



Congressional Testimony

LESSONS FROM MUMBAI

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Good morning, Mr. Chairman, Senator Collins, and Members of the Committee. Thank you for your invitation to testify on the recent terrorist attacks in Bombay (Mumbai) and their consequences for the United States. As requested by the Chairman and Ranking Member in their letter of invitation, I will focus my remarks on assessing the regional and global threat posed by Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), the implications of that threat for the U.S. homeland, and the status of U.S.–India cooperation on counterterrorism and homeland security. I respectfully request that my statement be entered into the record.

Of all the terrorist groups present in South Asia—and there are many—LeT represents a threat to regional and global security second only to al-Qaeda. Although LeT is linked in popular perceptions mainly to the terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir, the operations and ideology of this group transcend the violence directed at the Indian state. Being an Ahl-e Hadith adherent of Sunni Wahabism, LeT seeks to establish a universal Islamic Caliphate with a special emphasis on realizing that dream through the gradual recovery of all lands that were once under Muslim rule. The strategic objective of inaugurating a universal Caliphate has made LeT a strong ideological ally of Al-Qaeda, while the emphasis on recovering “lost Muslim lands” in Asia and Europe has taken LeT to diverse places such as Palestine, Spain, Chechnya, Kosovo and Eritrea.

That LeT is a constituent member of Osama bin Ladin’s International Islamic Front should not be surprising given that one of its three founders, Abdullah Azzam of the International Islamic University in Islamabad, was closely associated with Hamas and has been widely described as one of bin Ladin’s religious mentors. Together with Hafiz Saeed, the LeT’s current *amir*, and Zafar Iqbal of the Engineering University, Lahore, Azzam formed LeT in 1987 as the armed wing of the Markaz Dawat-ul Irshad (MDI), the Center for Proselytization and Preaching, which sought to actualize the universal Islamic state through *tableegh* (preaching) and *jihad* (armed struggle).

In the fervid atmosphere of the 1980s, when numerous extremist groups were springing up in Pakistan under the patronage of the country’s principal intelligence agency, the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), LeT’s militant attitude to political change, and its commitment to exploiting modern science and technology in support of its ideological ends, quickly made it an ISI favorite because its uncompromising commitment to *jihad* could be manipulated to advance Pakistan’s own strategic goals. As Saeed noted in a January 1998 interview in a Pakistani news magazine, *Herald*, “Many Muslim organizations are preaching and working on the missionary level inside and outside Pakistan...but they have given up the path of *jihad* altogether. The need for *jihad* has always existed and the present conditions demand it more than ever.”

Given Pakistan’s desire to control Afghanistan—an objective that dominated Islamabad’s strategic policies during the 1980s and 1990s—this categorical commitment to religious renewal through participation in armed struggle resulted in LeT becoming one of the key beneficiaries of ISI support. For over two decades now—and continuing to this day—the ISI has maintained strong institutional, albeit subterranean, links with LeT and has supported its operations through generous financing and combat training; at many points in the past, ISI support also included providing LeT with sophisticated weapons and explosives, specialized communications gear, and various kinds of operational assistance as it conducted its missions in Afghanistan and against India. Since the inauguration of the global war on terror, ISI assistance to LeT has become more recessed but it has by no means ended, even though the organization was formally banned by Pakistan’s President Pervez Musharraf on January 12, 2002.

LeT's desire to engage in both preaching and *jihad* simultaneously found manifestation in different ways from the moment of its founding. The group's sprawling 200 acre headquarters at Muridke outside of Lahore, believed to have been constructed with an initial gift from Osama bin Laden's Afghan operations and sustained since through contributions by ISI, Saudi charities, Islamic NGOs, and Pakistani expatriates in Europe and the Middle East, quickly became the nerve center from whence its vast charitable and militant activities were directed. LeT's earliest armed operations began immediately in the Afghan provinces of Konar and Pakhtia, where the organization set up a series of terrorist training camps that over time were incorporated into the Al-Qaeda network in Afghanistan. These militant activities, which were initially intended as part of the ISI-managed war against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, became quickly subordinated to either ISI-supervised efforts at bringing Kabul under Pakistani influence or Al-Qaeda's murderous terrorism missions against the West.

