

INDIA *and* PAKISTAN

Is Peace Real This Time?



A Conversation Between
Husain Haqqani
and
Ashley J. Tellis



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- **Ashley J. Tellis** is a leading expert on Indian and Pakistani nuclear weapons programs, and security relations among India, China, Pakistan, and the United States. He is writing a monograph on India and missile defense, anticipating a decision by the Bush administration with respect to missile defense cooperation with India.
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- **George Perkovich** recently published a *Washington Quarterly* article assessing India's rise as a major power and works on South Asian security issues and India-United States trade relations. He is the author of the award-winning book *India's Nuclear Bomb* (University of California Press, 1999, updated 2001).
- **Anatol Lieven**, a former journalist with the *Times* (London), who has lived and worked in India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan, writes frequently on the region. He will begin a major assessment of state-building efforts in Afghanistan in 2005. He is the author of "The Pressures on Pakistan" (*Foreign Affairs*, January–February 2002) and "Pakistan and the U.S.: Doomed to Partnership" in *The State of Pakistan* (panel discussion on Pakistan at Johns Hopkins University, April 2, 2003).

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Introduction

Since 1999, when Indian and Pakistani forces briefly fought in the Kargil area of Kashmir, India and Pakistan have experienced extremely strained relations. Tensions got particularly high during 2001–2002, when the two countries deployed a million or more troops along their common border; elements of the two massed forces frequently exchanged artillery fire in Kashmir. The specter of nuclear war haunts any armed conflict between India and Pakistan; India first demonstrated its nuclear capabilities in 1974 and Pakistan in 1998. Even when the two states manage to avoid war, their mutual hostility impedes economic development and gives a reactive cast to their internal politics. Further complicating the situation, Pakistan and India are, in different ways, frontline states in the struggle against terrorism. Thus, when Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Pakistani President General Pervez Musharraf met, with little advance notice, at a regional summit in Pakistan in early January 2004, it behooved U.S. policy makers and other informed Americans to take note of this breakthrough and explore whether and how the United States could enhance the chances of further diplomatic progress.



In late January 2004, the Carnegie Endowment organized a briefing by Husain Haqqani and Ashley J. Tellis on prospects for improved relations between India and Pakistan. Haqqani and Tellis possess unsurpassed expertise on Pakistan and India, respectively. Haqqani, a visiting scholar at the Endowment, had just returned from Pakistan, where he met with government officials and other closely involved participants in the summit meeting. Tellis, an Endowment senior associate, had just returned from a trip to India, where he likewise met with senior officials and others to talk about India-Pakistan relations. In the following discussion, Haqqani and Tellis highlight key issues they raised in their respective visits. Both were particularly interested in assessing whether this latest diplomatic engagement would lead to lasting peace, or simply be another in a long string of disappointments.

Q: What does the January 2004 India-Pakistan summit imply for the prospects of peace in the subcontinent?

Husain Haqqani: That India and Pakistan are willing to talk again is a positive development. The two nuclear-armed neighbors were on the brink of war less than a year ago. But the thaw in relations is just that—a thaw rather than a breakthrough. We have seen similar develop-

ments in the past hailed as breakthroughs, only to watch them end in breakdowns. India and Pakistan are, once again, approaching the peace process with totally different objectives. India's purpose is to seek an end to terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir and start the process of normalizing relations. India has given no indication that it would negotiate alternative futures for Kashmir, though it has accepted Kashmir as one of eight matters the two sides need to address. Pakistan, on the other hand, has abjured the use of force but would like to link this step to substantive talks about the future of Kashmir.

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The willingness of both sides to start a composite dialogue has raised hopes that they are willing to back away from their entrenched positions. But their willingness to talk does not necessarily signal willingness to compromise on what each side considers to be the real issue requiring resolution.

Ashley J. Tellis: This is a far more complex question than it appears at first sight. At the most obvious level, the summit produced a clear sense of relief in India because the agreement between Prime Minister Vajpayee and General Musharraf to resume their bilateral dialogue signaled the *formal* end to the 2001–2002 crisis. Whether it

symbolizes the *substantive* conclusion of the crisis—meaning that the root causes, which generated that confrontation in the first place, are now eviscerated—is still unclear. But the fact that both sides have now committed themselves to a wide-ranging dialogue offers a ray of hope: It implies the beginning of a process whereby outstanding disputes can now be addressed through diplomacy rather than coercion and force.

