Haq and President Pervez Musharraf, despite their military backgrounds, felt compelled to reflect such sentiments on different occasions. In 1985 President Zia ul-Haq visited the National Martyrs' Memorial in Bangladesh and said, 'Your heroes are our heroes.' President Pervez Musharraf visited Bangladesh in 2002 and wrote in the Visitor's Book of National Martyrs' Memorial, 'Your brothers and sisters in Pakistan share the pain of the events of 1971. The excesses during that unfortunate period are regrettable.' The feeling in Pakistan on this issue is so strong that even Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, during his visit to Bangladesh in June 1974, visited the National Martyrs' Memorial. This may not have been considered particularly significant in Bangladesh but in Pakistan it did create quite a stir since the memories of the 1971 tragedy and the role of the main actors was very fresh in public memory then.

Many remember that General Yahya Khan had, on one occasion, after the general elections of 1970, referred to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman as the 'future Prime Minister of Pakistan'. Every year when Bangladesh celebrates its independence and Pakistan remembers how the country was split up, a question is repeatedly asked: 'Could Pakistan

have been saved if power had been transferred to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, leader of the largest party, the Awami League?’ Only after a long time, when passions have subsided, will history perhaps be able to provide a somewhat objective answer to this question. It may be pertinent here to quote from an article by A. G. Noorani, constitutional expert and historian of repute. I have chosen to quote from his article, also, because he is neither a Pakistani nor a Bangladeshi, but an Indian Muslim.

Bhutto’s reaction to Mujib’s proposal for handing over power before the National Assembly could meet or frame a constitution was indefensible. In a statement on 14 March, when Yahya was on his way to Dacca to make his final bid to Mujib, Bhutto declared: ‘If power were to be transferred to the people before any constitutional settlement as demanded by Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, it should be transferred to the majority party in East Pakistan and the majority party here.’ The Urdu press reported him as saying ‘*Idhar ham, udhar tum*’ [we here, you there]. It is against this background that Yahya arrived in Dacca on 15 March only to leave on 24 March. Whatever happened in those ten days to seal the fate of a United Pakistan?

In the interest of fairness to Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, I know that this quote ‘*Idhar ham, udhar tum*’ is not his but was the headline of a newspaper story of that time provided by a creative editor. Among Pakistanis, the answer to the question whether Pakistan could have been saved if power had been transferred to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman depends on the person one speaks to. Generally speaking, if somebody is opposed to Bhutto’s policies, he is likely to respond by saying that Pakistan would have been saved. On the other hand, if the person concerned is a supporter of Bhutto’s policies, the answer would be along the lines that it was already too late.

Before I conclude my remarks on Bangladesh, I have to refer to the issue of the Biharis. The term refers largely to those who migrated from the Indian State of Bihar, at the time of Partition in 1947, to the then East Pakistan. The term ‘Bihari’ colloquially also includes refugees from UP and other areas, who had migrated to East Pakistan. In the 1971 war these Biharis supported a united Pakistan and suffered the consequences after the country was split up. They regarded themselves as stateless with a right to migrate to Pakistan, the country to which, they said, they had migrated in 1947. I used to meet their representatives on my visits to Dhaka.

As Foreign Minister, I was touched by their plight. The Bangladesh Government was also keen that they migrate to Pakistan. I told President Pervez Musharraf that morally Pakistan should take all those into the fold of Pakistan who wanted to come here. He was not averse to my suggestion. I suggested that, since the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) was opposed to their coming to Pakistan, fearing that they would all ultimately end up in Karachi, further increasing the vote bank of Muhajirs, to the detriment of the PPP, we should give the Biharis a big incentive to settle in Punjab, including the provision of housing colonies in Lahore and other cities of the province. The PPP leadership did not agree to their repatriation to Pakistan. Their claim was that, even if the Biharis were offered incentives to stay in Punjab, they would all end up in Karachi since they had their friends and relatives living in Karachi. As a result of some judgments of superior courts in

Bangladesh, 150,000 Biharis, who were minors at the time of the war in 1971, could be given voting rights as well as citizenship in Bangladesh. This was also extended to those who were born after the war. This may provide some sort of a solution to this problem in the long run.

As Foreign Minister of Pakistan, I tried my best to encourage the peace process between Pakistan and India, the details of which constitute a major part of this book. We have all seen that, in modern times, regional cooperation has provided answers to many complex political problems rooted in history. The most obvious examples of successful regional cooperation are the European Union (EU) and the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN). In both cases, besides encouraging economic development, they have also helped in bringing closer nations with deep grievances against each other rooted in their histories. I strongly believe that SAARC has long been held hostage to Pakistan-India differences. If Pakistan and India can resolve their problems, as we were trying to do during our tenure and nearly succeeded, SAARC could become an effective mechanism for regional cooperation and enhanced trade. It will also, hopefully, help rekindle in Pakistan and Bangladesh some of the feelings, which united Muslims of undivided India during their struggle against colonial rule and during the movement which culminated in the creation of Pakistan in 1947 and help apply balm on some of the wounds inflicted by the war of 1971.

## **IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH BRITAIN**

Apart from the historic connection between Pakistan and Britain, the military and intelligence links between them were further solidified during the NATO campaign in Afghanistan, of which Britain was a key member. NATO depended on Pakistan for supplying its troops in Afghanistan. Britain had the second largest contingent of troops in NATO-ISAF (International Security Assistance Force) after the US.

Pakistan has traditionally enjoyed friendly relations with the European countries, particularly with Britain, France, and Germany. The historic connection of Europe with South Asia has its roots in the arrival of European colonists from Portugal, France and, most importantly, Britain. That the British connection has had the most abiding effect is a fact that hardly needs to be explained, given the role of the British Raj in the subcontinent.

The effect of Great Britain on the economy and culture of the area is vast. English replaced Persian as the official language, a fact which has had lasting consequences. The systems of governance, the idea of representative government and, indeed, the Indian nationalist movement itself, were outcomes of the presence of the British and of British ideas. The British were responsible for the introduction of the railway system and one of the most advanced link canal systems in the world. One can trace the influence of the British in the architecture of the subcontinent, which to this day show traces of Christian, Gothic, Imperial, Renaissance, and Victorian styles.

The founding fathers of Pakistan and India studied in Britain and so, were greatly influenced by ideas of democracy, nationalism, and, in some cases, Fabian Socialism. The British bond is kept alive by more than a million British citizens and residents of Pakistani origin. I found that Britain played a particularly useful role in the European Union whenever issues concerning Pakistan come into consideration. I was always very conscious of the fact that the world's only superpower, the United States, has a special relationship with the UK and consulted it regularly on issues concerning South Asia.

In our initial years, our foreign policy was greatly influenced by the British connection. We became part of the military alliances where the UK with the US played a dominant role. The posting as a High Commissioner to London, for example, was for a long time after independence, one of the most highly sought after posts in the Foreign Service of Pakistan. Apart from connections of history, I felt that the UK, in view of its special relationship with the US which valued British expertise on South Asian affairs, could be very helpful to Pakistan in influencing US policy in the region.

I developed close personal and working relations with Jack Straw, the then British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Straw visited me at my house in Lahore. After dinner, I asked him whether he was returning to UK the next day and was surprised by his response. He said, 'No, I plan to visit Gujrat (in Central Punjab) to meet some relatives of my voters in the UK!' The huge Pakistani Diaspora in the UK plays an important role in local British politics. This is yet another bond between Pakistan and the UK.

There is, of course, the Commonwealth connection between Pakistan and Britain. Pakistan has been in and out of the Commonwealth. I tried to strengthen our relations with the Commonwealth during my tenure, since I strongly believed in strengthening Pakistan's diplomatic outreach. I faced resistance by some at the Foreign Office in my desire to rejoin the Commonwealth who thought that I was unduly enthusiastic about joining this 'Club of former Slaves'. My informal meeting in London with the then Secretary General of the Commonwealth, Don McKinnon, was kept secret. McKinnon supported me all the way. Luckily, our High Commissioner in London at that time, Abdul Kader Jaffer, a practical man from a leading business family of Karachi, agreed with my desire to rejoin the Commonwealth and was in the loop in this 'adventure' as was DGFMO (Director General, Foreign Minister's Office) Ambassador Khalid Mahmood. On the lighter side, the High Commissioner said to me that either he or I would have to pay out of our pockets rather than bill the Foreign Office for the high tea at the Savoy with McKinnon, because, this meeting was not supposed to have taken place at all. I was quite happy to foot the bill.

## MAJOR DEMOCRACIES OF THE COMMONWEALTH

The Commonwealth connection brought us into close touch with many Commonwealth countries, particularly with three important democracies, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. With Australia and New Zealand, Pakistan has been playing cricket for a long while, and I would like to mention in a lighter vein that Canada has also decided to improve its cricketing standards; hopefully, this will become yet another link between the two countries. At that time, we were consciously increasing Pakistan's diplomatic outreach and had even forged links with certain Latin American countries. Commonwealth countries were culturally much closer and many Pakistanis had settled in these countries, particularly in Canada and Australia.

**Canada:** Canada has been a close economic partner of Pakistan for a long time. Pakistan has had a very close relationship with the USA ever since Independence and there have been many official visits between the two countries, as well as exchanges of parliamentary and official delegations. There has, however, not been enough interaction with the USA's northern neighbour Canada. We felt we needed to rectify this.

President Pervez Musharraf paid an official visit to Canada from 24 to 26 September 2003, in the backdrop of concerns in Ottawa that Pakistan was 'not doing enough' to stop the reported rise of Taliban 'supporters' within the armed forces of Pakistan. The resurgent Taliban in Afghanistan were also perceived as a major threat to the nearly 2,000 Canadian peacekeepers posted in that country. It had been reported in the international media, and the report carried in Canada that Pakistan Army had questioned some army personnel on suspicion of maintaining ties with certain extremist groups and 'Islamic militants'.

President Musharraf's visit to Canada coincided with his trip to New York in the context of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Session. Our High Commissioner Shahid Malik in Ottawa had also made a strong pitch to the Foreign Office to include Ottawa in the President's itinerary, suggesting that we needed to remain engaged, both politically and in the economic and trade sphere with an important G-8 country. The Canadian government, I must acknowledge gratefully, rolled out the red carpet for President Musharraf and the delegates. The visit included talks with Prime Minister Jean Chrétien at his official residence, a state banquet, address to the Canadian Parliament and Foreign Affairs Committee, and wide-ranging interaction at the Canadian Institute of Strategic Studies.

I found the Canadian Prime Minister a very interesting person. He spoke English with a heavy French accent, coming as he did from Quebec, the French-speaking part of Canada. His speech reminded me, somehow, of Maurice Chevalier, the well-known French actor and entertainer who spoke English similarly in Hollywood movies. I mentioned this to the Prime Minister, who seemed to enjoy the comparison. I found Prime Minister Chretien to

be an affable person with no pretensions and a great sense of humour. A nondescript vehicle in the Prime Minister's residence caught my attention. Noticing my interest, Chretien remarked it was his personal car, in which he would be driving out to his private quarters on relinquishing office, which was to take place soon. I was struck by his modesty and simplicity.

Prime Minister Chretien, in his welcome remarks, stated, *inter alia*, that the Canadians were concerned with both the Pakistani and Indian nuclear programmes, 'as they diminish regional and global security.' President Musharraf assured Chretien that Pakistan had taken major steps to make its programme secure from falling into the wrong hands, including personnel evaluation and multilayered security rings around Pakistan's major nuclear installations.

In a lighter vein, Prime Minister Chretien mentioned to President Musharraf that the Canadian government will take him to task for squandering the taxpayers' money as he had flown from New York, only for a couple of days to receive the Pakistani President, and would be returning back for the ongoing UNGA session. President Musharraf offered to take him to New York in his special aircraft since he too was also returning there. Quick-witted, Chretien remarked, 'No, Sir, you are prone to being hijacked, and I wouldn't like to experience that.' Chretien's reference was to the incident when Musharraf was refused landing on return from Sri Lanka by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, leading ultimately to Nawaz Sharif's ouster.

Earlier, Canadian Foreign Minister Bill Graham had visited Pakistan. We met in Islamabad on 6 September. Graham mentioned to me that he appreciated the problems faced by Pakistan government in dealing with the 'lawless groups' and 'Taliban sympathizers'. In this context, he added that, while Canada did not expect perfection from Pakistani security forces, 'We do expect best efforts.' My discussions with Graham also focused on developments in the region, including Pakistan-India relations, the situation in Iraq, and the Middle East peace process. We agreed on the need for an early resumption of the dialogue process with India, aimed at resolving all outstanding issues, including Kashmir.

I am amazed that Canadians always showed more empathy with Pakistan's position than its Southern neighbour, the USA. Even at the G-8 meeting at Potsdam on 30 May 2007, when Dr Condoleezza Rice, the then US Secretary of State, raised the issue of cross-border movement of terrorists across the Pak-Afghan border, I had given the suggestion that we could fence the area and, at some critical areas, we could even mine it. While she and other western Foreign Ministers kept quiet, it was the then Canadian Foreign Minister Peter MacKay who showed much greater understanding and offered to provide technical help regarding the fencing of the border.

I visited Australia and New Zealand in May 2005. This was the first official visit of any Pakistani Foreign Minister to the two nations with whom, despite playing cricket for

decades and old diplomatic ties based on the Commonwealth connection, an official visit had, astoundingly, never been arranged. Our leaders had of course been visiting these countries in connection with various multilateral conferences. The purpose of my visit was to pave the way for smoother and stronger relations between Pakistan and these two nations. Another purpose of the visit was to prepare the ground before President Musharraf's visit, which was planned for June 2005, the first-ever official visit by a Pakistani Head of State to either country. The main thrust of discussions during my visit included economic cooperation, counterterrorism, nuclear non-proliferation, and Commonwealth and UN reforms.

**Australia:** I first visited Australia. Meeting with my counterpart, Alexander Downer, we discussed the efforts the Pakistan Army was making against the Al-Qaeda and which had paralysed the terrorists' communications network. I also told my counterpart that this had vastly reduced Al-Qaeda's capacity to strike. The Australian Foreign Minister hoped that the two countries would sign a Memorandum of Understanding during President Musharraf's visit. He also complimented Pakistan's efforts and said, 'There's no doubt about it that Pakistan has been doing a good job in its work against Al-Qaeda and we appreciate that and I think if we had a Memorandum of Understanding we could enhance our cooperation.' He cited the arrest a few days earlier, by the Pakistani security forces, of Abu Farraj Al-Libbi, a top Al-Qaeda leader.

I also met Prime Minister John Howard, who very graciously sent his personal aircraft to bring me to Canberra from Sydney. I think this gesture also recognized the important role that Pakistan was playing at that time as a responsible member of the international community. I found Prime Minister John Howard to be a warmhearted person. His warmth towards Pakistan was also stimulated by his love of cricket; he even had cricket figurines placed prominently on a console in his office. The first thing that he did, as I entered his office, was to take me towards the console and our official photographs were taken with cricket figurines behind us. I was amazed he had followed various cricket matches of Pakistan against Australia and remembered the names of leading Pakistani cricketers like Imran Khan, Javed Miandad, Inzamam ul-Haq, and Wasim Akram.

He was appreciative of our efforts for this first-ever official visit of Pakistan's Foreign Minister to Australia. He wanted my views on the causes of rage and terrorism in the Muslim world. I tried to explain some of the grievances of the Muslims against European colonialism. I pointed out that the one that had left a deep scar was the Israeli-Palestinian question. Afghanistan and Iraq had only made matters worse. An attack on Iran on whatever grounds, including the nuclear issue, would seriously inflame the situation. He was appreciative of the difficulties that the Government of Pakistan faced on the Pak-Afghan border and said that he looked eagerly forward to President Musharraf's visit, which was to follow my visit during the next month.