The LeT's initial focus on Afghanistan is significant because it refutes the common misapprehension—assiduously fostered since the early 1990s—that the group has always been a part of the indigenous Kashmiri insurgency. Nothing could be further from the truth. The LeT is composed primarily of Pakistani Punjabis and has been so from its inception. In fact, its Punjabi composition, along with its inflexible ideology, is precisely what made it so attractive to the ISI to begin with, because it could be controlled and directed far more effectively by its Punjabi-dominated sponsor, the Pakistan Army, than any local Kashmiri resistance group. Because of LeT's founding ties to Al-Qaeda, however, its Punjabi core has over the years been episodically supplemented by Libyans, Central Asians, and Sudanese—although these non-Pakistani elements have generally been marginal to the group's numerical strength.

It was only when the indigenous Kashmiri resistance began to flag in 1993 that the ISI directed LeT, among other Pakistani terrorist groups, to shift its principal focus of operations from the Afghan theater to Jammu and Kashmir. ISI objectives in engineering this shift were threefold: First, it enabled the Pakistani military to replace what it saw as feckless local fighters pursuing the autonomous goal of independence with militants who were battle-hardened in Afghanistan, beholden to the Pakistani state, and dedicated to the more appropriate objective of incorporating Kashmir into Pakistan. Second, it permitted the moderate Kashmiris to be replaced by genuinely committed Wahabi fighters who were capable of inflicting (and intended to unleash) an unprecedented level of brutality in their military operations because they shared no affinities whatsoever with the local population. Third, and finally, it permitted Pakistan to pursue an agenda larger than Kashmir: by employing ideologically charged Islamist foot soldiers from outside the disputed state—a cohort that hailing from the Pakistani Punjab carried with it all of Islamabad's pent up animosities towards India—the local struggle over Kashmir's status could be expanded into a larger war aimed at destroying India itself.

Hafiz Saeed wholeheartedly endorsed the objective of destroying India writ large. Asserting in a 1999 interview that “jihad is not about Kashmir only,” he went on to declare that “about fifteen years ago, people might have found it ridiculous if someone told them about the disintegration of the USSR. Today,” he continued, “I announce the break-up of India, *Inshaallah*. We will not rest until the whole [of] India is dissolved into Pakistan.” In a later 2001 statement, he reaffirmed the proposition that “our struggle will continue even if Kashmir is liberated. We still have to take revenge for East Pakistan.” In accordance with his declaration that Kashmir was merely a “gateway to capture India,” Saeed then directed his LeT cadres to focus their attention on capturing the Muslim-dominated areas outside of Jammu and Kashmir, such as Hyderabad,

Junagadh, Munabao and West Bengal, which he argued were forcibly occupied by India in 1947. In the pursuit of these objectives, LeT received strong financial, material, and operational support from the ISI—including from ISI field stations in Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh—because of the growing conviction within the Pakistani military that the war against India could never be won if the hostilities were to be confined only to Jammu and Kashmir.

Judging from LeT's operational record, Saeed has been as good as his word. Of all the terrorist groups operating in the Himalayan state, none has been as brutal and vicious in its armed operations as LeT, particularly as witnessed in its encounters with the Indian military. Moreover, since 2005, LeT's operations have expanded far beyond Jammu and Kashmir into the rest of India. The LeT has been implicated in terrorist attacks in New Delhi in October 2005; in Bangalore in December 2005; in Varanasi in March 2006; in Nagpur in June 2006; and in the July 2007 train bombings in Bombay—all before its most recent multiple atrocities in Bombay in November 2008.

While India has occupied the lion's share of LeT attention in recent years, the organization has not by any means restricted itself to keeping only India in its sights. Like many other radical Islamist groups, the LeT leadership has on numerous occasions singled out the Jewish community and the United States as being among the natural enemies of Islam. Speaking frankly to a journalist, Saeed warned, for example, that although his outfit was consumed at the moment by the conflict with India, "Let's see when the time comes. Our struggle with the Jews is always there." This enmity with the Jewish people is supposedly eternal and ordained by God himself. When Saeed was asked in the aftermath of the tragic 2005 earthquake in Pakistan whether then-President Musharraf's solicitation of aid from Israel was appropriate, he had no hesitation in declaring forthrightly that "We should not solicit help from Israel. It is the question of Muslim honor and self-respect. The Jews can never be our friends. This is stated by Allah." This twisted worldview found grotesque expression during the November 2008 LeT atrocities in Bombay when the group deliberately targeted the Jewish Chabad center at Nariman House. Justifying this attack as reprisal for Israeli security cooperation with India, the Jewish hostages at Nariman House were not simply murdered but humiliated and brutally tortured before finally being killed during the three day siege.