I would like to emphasize three elements here. *First*, the summit primarily signifies a bilateral commitment to a process and is not an agreement about any particular outcome; hence, one cannot conclude that a resolution of the outstanding disputes between India and Pakistan is imminent. *Second*, the two key elements that do appear in the joint statement (the bilateral communiqué that followed the January 2004 summit)—the acceptance that all disputes, including Jammu and Kashmir, ought to be resolved only through dialogue, and the acknowledgment that terrorism is unacceptable as a means of securing political aims—are vital to the eventual success of the process. *Third*, if both sides *consistently* abide by these substantive elements, the peace process could succeed over time because it would effectively pave the way for accepting the current territorial division of Jammu and Kashmir (with some modifications) as the basis for an enduring political solution. Such a solution would also include, *inter alia*, increased political autonomy for both sides of the divided state, easier cross-border transit for their respective populations, and a reduction in the military presence maintained by India and Pakistan along the present Line of Control (LOC).

In saying all this, I am trying to address what I think lies at the heart of the question:

Will this summit indeed be the first step along the road to lasting peace in South Asia, or is it condemned, as other efforts before it, to become yet another failed opportunity? My short answer is that we are unlikely to see major *conflict-resolving* breakthroughs anytime soon. The advances, to the degree that those have occurred, pertain primarily to either process or principle. While these are no doubt important, there is still no assurance that these gains will be translated appropriately into negotiating strategies that yield an agreement that brings about lasting peace and stability. Obtaining this goal will require a lot of hard work and a great deal of creativity on both sides. It will also require a willingness by Pakistan to compromise on its traditional objective of radically altering the territorial status quo in Jammu and Kashmir. I am skeptical, however, about Islamabad's capacity and willingness to change course on this fundamental issue at the current juncture.

Q: How have the people of the subcontinent reacted to the peace initiative?

Ashley J. Tellis: The initial reaction—at the popular level—on both sides of the border has been one of relief and elation: relief because the resumption of the diplomatic process gives both sides a

weary of confrontational strategies and was more than willing to endorse peaceful alternatives. Indian elites, too, were delighted by the turn of events because of the prospect of resumed trade and increased commercial intercourse between the two countries. They also recognize that better intersocietal relations offer the best opportunity for nurturing those constituencies in Pakistan that have a stake in peace as opposed to continued confrontation with India.

Husain Haqqani: There is clearly a feeling of relief that a peace process is under way even though a solution is not immediately in sight. Since 9/11, Pakistanis have felt increasingly embattled and isolated. A hard core remains committed to an ideological foreign policy that casts India as a permanent enemy. But a significant though small body of opinion in Pakistan recognizes that the economic and military race with India is a losing proposition and that Pakistan's friends such as the United States are fair-weather, and cannot be counted on in the contest with India. In this view, Pakistan must turn its attention inward and focus on internal development and self-sufficiency, instead of remaining engaged in military competition. Adherents to this view further argue that Pakistan cannot seriously pursue economic development if it



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chance to put the acute bitterness of the last several years behind them, and elation because the peace process finally opened the door to resuming transportation links, cross-border trade and travel, people-to-people ties, and various forms of cultural exchange. In India, in particular, the peace process was greeted with great enthusiasm because, after almost two and a half years of political standoff, the populace had grown

continues along the path of militarism and militancy. Sustained economic progress would only be possible after relations with India were normalized. These people constitute the peace constituency in Pakistan.

But the question in Pakistan is always, “Is there a constituency for peace within the Pakistani military?” The thinking of civilians is seemingly less important in a country where the

military calls the shots. There was no Pakistani civilian constituency for supporting the Sikh insurgency in India during the 1980s. But Pakistan did it nevertheless. Was there a Pakistani constituency for supporting the Taliban when it ascended to power in Afghanistan or for ending that support after 9/11? Pakistan made both decisions anyway because the Pakistani military considered both strategically important.