During my visit, I laid the groundwork for a counterterrorism pact, which President Musharraf was expected to sign on his visit to Australia the following month. President Musharraf's visit was the first ever visit by a Pakistani head of state to Australia. The counterterrorism pact included exchanging intelligence information. During my visit I also met with Defence Minister Robert Hill, Immigration Minister Amanda Vanston and Attorney General Philip Ruddock. I made it a point to also interact with the expat community in Australia.

As a result of my meetings, Pakistan and Australia agreed to further strengthen our relations and finalized agreements to hold regular consultations and increase cooperation against terrorism, and, in the field of post graduate education and agriculture.

President Musharraf visited Australia in June 2005, where he met with Prime Minister John Howard. The two heads of state held talks that covered bilateral, regional and multilateral issues of mutual interest, including UN reform, regional security, trade and investment, and agriculture. President Musharraf and Prime Minister Howard witnessed the signing of multiple Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) ranging from counterterrorism, which entailed exchange of information, joint training and capacity-building initiatives, to agriculture and commercial cooperation between the two countries. They also signed an agreement to foster closer ties between the Australian Securities and Investment Commission and the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan. Prime Minister John Howard termed President Musharraf's visit a 'historic milestone' in the two countries' relations.

**New Zealand:** During the New Zealand visit, I called upon the new Prime Minister Helen Clark, who underscored the importance that New Zealand attached to its relations with Pakistan. She appreciated the role Pakistan was playing in counterterrorism and respected the courage of President Musharraf in the War on Terror. Welcoming the first official visit by a Pakistani Foreign Minister to New Zealand, she said that it would strengthen bilateral relations, and enhance trade and cooperation in education between the two countries. I also stressed on the need for regular high-level diplomatic exchanges between the two nations which had a lot in common based on the Commonwealth connection, as well as, the fact that we had been playing cricket against each other ever since Pakistan became independent.

She was very pleased with our initiative for peace talks with India. I briefed Helen Clark on the progress in the dialogue process with India aimed at resolution of all outstanding issues including Kashmir, Pakistan's commitment to nuclear non-proliferation, and United Nations Security Council reforms. My meeting with New Zealand's Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Agriculture Minister covered a broad spectrum of issues, focusing on establishing a sustainable mechanism for enhanced bilateral cooperation. I took special interest in the dairy industry in both the countries and explained that there was a great scope for cooperation in agriculture, as well as joint ventures with Pakistani entrepreneurs

in dairy and livestock. I was particularly interested in getting their expert opinion on how Pakistan could increase its milk production.

## **THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Pakistan has also maintained close ties with the European Union (EU). Many countries in the European Union like France, Germany, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, Belgium and many others have been very good economic partners to Pakistan. This relationship became closer following 9/11 with the presence of NATO-ISAF troops in Afghanistan which depended on Pakistan for supplying its troops in Afghanistan through Pakistani territory. Pakistan's relations with European Union were consolidated during 2002–07, despite concerns of the European Union about some issues relating to democracy (President Musharraf remaining in uniform) and non-proliferation.

The relationship was strengthened by the ratification of the Third Generation Agreement at that time. The EU remains Pakistan's largest trading partner and a source of foreign investment and development cooperation. In May 2007, the first Joint Commission from the EU established four special groups in trade, development cooperation, governance and migration, and science and technology. There was a lot of hard and detailed work done at the Foreign Office during this time. In view of the solid base developed by the Foreign Office at that time, the last Government following ours, was able to achieve the objective of the first summit-level formal meeting between the EU and Pakistan in Brussels in June 2009.

## **JAPAN**

Japan has been a close development and economic partner of Pakistan ever since Independence. Japanese companies, like Toyota and Honda, have a major presence in Pakistan. I remember, when I was at college, the cars we saw were of British, American, or German make. Now, it seems that almost 90 per cent of the cars on our roads are Japanese cars. Innumerable Japanese companies, particularly in the field of electronics, have a substantial presence in Pakistan. Japan has been cooperating with Pakistan since the early 1960s, when it extended its first post-War Yen credit to Pakistan, besides India. It also played a significant role in arranging global development finance and technical assistance.<sup>37</sup>

I had very stimulating discussions with Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, Foreign Minister Nobutaka Machimura and Communications Minister Taro Aso (later Prime Minister), during my visit to Japan in February, 2005. They were very appreciative of Pakistan's role in extending support to NATO- ISAF forces in Afghanistan. I would like to narrate an interesting anecdote regarding my meeting with Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi. There is a background to this story. It was being alleged by President Karzai that

Mullah Omar was hiding in Pakistan where the ISI was providing him with a sanctuary from where he operated to launch attacks inside Afghanistan. Before our meetings started, Prime Minister Koizumi jokingly asked me about the whereabouts of Mullah Omar, the Taliban leader. I retorted that he was last seen in Afghanistan escaping on a Japanese-made Honda motorbike. I said to him, 'Your Excellency should know better'. Both of us had a good laugh and we started our meeting on a pleasant note.

During the visit, I met with Japanese Foreign Minister Nobutaka Machimura and we went over the entire gamut of our relationship. We discussed the latest situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan's role in bringing stability to the region. My meeting with Communications Minister Taro Aso was very interesting. Taro Aso is a warm-hearted and likeable person, I remember he had a framed photograph of the Lowari tunnel on one of the walls in his office. He spoke with pride about Japanese cooperation in the Lowari Pass Tunnel Project, which would enable the residents of Chitral district near the border of Tajikistan in Central Asia to get connected to the rest of Pakistan more easily than through the long, difficult and circuitous alternative route. I met him often later on, when he became Foreign Minister. Whenever we met, anywhere in the world, he greeted me very warmly as if we were old friends. Later on, as Prime Minister of Japan, he co-hosted a conference with the World Bank to help Pakistan, which was facing the consequences of instability in Afghanistan. He announced a pledge of a billion dollars by Japan at this conference and acknowledged that Pakistan's peace and stability were important for the region and for the peace and stability of the international community.<sup>38</sup>

## **THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY'S HEART-WARMING RESPONSE FOLLOWING THE EARTHQUAKE**

Pakistan's diplomacy during 2002–07 was very active. We engaged with the international community in a very proactive manner, perhaps as never before. We all worked as a team at the Foreign Office to promote this objective. It has been a great privilege for me to be a part of this process. We believe this policy of proactive engagement served us well and also enabled us to meet many challenges, for example, in handling the crisis following the A. Q. Khan saga.

Another example of this was the response of the international community which was truly heart-warming following the massive earthquake on 8 October 2005. A Donors Conference was organized at Islamabad at a very short notice on 19 November and it pledged approximately US \$6 Billion, which was in excess of our expectations and was slightly in excess of our estimate of losses sustained during the earthquake. This Conference was very well attended. Besides, we had important visitors from all over the world to show their sympathy to the people of Pakistan in their time of need. President George H. W. Bush, father of President George W. Bush, and Kofi Anan, Secretary General of the United Nations, also came to show their solidarity. They appreciated the

Pakistani response to the earthquake, I remember the Senior Bush telling me that he wished that their own response had been as good following hurricane Katrina, which devastated parts of United States. The Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, and his Deputy Under Secretary General, Jan Egeland also visited Pakistan and commended the Pakistani government for their handling of the emergency following the earthquake and described it as a model for other countries to follow.

The Donors Conference was attended by many Foreign Ministers. The Foreign Office was put on a war footing and had its representatives 24/7 at Islamabad international airport to facilitate the visiting dignitaries and to arrange for the onward deployment of humanitarian assistance. I recall late one night receiving a call from the Foreign Minister of Cuba who informed me that the Cuban government was dispatching a contingent of 3,000 doctors and paramedics to help those injured seriously and traumatized after the earthquake. I first thought that I had heard him incorrectly or that perhaps his knowledge of English was limited. I had assumed he was offering thirty. I asked him to repeat and could not believe that he was actually offering not thirty or three hundred but 3,000 doctors. He told me that President Fidel Castro, whom President Musharraf and I had met on the sidelines of some international conferences and with whom President Musharraf had developed a very good rapport, had personally instructed him to do whatever he could to help Pakistan. I was deeply touched by this gesture. This show of solidarity on the part of the Cuban government later on led to the setting up of our diplomatic mission in Havana. I remember being present at the inaugural ceremony in Havana, where a large number of members of the Cuban contingent sent to the earthquake affected areas were decorated. One of the interesting features of their presence was the fact that, after initial treatment by the Cuban doctors, very often some of the patients in serious condition were forwarded to a high-tech hospital facility set up by the United States. This impressed all the observers that these two countries which were often at loggerheads were cooperating in the interest of earthquake victims in Pakistan.

In a nutshell, it would be fair to say that the heart-warming response of the international community, following the earthquake, was a resounding vote of confidence in Pakistan's conduct of its diplomacy during this period. Unfortunately, Pakistan has been affected by disasters, before and since, but never has the response of the outside world been the same as on that occasion.



# The Foreign Office

## SECTION I

### DOES THE FOREIGN OFFICE FORMULATE FOREIGN POLICY?

It would be appropriate to address a question that is sometimes asked: Does the Foreign Office have a significant input in the formulation of the foreign policy of Pakistan? There is a perception that the Army and the Intelligence Agencies play a key role in it. This question is not surprising in view of the repeated military interventions in Pakistan as well as the widespread belief, both within the country and outside, that sections of our establishment have supported activities of non-state actors in the Afghan Jihad as well as in Kashmir.

This question, while it is understandable, does nevertheless underrate the contribution and belittles the efforts of the dedicated and competent officers of the Foreign Office. It is therefore necessary to say something about the contribution made by Pakistan's Foreign Office since Independence to promote Pakistan's national interest. I would like to share some of my own experiences and perceptions about the Foreign Office.

#### Historical Perspective

Pakistan has produced some outstanding Foreign Ministers and Foreign Secretaries. Sir Muhammad Zafarullah Khan, the Foreign Minister of Pakistan, in the formative years of its existence, excelled at the United Nations with his powerful advocacy of the case for Kashmir over a number of years and won many supporters to Pakistan's cause. He also forcefully opposed the partition of Palestine. He argued that the pledge given to the Arabs should have precedence over the Balfour Declaration, and he accused the Western powers of 'forcefully driving a western wedge into the heart of the Middle East.'<sup>1</sup>

He played an important part in the campaign for the independence of Tunisia, Morocco, and Algeria at the UN.<sup>2</sup> This has not been forgotten in these countries. I was touched by how often the leaders of these countries talked to me about Pakistan's contribution towards their countries' independence. They described how Pakistan's Foreign Office had made it possible for their founding fathers to present their cases at the United Nations, with Pakistan even going out of its way, in the face of French and Western opposition.

There were even cases where their leaders were provided Pakistani diplomatic passports so that they could represent their people's aspirations before the United Nations.

Sir Zafarullah played an active role in promoting Pakistan's long-term relations with the United States. 'Zafarullah and Dulles, US Secretary of State under President Eisenhower, had a special regard for each other. Both had a legal background.'<sup>3</sup> Sir Zafarullah Khan's role in strengthening the security relationship with the United States has come in for some criticism in recent times. To be fair, his role in this respect has to be judged in the context of the situation that prevailed immediately after the creation of Pakistan, when the newly independent country felt gravely threatened by India, a country much larger and with far greater resources. There is no doubt that Pakistan's armed forces, as well as its economy, benefitted greatly as a result of American support in the early days of Independence.

### **Pakistani Diplomats: 'A Formidable Group'**

The contribution of our diplomats in various international fora in sustaining the focus on the Kashmir issue has been acknowledged by an unexpected source. Their efforts have been recognized even by the former External Affairs Minister of India, K. Natwar Singh, who is himself a career diplomat and should know what he is talking about.<sup>4</sup> Let me quote him here:

I might here say something about the quality of Pakistani diplomats. They are a formidable group. Their best are as good as our best. For some Pakistani diplomats the Foreign Service was both a cause and a career. For a handful it was a crusade. A few, however, gave the smell of being over smart. It is no mean achievement to keep alive the Kashmir question on the international agenda for so long. Even greater is their achievement in maintaining excellent relations with China and the US and at our expense, and that too when the Americans were dead opposed to Mao's China from 1962 to 1971. The Americans used Pakistan to first establish contact with China in July 1971. The world was taken completely by surprise. Men like Agha Shahi, Abdul Sattar, and Agha Hilaly combine subtlety with sophistication with engaging ease.<sup>5</sup>

The Foreign Office remained preoccupied in those early days with the projection of the Kashmir issue at the United Nations and sustaining difficult relations with India, as well as promoting friendly relations with Pakistan's other neighbours and big powers.

Pakistan was lucky to have a scholar-turned-diplomat, Ahmed Shah Bokhari, better known by his pen name Patras Bokhari, as Pakistan's first Permanent Representative to the UN. After having served as the Principal of Government College, Lahore (my alma mater), from 1947 to 1950, he was sent to the UN. Subsequently, he worked with Dag Hjalmar Hammarskjöld of the United Nations. Ambassador Bokhari built a reputation for speaking his mind. Few who heard him will forget his words during the debate on Tunisia and the colonial question, when he told the Security Council that, by its refusal to discuss the issue, it was inviting the people of Asia to 'go to hell'.<sup>6</sup> In March 1953, *The New York Times*, on the occasion of his assumption of Presidency of the Security Council, described Bokhari as a 'diplomat's diplomat' and went on to say that he was 'one of the ablest representatives of the Asian-Arab bloc to turn up in the United Nations' in the then seven

years of its existence.<sup>7</sup> Such was the quality of diplomats that brought Pakistan into the limelight in those years at the UN.

### **The Golden Age of the United Nations**

We need to remember that the years during the 1950s and 1960s were the golden years of the United Nations. It was also a period of economic growth and expansion in the world. As a result, this was a time of optimism and idealism in which Pakistan's role at the UN as a champion of the Palestinian cause and an active supporter of the independence of North African countries, Tunisia, Morocco, and Algeria, was highly appreciated. Pakistan's diplomacy could rightfully be commended for promoting respect and goodwill for Pakistan in the world.

Pakistani diplomats developed a false set of expectations regarding the role of the United Nations in resolving international disputes. Lack of consensus among the five permanent members in the Security Council during the Cold War made the UN ineffective in pacific settlement of disputes. Inevitably, high expectations from the UN have not been fulfilled and, as a result, a degree of cynicism regarding the role of the United Nations, and particularly that of the Security Council, has subsequently developed. The situation has deteriorated further since 9/11 and there is a growing tendency for the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to assume a role that the framers of the United Nations' Charter never intended.

This tendency has impacted negatively on consensus building and there is a growing apprehension that the UNSC has started eating into some of the functions of the other important bodies of the United Nations, such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Vienna, which Iran maintains should be dealing with its nuclear programme rather than the Security Council itself.

About the role of the Foreign Office in the early years of Pakistan, an anecdote will help in illustrating my point. Former Foreign Secretary Shahryar M. Khan told me that when he was posted to Tunisia in 1962 as a young diplomat, the landlord of the house that he was renting told him that he had eleven children. He had named his first son Zafarullah and the second one Bokhari as a mark of respect for the Pakistani Foreign Minister and Ambassador to the UN. Both names were unusual in Tunisia. This highlighted the degree of public acclaim in North African countries about Pakistan's contribution at the UN in accelerating Tunisia's march to freedom.

### **The Coordinating Role of the Foreign Office in the 1960s**

It may be recalled here that over the years, the Foreign Office and its diplomats have made outstanding contributions to the formulation and implementation of foreign policy. In the 1960s, during President Ayub Khan's time, Foreign Secretary S. M. Yusuf used to convene a monthly meeting of all the key secretaries to the government of Pakistan, including

Secretaries of Finance, Defence, Commerce, Information, as well as heads of departments whose subjects were under discussion at meetings in the Foreign Office. These meetings facilitated coordination and implementation of the various aspects of the foreign policy of Pakistan. This system continued for a number of years and reflected the pre-eminence of the Foreign Office and the proactive role that it played in providing its inputs in the formulation and implementation of the foreign policy of Pakistan.