Since Israel and India are viewed as part of the detestable "Zionist-Hindu-Crusader" axis that includes the United States, it is not surprising that LeT has long engaged in a variety of subversive activities aimed at attacking American interests. Although the ideological denunciation of the United States as an immoral, decadent, and implacable enemy of Islam was part of the group's worldview from its founding, its war against the United States took a decidedly deadly turn after the Clinton administration launched missile attacks against several al-Qaeda camps in Afghanistan in August 1998. Although these attacks did not kill Osama bin Laden, their intended target, they did kill many LeT operatives and trainers who were bivouacked in these facilities. Shortly thereafter, the LeT formally declared a *jihad* against the United States and began a variety of operations globally aimed at targeting U.S. interests. Asserting unequivocally that LeT intends to "plant the flag of Islam in Washington, Tel Aviv and New Delhi," the group intensified its collaboration with al-Qaeda, supporting bin Laden's efforts as a junior partner wherever necessary, while operating independently wherever possible. Within Southern Asia today, and especially in Pakistan's tribal belt, along its northwestern frontier, and in Afghanistan, LeT cooperates with al-Qaeda and other militant groups, such as the Taliban, in the areas of recruiting, training, tactical planning, financing, and operations. The senior al-Qaeda operative,

Abu Zubaydah, for example, was captured in a LeT safe house in Faisalabad, Pakistan, indicating the close ties existing between both terrorist organizations.

LeT's universal ambitions, however, do not permit confining itself only to South Asia. After declaring that it would provide free training to any Muslim desirous of joining the global *jihad*—a promise that LeT has since made good on—the group's operatives have been identified as engaging in:

- liaison and networking with numerous terrorist groups all over the world but especially in Central and Southeast Asia and the Middle East;
- facilitation of terrorist acts, including in, but not restricted to, Chechnya and Iraq;
- fundraising far and wide, including in the Middle East, Europe, Australia, and the United States;
- procurement of weapons, explosives, and communications equipment for terrorist operations from both the international arms markets and Pakistani state organizations such as the ISI;
- recruitment of volunteers for suicidal missions in South Asia as well as the Middle East;
- creation of sleeper cells for executing or supporting future terrorist acts in Europe, Australia, and likely the United States; and
- actual armed combat at least in India, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq.

All told, Indian intelligence today estimates that LeT maintains some kind of terrorist presence in twenty-one countries worldwide with the intention of either supporting or participating in what Saeed has called the perpetual “jihad against the infidels.” Viewed in this perspective, LeT's murder of the six American citizens during the November 2008 attacks in Bombay—a bloodbath that claimed the lives of close to 200 people, including 26 foreigners of 15 nationalities—is actually part of a larger war with the West and with liberal democracies more generally, and only the latest in a long line of hostile activities—most of which have remained *sub rosa*—affecting U.S. citizens, soldiers or interests.

Unlike many of the other indigenous terrorist groups in South Asia whose command and control structures are casual and often disorganized, LeT's organizational structure is hierarchic and precise, reflecting its purposefulness. Modeled on a military system, LeT is led by a core leadership centered on the *amir*, Hafiz Mohammed Saeed, and his deputies, who oversee different aspects of its functional and charitable operations. These activities are implemented through various branch offices throughout Pakistan, which are responsible for recruitment and fundraising as well as for the delivery of social services such as education, healthcare, emergency services, and religious instruction. LeT's military arm is led by a “supreme commander” and a “deputy supreme commander” who report to Saeed directly. Under them are several “divisional commanders” and their deputies. Within the South Asian region, the divisional commanders oversee specific geographic “theaters” of operation, which are then subdivided in certain defined districts. These are controlled by “district commanders,” each of whom is ultimately responsible for various battalions and their subordinate formations.