There is now a civilian constituency for peace with India, but I would warn against overestimating its influence unless there are some changes taking place in the way Pakistan is run. Ideally, if I were advising General Musharraf, I would say, “Reach out to the peace constituency and make it yours.” There is a peace constituency, but it is not a constituency for Musharraf necessarily. And some of its members are actually afraid that if Musharraf and the military succeeded in making a deal with India, the military would remain in charge with international support. Instead of being a military-dominated state under the shadow of a conflict with India, Pakistan would then be a state dominated by the military without active conflict with India.

The Pakistani military would have to convince the peace constituency that peace would

is the key, and it is always the most difficult institution to analyze.

I don’t think the Pakistani military wants to relinquish political control. I don’t think it wants to relinquish its position of privilege and power. And those are issues that haven’t even been addressed by General Musharraf. There could be momentum in the peace process between India and Pakistan, sufficient for a deal between India and Pakistan to come first and then create the momentum for domestic and internal changes. Egypt has been cited as an example. It was argued that once Egypt signed its peace treaty with Israel, the changes that had to come about within Egypt would follow. But my view is that the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty, absent a change in the military’s preeminence in Egypt, has led to Egypt becoming a stagnant nation that lives off strategic rents in the form of U.S. aid. We may not want Pakistan to be a stagnant nation with nuclear weapons.

One of the major unanswered questions of the India-Pakistan peace process is what to do with the huge military establishments of both countries, one of which also controls political power. If the Pakistani military were not running covert operations against India and if it were not running the country, what would it do?

How much of Pakistan’s military wants permanent peace? That’s difficult to say.



also mean some changes in life at home. How much of Pakistan’s military wants permanent peace? That’s difficult to say. In the past, there have been moments when the military said right now, we want peace, or we want peace for five years, seven years, ten years. General Zia ul Haq (ruled 1977 to 1988) reportedly said he would never let a war take place with India while he was president and while Pakistan was making a nuclear bomb. The Pakistani military

Pakistan’s military has traditionally drawn its legitimacy from the fact that it is the defender of Pakistan against the existential threat from India and that it is the institution that will get Kashmir for Pakistan.

If the existential threat from India were acknowledged as no longer real and the issue of Kashmir were already settled, the Pakistani military would lose its legitimacy as the arbiter of the nation’s destiny. The praetorian ambitions

of the Pakistani army must be channeled in some other direction, if the peace initiative is to have a long-term future.

Q: What has been the international response thus far?

Husain Haqqani: The international community has been extremely supportive of dialogue between India and Pakistan. The United States, Europe, and China have all been encouraging the two

ating with impunity in Rawalpindi, where the general headquarters of the Pakistani army is located and which is a pretty easy city for the military and the intelligence apparatus to clean up. The jihadis have deep roots in Pakistani society. There are several hundred thousand people employed in the “industry of jihad” at a time when new jobs are not being created in the Pakistani economy and new investment is not coming. There are still people in the military



Relief, tinged with great expectation, appears to be the dominant sentiment in the international community.

sides to back away from their periodic blustering and saber rattling and find a solution to their disagreements.

Pakistani supporters of the peace initiative argue that now is the time for Pakistan to settle its differences with India. Once Afghanistan is stabilized, and Al Qaeda is mopped up, the Americans and their economic and military assistance will disappear, leaving Pakistan without a major ally. China, which had been a reliable supporter against India, has become alarmed at Pakistan’s support for Islamist radicalism. China is moving toward an understanding with India, and, therefore, Pakistan’s ability to depend on it as an ally would diminish over time. Pakistan may not be able to secure a reasonable deal from India in a few years’ time, when the conventional military gap between the two countries would have widened, and the economic difference, coupled with major power realignments, would make Pakistan’s negotiating position untenable.