In the early 1960s many meetings about various aspects of Pakistan's external relations used to be convened at the Foreign Office. An important example in this respect is the negotiation over the construction of the Karakoram Highway linking Gilgit with Kashgar in Xinjiang over some of the highest mountains in the world. Representatives of other ministries concerned would come to the Foreign Office for this purpose.<sup>8</sup> This is just an example of the important coordinating role that the Foreign Office played in formulating and implementing Pakistan's Foreign policy in those days.

### **Active Role of the Foreign Office in the Opening-Up of Relations with China**

The contributions of Foreign Secretaries such as J. A. Rahim and S. K. Dehlavi during the early years of Pakistan are still remembered at the Foreign Office. In those days, when the foundations of our foreign policy were being laid, Foreign Minister Zafarullah Khan and Foreign Secretary J. A. Rahim did not agree on the contours of Pakistan's policy towards the United States of America. Policy papers by the two, including the Foreign Secretary's dissent note containing his assessments and recommendations about the parameters of the alliance with the US, were submitted to the Cabinet for consideration, and it decided in favour of the Foreign Minister's approach of laying the foundation for an alliance with the United States.

In the 1960s, Foreign Secretary S. K. Dehlavi played an active role in facilitating good neighbourly relations with China. The USA had serious reservations about the diplomatic moves made by Pakistan to initiate talks on the Pakistan-China Border Agreement. Under pressure from Washington, S. K. Dehlavi was replaced as Foreign Secretary in July 1963.<sup>9</sup>

### **Pakistan Without a Foreign Minister During the 1971 War**

However hard to believe it may be, Pakistan was without a Foreign Minister during the 1971 crisis with India. One would assume that precisely at such a time there was greater need for an effective Foreign Minister (ironically, even now, despite major developments in the region, as well as internationally, we do not have a full-time Foreign Minister). No wonder that, besides other reasons, Pakistan's case went largely by default in the court of world opinion. General Agha Muhammad Yahya Khan, President and Chief Marshal Law Administrator, held the portfolio of Foreign Minister of Pakistan. Also, the Foreign Office virtually gave up its role of giving independent advice and contented itself with just carrying out uncritically the policies of the Yahya regime.<sup>10</sup> Pakistan was not even able to

present its version of the events and was totally isolated. Like other institutions of the state, the Foreign Office in this hour of tragedy also suffered.

### **Zulfikar Ali Bhutto: A Deep Imprint on the Foreign Policy of Pakistan**

Another outstanding Foreign Minister was Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (1963–66). Since I knew Bhutto well, I was aware of his weaknesses as well as his strengths. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was a controversial figure, but he did leave a deep imprint on the foreign policy of Pakistan. He was a strong proponent of special ties with China. It would be fair to give credit to both Ayub Khan and Bhutto for Pakistan's opening up to China, which, in the long run, had a major impact on the relationship between the two countries. Bhutto, however, spearheaded the process and played a lead role in President Ayub's tenure in laying the foundations of solid Pak-China cooperation. On assumption of office as President and later as Prime Minister, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto kept the Foreign Office portfolio with himself and played an active role internationally. He signed the Simla Agreement with India in 1972 and also hosted the Islamic Summit in Lahore in 1974, which hugely boosted the nation's morale and brought Pakistan even closer to the top leaders of the Muslim World including King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, Egypt's President Anwar al-Saadat, Syria's President Hafez al-Assad, Libya's Leader Muammar Gaddafi, Shiekh Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahyan of the UAE, Yasser Arafat of the PLO, and many others. (Details in Chapter 2, in the section titled 'The 1974 Islamic Summit in Lahore'.)

Pakistan further strengthened relations with China and restored its image and influence in the world. But what is perhaps Bhutto's enduring legacy to Pakistan is the nuclear programme that was started during his era, following India's 'peaceful' nuclear tests in 1974. The nuclear programme has been taken forward by all successive governments. This has provided an element of security against external aggression by bringing nuclear parity to South Asia.

The years 1972–77 were of optimism at the Foreign Office. Outstanding achievements were made when Agha Shahi was Foreign Secretary of Pakistan. This period also marked the revival of the active role of the Foreign Office. It is worth recalling here that, in 1972, when Agha Shahi was Pakistan's Ambassador to China, the case of the admission of Bangladesh as Member of the United Nations was coming up for a decision. Considering the fact that Pakistan's wounds of the break-up of East Pakistan were still very fresh, and that its Prisoners of War (POWs) had not yet been released, Agha Shahi proposed to Prime Minister Zhou En lai that China should use its veto against this move. The Chinese Prime Minister agreed with the suggestion and even offered Agha Shahi a Chinese aircraft to take him to New York to coordinate with the Chinese mission in this regard. The veto on 25 August 1972 was the first ever by China since assuming a Permanent Security Council Seat. It allowed Pakistan adequate time after the return of the POWs in 1973 to recognize Bangladesh at the Lahore Summit in 1974, under more propitious circumstances.<sup>11</sup>

## **The Afghan Jihad and Decline in the Role of the Foreign Office**

The prominent and active role of the Foreign Office began to undergo a change with the Afghan Jihad. It is worth noting that, during General Zia ul-Haq's government, there was a degree of coordination between the Foreign Office and the ISI. Foreign Minister Sahabzada Yaqub Khan and the Foreign Office would provide diplomatic and political support, while the ISI would provide operational support to the Afghan Mujahideen. This active coordination between the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and the Foreign Office continued because Yaqub Khan was a respected former general, whose opinions President Zia ul-Haq valued. It was Zia's desire that Yaqub Khan and DG-ISI work in close coordination. Because of the preoccupation of the Foreign Office in providing diplomatic support and cover to the policy of covert war in Afghanistan by the ISI, due attention was not paid to the long-term implications of this policy for Pakistan.

Sahabzada Yaqub Khan is related to me from my maternal side. He has served as Foreign Minister twice (1982–87 and 1988–91), and as Caretaker Foreign Minister briefly (1996–97). He has held office in governments of varying complexions: of General Zia ul-Haq, Benazir Bhutto, and Nawaz Sharif. He steered the foreign policy of Pakistan with panache, verve, and style, through difficult times in the 1980s and early 1990s, becoming Pakistan's diplomatic face on the international arena. His wife, the sophisticated Begum Tuba Yaqub Khan, proved to be a perfect spouse to the equally sophisticated Foreign Minister of Pakistan.

An illustration of how things would later play out with the Mujahideen leaders started manifesting itself fairly early. In the 1980s, every year a group of seven Mujahideen leaders would travel to New York for the Annual United Nations General Assembly Session to help garner support in connection with the vote on Afghanistan. The Mujahideen were lionized by the American media and the establishment. In September 1985, a meeting of these leaders was arranged with President Ronald Reagan at the White House. At the last minute, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, leader of the Hezb-e-Islami refused to go for the meeting because of his known dislike of the USA. Despite persuasions from Lt General Akhtar Abdur Rahman, DG-ISI, Hekmatyar refused to meet with the US President. Policymakers in Pakistan at this point should have realized that the Afghan Mujahideen, despite all the help that Pakistan was giving them, were not pawns in their hands.

### **A Period of 'Systemic Failure'**

Following General Zia ul-Haq's death in an air crash in 1988, the civilian governments that followed between 1988 and 1999, led by Prime Ministers Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif, could not really get a grip over the country's foreign policy. Poor governance, polarization between the two main political parties, rising corruption, and the resulting

instability of the civilian governments, all led to the label of 'lost decade' being applied to this period.

While these governments did take some important measures to liberalize the economy, lack of stability and troubled civil military relations ensured that these reforms could not take root, as was the case in many other countries at the end of the Cold War.

Governments were distracted from focusing on crucial foreign policy issues. As a result, the grip of the uniformed establishment over issues relating to India, Kashmir, Afghanistan, and the USA grew stronger. It is only fair to say that Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif took a bold initiative in inviting Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to Lahore. But the hold of the establishment in key foreign policy areas was growing. This was soon demonstrated by the Kargil episode, regarding which, to date, one is not clear as to who knew what and how much and at what time, owing to completely different accounts given by different actors.

According to Shuja Nawaz in *Crossed Swords*, the 1990s was a period of 'systemic failure', as manifested in the troubled relations between the Presidents, Prime Ministers, and the Chiefs of the Army Staff, with 'ISI's Islamist bent' becoming more apparent.

This was the period when General Javed Nasir, as head of the ISI, was keen to support 'Islamic causes' anywhere in the world and a 'strange non-military atmosphere' prevailed at the ISI.<sup>12</sup> Relations with the US during the Clinton Administration suffered and as a result, there was a renewed focus on terrorism by his administration. In part, the relationship suffered because of Pakistan's determination to proceed with its nuclear programme and the Clinton Administration's unhappiness at Pakistan's policies in this respect. Also, Pakistan's support for the Kashmiri militants was seen negatively in Washington and there were reports that Pakistan might be on the verge of being declared a state sponsor of terrorism. Needless to say, the attitude of the DG-ISI, General Javed Nasir, did not help matters.<sup>13</sup>

The idea of the dictation in foreign policy matters by the Intelligence Agencies gained currency during the Afghan Jihad against the Soviet Union. The reason for this was not difficult to understand. Following the eyeball-to-eyeball confrontation during the Cuban Missile Crisis, it had been decided at the highest levels in both the US and the USSR that such brinkmanship, which had brought the world to the threshold of a nuclear war, would be avoided in future. Thus, when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan, in order to counter it, the CIA started supporting the Mujahideen through the ISI. It was decided to keep this intervention covert. As a consequence, members of the US Congress or, for that matter, even leading members of the administration, were kept out of the loop.

During this period, the CIA had emerged as the lead agency deciding American policy in Afghanistan. It had a large presence both in Afghanistan and Pakistan larger than that of the State Department officials. Many important negotiations with Pakistan took place between the CIA and the ISI during this period. There were also close personal relations

between Director William J. Casey of the CIA and DG-ISI Lt General Akhtar Abdur Rahman. It seemed that not just the Pakistan Foreign Office but even the US State Department in Washington was no longer in charge of policies on Afghanistan. Not surprisingly, President Zia ul-Haq, who also happened to be the Chief of Army Staff, and President Ronald Reagan, developed warm and friendly relations.

Since the US State Department was largely kept on the fringes, it was only prior to the signing of the Geneva Accord that US Secretary of State George Schultz started taking an active interest in Afghanistan. Under these circumstances, it was not surprising that the State Department could not meaningfully negotiate with the Foreign Office in Islamabad on an issue on which neither side was particularly well informed. Inevitably, top CIA officials started interacting with their counterparts in the ISI.

The conduct of the Afghan Jihad and the details of the support by the CIA to covert operations generally were also kept secret in Pakistan. The ISI received and distributed funds, weapons and material to the Mujahideen. Naturally, they acquired a more significant role in the policy on Afghanistan.

The ISI was therefore empowered through this relationship. Their self-confidence in their ability to protect what they regarded as the national interest of Pakistan also grew. According to a well-known author, the 'ISI staff jumped from 2000 in 1978 to 40,000 in 1988 with a billion dollar budget', and 'Much of the growth was directed at keeping General Zia ul-Haq in power and also, at waging jihad.'<sup>14</sup> According to the same author, General Zia ul-Haq gave Pakistan the 'incendiary mix of Despotism and Islamization', from which Pakistan continues to suffer and the challenges posed by those policies will take a long time to redress. It was due to these reasons that the impression grew that it was the ISI and the Army that formulated Pakistan's foreign policy, rather than the Foreign Office, particularly, in the context of Afghanistan.

It is appropriate to recall here that Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in 1989 had restructured the Afghan cell, which was co-chaired, alongside Foreign Minister Yaqub Khan, by the National Security Advisor Iqbal Akhund, an outstanding Pakistani diplomat who had served, inter alia, as Pakistan's Permanent Representative at the UN.<sup>15</sup> Despite this effort, the restructuring process did not bear much fruit because of the infighting between the government and the Opposition as well as issues relating to governance and troubled civil military relations.

As far as the role of intelligence services in influencing foreign policy is concerned, there is no doubt that the input that they make has a major bearing on the foreign policy of any country. It is for this reason that, reportedly, CIA's Director George Tenet, was usually the first visitor every day at the Oval Office when George W. Bush was President.

When the jihad ended in 1989, the concept of 'Strategic Depth' came into being and was supported by a section of the establishment. It implied Pakistan's ability to remove its

strategic assets away from the theatre of war. It has been correctly said that this explanation made little sense as such assets are meant not for their own safe keeping at a time of conflict but should be readily available for the security of the country and its citizens.<sup>16</sup> In recent years, an attempt has been made to put a more credible interpretation on this term to imply that all Pakistan needed was to feel secure along its Afghan borders. Afghan King Zahir Shah rightly pointed out to me when I met him in Kabul in August 2003, that Pakistan was never threatened by Afghanistan, and that its border with Afghanistan remained tranquil during Pakistan's conflicts with India in 1965 and 1971. I also realized during my interaction with Afghan leaders that they resented statements coming from Pakistan which, in their minds, implied that somehow Pakistan felt that it had earned the right to influence internal developments in Afghanistan. I was at pains to explain to them that we were forced to refer to the situation in Afghanistan because it had a direct bearing on the internal stability of our own country. I feel even my explanations were not happily embraced. As pointed out by an eminent diplomat, 'If Afghanistan is peaceful, stable and friendly, Pakistan's western border will be secure, [and] that is where Pakistan's strategic depth would lie.'<sup>17</sup>

When the Taliban appeared on the scene, sections of the establishment in Pakistan found it convenient to support or even adopt them, on the assumption that this would increase Pakistan's influence or 'Strategic Depth' in Afghanistan. Over a period of time, this had impacted not just the military but had affected the Foreign Office and politicians. Referring to the 1990s, an experienced insider has pointed out,

[T]he influence of the ISI on policies relating to India and Afghanistan became more pronounced and excessive, particularly, in practical dealing with the Afghan factions and later the Taliban or in supporting the Kashmir uprising. Such hawkish views on security and foreign relations in fact became quite common within the Foreign Office and civilian establishment, partly owing to the long period of military rule in Pakistan.<sup>18</sup>

A few in the Foreign Office sometimes tended to look up to the military establishment, rather than representatives of the civilian government or the competent authority in the Foreign Office. In view of the foregoing, this was not a surprising development. During this period, the positions of the civilians and the Security Establishment began to diverge on some issues. The role of the Foreign Office suffered.

### **The Palestine Initiative: Go-Slow Approach Adopted**

A point that I wish to highlight here is the fact that the Foreign Office can influence the policy even if it has been initiated by the Head of State, even as powerful as President Pervez Musharraf undoubtedly was. This is what happened with a proposal by President Musharraf towards the end of 2006 and beginning of 2007 that he formulated without much consultation with the Foreign Office. This was done by him on the suggestion of King Abdullah of Jordan who was known to be a close ally of the US. Although King Abdullah and his father, the late King Hussein, have been close friends of Pakistan,

nevertheless, there were suspicions at the Foreign Office that the initiative seemed to have been conceived in Washington aimed at isolating Iran.