The entire command edifice thus reflects a model of “detailed control,” with orders being executed at the lowest level only after they are authorized by a chain of authority reaching to the top. This hierarchic command and control structure, although susceptible to decapitation in

principle, was nonetheless institutionalized because LeT owed its origins primarily to the charismatic leadership of three individuals—of which Hafiz Saeed quickly became the *primus inter pares*. A hierarchic structure was also particularly appropriate, given the covert activities carried out by its military wing both autonomously and for the ISI—with the latter in particular insisting on a combination of high effectiveness, unremitting brutality, durable control, and plausible deniability, as the price for continued support. Because LeT was from the very beginning a preferred ward of the ISI, enjoying all the protection offered by the Pakistani state, the vulnerability that traditionally afflicts all hierarchic terrorist groups was believed to be minimal in this case.

This judgment, it appears, turns out to be correct because even when Pakistan, under considerable U.S. pressure, formally banned LeT as a terrorist organization in 2002, the LeT leadership remained impregnable and impervious to all international political pressure. Not only did it continue to receive succor from the ISI but its close links with the Pakistani state, which continued in its every incarnation, have raised the understandable question of whether the 2008 terrorist strikes in Bombay were in fact authorized either tacitly or explicitly by someone in the Pakistani secret services, as other attacks on India have been in the past. Although neither India nor the United States has provided specific evidence thus far of ISI or Pakistani military authorization for the Bombay attacks—which, if available, would be fortuitous in any event, given the usual incompleteness of all intelligence information—the question of whether these murderous acts were sanctioned by elements within the Pakistani state is *prima facie* not absurd in light of the ISI's traditionally close relationship with LeT.

The attacks in Bombay also reflect the LeT's classic *modus operandi*: Since 1999, the group has utilized small but heavily armed and highly motivated two- to four-man squads operating independently or in combination with others on suicidal—but not suicide—missions that are intended to inflict the largest numbers of casualties during attacks on politically significant or strategically symbolic sites. These missions invariably are complex and entail detailed tactical planning; historically, they have taken the form of surprise raids aimed at heavily guarded facilities such as Indian military installations, command headquarters, political institutions, or iconic buildings, all intended to inflict the highest level of pain, underscore the vulnerability of the Indian state, and embarrass the Indian government. (In Afghanistan, in contrast, LeT operations have focused principally on targeting coalition forces, disrupting reconstruction efforts, and supporting other terrorist groups in their efforts to undermine the Karzai regime.) In any event, the LeT personnel involved in the majority of these attacks seek to escape the scene whenever possible—in fact, they come carefully prepared to endure yet exfiltrate—but appear quite willing to sacrifice themselves if necessary, if in the process they can take down a larger number of bystanders, hostages, and security forces.

The targets attacked in Bombay are consistent with this pattern: they included the symbols of Indian success (luxury hotels), reflections of Indian history and state presence (a historic railway station) and emblems of India's international relationships (a restaurant frequented by tourists and a Jewish community center). The targeted killing of the Jewish residents at Nariman House, and possibly the murder of the Western tourists at the Leopold Café (if indeed they were deliberately targeted), would also be consistent with LeT's past record, which has included the focused slaughter of non-Muslims such as Hindus and Sikhs. Although the use of small arms to include pistols, automatic rifles, grenades, plastic explosives, and occasionally mortars have been the norm in most past LeT attacks, the group has also undertaken true suicide missions, including

car bombings, on occasion. In LeT's operations in Afghanistan, where recruitment for suicide bombings appears to be a specialty, the use of larger crew-served weapons, mines, mortars, rocket-propelled grenades, and even primitive air defense systems have been observed.

These characteristics of LeT, which have been on display since the group first came into existence in the late 1980s, have made it the object of focused attention within the U.S. intelligence community. Its worldwide operations, whether they be merely facilitation or fundraising or more lethal activities such as planning, coordinating and executing armed attacks either independently or in collusion with others, have marked LeT out as a genuine threat to regional and global security. If the outfit had previously escaped the popular attention it received after the atrocities in Bombay in 2008, it was only because its earlier attacks did not extend to Western civilians and because its preferred combat tactics made it a lesser challenge to American interests in comparison to al-Qaeda. This, however, should not be reason for consolation: if left unchecked and untargeted, LeT could well evolve into a truly formidable threat, given its resourcefulness, its operational span, its evolving capabilities, and its relatively robust sanctuary within Pakistan.