But just as there is a growing number of realists in Pakistan, including ostensibly General Musharraf, there are others who think the negotiating process is a useful stratagem to buy time for further showdowns with India. There are still Kashmiri militant mujahideen groups oper-

and the intelligence apparatus who think that conflict with India is a cyclical thing. “We are in a bad cycle,” they think, and for them there has to be a period of possibly three, four, or five years of waiting before they revert to conflict. The international community has the difficult task of converting these cynics to the cause of normal relations with India.

Ashley J. Tellis: The international response mirrors in many ways the excitement felt by the peoples of India and Pakistan. Relief, tinged with great expectation, appears to be the dominant sentiment in the international community. In the United States in particular, the fear of nuclear conflict between India and Pakistan has been so prominent that any initiative that walks the two countries away from the nuclear precipice finds ready endorsement. The fact that a diplomatic dialogue between the two South Asian rivals would also enable Islamabad to cooperate more fully with the United States in bringing Operation Enduring Freedom to a successful close is an important factor that cannot be overlooked—it was precisely the reason why the Bush administration has been leaning heavily on Musharraf to make good on his commitment to end cross-border infiltration into Jammu and Kashmir.

Q: What, in your opinion, led to the peace initiative?

Ashley J. Tellis: This may seem like a simple question, but it cannot be answered briefly. The roots of the peace initiative—at the Indian end—cannot be appreciated without reference to the 2001–2002 crisis. This crisis, as you will recall, was precipitated by Pakistan’s continued support for cross-border terrorism against India, which, after the December 13, 2001, attack on the

environment. Parenthetically, I may note, this strategy could succeed only because Musharraf astutely concluded that so long as the United States needed his cooperation for successfully prosecuting military operations in Afghanistan, Washington would never lean hard enough to compel him to conclusively terminate his campaign of terrorism against India.

Given this outcome, the Vajpayee government was confronted by the need for an alter-

By early 2003 the Government of India had every reason to be optimistic that its strategy of politely snubbing Pakistan was working.



Indian Parliament, resulted in a major Indian military mobilization intended to compel Islamabad to end its involvement in terrorism against India once and for all. The 2001–2002 crisis ended ambiguously, from an Indian perspective. Of course, the “hammer and anvil” strategy of Indian military pressure and U.S. diplomatic intervention produced many gains for India. These included forcing Pakistan to acknowledge complicity in Kashmiri terrorism and promise a change in course, securing U.S. acknowledgment of Kashmir as a case of terrorism rather than simple insurgency, and strengthening the international perception of Pakistan as a “near rogue” country that exports terrorism, proliferation, and instability. But these gains notwithstanding, India did not secure the one thing its military mobilization was intended to achieve: conclusive termination of Pakistan’s involvement in terrorism directed against India. On this score, General Musharraf adopted a tactically brilliant strategy of modulating Pakistan’s involvement in terrorism depending on the intensity of international (primarily U.S.) pressure at any given moment—but never quite abandoned terrorism as an instrument of state policy despite his own growing recognition that it was a wasted asset in the post-9/11 international

nate strategy for dealing with Pakistan because it had, in effect, given up on the option of using military force to punish Islamabad by the end of the 2001–2002 crisis. At that point, India, broadly speaking, had two choices: One was to begin negotiations with Pakistan more or less immediately. This alternative would have implied meeting Musharraf’s demand for negotiations as a quid pro quo for the cessation of terrorism against India. The other choice was to settle for a cold peace with Islamabad. This option had three components: a comprehensive eschewing of contacts with Pakistan, an emphasis on internal solutions to the problems in Jammu and Kashmir, and continued international pressure on Pakistan to end its involvement with terrorism. Faced with these alternatives, Prime Minister Vajpayee could not settle for the first option—beginning negotiations—because his government believed that it would reinforce the wrong lesson in Islamabad: “If you pursue terrorism effectively, you can secure your political goals at will.” Consequently, he chose the second strategy and settled for a cold peace.