The American government was unhappy with Iran's nuclear programme. The hostility was so severe that it had been openly communicated that all options were on the table—a clear reference to the threat of use of force. King Abdullah had urged President Musharraf to play his role in organizing other Muslim countries to help find a solution to the ongoing issue of Palestine, an issue that has been close to the hearts of Pakistanis. The initiative was taken in the backdrop of efforts by rival Palestinian factions to form a unity government following a power-sharing deal. Lebanon still continued to face a critical situation following Israeli attack in July 2006. Iraq was mired in violence following the US attack and removal of Saddam Hussein. President Musharraf had addressed the American-Jewish Congress in New York and his stature in the West as a major international statesman had grown. Musharraf had been assured that in view of his stature in the Muslim world and his close friendship with President Bush and with the leaders of the Islamic countries, the US Administration would throw its weight behind a solution enjoying the backing of leading moderate Muslim countries. In Washington's view, this obviously excluded Iran.

As I have mentioned before, Pakistan faces a peculiarly challenging situation in dealing with Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Turkey, who have a complex relationship rooted in history and religion. Pakistan has had close relations with these countries despite their mutual differences. We at the Foreign Office, therefore, felt very uncomfortable that Pakistan was being dragged into a situation where its relationship with Iran would come under strain. I also knew that Saudi Arabia, one of Pakistan's closest friends, was unhappy with Iran's nuclear programme and its efforts to hijack the Palestinian cause. The Saudis, Jordanians, and Egyptians were unhappy at Iran's growing interference in the region through its championing of the cause of Palestine. They were uncomfortable with Iran's increasing influence among sections of the Arabs through its support of Hamas in Palestine and of Hezbollah in Lebanon. Some Arab allies of Pakistan accused Iran, in private meetings with us, of planting its pawns to destabilize the Arab heartland.

We faced a difficult situation. It was made worse by the fact that Pakistan was gravely short of energy and an Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline offered the only viable option to take care of Pakistan's ever-growing energy needs. In fact, I had started supporting the idea of the pipeline being extended to India, and, at a later stage, even to China, to best leverage Pakistan's geographical location as a link between South Asia, Central Asia, and China. I also thought that the Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline could give a major boost to the Pakistan-India peace process, which was making headway during our tenure. I was also conscious of the possible sectarian implications of this move for Pakistan. Pakistan has a significant Shiite population and they have historically held important positions in different areas of national life. I have already illustrated my fears regarding sectarian fallout, of a possible attack by the United States on Iran over differences on the nuclear

issue. My fears in this respect have now come out through leaked US Embassy cables through WikiLeaks.<sup>19</sup>

Out of the blue came the new project, we suspected on US urging, whereby President Musharraf would take the initiative on this issue. Iran was expected to be kept out. We knew that Iran suspected the United States of surreptitiously using Pakistani soil on the Balochistan border to encourage terrorist attacks on Iranian Balochistan by the Sunni militant organization, Jundullah. Pakistan had arrested some Jundullah terrorists and handed them over to Iran. The new project, therefore, required dexterous handling. At the Foreign Office, we faced a difficult situation because the President was very keen that his tour of the major Islamic capitals be followed up by a Foreign Ministers' Conference leading to a meeting of the Heads of State.

The President made high-profile visits to Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, Turkey, Malaysia, and Indonesia in early January. I accompanied him to these visits. This was followed by a conference of Foreign Ministers of Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, Turkey, Malaysia, and Indonesia. It was clear from the conference that Turkey, Malaysia, and Indonesia, like Pakistan, were uncomfortable at keeping Iran out. On the other hand, the Foreign Ministers of Arab countries openly expressed their unhappiness at Iran's activities in the Arab world and also its efforts to project itself as a protector of the Shiites in the Muslim world generally. Some of the Arab Foreign Ministers present said that the message to Iran emanating from this group should be loud and clear. My opinion was that this may present some complications for Pakistan. In response, one of the Foreign Ministers said to me that the message should be 'loud and clear' but it could be 'whispered' in Iran's ear. This was obviously easier said than done. I felt particularly embarrassed because I received telephone calls from my Iranian counterpart asking me the purpose of the conference indicating also at the same time his unhappiness at being excluded.

After great deal of effort we at the Foreign Office were ultimately able to convince President Musharraf to add a visit to Tehran and Damascus to allay the impression that the initiative was being undertaken solely to please Washington and to calm Iran's fears. The President did agree to visit Tehran and Damascus. Something very unusual happened during our meeting with the Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Sayyed Ali Khamenei. During important international visits, it is customary for television channels to be let in briefly and then leave so that the meeting may then commence. Surprisingly, the state television stayed throughout our meeting with the Supreme Leader at which President Musharraf and I were accompanied by President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. I began to feel uncomfortable since it seemed that the discussion was being recorded.

President Pervez Musharraf tried to allay Iranian misgivings. He said his initiative was aimed at bringing about unity in the ranks of Muslims and towards addressing major issues confronting the Muslim world, such as Palestine, Iraq, Lebanon, and Afghanistan. Ayatollah Khamenei emphasized that the enemies of Muslim nations saw their interest on

the contrary in sowing discord among them. He said that the Zionist regime in Israel was making efforts through the United States to divide the Muslims. He added that the continued crimes of this regime were responsible for the oppression of the Palestinians. As far as I was concerned, I knew that both sides were saying what they were expected to say, but the important point from Pakistan's perspective was the fact that the visit by itself had, in fact, defused some of the tension that had been generated out of the President's initiative in keeping the Iranians out from the Foreign Ministers' Conference.

The Foreign Secretary and I were completely on the same page on this issue. I remember having consulted former Foreign Secretaries as well. As a result of these consultations, I was convinced that Pakistan would face a very difficult situation unless we were able to cool off President Musharraf's enthusiasm or at least go slow on the entire project. This was not going to be easy because the President had been convinced by some of his friends that this was an opportunity for him and for Pakistan to play a major role on the international stage. In view of all the complications described above, it was decided at the Foreign Office that we should adopt delaying tactics at the diplomatic level, in the expectation that it would not lead to a meeting of the Heads of States. Without going into details, this is what actually happened. Anyway, the Lawyers' Movement in March 2007 took our attention away from international issues. In retrospect, it seems unbelievable that President Musharraf, who was at the height of his popularity in Pakistan towards the end of 2006 and whose international stature had grown enough for the West and major moderate Muslim countries to encourage him to play this role on the international arena, should fall so precipitously within a matter of months. This is reminiscent of President Ayub Khan's political collapse following mass public protests within a matter of months of his reaching his peak and celebrating a 'Decade of Development' and being hailed as the 'Asian De Gaulle' by many Western leaders.

### **The Role of the Foreign Office After 9/11**

The relationship between the two countries following 9/11 has already been covered under the section titled 'Pakistan-US Relations' in Chapter 7. Here, it may suffice to point out that Foreign Secretary Inam-ul-Haque had made a case for committing support to Washington in principle and offering discussions for mutually agreed understandings on the terms of engagement. A Foreign Office Note on these lines was handed over by President Musharraf to Ambassador Wendy Chamberlain in Islamabad. The security establishment, however, felt that this was not the time to 'quibble' over such details, and President Musharraf supported the establishment's position.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, 'On September 14, General Musharraf convened a corps commanders' meeting, effectively the country's highest military body, to discuss the situation and the US demands. There was no dissent, only the raising of some issues of tactics and what Pakistan must ask in return. The impact of 9/11 was so overwhelming that the question of denying support to the US appeared foolhardy, regardless of the perceived importance of Taliban regime to Pakistan's

interests ... Pakistan hoped to convince the Taliban to extradite Osama and avert the oncoming disaster,<sup>21</sup> but that was not to be.'

## **Invaluable Role of the Foreign Office in Ensuring Civil Nuclear Cooperation with China**

I would like to particularly mention the important role that the Foreign Office played on the vital issue of civil nuclear cooperation with China. One of our most outstanding diplomats, Ambassador Riaz Muhammad Khan, remained in constant touch with me to emphasize the need for an early agreement with China prior to its joining the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) in 2004. Ambassador Riaz M. Khan said to me that he faced some bureaucratic bottlenecks in Islamabad (not at the Foreign Office) and asked me to help resolve these. I continuously attempted to sensitize President's House on the need for urgent action in this respect. I think Ambassador Riaz Muhammad Khan, who became Foreign Secretary in early 2005, took an invaluable initiative which helped us in concluding an agreement to secure future cooperation with China following its decision to join the NSG through what is called a 'Grandfather Clause'. The Grandfather Clause is a legal term that is meant to provide legal cover to a pre-existing situation before assumption of new legal obligations. At that time it was understandably a very hush-hush affair. Luckily, we were able to complete all the formalities before the due date. China thus is on a sound legal footing in continuing cooperation with Pakistan on peaceful uses of nuclear energy. After all, if in 2008 the US signed an agreement with India on peaceful uses of nuclear energy, why should it try and deter China from meeting its own commitments to Pakistan? If America can bend rules for India, why can't China continue to cooperate with Pakistan on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy? The role of the Foreign Office and the continuing strategic value of this agreement with China can hardly be over-emphasized.

## **Indispensable Work of the Foreign Office**

On the basis of my own experiences as Foreign Minister, I can say without a shadow of doubt that the Foreign Office contains some exceptionally competent diplomats who can hold their own with the best anywhere in the world. As in the case of Foreign Offices in other major countries, the work of the Foreign Office is indispensable for the protection, promotion, and projection of Pakistan's national interests abroad on a number of vital issues pertaining to security and economy.

Diplomats posted to different world capitals send telegrams and reports regularly to the Foreign Office. They have to report on important developments in the countries of their posting on a regular basis. The information and assessment provided by them helps the Foreign Office in preparing various policy options for the government of the day. Some of these are of a highly sensitive nature. No other government department, civil or military, has the training, the reach or the analytical skills honed over many years to match this.

Hence no other department can really substitute for the Foreign Office in these areas. Furthermore, while the military in Pakistan does have major input in foreign policy formulation, particularly on India and Afghanistan, it is also a fact that the way the international community operates leaves very little room for any other organization to play the role that only the Foreign Office is equipped to play.

The Pakistani diplomats at the United Nations headquarters in New York, Geneva, and Vienna handle and deal with matters relating to regional and global security including nuclear nonproliferation and counterterrorism, human rights, refugees, and humanitarian issues at the UN. These specialized skills, developed over many years of training and experience, enable the Foreign Office to protect Pakistan's national interest at the multilateral fora. Some of the issues dealt at the United Nations are of vital significance to Pakistan. These include negotiations over Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) reform, expansion of UN Security Council, and humanitarian assistance.

Pakistan's missions abroad also safeguard the rights and interests of the Pakistani citizens and institutions abroad. They provide consular facilities to approximately eight million Pakistanis living overseas in the Gulf, Saudi Arabia, the EU, the UK, the USA, Norway, Denmark, and other North American countries. Much more, however, needs to be done in this area. Pakistani expatriates are a major national resource and there is need to provide better consular facilities to Pakistanis living abroad. This would require more funding, and the Foreign Office should be provided additional resources to perform this role more effectively.

### **The Foreign Office and the Backchannel on Kashmir**

Given the importance of the issue of Jammu and Kashmir in the foreign policy of Pakistan, it can be said without any fear of contradiction that one of the most sensitive negotiations during our tenure related to the backchannel negotiations on this issue. No draft of a non-paper was ever sent to the Indians without it being vetted by Foreign Secretary Riaz Muhammad Khan and me. Tariq Aziz, who interacted on the backchannel with Ambassador J. N. Dixit, and later, after the latter's death, with Ambassador S. K. Lambah, would carry various drafts in the form of non-papers. The Committee presided over by President Musharraf, which met often on the backchannel on Kashmir comprised, inter alia, the Foreign Minister, Foreign Secretary, Vice Chief of Army Staff General Ahsan Saleem Hayat, General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani who was DG-ISI at that time, as well as Lt General Hamid Javed, Chief of Staff to the President, and of course Tariq Aziz, our backchannel negotiator. Ambassador Riaz Muhammad Khan and I always studied the drafts and made our recommendations. After incorporating the results of our discussions at the meetings, we would send back to India our revised version of the draft non-paper through Tariq Aziz.

As already noted, these non-papers would be brought to a committee presided over by President Pervez Musharraf, who always encouraged a healthy discussion. He never tried to thrust his views on the participants. I sometimes disagreed with assessments made by the Intelligence Agencies and tried my best to argue in favour of what I considered to be in the best national interest of Pakistan. I spoke with conviction with my international interlocutors and often with passion at public fora, both local and foreign, on issues of importance to Pakistan. This would not have been possible and I could not take ownership of foreign policy if I was not an active participant in the formulation of policy on those issues.

### **Need for a High-Level Inter-Ministerial Coordination Committee**

One of the deficiencies that I noticed in the system, and which delayed follow-up action, was the absence of an effective inter-ministerial coordination body to implement decisions and agreements reached during high-level visits by the President, the Prime Minister, and the Foreign Minister. I noticed during my tenure that instructions given by the leadership or decisions taken during a foreign visit were not always carried out effectively. I used to be reminded sometimes by foreign leaders, much to my embarrassment, that decisions taken during my previous visits or that of the visits of the President or Prime Minister had not in fact been implemented. This amounts to a waste of national effort.

The external relations of Pakistan, as of any country, also touch upon trade, external publicity, culture, matters relating to Pakistani expatriates/labour, overseas Pakistanis, defence and economic cooperation. For an appropriate follow-up, it is essential to set up a high-level inter-ministerial mechanism which could be headed by the Foreign Minister and comprise the representatives of all the Ministries concerned at the Secretary level. Participation in such meetings should be mandatory.

Besides a formal meeting held once a month, it should be preceded by a meeting of the Secretaries to ensure that a follow-up action on all matters have been carried out. These meetings should facilitate coordination and implementation. Issues of turf, funding and coordination could be sorted out through these regular high-level meetings. In view of the challenges that Pakistan faces today and the absence of an effective follow-up mechanism to implement decisions taken during such visits, as well as for an effective projection of Pakistan's viewpoint, it is necessary that such a body be set up without delay.

### **An Effective Foreign Office Team**

During my tenure, I had a very good team at the Foreign Office. Makhdoom Khusro Bakhtiar remained Minister of State for Foreign Affairs for almost three years, one of the three years in which I held office. Bakhtiar is a competent young man with a lot of promise and a bright future in politics. Because of my busy schedule, he represented Pakistan on many occasions in my place very competently.

I had the opportunity to work with two distinguished Foreign Secretaries, Riaz H. Khokhar (November 2002 to February 2005) and Riaz Muhammad Khan (February 2005 to November 2007). My positive views of the Foreign Office are obviously a product of my dealings with them and other senior diplomats at the Foreign Office. Riaz Khokhar was one of Pakistan's most accomplished diplomats, who had been posted to some of the most important world capitals. I had known him before assuming the office of Foreign Minister. We were friendly, although our views on the way forward with India at times differed. Riaz Khokhar's successor, Riaz Muhammad Khan is a distinguished author with a scholarly bent of mind. We share a similar world view. We worked together on an entire range of issues of interest to Pakistan including our India policy. A relationship of close partnership between the Foreign Minister and the Foreign Secretary is essential for the smooth working of the Foreign Office as well as for its effectiveness.

I must note with appreciation the role of Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, who served with me as Director General, Foreign Minister's Office, for the entire duration of my tenure. He was hard working, dependable, trustworthy, and kept long hours as I did. Khalid Mahmood had earlier served as Pakistan's Ambassador to various countries. I relied on him for advice and kept him in the loop on sensitive issues. We have remained in touch after his retirement. His inputs while I was writing the book are invaluable. It came as a great shock to me and to many in the Foreign Service who had known him, when he died suddenly in April 2014. I have lost a dependable friend.