A net assessment of LeT as a threat to regional and global security and to the American homeland would, therefore, justify the following conclusions.

First, LeT remains a terrorist organization of genuinely global reach. Although the nature of its presence and activities vary considerably by location, it has demonstrated the ability to grow roots and sustain operations in countries far removed from Southern Asia, which remains its primary theater of activity. Equally important, it exhibits all the ideological animus, financial and material capabilities, and perverse motivation and ruthlessness required to attack those it believes are its natural enemies simply because they may be Jewish, Christian, or Hindu, and living in secular, liberal democratic, states. Furthermore, like al-Qaeda, LeT has demonstrated a remarkable ability to forge coalitions with like-minded terrorist groups. These alliances are most clearly on display within Southern Asia: in India, for example, LeT has developed ties with Islamic extremists across the country including in states distant from Pakistan such as Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu; in Pakistan, LeT cooperates actively with the Pakistani and Afghan Taliban and coordinates operations with Al-Qaeda and the Haqqani network against Afghanistan; in Central Asia, LeT has cooperated with both the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and local Islamist rebels in the Caucasus; and, in Europe, LeT was actively involved in supporting the Muslim resistance in Bosnia while raising funds and building sleeper cells in countries such as Spain and Germany.

When viewed from the perspective of the United States, it is safe to say that LeT has long undermined U.S. interests in the global war on terror. It threatens U.S. soldiers and civilians in Afghanistan and has now killed U.S. citizens in Bombay. Thus far, however, it has not mounted any direct attacks on the American homeland, but that is not for want of motivation: given the juicier and far more vulnerable U.S. targets in Southern Asia, LeT has simply found it more convenient to attack these (and U.S. allies) *in situ* rather than overextend itself in reaching out to the continental United States. The effectiveness of U.S. law enforcement after September 11, 2001, and the deterrent power of U.S. military capabilities have had much to do with reinforcing this calculus. Consequently, LeT operations in the United States thus far have focused mainly on recruitment, fundraising and procurement rather than on lethal operations. Yet, with the deliberate killing of American citizens in Bombay, a new line has been crossed. If Washington

fails to respond to this provocation, the door could be opened to a repetition of more such incidents in the future. The inability or unwillingness to punish LeT for these transgressions, as the United States and Israel have done against other terrorist groups, could also embolden this outfit to attack American citizens and American interests with greater impunity the next time around.

Second, India has unfortunately become the “sponge” that protects us all. India’s very proximity to Pakistan, which has developed into the epicenter of global terrorism during the last thirty years, has resulted in New Delhi absorbing most of the blows unleashed by those terrorist groups that treat it as a common enemy along with Israel, the United States, and the West more generally. To the chagrin of its citizens, India has also turned out to be a terribly soft state neither able to prevent many of the terrorist acts that have confronted it over the years nor capable of retaliating effectively against either its terrorist adversaries or their state sponsors in Pakistan. The existence of unresolved problems, such as the dispute over Jammu and Kashmir, has also provided both Pakistani institutions and their terrorist clients with the excuses necessary to bleed India to “death by a thousand cuts.” But these unsettled disputes remain only excuses: not that they should not be addressed by New Delhi seriously and with alacrity, there is no assurance that a satisfactory resolution of these problems will conclusively eliminate the threat of terrorism facing India and the West more generally.

This is because the most vicious entities now engaged in attacks on India, like LeT, have objectives that go way beyond Kashmir itself. Rather, they seek to destroy what is perhaps the most successful example of a thriving democracy in the non-Western world, one that has prospered despite the presence of crushing poverty, incredible diversity, and a relatively short history of self-rule. India’s existence as a secular and liberal democratic state that protects political rights and personal freedoms—despite all its failures and imperfections—thus remains a threat to groups such as LeT, with their narrow, blighted, and destructive worldviews, as well as to praetorian, anti-democratic, institutions such as the Pakistan Army and the ISI. India, accordingly, becomes an attractive target, while its mistakes, inadequacies, and missteps only exacerbate the opportunities for violence directed at its citizenry.