In retrospect, the cold peace alternative has paid India unforeseen dividends, as the Vajpayee government’s emphasis on internal solutions to the problems in Jammu and Kashmir proved

more successful than even the optimists within the ruling coalition would have expected in mid-to-late 2002. In September of that year, India organized the freest and fairest election seen in Jammu and Kashmir since the mid-1980s, an election that drew a remarkably high voter turnout (45 percent) for such an unstable and alienated state and that resulted in the conclusive defeat of the ruling National Conference government, which also happened to be an ally of the Bharatiya Janata Party in the Union Government in New Delhi. From July 2002, even before the state elections, Vajpayee encouraged a series of unofficial and official interlocutors to test the prospects for a dialogue between the Kashmiri separatists and the Indian Union Government. Although this effort proceeded in fits and starts and with varying degrees of enthusiasm, a series of high-profile intermediaries—Ram Jethmalani and the Kashmir Committee; Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission K. C. Pant; former Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister N. N. Vohra; and finally Deputy Prime Minister L. K. Advani himself—engaged in various exploratory probes intended to foster a reconciliation with India. Even as these political efforts proceeded, the Indian army successfully accelerated its border patrol operations, exploiting new technologies,

The All-Party Hurriyat Conference, the political arm of the insurgent movement, which lost considerable leverage as a result of its decision to forsake participation in the September 2002 elections, finally split at Pakistan's behest into moderate and hard-line factions. As if in reflection of this split, the insurgents too began to engage in factional bloodletting. This was a product partly of New Delhi's increasingly successful ability to play off one group against the other, Pakistan's own efforts to manipulate the different terrorist groups, and the increasing uncertainty among the jihadis about Pakistan's strategic intentions, given its larger geopolitical strategy of running with the terrorist hares while hunting with the American hounds.

All in all, by early 2003 the Government of India had every reason to be optimistic that its strategy of politely snubbing Pakistan was working. New Delhi continued to reiterate the position that no dialogue with Islamabad was possible so long as Pakistan persisted in its support of terrorism against India. With the change in international attitudes toward terrorism post-9/11, the international community, too, more or less acquiesced to this Indian position. However, given Vajpayee's own personal commitment to achieving reconciliation with



There is now a civilian constituency for peace with India.

better tactics, and increased fencing along the LOC, to intercept and kill more and more terrorists as they attempted to cross over into India. Finally, the Kashmiri insurgency appeared to be consumed by its own internal crisis. The success and responsiveness of the new state government took the edge off the accumulated resentments against New Delhi and offered the local population the option of political participation as an alternative to violence.

Pakistan, this cold standoff with Islamabad could not persist forever. The strong security interdependence between the two South Asian states also required India to resume a dialogue with Pakistan at some point. Vajpayee clearly appreciated this. He wanted to resuscitate the process of achieving normalcy he had left incomplete at the India-Pakistan summit in Agra in July 2001, but the timing had to be right. This involved, among other things, complex

issues of internal Indian politics. In April 2003, Vajpayee was in a completely different position domestically relative to his circumstances at Agra: He was unchallenged within his Bharatiya Janata Party, and he enjoyed a national popularity unmatched by that of any rival within or outside the party. He also realized the electoral benefits of peacemaking, since nothing would be more appealing to India's 140 million-strong Muslim population in the next general elections than a concerted effort to mend fences with Pakistan. Accordingly, he felt comfortable enough to begin making a tentative public overture to Pakistan, which he inaugurated in a major speech to the Kashmiris in Srinagar on April 18, 2003. This overture, which he had planned unbeknownst to all but a handful of close advisers, had the effect of changing in one fell swoop the tone of India's diplomacy toward Pakistan. One strong note of continuity persisted nonetheless: If Pakistan were to secure what it wanted most—a formal dialogue on Kashmir—it would have to show in word and deed a willingness to end terrorism against India.

To demonstrate his own seriousness, Vajpayee dispatched his trusted amanuensis, his Principal Secretary and National Security Adviser, Brajesh Mishra, to meet secretly in

Islamabad for the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) summit in January 2004. However, Vajpayee's decision to attend the summit included no guarantee that he would meet with General Musharraf and agree to a renewed dialogue between India and Pakistan. Although Brajesh Mishra preceded the prime minister to Islamabad by a few days to discuss the terms for such a meeting, the Indian delegation waited until the summit was well under way before it consented to a meeting between the two leaders. The turning point probably was the tenor of Pakistani Prime Minister Jamali's public remarks, which, reflecting a conscious Pakistani decision to avoid beating up on India in that forum, appeared to provide the required proof of Islamabad's willingness to conduct itself responsibly. The all-important meeting between Vajpayee and Musharraf occurred the following day, and the joint statement that followed is now the stuff of history.