I would also like to mention some of the officials whom I was in contact with. These include Jalil Abbas Jillani, then DG, South Asia, Masood Khan, Muhammad Sadiq and Tasneem Aslam, all spokespersons of the Foreign Office during my tenure. Jalil Abbas Jillani briefed me on Pakistan's relations with India and other countries in South Asia. He knew his area very well and I found his input useful. Jillani was later appointed Foreign Secretary. Masood Khan, as Spokesperson of the Foreign Office, maintained regular contact with me. In dealings with the media, he was articulate in Urdu and in English, and has a pleasant disposition. He is currently serving as Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations in New York. I found Muhammad Sadiq good-humoured and was, therefore, happy always to meet him. Later, he made quite a reputation as our Ambassador to Afghanistan. He is now considered an expert on Afghan affairs. Currently, he is Secretary of the Cabinet Committee on National Security (CCNS).

Tasneem Aslam has served as Pakistan's Ambassador to several countries. She is now Pakistan's spokesperson at the Foreign Office. I can never forget one incident when during one of my visits to New Delhi, I was being interviewed by an anchor who had a reputation for being aggressive on Pakistan. I was advised by some not to agree to an interview with him. But I agreed, since I felt that it would provide me with an opportunity to put across Pakistan's point of view. I felt that I could handle his aggression. The interview was being conducted at the office of Pakistan's High Commissioner in New Delhi, Shahid Malik. The anchor was being his usual self when I noticed Tasneem Aslam marching into the

room. She said to the anchor that the interview had to end, since ‘you cannot talk to the Foreign Minister of Pakistan in this manner’. Although I wanted to go ahead with the interview, I just did not feel that it would be appropriate to do so after her intervention. In a jiffy, I decided that I could not let her down by continuing with the interview. The interview was abruptly ended.

### **Periodic Consultations with Former Foreign Secretaries and Others**

During my tenure, I started a system of periodically consulting with former Foreign Secretaries and distinguished diplomats, and eminent persons on some of the developments on our relations with India, Afghanistan, and the United States. I sought their advice and I found this process very helpful. I consulted among others, former Foreign Secretaries Niaz A. Naik, Abdul Sattar, Akram Zaki, Inam ul Haque, Dr Humayun Khan, Tanvir Ahmed Khan, and Najmuddin Sheikh, as well as Lt General Talat Masood, Lt General Asad Durrani, and Ambassador Syed Tariq Fatemi, now Special Assistant to the Prime Minister. This provided me with an opportunity for brainstorming with some of the experts who had dealt with similar matters during their time in office. The system became so well structured that these working luncheons sometimes extended into working sessions of over three hours’ duration. I found these informal consultations very useful.

I had the pleasure of discussing important issues with Mr Agha Shahi, one of our most distinguished diplomats, who had also held the office of Foreign Minister. I recall one of my working luncheons at the Foreign Office with him just a few weeks before his death. I could not but admire the depth of his knowledge, the recall of his memory, and the engaging manner in which he expressed his views on various foreign policy issues. His iconic contribution to the Foreign Service of Pakistan will always be remembered with appreciation and gratitude.

As Foreign Minister, my office had an open-door policy. Visitors who could make useful inputs, were always welcome. I started a system of inviting young officers to these meetings and encouraged them to express their views. Initially, they were hesitant to do so in the presence of their seniors; this changed over a period of time.

### **The Growing Importance of Women Foreign Service Officers**

My wife Nasreen (Mona) Kasuri is one of the most successful working women in Pakistan. She is the founder of Beaconhouse School System (BSS) and Chairperson, Beaconhouse National University, a non-profit institution, where women in top positions serve as true role models. A vast majority of those working at the BSS, one of the largest private school systems in the world, are women and I am a firm believer that, given an opportunity, women can do as well as men. In some sectors like education, media, medicine, and politics, they have performed remarkably. I have no doubt that no nation can realize its potential if it deprives fifty per cent of its population from realizing its

potential. I was, therefore, convinced, before assuming office, of the important role that women played if a level playing field were provided to them.

It is a matter of satisfaction that during my time, Fouzia Nasreen, who was our Ambassador to Poland, was the first woman to be promoted to Grade 22 at the Foreign Office. I took personal interest in this matter and also spoke to the President about this. A number of very competent women held ambassadorial positions in important countries, including Dr Maleeha Lodhi in London (although she was not from the regular Foreign Office cadre), Asma Anisa in Paris, Tasneem Aslam in Rome, Humaira Hassan in Madrid, Fauzia Sana in Lisbon, Fouzia Abbas in Copenhagen, Seema Ilahi in Warsaw, and Ayesha Riyaz in Berne. I have no doubt that, in view of their competence and dedication, the women Foreign Service officers will continue to play an increasingly important role at the Foreign Office.

### **Misperceptions about the Quality of Life of Pakistani Diplomats**

There seems to be an impression in Pakistan generally that our Foreign Service officers posted abroad live luxurious lives. Nothing could be further from the truth. It is not generally known that in many small and medium-sized embassies, the absence of staff cars and other facilities arising out of a paucity of funds sometimes makes it difficult to look after visiting Pakistani delegations the way they should be, and, more importantly, they expect to be looked after. This gives rise to a lot of bitterness and misunderstanding. I knew of embassies where, besides the ambassador, there was not a single Foreign Service officer posted in the mission. They had to make do with ministerial staff and locally hired officers. As a result, visiting delegations come back with the impression that the concerned embassy had not been helpful. There is a definite need to provide more personnel and resources, particularly to embassies in countries which host a large Pakistani population, to enable the embassy concerned to look after them better. This is particularly true of the Gulf countries as well as of our missions in some of the European countries. I made it a point to meet with expatriate Pakistanis and emphasized the need for our embassies to look after them better. A lot needs, however, to be done in this direction. More funds need to be provided for this purpose.

It is a matter of satisfaction that, due to the efforts that the Foreign Secretary and I made, we were able to convince the government to increase foreign allowances by 20 per cent. This had become imperative because in some capitals that I visited, I was made aware of the problems that many young officers and staff members felt because of the increase in the cost of living. Some of the officers even declined foreign postings because of the low allowances. A comparative analysis of salaries and allowances offered by other regional countries conducted during my tenure proved that Pakistani Foreign Service officers were underpaid.

## SECTION II

### MEDIA AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

My father, the late Mian Mahmud Ali Kasuri, was a generous host and maintained an open house. I was brought up in a household where important media personalities of the day were constantly in and out of our home. Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din (owner of Progressive Papers Limited, which brought out Pakistan's leading newspapers, *The Pakistan Times* and *Imroze*) was one of my father's closest friends, and his son Sohail a close friend of mine. The editors of these newspapers, Faiz Ahmed Faiz, also one of Pakistan's greatest poets, and Mazhar Ali Khan, one of our country's most distinguished editors, were personal friends of my father's. Our residence, 4-Fane Road, for many years before we moved to our Gulberg house, was the centre of political activity. Habib Jalib, the famous revolutionary poet and left-wing activist, and Syed Sibte-Hasan, editor of *Naya Adab* and *Lailo-Nahar*, as well as one of the moving spirits behind the Progressive Writers' Movement, were frequent visitors. One of Pakistan's leading journalists Abdullah Malik was also my father's friend. He was also mine and my father's prison cellmate during various political movements. Similarly, Nisar Usmani, who became a legend among working journalists in his day, was a close friend of my father's.

Hardly a day would pass by without some political meeting or the other taking place at 4-Fane Road. I. A. Rehman, later Chairman of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, and Hussain Naqi, then a relatively young journalist, were also close to my father. Regular press conferences were held at our house. Although I was very young, I used to enjoy sitting at these press conferences which were either addressed by my father or by some important political personality. Since my father had many close friends who were journalists, I got to know quite a few of them. Hence, I felt comfortable with media people from an early age and got to know many of them well.

I do not have to emphasize the importance of the media in moulding public opinion, more so after the advent of the electronic media. As early as the eighteenth century, Napoleon understood the importance of media when he said, 'Four hostile newspapers are more to be feared than a thousand bayonets.'<sup>22</sup> After the advent of the electronic media it would not be an exaggeration to say that one important electronic channel is perhaps more to be feared than an entire army corps.

When I came to the Foreign Office, my extensive connections with the media and my friendly disposition towards it came in handy. This was particularly so, while we were trying to craft a new policy towards India. Pakistan-India relations were a sensitive subject and there was a section in the media which had entrenched negative views about India. I found a similar attitude in sections of the Indian media towards Pakistan. I think my background enabled me to tell our side of the story in both countries in a less jarring

manner. It was very important that we did so, if we were to have any chance of success in changing some of these deeply entrenched negative attitudes.

As Foreign Minister, I realized the importance of building a positive narrative in the ongoing peace process between the two countries. In order to carry Pakistan's story, I adopted an open door policy towards both, Pakistani and Indian media. In view of the importance of the media in either promoting or impacting negatively on relations between the two countries, it is no longer sufficient to blame political leaders if the situation starts to go wrong. Besides the politicians, the media must also get credit and also blame. My experience, on the other hand, was very positive. I was able to get our narrative across in both the countries very effectively on occasions even when the situation was really grave, as it was after the Mumbai serial train bombings of 2006.

I started giving interviews over the telephone to Indian journalists shortly after assuming office. I was advised by some at the Foreign Office to be more restrictive in dealing with Indian journalists, since I was repeatedly told that my words would be twisted out of context. I was prepared to take the risk and on the rare occasions when my remarks were not correctly reported, I was able to rectify these without difficulty. Although Adlai Stevenson, the two-time US Democratic presidential nominee, commented, but in a different context, that newspaper editors are men who separate wheat from the chaff, and then print the chaff, my experience taught me that if one was persistent one could get in a bit of the wheat as well. I initiated a policy of providing easy access to the media. By holding regular briefings, being helpful with information when asked for, and adopting a proactive approach towards Pakistani and foreign media, we were able to help promote the objectives of our policy agenda.

Since the Foreign Minister's Office was inundated with requests for interviews by local and foreign media, I tried to oblige as much as I could in view of the time constraints imposed on my schedule. I made it a point on my visits to Lahore and Karachi, the two other major news dissemination centres in Pakistan (besides Islamabad where I was based as Foreign Minister) to brief the editors and leading columnists in these two cities. This was normally off the record and meant to give a background briefing so that our policies were better understood. This also helped provide the justification for an action that otherwise could appear to be not particularly popular. My experience taught me that this did help.

There were times when I could not grant briefings personally. On such occasions I would encourage the Director General of the Foreign Minister's Office, Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, to attend to them. Such news was often attributed to 'knowledgeable circles' in the Foreign Office and had the effect of crowding out the bad news, besides of course of giving our own version of the events and developments.

It is now a cliché to say that we live in a global village. This has particularly strong manifestations in the world of the media. Local and international media feed upon each

other. When I used to go to my rural constituency in Kasur district in Central Punjab, I would sometimes speak to the local media there. A day later, this would be picked up by the national media; the day after, the international media would pick up the story, not infrequently with a slant. This would then, of course, acquire a life of its own and be picked up in turn by the local media as if it were a new story. Proper briefing of the national media, therefore, helps a better international projection as well.

The media management of the Simla Agreement in 1972 has been compared to Agra 2001 in its contrasting styles which, in one case improved the chances for success, while in the other case, it reduced them. In many successful phases of proactive diplomacy, the media has to be a part of the move forward. As Foreign Minister, I instinctively realized that media could play an extremely important role in carrying the peace process forward. Even in the aftermath of the July 2006 serial train bombings in Mumbai, when the Indian media was particularly hostile towards Pakistan, I was able to convey Pakistan's side of the story. This was very helpful in keeping the peace process on track. Notwithstanding the Indian media's generally hostile attitude following the blasts, I realized that since so much progress had been made on the Composite Dialogue and on the Backchannel, I should try and use any remaining goodwill to salvage the peace process from the inevitable setback of the Mumbai bombings. As part of the damage limitation exercise, in my interview with Karan Thapar in Islamabad on 24 July, I mentioned that Pakistan had received a non-paper from India on demilitarization, self-governance, and joint management to resolve the Kashmir issue. This interview elicited the type of response that I had anticipated. I had first met Karan Thapar in Washington with Ashraf Jahangir Qazi, our Ambassador there. Ashraf and Karan are good friends.

The purpose of my interview was to subtly convey the message that Pakistan and India continued making concrete progress on various bilateral disputes. The next day, I gave an interview to the Islamabad correspondent of *The Hindu* which was prominently covered. In this interview I protested that the Indian media had failed to report my unequivocal condemnation of the bomb blasts that I had made in Washington. I pointed out that hawkish sections in the Indian establishment had used my remarks on Kashmir delivered at an open meeting of a think tank in Washington before I was even aware that the Mumbai bombings had taken place. This was done to give the impression that I was somehow indicating that unless the Kashmir issue was resolved, such serial bombings could be expected. I made myself available to several other Indian newspapers, who soon started queuing up to carry our version. This suited my nuanced agenda of reminding the people of the progress that had already been made and the need to exercise caution in order to foil the objectives of the terrorists. In addition to President Musharraf's speech, expressing his sympathy for the blast victims, my interviews to the Indian media helped in bringing the temperatures down.

In view of the entrenched positions in Pakistan and India on divisive issues, particularly on the issue of Jammu and Kashmir, I had to make myself available to the media in both

countries to create an enabling environment for the peace process to move forward. As a result, I got to know quite a few important journalists in India. They were always looking for a story. As Foreign Minister I could provide them with one as well as take care of my requirement to get Pakistan's point of view across. Top Indian journalists realized that they could approach me without too much problem.

I am reminded here of an incident. President Pervez Musharraf and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh were going to meet on the side lines of the Non-Aligned Summit in Havana in September 2006, which led to an agreement on a new anti-terror mechanism. The meeting was particularly important since it was the first major interaction between the two leaders after the serial train bombings in Mumbai in July 2006 which had nearly wrecked the peace process. The Pakistani and Indian delegations were staying in different hotels in Havana. After a late night meeting with President Musharraf and other delegates, when I reached my hotel room, around midnight there was a knock on my door. It was very unusual for someone to approach me at this late hour. When I opened the door, I was stunned to see two young women standing outside. I immediately recognized them. They were well-known journalists, Barkha Dutt and Maya Mirchandani from NDTV. I could not for the life of me understand why they were knocking on my door at this unearthly hour. I was a bit apprehensive since Cuban and Pakistani security personnel were crawling all over the place and the presence of two young women outside my hotel room could be misinterpreted. I did not think it appropriate to invite them into my room at this unearthly hour, but I could also not turn them away since they had obviously gone through some trouble in tracing me. Hence, I decided that an appropriate compromise between chivalry and propriety was to invite them to the hotel coffee shop. They said to me that they were desperate to get the Pakistani version of the meeting. Many years later, I joked with Barkha about this incident. She told me that she had no option but to approach me, since the Indians, she said, with some bitterness, avoided the press and were completely tight-lipped.

The fact that I made it to a point to brief senior editors, columnists, and anchorpersons in the Pakistani media, besides frequent interactions through press conferences, gave us the confidence to take difficult decisions in foreign policy, because we were able to explain and give the underlying reasons for our decisions. I also made a point of frequently talking about the progress being made on Kashmir to sensitize the public in Pakistan and India that certain decisions were being taken, so that when announced at an appropriate time, the public would already have become acclimatized and informed about the basic parameters of possible solutions to our disputes. This took care of the possibilities of unexpected or nasty reactions to some of our moves.

## **THE ROLE OF PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS IN DIPLOMACY**

Abraham Lincoln had said, 'I destroy my enemies when I make them my friends'. I have always believed in personal touch and the value of personal relationships. I made a special effort to get to know my counterparts in other important countries. In the case of India, with whom we had a perpetual adversarial relationship, I found that it was particularly important to do so. If we were to get anywhere in our relationship we had to seriously address our differences. The truth had to be told, but for it to be received purposefully, it was essential to first develop a level of trust where one could speak one's mind without being misunderstood. A level of trust has to be created.