Yet it would be a gross error to treat the terrorism facing India—including the terrible recent atrocities—as simply a problem for New Delhi alone. In a very real sense, the outrage in Bombay was fundamentally a species of global terrorism not merely because the assailants happened to believe in an obscurantist brand of Islam but, more importantly, because killing Indians turned out to be simply interchangeable with killing citizens of some fifteen different nationalities for no apparent reason whatsoever. If the United States fails to recognize that the struggle against terrorism ought to be indivisible because Indian security is as important to New Delhi as American security is to Washington, future Indian governments could choose to respond to the problems posed by Pakistani groups such as LeT in ways that may undermine regional security and make the U.S. effort to transform Pakistan more difficult than it already is. Avoiding these sub-optimal outcomes requires the Obama administration to treat Indian concerns about terrorism more seriously than the United States has done thus far.

Third, the most vicious terrorist groups in Southern Asia, such as al-Qaeda, LeT, the Pakistani Tehrik-e-Taliban, Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), and the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen (HuM), are driven largely by a radical Islamist agenda rather than by any negotiable grievances, yet remain highly adaptable with respect to the lethal tactics chosen to achieve their goals. This reality makes such

terrorists formidable adversaries and a successful anti-terrorism policy must be able to cope with both their obdurate aims and their changing techniques. The only reasonable objective for the United States in this context must be the permanent evisceration of these groups—especially al-Qaeda and LeT, which threaten American interests directly—with Pakistani cooperation if possible, but without it if necessary. This is particularly so because the unacceptable nature of their ambitions alone should rule out any consideration of policies centered on conciliation or compromise. It should also make Washington suspicious of any theory of terrorism that justifies its precipitation by so-called “root causes,” especially in South Asia—and saying so does not in any way obviate the need for resolving existing intra- and inter-state disputes so long as these are pursued through peaceful means. Where the forms of violence are concerned, the evidence suggests that the uncompromising ideological motivations that often drive terrorism in the Indian subcontinent coexist quite comfortably with the presence of effective instrumental rationality, even if this is only oriented towards sinister purposes. As the attacks in Bombay demonstrated, even ideologically charged terrorist groups such as LeT are capable of meticulous planning and strategic adaptability. Terrorists learn and change their tactics to outwit their state opponents: because Indian intelligence agencies successfully broke up several terrorist modules in recent years—groups that intended to transport explosives and conduct bombings by land—the LeT resorted to an unexpected course of action that involved arrival by sea and the use of trained and motivated attackers with relatively unsophisticated weapons to inflict a great deal of damage.

There is little doubt that other terrorists will learn from Bombay and could attempt to emulate LeT’s actions. If LeT itself seeks to attack the U.S. homeland, it could well choose to replicate its experience in Bombay using sleepers, possibly already resident in the country. Whether it does so or not, the important point is that the successes of U.S. intelligence and law enforcement agencies in neutralizing more complex kinds of attacks could well push various ideologically hostile terrorist groups to seek simpler solutions, using capabilities at hand or readily available, to attack U.S. citizens in unanticipated ways abroad or at home. LeT is one such group that certainly possesses the motivation to conduct such attacks on American soil if the opportunities arise and if the cost-benefit calculus shifts in favor of such assaults.

As a recent RAND study I participated in points out,

The Mumbai attack demonstrates that jihadist organizations based in Pakistan are able to plan and launch ambitious terrorist operations, at least in neighboring countries such as India. Put in the context of previous terrorist attacks in India by Pakistani-based or local jihadist groups, it suggests a continuing, perhaps escalating, terrorist campaign in South Asia. Beyond India, the Mumbai attack reveals a strategic terrorist culture that thoughtfully identified strategic goals and ways to achieve them and that analyzed counterterrorist measures and developed ways to obviate them to produce a 9/11-quality attack. For 60 hours, the terrorists brought a city of 20 million people to a standstill while the world looked on. The attack put into actual practice LeT’s previous rhetoric about making the Kashmir dispute part of the international jihad. In so doing, LeT has emerged, not as a subsidiary of al-Qaeda, but as an independent constellation in the global jihad galaxy. Indeed, with al-Qaeda central operational capabilities reduced, the Mumbai attack makes LeT a global contender on its own.