We have to understand that we are human beings first and then come our rank, race, and creed. Hence, when developing relationships, we need to work on our commonalities. With India, I knew that we were starting at a disadvantage based on the absence of mutual trust. My first interlocutor was Yashwant Sinha, and I attempted to get to know him well. There was, however, a change of government within a few months, when the BJP lost the elections and the Congress took over. After he gave up office, Sinha visited me in Islamabad. The Foreign Office is very protocol conscious and a debate took place as to where I should receive him. I was advised that, since he was no longer Minister for External Affairs, I should receive him in my office and not on the stairs of the Foreign Office, as I used to do when receiving visiting counterparts. But I received him exactly where I had done so during his previous visit, on the stairs of the Foreign Office. Yashwant Sinha appreciated the gesture. I also invited him and his wife to a meal at our Lahore residence. Our respective spouses found they had a common interest in education.

I also tried to develop a relationship with Pranab Mukherjee who had replaced Natwar Singh. I was surprised when Mukherjee told me at one of our meetings that he had done some research on my grandfather, the late Maulana Abdul Qadir Kasuri, who, besides being a successful lawyer, was also President of the Punjab Congress for ten long years. It was rare that one person remained President of a major national party for so long. He told me that the position of Presidents of the provinces of Punjab and Bengal were very important and were in fact almost as important and sometimes interchangeable with that of President of the Indian National Congress. In fact Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Mukherjee told me, became President of the Bengal Congress after having remained President of the Indian National Congress (INC). I was deeply touched by Mukherjee's efforts in digging up these facts.

Natwar Singh was, however, my interlocutor for a large part of my tenure and also at a time when maximum progress on the peace process had been made. I remember that both of us made special efforts when we met for the first time after the change of government in Delhi and his assumption of office as Minister of External Affairs. It was reported by a leading Indian newspaper at that time that the chemistry between the two of us was 'pretty good'. I was quoted as having said, 'He [Singh] personally told me that the new government looks forward to carrying the process of peace with Pakistan even further and

at a faster pace. So I am looking forward to this with great expectations.’<sup>23</sup> I arranged for us to have frank discussions in the enchanting setting of the Government House in Nathiagali about which I have already mentioned.

Mani Shankar Aiyar and I met when we were at the Trinity Hall in Cambridge. We have been friends ever since. There was an unstated ‘competition’ between us as to who would make it to becoming Foreign Minister first. It so happened that when I was Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Aiyar was India’s Minister of Petroleum. I have a feeling that he would have made it to the Foreign Ministership of his country, but I have always felt that Mani is far too bright and outspoken for his own good.

I took special care to develop a closer relationship with Bangladesh because I had never forgotten that we were one country and had so much in common. I developed an exceptionally close relationship with Morshed Khan, who remained Foreign Minister of Bangladesh for most of my tenure. He and his wife visited us many times at our home in Lahore and we visited them in Dhaka. During meetings of the SAARC, our personal relationship proved to be very useful.

I invited a large number of visiting Foreign Ministers to my home in Lahore and arranged for them to meet a cross section of Pakistani opinion, including those who were critical of our government and its policies. I would of course defend our position but the fact that there was an open debate, often with no holds barred, created an atmosphere of transparency and resulted in greater understanding and goodwill for Pakistan. I particularly remember the visit of the German Vice Chancellor and Foreign Minister, Joschka Fischer. Apart from the dinner at my residence and a long and heated exchange of views among the participants, I made sure that he was taken to a well-known restaurant in the walled city of Lahore. I was very touched by his warm message, along with some German goodies, including chocolate and cheese sent specially from Germany. Joschka Fischer said to me in his message that he had changed his view of Pakistan after his visit to Lahore. Unfortunately, Pakistan had been receiving bad press because of the developments in Afghanistan and our perceived policy in that regard. The Foreign Minister implied that he was less impressed by the bureaucratise that he heard in Islamabad, and the free and frank exchange of views held in our home’s drawing room helped him understand Pakistan much better.

Such interactions also improved the level of trust and understanding between my interlocutors and me. There were occasions and situations in which I had a difficult brief to defend and our policies were at variance with those of my interlocutors. Because of having developed a level of empathy, I was able to relay fairly hard views in private without causing offence. It was perhaps in this spirit that Abraham Lincoln had commented, ‘I destroy my enemies when I make them my friends.’

Under my instructions, the Director General of the Foreign Minister’s Office (DGFMO), Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, remained in regular contact with large number of

ambassadors from important countries. It was during our tenure that a system of twice-a-year 'working dinners' to be hosted by the ambassador of the country holding the presidency of the EU (European Union) was initiated. Subsequently, ambassadors of the Arab League and ASEAN countries started holding similar working dinners. I found these dinners to be useful because they encouraged informal and candid exchange of views on important, sensitive matters in a cordial setting. Such rapport facilitated matters. As a result, the flow of information became effortless. The empathy promoted mutually cooperative and friendly bonds which, in turn, facilitated an exchange of useful information, inputs, and insights.

It was these backchannel contacts that aided in the meeting of the Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in 1999 at the Lahore Summit, the Islamabad meeting between President Pervez Musharraf and Prime Minister Vajpayee in 2004, and President Musharraf's meeting with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in New Delhi in 2005. These can be regarded as examples of high-level meetings that produced results and where personal interaction, often by backchannel interlocutors, played a helpful role in producing concrete results.

The importance of the personal bond has been recognized in diplomacy and its value should not be underestimated. According to US President George H. W. Bush, 'Good diplomacy really depends on good personal relations.'<sup>24</sup> Like in any other human endeavour, the role of individuals is important in diplomacy. For effective diplomacy, an individual needs to be realistic, flexible, and patient. He should have the quality to generate trust in his interlocutors. 'President Ronald Reagan was a strong believer in personal diplomacy, the idea of having a face to face discussion with those he was seeking to persuade. That is why, after becoming President, he often talked privately about the desire to engage the leaders of the Soviet Union in a one on one conversation to diminish any fear of the United States intentions and to seek common ground for reducing tensions and promoting peace.'<sup>25</sup> He wanted to establish a personal relationship with Soviet leader Gorbachev to remove what he viewed as the barriers of mistrust that divided the two countries. For example, in their conversation they also agreed to two more summit meetings, one in Washington and one in Moscow, which none of the diplomats of the two countries would have thought possible. It was these meetings that changed the course of history.<sup>26</sup>

'President Ronald Reagan and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher also showed that warm friendship between leaders can be translated into greater trust and understanding and lead to effective cooperation on issues of mutual interest and concern.'<sup>27</sup> Likewise, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill pursued personal diplomacy while in office. He was in this way able to reverse his country's declining fortunes and prevent many difficulties for England during the Second World War and the Cold War years. It has even been said that it was as a result of his diplomacy that 'he was able to maintain Britain role in the early

Cold War and continued place in the sun.’<sup>28</sup> It is in this context that an interesting anecdote has been narrated repeatedly over the years. While I cannot vouch for its authenticity, there is no doubt that it does capture the nature of the close relationship that Prime Minister Winston Churchill had developed with President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. According to the story, when Churchill was on a visit to the United States, Roosevelt came to see Churchill unannounced and was led straight into the latter’s bedroom (bathroom—according to the more colourful version). Churchill was in a state of complete or partial undress. He is reputed to have said to Roosevelt, ‘Come in Mr President, England has nothing to hide from the United States!’

President Bill Clinton tended to highlight his private rapport with foreign counterparts and to see personal chemistry between leaders as an important ingredient in diplomacy.<sup>29</sup> My experience also makes me believe that personal relationships facilitate the conduct of diplomacy. President George H. W. Bush emphasized the importance of personal interactions and bonds of friendship as well as the factor of style and trust in the conduct of diplomacy. The Senior Bush also felt that his experience as the United States’ Permanent Representative at the UN along with his network of social connections were very helpful to him when he was at the White House.<sup>30</sup>

It is obvious that strategic considerations are central in the conduct of foreign policy; this does not, however, take away the importance of harmonious personal interactions to facilitate diplomacy. Other examples come readily to mind, which highlight the value of personal diplomacy between heads of state, prime ministers, foreign ministers, and diplomats. Personal diplomacy has also been in vogue over the years through ‘Personal Representatives’, sometimes bypassing the normal channels of diplomacy to deal with ticklish problems. Examples of President Wilson’s trust in Colonel Edward Mandell House, who was an American diplomat and presidential advisor, are well known. During President Roosevelt’s time, Harry Hopkins was one of his closest advisors. President Nixon’s trust and confidence in Henry Kissinger, who was also his National Security Advisor, to send messages and to work out difficult problems with other countries, is legendary.

The close personal relationship between President Ayub Khan and President Kennedy, and later with President Johnson; and between President Musharraf and President Bush, did help the relationship between Pakistan and the United States during their respective tenures. Similarly, Mr Bhutto’s close relationship with Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al-Nahyan of Abu Dhabi and between him and Colonel Gaddafi did have an impact on the relationship between Pakistan and these countries and facilitated cooperation in many areas.

I would like to close this section by quoting Henry Kissinger from his book *On China*. While talking about the Chinese, Kissinger noted:

The emphasis on personal relationship goes beyond the tactical. Chinese diplomacy has learnt from millennia of experience that in international issues, each apparent solution is generally an admission ticket to a new set of related problems. Hence Chinese diplomats consider continuity of relationship an important task and perhaps more important than formal documents. By comparison, American diplomacy tends to segment issues into self-contained units to be dealt with on their own merit. In this task, American diplomats also prize good personal relationship. The difference is that the Chinese leaders relate the friendship less to personal qualities and more to long term cultural, national or historical ties; Americans stress the individual qualities of their counterpart. Chinese protestations of friendship seek durability for long term relationship through the cultivation of intangibles; American equivalents attempt to facilitate ongoing activities by emphasis on social contact.<sup>31</sup>

Be that as it may, my answer to the question whether or not personal relationships can help advance the objectives of the policy that one is pursuing is an emphatic yes!

In diplomacy, understanding and confidence can only be established over a period of time through candid and cordial dialogue during which, sometimes, you can say disagreeable things in an agreeable manner and still retain the human bond or relationship which may have been established over time. The great Chinese Prime Minister Zhou En lai excelled in presenting his own case in terms that were understandable to the other side and he seldom failed in any negotiations that he conducted himself.<sup>32</sup> I tried to do that during my time at the Foreign Office. This was particularly important in trying to deal with India, because of the adversarial nature of our relationship. I tried to focus on areas of convergence of interests in the hope that it would reduce some of the bitterness in areas where our interests diverged. I found it useful in the conduct of diplomacy to establish personal relationships with my ministerial counterparts from various countries, in order to project and promote Pakistan's point of view. I remained in regular contact with Foreign Ministers from a number of friendly countries. I often exchanged views on important developments, informing my counterparts of our perspective and trying to understand theirs. I would exchange views with them and alert them, where required, regarding likely developments as and when necessary.

Besides this proactive diplomacy, I would normally have one-on- one informal meetings in order to develop a rapport and a level of trust. I often did this with my visiting counterparts. I paid attention to detail; I took care that, on the occasion of official dinners for them, some cultural events were also included in the programme, particularly when I was hosting a dinner in their honour at the Foreign Office. The entire purpose was to create an atmosphere of friendship and bonhomie. I invited many of my counterparts to my residence in Lahore, where I made it a point to put them at ease. I have always believed that the personal element is fairly important in diplomatic negotiations. Although President Reagan was talking in a different context when he said, 'All great change in America begins at the dinner table,' I think that the significance of the personal touch inherent in this quote is also true of diplomacy. It was in the same spirit that the articulate and outstanding French statesman, Talleyrand (Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord), who had a great knack for survival— having served France during the Revolution, under Napoleon, and, after the restoration, the Bourbon monarchy—when asked by Louis XVIII

if he needed more assistance, replied, 'Sire, I need cooks more than diplomats.'<sup>33</sup> The fact that he also owned the vineyard that produced the famous Bordeaux wine, the Château Haut-Brion, would also have helped him in his work in the service of France!

## My Paternal and Maternal Family Could Not Be More Different The Twain Never Met

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My grandfather, Maulana Abdul Qadir Kasuri (2nd from right) was one of the top leaders of the Khilafat Movement and the Indian National Congress. He was the only Indian Muslim invited to join the cabinet by the founder of the Saudi dynasty, King Abdulaziz Al-Saud, and was jailed many times for his role in the anti-colonial struggle. Seen here with Sir Abdullah Haroon, Leader of Sindh Khilafat Movement (2nd from left), Maulana Ghulam Rasool Mehr (extreme right), Abdul Majeed Salik (extreme left); my father in his teens, and Mahmud Haroon even younger.



My mother's grandfather, His Highness Nawab Sir Amir-ud-Din Ahmad Khan of Loharu with his three sons. In the centre is my grandfather Nawabzada Aizaz-ud-Din Ahmed Khan. Nawabzada Aizzuddin Ahmed Khan, later on Nawab (left), and Nawabzada Aitzazuddin Ahmed Khan (right), later on IG Police who died in a mysterious air crash while investigating Prime Minister Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan's assassination.



His Highness Nawab Sir Amir-ud-din Ahmad Khan with King George V. The Nawab, 'Advisor' to the British on Arab Affairs in Mesopotamia (modern-day Iraq) was considered for Kingship of Iraq or of the Arabian Peninsula. He told my mother's cousin, Nawabzada Sher Ali Khan Pataudi, 'Son, I thanked them and told them that God was kind to me and I had no desire to have my life ended by an Arab dagger in my back.'



My father Mian Mahmud Ali Kasuri with Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (1972). My father was considered as the founder of the Human Rights Movement in Pakistan. He served as Law Minister and Senior Vice Chairman of the PPP. He developed serious differences on political and constitutional issues with Bhutto, and resigned as Law Minister and Deputy Leader of the National Assembly.

## **My Immediate Family**

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With my parents Mian Mahmud Ali Kasuri and Sahibzadi Roshanara Begum on the eve of my departure for Cambridge University. My parents belonged to completely different backgrounds, leading to my developing a more tolerant attitude towards opposing perspectives. Also in the photograph are my brothers Umar (standing), Daniyal (right), and Bakhtiar (left).



With my wife, Nasreen Kasuri ('Mona') founder of Beaconhouse School System, one of world's largest private school networks and Chairperson, Beaconhouse National University, a non-profit institution, where women in top positions serve as true role models. Also seen in the photograph are our sons, Ali, Kasim, and Nassir, with their wives Fatima, Sophia, and Amina, and our grandchildren.

## **My Family and Pakistan's Political Movements**

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Almost anyone who had been in the opposition at one time or another, or was on the wrong side of the government, found my father (3rd from right) welcoming them to our home. They included people as diverse as Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan (2nd right), Abdus Samad Khan Achakzai (extreme right), Suhrawardy, Bhutto, Maulanas Bhashani, Maududi, Noorani, Niazi and others.



Lahore, 1977: Start of the PNA (Pakistan National Alliance) Movement from Neela Gumbad, Lahore. Air Marshal Asghar Khan (with Jinnah cap), and me (with dark glasses) coming out of the mosque to take part in the procession led by Asghar Khan, Mian Tufail Mohammad, Amir Jamaat-i-Islami, and Malik Muhammad Qasim, President of the Muslim League. The movement ultimately led to Bhutto's downfall.



Meeting of Movement for Restoration of Democracy (MRD) (c.1980–81): Mir Ghaus Bux Bizenjo (Pres. National Party), Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan (Pres. PDP), Khan Abdul Wali Khan (Leader NAP), Mir Sherbaz Mazari (Pres. NAP), Maulana Fazl-ur-Rehman (Pres. JUI-F), and me. MRD was formed to fight the dictatorial regime of Gen. Zia ul-Haq. I was jailed for six months and kept in a condemned prisoner's cell with a dirty drain running through it.



Lahore, 1990: With Benazir Bhutto when I was Secretary General PDA, and Asma Jahangir (Pakistan's, renowned human rights activist). Benazir and I became friends and she would often visit me and my wife. She was comfortable with me because I did not belong to her party and, thus, could afford to be off guard. She confided in me, 'May God save me from my enemies and Asif from his friends!'



Islamabad, 1990: Addressing a Press Conference as Secretary General of Pakistan Democratic Alliance (PDA), main opposition alliance to PML-N. PDA complained about rigging by PML-N in the 1990 general elections. Seen left to right: Malik Mohammad Qasim (Pres. PML), Allama Syed Sajid Ali Naqvi (Pres. TNFJ), Air Marshal Asghar Khan (Pres. Tehrik-e-Istiqlal), me, former PM Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi (PPP), and Maulana Kausar Niazi.



With Imran Khan, 19 Sept. 2014: (First row from left to right)—me, Sheikh Rasheed, Shah Mahmood Qureshi, Imran Khan, Javed Hashmi, Saifullah Niazi. Also seen in the picture are Ejaz Ahmed Chaudhry, Arif Alvi, Asad Omar, and Shafqat Mehmood, entering the Constitution Avenue, in the Red Zone, Islamabad, with Imran Khan leading the anti-government protest against electoral rigging in 2013 which swept PM Nawaz Sharif to power. The ‘Dharna’ (protest sit-in) having completed almost four months has highlighted issues like electoral reform, corruption, education, health, women empowerment, and minority rights.

### **My Three Indian Interlocutors**

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With Yashwant Sinha: We agreed on modalities for a historic meeting between President Pervez Musharraf and Prime Minister Vajpayee leading to the Islamabad Declaration (2004), which initiated the most promising peace process ever, following tense relations in which there were a million soldiers confronting each other, eyeball to eyeball.



Jakarta, 2004: at the ARF meeting with Natwar Singh. The peace process was started by PM Vajpayee. When the BJP lost the elections, we were uncertain whether the Congress government would continue the process. Luckily it did, and maximum concrete work was done, including 'backchannel' negotiations on Kashmir during 2004–07.



Delhi, 2007: With Pranab Mukherjee (now India's President). He accepted my suggestion that we appoint a panel of senior judges to improve the prisoners' pathetic plight in each other's jails. I was touched when he told me about my

paternal grandfather's important role in the freedom movement. Also in the picture, Ambassadors T. O. Haider and K. C. Singh.

## **The Most Productive Pak-India Peace Process Ever (2004–07) Since Independence**



Islamabad, 2004: At the President's House with me between President Musharraf and Prime Minister Vajpayee. This handshake was at the time dubbed as 'the handshake that changed the world' and set in motion the most productive peace process between the two countries since Independence.



Delhi, 2007: With Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. He supported the peace process. He could not visit Pakistan due to domestic political considerations in late 2006 when great progress was made over the Kashmir issue, nor could he come in March 2007 due to political upheaval in Pakistan. The devised framework will help future statesmen to resolve the Kashmir issue.



New Delhi, 2007: I called on Mr Vajpayee after he gave up office. I respected him as a statesman, who, along with President Musharraf, had initiated the peace process and was surprised when he advised me to proceed '*dheeray dheeray*' (slowly slowly) with the peace process.



Delhi, 2007: With I. K. Gujral, India's former Prime Minister. I got to know him when he used to visit my father in Lahore. He told me that he asked Pakistan's Foreign Minister Sahabzada Yaqub, 'Are you giving me a threat?' This followed a dangerous build-up after severely disturbed conditions in Jammu and Kashmir.



With Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, Yasin Malik, and Sardar Anwar, President of AJK. A delegation of nine Kashmiri leaders (Hurriyat, JKLF, and others) called on me (Islamabad, 2005). I regarded this as a great breakthrough after repeatedly urging Natwar Singh to convince the Indian government to allow Kashmiri leaders from both sides of the LoC to help underpin a possible settlement on Jammu and Kashmir.



At the Foreign Office (2005) with L. K. Advani who came on my invitation. He was forced to resign as BJP President because of positive remarks about the Quaid. Later in Delhi when I commiserated, he said, 'no regrets on Jinnah statement', and handed me his book *My Country, My Life* with a chapter 'I have no regrets'. Also in the picture, Shiv Shankar Menon, Indian H.C. in Islamabad (later on India's National Security Advisor).



With former Foreign Ministers of Pakistan and India as a part of Pak-India Track-II efforts, at my initiative, in Lahore at my residence (April 2010). Abdul Sattar, Mani Shankar Aiyar (former Petroleum Minister and Foreign Service officer), K. Natwar Singh, me, Sartaj Aziz, Jaswant Singh and Gohar Ayub Khan.



Cambridge, 2011: Master's Lodge, Trinity Hall, with Mani Shankar Aiyar (who rose to become India's Petroleum Minister). We met as students at Trinity Hall and became lifelong friends. We were invited to speak at the 'College Reunion' on the Pak-India peace process.



Ajmer Sharif at the dargah of the great Sufi saint, Hazrat Khawaja Moinuddin Chishti, also known as Gharib Nawaz (2004). I thanked the Government of India for making excellent arrangements to fly me and my delegation to Ajmer. I specially wished to go to Ajmer also to send a message that subcontinental Islam was essentially inclusive and peaceful.

### **Highs and Lows of Pak-US Relations From the Most ‘Allied Ally’ to the ‘Most Sanctioned Ally’**

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Washington, 1965: President Ayub Khan delivering a friendly pat on the cheek to US President Lyndon Johnson. Earlier in 1961, he and his daughter Princess Naseem Aurangzeb of Swat were received by President and First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy at Andrews Air Force Base. Quaid-i-Azam and Liaquat Ali Khan, aware of Pakistan’s security dilemma, tried to promote relations with the West.



Washington, 1989: PM Benazir Bhutto gestures before a state dinner at the White House with President and Mrs H. W. Bush and her husband, Asif Ali Zardari. Charismatic Benazir, the world's first woman Muslim Prime Minister, became the toast of the world, and was the only celebrity the Clintons ever queued up to see.



Camp David, 2003: President Pervez Musharraf and Begum Sehba Musharraf being received at 'a weekend retreat on a weekday' (despite Dr Condoleezza Rice's objections) by President and Mrs Bush. *The Times of India* commented, 'The venue for the Bush-Musharraf meeting has been changed [from the White House to Camp David] after the just-concluded visit of Pakistan FM, Khurshid Kasuri to Washington.' Pak-US defence and economic cooperation, and peace between Pakistan and India featured high during talks.



With President Bush (Senior), following a calamitous earthquake (2006) in Kashmir and Northern Pakistan. The international community responded as never before, a tribute to our proactive foreign policy. Impressed with our response, he said to me he wished the US had responded to 'Hurricane Katrina' equally promptly and effectively.



Washington, Oval Office, 2005: with President Bush. We discussed Kashmir, sale of F-16s and UN reform where Bush supported our stand that reform should not focus on Security Council expansion alone. Secretary Rice, Assistant Secretary Rocca, CoS Andrew Card assisted Bush. Ambassadors Jehangir Karamat, DGFMO Khalid Mahmood, Mohammad Sadiq, M. Aslam Khan, Syed Zulfiqar Gardezi, and others were present.



With President Jimmy Carter, Nobel Peace Prize winner (Atlanta, 2004) whom I invited to visit Pakistan. My wife, Nasreen Kasuri ('Mona'), who was present, is one of Pakistan's most successful entrepreneurs, educationists and founder of the Beaconhouse Group, where I saw women excel. No wonder I took a keen interest in the careers of women Foreign Service officers including the first-ever promotion of a woman to Grade 22.



With Condi Rice. My relationship with her and her predecessor General Colin Powell (whom I convinced to release Pakistani prisoners from Guantanamo) was warm and cordial (Washington 2003). Condi and I did have strong exchanges, occasionally, as when Lebanon was being bombed by the Israelis. Perhaps this is why she wrote in her book *No Higher Honor* that I was sometimes 'puffed-up'.



January, 2011: Raymond Davis, a US contractor handcuffed after he shot dead two young men in Lahore. The first incident of 'Annus horribilis' (horrible year) in Pak-US relations which saw the Raymond Davis episode, the Abbottabad attack to capture Bin Laden, the Salala attack, controversy over the language of Kerry-Lugar-Berman Bill and the Memogate scandal.



November, 2011: Coffins of 24 Pakistani soldiers martyred by US/NATO attack at Salala check-post, Mohmand Agency, FATA, caused massive anger and fury among Pakistanis, leading to the evacuation of the Shamsi Airfield and closure of the NATO supply lines for seven months until US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton apologized on 3 July 2012.



New York, 2003: Former US Secretary of State Dr Henry Kissinger at my hotel suite. Besides focusing on Pak-US relations, I enjoyed discussing international affairs with him when I visited US. This was my first introduction to the uniquely American institution of a 'working breakfast' at the unearthly hour (for Pakistanis at least) of 7 am!



New York, UN, 2004: With Sectary General Kofi Annan after I presided over a meet ing of the Security Council on UN Peacekeeping Op erations. Pakistan is one of the largest contributors to UN peacekeeping missions which has earned a lot of goodwill for us.

**Pak-Afghan Relations are Unique, Rooted in Close Historical, Cultural, and Ethnic Bonds**

*Despite difficulties at official level, the idea of a confederation was seriously mooted!*

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With King Zahir Shah of Afghanistan (Kabul, 2003), who reminded me that Pakistan faced no difficulty from Afghanistan on Pak-Afghan border in the 1965 and 1971 wars with India. I was touched that he mentioned my uncle, Maulana Muhammad Ali Kasuri's refuge at the Court of Amir Habibullah to free India from British colonial rule. Also in the picture are Ambassadors Khalid Mehmood (DGFMO) and Rashid Saleem Khan.



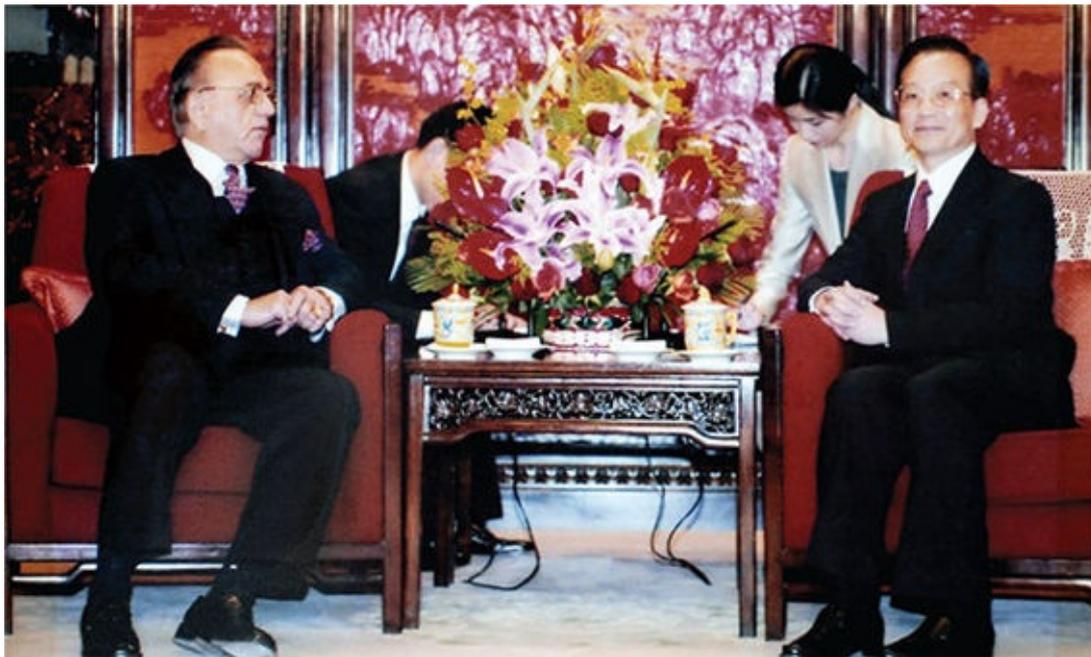
Kabul, December 2006: President Hamid Karzai asked me 'why Pakistanis looked down upon Afghanistan!' I was shocked and refuted the allegation politely but sternly. Pak-Afghan relations are unique. Despite government-level tensions the idea of a confederation between the two countries was seriously mooted (in the past), because of close historical, cultural, and ethnic bonds.



Islamabad, 2005: With Afghan counterpart Abdullah Abdullah (now Chief Executive), signing an agreement to boost trade as President Hamid Karzai and Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz look on. Contrary to the opinion of some, I found Abdullah Abdullah pragmatic.

**Pak-China Friendship In Popular Imagination this Relationship is Considered  
'Deeper than the Oceans, Higher than the Mountains, Sweeter than Honey, and  
Stronger than Steel!'**

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With Prime Minister Wen Jiabao (Beijing, 2007). I was moved by his deep commitment to Pak-China friendship. He told me that I would be the first-ever foreign visitor to be taken to the most sensitive China Aerospace Facility, where a communication satellite was being built jointly by Pakistan and China.



*(Photo and caption from a newspaper)* ‘Beijing: Foreign Minister Kasuri being shown a model of a Communication Satellite to be built jointly by Pakistan and China at the China Academy of Space Technology. Mr Kasuri is the first foreign leader to visit the Chinese Space facilities’. Also seen in the photograph our Ambassadors Salman Bashir, later on Foreign Secretary, and Khalid Mahmood, my DGFMO.

## **Saudi Arabia with Islam’s Two Holiest Sites has a Special Place in the Hearts of Muslims Pakistan and Saudi Arabia also have Strong Military and Intelligence Links**

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Mecca, 2004: Coming out of the Khana-e-Kaaba, with President Musharraf, Sheikh Rasheed, Lt Gen. Shafaat Ullah Shah, Col. Sherbaz. As an extraordinary gesture by King Abdullah, we were allowed not just inside the Kaaba—itsself a very great honour indeed—but on the roof of the Kaaba!



With His Majesty King Abdullah during a visit to the Kingdom (2006). He is the custodian of the two Holy Mosques in Makkah and Medina. Saudi Arabia and Pakistan have extremely cordial relations and maintain strong military and intelligence links.



Prince Saud al-Faisal and I sign an agreement, while Saudi King Abdullah, President Musharraf, and Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz look on (Islamabad, 2006). Referring to my grandfather's religious background (Ahle-Hadees), Prince Faisal once light-heartedly remarked to me, 'I am going to tell the Americans to stop chasing me for my religious beliefs and instead chase the Foreign Minister of Pakistan.'

## From Imperial Iran to the Islamic Republic

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Tehran, Niavaran Palace, 1978: With His Imperial Majesty, Aryameher, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi of Iran, Air Marshal Asghar Khan, then widely tipped to become Pakistan's next Prime Minister, and Musheer Pesh Imam (rumours floated, I might be next Foreign Minister almost a quarter-century before I actually made it). He gave us a tour d' horizon of international affairs. His ignorance of discontent in Iran was equally striking.



Tehran, 2003: With scholarly and moderate President Khatami. President Musharraf and I were stunned by his startling statement that the almost weapon-grade enrichment of contaminated parts could have come from Pakistan. President Musharraf could barely control his temper and retorted sharply, 'How do I know that the Iranians have not done it themselves?' Thus began the A. Q. Khan saga.



With President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. As a gesture, he sent a special aircraft to Tehran to take me to Kermanshah (2006). He told me he would soon invite President Musharraf and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to sign the pipeline agreement. I had cautioned the US of catastrophic consequences for the region in case force was used against Iran on the nuclear issue. (WikiLeaks).