—Angel Rabasa et al, *The Lessons of Mumbai* (Santa Monica: The RAND Corporation, 2009, pp. 7-8.)

Dealing with this emerging LeT threat will require a mixture of unilateral actions and international cooperation. While U.S. law enforcement agencies are certainly seized of the challenges posed by LeT, and will develop responses aimed at preventing attacks whenever possible, responding to dangers whenever necessary, and managing their consequences whenever required, the most pressing political requirement right now is to collaborate with India and Pakistan in bringing the perpetrators of the Bombay bloodbath to justice. After an embarrassingly inept initial response by Islamabad, the Zardari government, acceding to intense U.S. pressure during the last days of the Bush administration, arrested key LeT ringleaders and offered to bring them to trial in Pakistan in lieu of extraditing them to India or the United States. The Obama administration should keep Pakistan's feet to the fire and ensure that Islamabad makes good on its promises. Given the long and bloody record of the individuals apprehended, any trial, whether in Pakistan or elsewhere, should seek capital punishment for the detainees. Neither permanent incarceration nor limited jail terms would prevent them from orchestrating further attacks from inside their prison cells. The experience of previous Pakistani detentions demonstrates that terrorists, even when in custody, can mount very effective cross-border operations with the aid of collaborators still at large.

But Washington should also demand more of Islamabad: Precisely because LeT threatens to become a significant global terrorist threat, the United States should insist that Islamabad roll up and eliminate the entire LeT infrastructure of terrorism that currently exists inside of Pakistan. Such an action not only holds the best promise of arresting the current crisis in Indo-Pakistani relations—one whose final dénouement has yet to occur and whose worst consequences could undermine both regional stability and the counterterrorism operations currently occurring in Pakistan's tribal belt and in Afghanistan—but it also remains the only guarantee of decisively eliminating LeT as a potentially serious threat to the U.S. homeland. Given the ISI's long history of support for LeT, the Pakistani state will require all the assistance it can get if it is to genuinely eradicate the diverse infrastructure of terrorism maintained by LeT's current front organization, the Jamat-ud Dawa (JuD). The United States should not stint in providing Pakistan with this aid, if Islamabad is judged to be serious about confronting LeT and other terrorist groups. That Pakistan should eliminate these threats in its own interest goes without saying. But, in any event, Washington should no longer compromise on this objective. Working with both the civilian government of President Zardari, which despite all its limitations still recognizes the threats posed by Pakistan's terrorist groups and desires to eliminate them, and with the Pakistan Army, which despite its growing recognition of the perils posed by Islamist terrorist groups still seeks to hold on to them as "strategic assets," the Obama administration should, using both carrots and sticks, induce Pakistan to comprehensively eliminate the LeT. If despite American insistence and aid, Islamabad remains unable or unwilling, the U.S. government should utilize the entire range of unilateral instruments available to neutralize this threat. After all, it would be a great pity and possibly even a dereliction of duty if amidst all the consolation and support offered to India in the aftermath of the Bombay attacks, Washington finally failed to perceive—and neutralize—the larger dangers posed by LeT's ambitions towards the United States.

In this context, the expansion of U.S.–Indian counterterrorism cooperation is also urgently needed. Unfortunately, the record thus far suggests that the bilateral partnership has not lived up to its promise in this issue-area. During the last years of the Clinton administration, the dialogue on counterterrorism followed a meaningful course of great utility to both countries. Unfortunately, this progress was not sustained during the Bush years. This is particularly ironic both because the U.S.–Indian relationship was fundamentally transformed during this period and

because countering terrorism dominated the Bush presidency in an unprecedented way. Yet, counterterrorism cooperation between the United States and India for most of the last eight years has been largely formulaic, superficial, and at best exploratory. Although many practical initiatives were initiated under the aegis of the U.S.–India Counterterrorism Joint Working Group, it would be hard to conclude that this cooperation has actually yielded meaningful dividends for both sides.

The exception to this general rule, however, has been the partnership between U.S. and Indian law enforcement agencies in the aftermath of the Bombay attacks. After the tragic events of November 26 – 29, 2008, the assistance rendered by the FBI and other U.S. agencies to India has simply been phenomenal. Despite the initial hiccups that impeded smooth cooperation, the resources, technology, and professionalism of the U.S. team deployed to Bombay has evoked the gratitude, admiration, and even the envy of their Indian counterparts. Plainly stated, it would simply not have been possible for the government of India to assemble the enormous amount of technical evidence pertaining to the attacks, which has since been shared with the international community, without American assistance. But against the backdrop of the last eight years, the intense cooperation witnessed between the United States and India after Bombay must be counted as the exception, not the rule.

The surprising disjuncture on counterterrorism, despite the overall transformation of the bilateral relationship, can be explained in one word: Pakistan. The disagreement between Washington and New Delhi in regards to Pakistan essentially hampered the prospects for expanded counterterrorism cooperation. This divergence on Pakistan was not rooted primarily in a difference of diagnosis: both sides agreed that Pakistan was the global epicenter of terrorism and had to be reformed. They could not agree, however, on the best strategies for achieving this objective. The United States, thanks to its crushing dependence on Islamabad for sustaining the military operations against al-Qaeda and in Afghanistan, defended a strategy of unconditional engagement with Pakistan. In contrast, India, though strongly supportive of U.S. military operations in Afghanistan, argued for a tougher policy of carrots and sticks as a means of mitigating the continuing threat emanating from Pakistani terrorism.

This divergence of perspectives, far from being academic, had practical consequences. The U.S. reluctance to confront Pakistan forthrightly about its terrorism against India—despite all its sympathies for New Delhi—resulted in most American counterterrorism cooperation being focused on coping with, or defending against, Pakistani threats, whereas successive Indian governments were more interested in exploring what Washington would do to eliminate the terrorism exported out of Pakistan. This fundamental incompatibility of objectives made Indian intelligence, law enforcement, and counterterrorism agencies—not to mention the government of India *writ large*—rather skeptical about the prospects for successful counterterrorism cooperation with the United States. Because U.S. programs in this regard were invariably viewed more as palliatives intended to manage the pain rather than as frontal attacks on the heart of the problem itself, Indian enthusiasm for deep counterterrorism cooperation with Washington was rather tepid. The Bush administration’s failure to confront Pakistan about its continued abetting of terrorism against India (and against Afghanistan), despite eight years of significant assistance to Islamabad, then produced an unfortunate double failure: it neither eradicated Pakistan’s addiction to terrorism nor institutionalized deepened counterterrorism cooperation with India.

The growing disenchantment in the United States with Pakistan’s performance in the war on terror and President Obama’s determination to correct the trajectory of the U.S.–Pakistan

bilateral relationship offers Washington a new opportunity to rectify the shortcomings that traditionally afflicted U.S.–Indian counterterrorism cooperation. The stellar collaboration exhibited by both sides in the aftermath of the Bombay attacks yields only a glimpse of what is actually possible if the two countries can arrive at a common strategic understanding of their problems regarding terrorism. If such a convergence can be promoted through a serious, high-level, dialogue on Pakistan—again, something that never really occurred during the entire duration of the second Bush term—it might be possible to embark on three specific initiatives that could produce high payoffs in terms of helping India (as well as the United States) better cope with the scourge of terrorism.

These initiatives include: comprehensive intelligence sharing about specific terrorist groups (an area where India has much to offer, given its collection capabilities and its proximity to the threats, and where the United States, given its extraordinary technical capacity, can make enormous contributions as well to mutual advantage); training of the law enforcement and intelligence communities, particularly in the realms of forensics, border security, and special weapons and tactics (areas where India would particularly profit, with collateral benefits to the United States); and, improving intelligence fusion and organizational coordination (again, areas where India could learn much from the U.S. experience after September 11, first to its own advantage and thereafter to the United States). Since these activities traverse areas of great sensitivity to any sovereign state, it is unlikely that any meaningful bilateral cooperation will take place unless there is close and steady direction from the very top of the governments in both countries. The task ahead of us in this regard is enormous—and our work has only just begun.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the Committee for your attention and your kind consideration.