## **Strong Brotherly and Emotional Bonds between Pakistan and Turkey since the Khilafat Movement and Much Earlier**

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With President Tayyip Erdogan (then Prime Minister), Islamabad, 2003. Under his leadership, Turkey made tremendous progress while maintaining its Islamic identity and was considered by many in Pakistan as a role model. His warmth for Pakistan was palpable and he referred to the support his country received from people here in the earlier 20th century (during the Khilafat Movement) when Turkey faced great difficulties.



Ankara, 2006: With former President Abdullah Gul (earlier my counterpart). I said Turkey will not get into the EU because it is a Muslim country. He joked, 'Brother, it doesn't matter. We have already met all the benchmarks for entry into EU. Turkey has benefited from this. It doesn't really matter now whether we get into it or not.'

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## **Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Home to Millions of Pakistani Expatriates**



With the Amir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani in Doha (2005). I reminded the Amir that Pakistanis had played an important part in the development of Qatar's physical infrastructure. On my request, the Amir agreed to relax visa restrictions on Pakistanis wishing to work in Qatar.



President Musharraf and I attending the funeral of Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan attended by many world leaders (Dubai, November 2004). He earned a special place in the hearts of Pakistanis. He was a great friend of Pakistan and supported Pakistan on all major international issues. (I am with President Karzai, behind Presidents Musharraf and Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria).

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## **Navigating Between the Begums of Bangladesh**



With Bangladesh Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia (Dhaka, 2003). Pakistan and Bangladesh (a country very close to my heart) had developed extremely close relations during her tenure. I felt totally at home travelling with her in her official aircraft from Dhaka to Kuala Lumpur. Her husband, President Zia-ur-Rahman, was one of the founders of SAARC, and I went to invite her to the SAARC Summit in Islamabad.



With Sheikh Hasina Wajed (daughter of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman), then Opposition Leader, now Prime Minister. Our fathers had taken part in many movements for restoration of democracy in united Pakistan. Some suggested I avoid meeting her since Awami League was considered pro-India and BNP pro-Pakistan. I met her (Dhaka, 2003), wanting to strengthen Pak-Bangladesh relations. As I was leaving, her aide whispered her message in my ear, 'This meeting should have taken place much earlier.'



With Bangladesh Foreign Minister Morshed Khan (Islamabad, 2005). We developed exceptionally close relations, initially, because he was Foreign Minister of Bangladesh. Later, we became friends and discovered we had a lot in common, both having begun our politics in Tehrik-e-Istiqlal, our wives had the same name (Nasreen), and both of them were born in Calcutta. During meetings of the SAARC, our personal relationship proved to be very useful.



With Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora, and Turkish, Malaysian, and French Foreign Ministers. The OIC (Organization of Islamic Countries) urged FM's of the Muslim World to show solidarity and visit Beirut when it was being bombed by Israel. The only ones to show up were the Turkish and Malaysian FMs, and I (Beirut, 2006). I travelled from Damascus to Beirut by car secretly, because I refused to get Israeli permission to fly.

## **Expanding Pakistan's Diplomatic Outreach**

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Signing an agreement on bilateral cooperation with my Brazilian counterpart while President Musharraf and President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva look on (Brasilia, 2004). This visit to Brazil, Argentina, and Mexico was an expression of Pakistan's proactive foreign policy at that time.



With Mexican President Vicente Fox, President Musharraf and Humayun Akhtar (Mexico City, 2004). During the Latin American trip, we negotiated a relationship with 'Mercosur', the most important trading bloc. A woman parliamentarian caused a sensation when she refused to shake Fox's extended hand, despite standing in the reception line, explaining later that it was contrary to her religious beliefs.



Buenos Aires, 2004: With President Nestor Kirchner of Argentina and President Musharraf. The First Lady, Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, we were told, played an important political role in Argentina and has since become President of

the Republic.

## International Conferences

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Potsdam, G-8 Conference on Afghanistan, with my counterparts (left to right), EU's External Affairs Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner, Canada's Peter MacKay, Italy's Massimo D'Alema, Japan's Taro Aso, Afghanistan's Rangin Dadfar Spanta, Germany's Frank-Walter Steinmeier, talking to Russia's Sergey Lavrov, UK's Margaret Beckett, USA's Condoleezza Rice, France's Bernard Kouchner, and Secretary General Council of EU, Javier Solana. When Secretary Rice highlighted the need for preventing cross-border movement, I said Pakistan was prepared to mine and fence the border. Western Foreign Ministers were looking for US leadership but since Condi kept quiet, so did the rest, except Canadian Foreign Minister who offered concrete help in better border monitoring.



Shanghai Cooperation Organization Summit (Bishkek, 2007). I represented Pakistan. With Presidents Hu Jintao (China), Vladimir Putin (Russia), Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (Iran), Nursultan Nazarbayev (Kazakhstan), Islam Karimov (Uzbekistan), Emomali Rakhmonov (Tajikistan), Kurmanbek Bakiev (Kyrgyzstan), Hamid Karzai (Afghanistan), and Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov (Turkmenistan). At another meeting Putin said to me, 'India did not have a veto on arms sales to Pakistan.'



At historic SAARC Summit where SAFTA was adopted and Pak-India peace process revived. (Left to right) PM Surya Bahadur Thapa (Nepal), PM Begum Khaleda Zia (Bangladesh), PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee (India), President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga (Sri Lanka), Ch. Shujaat Hussain, President PML-Q, PM Zafarullah Jamali, PM Lyonpo Jigmi Yoezer Thinley (Bhutan), and I.



Paris, Elysée Palace: (Left to right) Shaikh Rasheed, myself, President Jacques Chirac, President Musharraf, French FM Michel Barnier, Humayun Akhtar, Lt Gen. Shafaat Ullah Shah. (2004). The two sides discussed greater market access into the EU and enhanced defence cooperation, including the possibility of using a French engine for JF-17, a sophisticated multi-role combat aircraft developed jointly by Pakistan and China (ultimately Russia agreed to supply the engine).

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## Light Hearted Moments and Happy Memories



Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi jokingly asked me about the whereabouts of Mullah Omar, the Taliban leader (Tokyo, 2005). I instantly retorted that he was last seen in Afghanistan escaping on a Japanese-made Honda motorbike and, as such, ‘Your Excellency should know better!’ Both of us laughed heartily before starting our meeting.



Potsdam, 2007: Historic venue of meeting between Roosevelt, Stalin, and Churchill after WWII. Sharing a joke with my German and Russian counterparts Frank-Walter Steinmeier and Sergey Lavrov, who naughtily remarked, ‘You were sitting in Stalin’s chair in the conference room.’ Lavrov expressed keen interest in Karachi Steel Mill privatization. Russians were disappointed by the Supreme Court judgment. The Mill piles up losses and Pakistan continues to suffer.



With Prince Karim Aga Khan at the President House (Islamabad, 2003). I was always happy to meet him. His grandfather, Sir Sultan Muhammed Shah, Aga Khan III, who is held in great esteem in Pakistan was one of the founding

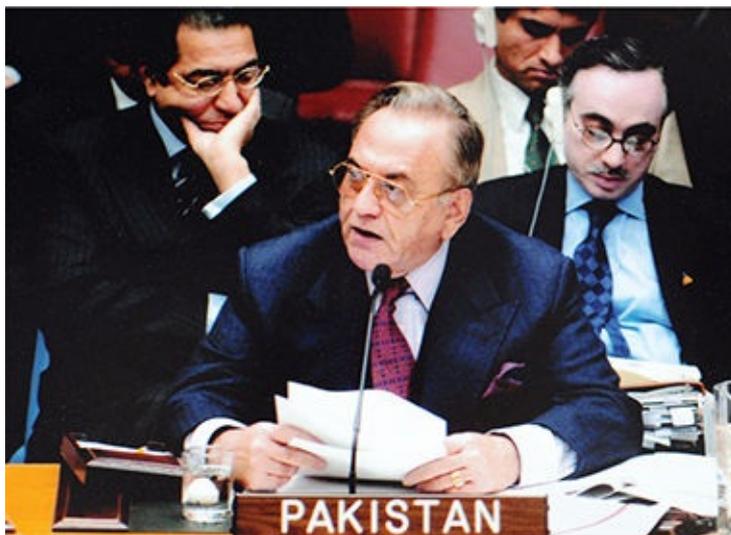
fathers of Muslim League and Pakistan. Prince Karim takes keen interest in education and health sectors and in the development of Pakistan's Northern Areas.

## **Opposition to Iraq War Brought Me Closer to French, German, and Russian Foreign Ministers**

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Islamabad, 2004: With charismatic French PM (then FM) Dominique de Villepin who visited Islamabad along with his wife on my invitation. He led the opposition to the attack on Iraq and acquired a rock star status. We bonded well. Some angry American leaders announced that 'French fries' would hence forth be called 'freedom fries' in the US.



New York, 2003: Speaking against attack on Iraq at UNSC. Also in the picture are Ambassadors Munir Akram and Masood Khalid. I said an attack would impact negatively on the welfare of the people, and on the unity and territorial integrity of Iraq and destabilize the region. Later on, Colin Powell apologized, accepting his briefing was based on incorrect information.



German Vice Chancellor and FM Joschka Fischer (Pakistan, 2004). Earlier at the Bonn Conference he pleasantly surprised me by hosting a dinner for me and my delegation alone, while his Deputy hosted delegates from all the other countries, saying, 'Pakistan is a very important country'. Later, he visited me at my home in Lahore and interacted with civil society representatives. He wrote that he had developed better insights about the situation in Pakistan after the Lahore visit.

### **My Keeness to Develop Closer Relationship with the Commonwealth Made Some Ask Me Why I was Keen to Get Closer to the 'Club of Former Slaves'**

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Accompanying President Musharraf, prior to meeting Prime Minister Tony Blair at No.10 Downing Street. Also in the photograph, Commerce Minister Humayun Akhtar, HC Maleeha Lodhi, Chief of Protocol Brigadier Khalid Habib. Our founding fathers had studied in Britain and were greatly influenced by the ideas of democracy, nationalism, and liberalism. Apart from the historic connection, there are strong military and intelligence links between them. I found that under Prime Minister Blair, Britain played a particularly useful role in the EU on issues concerning Pakistan. In dealing with the US, I found our relationship with the UK particularly useful since the two Atlantic cousins consulted regularly on issues concerning South Asia.



With Don MacKinnon, Secretary General of the Commonwealth, who supported me all the way. My ‘informal’ meeting in London with him was held in relative secrecy, but my DGFMO Ambassador Khalid Mahmood and Pakistan’s HC in London Abdul Kader Jaffer were in the loop. Jaffer jokingly asked me, since the Foreign Office could not be billed (because of the secrecy of the meeting) for the high tea at the Savoy Hotel, either he or I would have to pick up the bill. I was happy to do so.



With Jack Straw, my counterpart from UK with whom I developed a warm relationship. When he met me at my home in Lahore, I asked him after dinner whether he was returning to the UK the next day. He said he was going to Gujrat in Central Punjab to meet some of his important constituents who were in Pakistan at the time! The huge Pakistani diaspora in the UK is a very strong bond between the two countries.



With Canadian PM Jean Chrétien, President Musharraf and Ambassador Shahid Malik (Ottawa, 2003). Chrétien spoke English with a deep, guttural French accent, reminding me of French actor Maurice Chevalier. When the President offered him a seat to NY in his aircraft, Chrétien retorted, ‘No, Sir, you are prone to being hijacked!’ (referring to Nawaz Sharif’s attempt to not allow Musharraf’s aircraft to land resulting in Sharif’s ouster).



With New Zealand's Prime Minister Helen Clark. Amazingly, despite playing cricket for years and old diplomatic ties based on Commonwealth connections, mine was actually the first 'official' visit to New Zealand and Australia (2005).



With Australian counterpart Alexander Downer. PM John Howard, whom I also met (Canberra, 2005), displayed a lot of warmth for Pakistan and sent his personal aircraft to fetch me from Sydney. He wanted my views on causes of rage in the Muslim world.

**Beaconhouse School System (a benchmark for quality education) founded by my wife Mona (Nasreen Kasuri) at a time when the state education system had deteriorated alarmingly**

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Lahore, 2014: Imran Khan, on whose boards of trustees (Shaukat Khanum Hospital and Namal University) Dr Parvez Hasan, presides over the Naming Ceremony of the Razia Hasan School of Architecture, made possible by a generous contribution by Dr Hasan. Left to right: Imran Khan, Parvez Hasan, Mona, myself and Shahid Hafiz Kardar, Vice Chancellor, Beaconhouse National University. BNU, Pakistan's first non-profit, liberal arts university, aims to inculcate international-mindedness and inclusiveness in a new generation of Pakistanis. Over one billion rupees (\$10.4 million) has been contributed by Beaconhouse and the Kasuri family towards the establishment of the university; other key donors include Hussain Dawood, Izzat Majeed, and the Federal and Punjab Governments.



Kuala Lumpur, 2012: With Dato' Seri Utama Dr Rais Yatim, Minister for Information and former Foreign Minister (centre) invited to make the keynote speech at the 'School of Tomorrow', the first international education conference organized by Beaconhouse overseas and Kasim Kasuri, CEO. Beaconhouse is now one of the leading school networks in Malaysia. Apart from being the largest in Pakistan, Beaconhouse is now one of world's largest school networks and is poised to make its mark as an educator of note in Belgium, Malaysia, Oman, Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, the UAE, and the UK.

\*Ahl al-Hadith literally means ‘People of the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)’. It was Sunni Islamic movement started in North India in the mid-19th century.

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# Acknowledgements

My mental predisposition to situations and events, reflected in this book, is largely conditioned by my early years of experiences at my parents old residence '4-Fane Road Lahore' which had become an institution of sorts in Lahore after independence and where my father maintained an open house. All varieties of people from diverse backgrounds including politicians, trade union leaders, leaders of religio-political parties, journalists, writers and poets (largely from the left of the political spectrum) were in and out of our home on a daily basis.

Although this book is about foreign policy, I have thought it appropriate in Chapter One to refer to some of the early influences that moulded my relatively more cosmopolitan and inclusive world views and attitudes which I imbibed in my parents' home. I have only given pen portraits of politicians who I came across in my father's home and have diligently avoided any political analysis since this book is not about politics but on foreign policy. My father and mother came from entirely different backgrounds; my paternal family came from Punjabi-speaking, nationalist, politicalcum-religious background of freedom fighters against British colonial rule and my mother from an Urdu-speaking, princely family in Northern India which was pro-British in its orientation. They agreed on almost nothing but their marriage was still a success. Respect for opposing perspectives is something that I learned from them. As Foreign Minister, particularly, in dealing with India, my mother's family background (a large number migrated as refugees to Pakistan, some rising high in Pakistan's defence forces—a few remained in India where some are doing well) did impact my attitudes in dealing with India which were considered non-conformist at least at the time when I joined as head of the Foreign Office. It was my great fortune that I (also helped by President Pervez Musharraf's change in policy towards India) was able to impact our narrative towards India more positively. I am also indebted to my wife Nasreen (Mona) Kasuri, my sons, Ali, Kasim, and Nassir, and my brothers Umar, Daniyal and Bakhtiar who have all been a source of strength for me in whatever I have endeavoured to do.

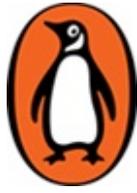
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preferred to have himself referred to as Chef de Cabinet (head of the Foreign Minister's Office). To my eternal sadness, he did not live long enough to see this book in print since he passed away slightly more than a year ago. He had maintained notes of important meetings and visits during my tenure when he was present. I also jotted down points after important meetings and my one-on-one meetings with some of my counterparts. I made it a point to share the contents of my meetings abroad including one-on-one meetings when he was not with me on some of my foreign trips. After return, I would immediately inform him of the contents of all my meetings for the sake of maintaining an accurate record. All these notes have provided a precise record of an important slice of history in contemporary South Asia. Hence I am indebted to my late friend Khalid Mahmood for his essential role and indispensable contribution.

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