Husain Haqqani: After a fortnight in Pakistan during the course of the SAARC summit, I can say that a major factor in bringing the two sides together was General Musharraf's realization that supporting Islamist militancy and jihad in Kashmir poses a greater threat to him and pos-

India holds most of the cards both on issues of process—to talk or not to talk—and on issues of substance—to give away territory or not.



London with Tariq Aziz, Musharraf's principal secretary and personal friend. The purpose of this conversation was simply to explore what degree of realism existed within the Pakistani leadership with respect to its willingness to meet the conditions required for resuming a bilateral dialogue. A series of sub-rosa backroom negotiations followed, bringing things to the point where, after much public speculation about his intentions, the Indian prime minister decided that he would visit

sibly to Pakistan than it does to India. General Musharraf had two close calls in the form of attempts on his life just prior to the SAARC summit. The international community and the Indian leadership seem to agree that General Musharraf is a better option on the Pakistani side than the Islamist radicals who are threatening his life. Musharraf's support for the U.S.-led war against terrorism has gained him international support, and the peace talks are India's

way of joining the international community on this issue despite its reservations about Musharraf's own anti-Indian stance in the past.

By most accounts, Musharraf has had a change of heart about India, transforming from hawk to dove, though we cannot be sure that such a change of heart is in any way absolute. Part of it has to do with the need for self-survival. At a time when the jihadis are trying to kill him



Pakistan knows it is relatively weaker, so it always looks for negotiating moments.

and the Americans are worried about Pakistan's involvement in nuclear proliferation to Libya, North Korea, and Iran, and Musharraf has little domestic political support, it serves him well to turn off at least one source of heat. That is probably why he chose to cool things with India. But Musharraf and his fellow generals have invested too much in demanding resolution of the Kashmir dispute before normalization with India to now accept normalization without a Kashmir settlement right away.

We may also have to make a distinction here between General Musharraf the individual and General Musharraf the head of Pakistan's military institution. I know that there is a tendency to think that General Musharraf speaks for the entire Pakistani elite and especially the military. But there's no sign that everyone in Pakistan's civil-military elite shares Musharraf's realization of the internal threat from the jihadis. The generals and their backers have, for years, believed that by stoking the fires of rebellion in Indian-controlled parts of Kashmir they can force India to make concessions on the territorial status quo in that disputed region. Now Musharraf has more or less acknowledged that Kashmir is not necessarily going to fall into Pakistan's lap as a ripe apple from the tree, simply as a consequence of sustained jihadi activity.

And his realization, coupled with Indian acceptance that the realization exists, paved the way for the recent peace initiative.

Q: What compromises, if any, did each side make to reach the January agreement?

Husain Haqqani: Both sides have made concessions on form, but we have not yet reached the stage

for concessions on substance. The India-Pakistan joint statement issued in January 2004 was different from previous joint statements in one respect. It clearly said that General Musharraf reassured Prime Minister Vajpayee that Musharraf "will not permit any territory under Pakistan's control to be used to support terrorism in any manner."

We may recall that during the India-Pakistan summit in Agra in 2001, India had asked for similar language in the joint statement for that meeting, only to be turned down by General Musharraf. At that time, Pakistan's refusal to acknowledge that Pakistani-controlled territory was being used for terrorism against India was a major, major issue between the two countries. The call for a composite dialogue that addresses all outstanding issues between the two countries, included in the statement announcing the latest peace process, is a reiteration of the joint declaration made at Lahore in February 1999 during Vajpayee's bus trip to meet then-Pakistani prime minister Nawaz Sharif. The peace process initiated at Lahore was interrupted by Pakistan's military incursion into Kargil three months later. General Musharraf and the Pakistani military undertook the Kargil incursion mainly because they were dissatisfied with the terms of the

India-Pakistan dialogue resulting from the Lahore process.

So, in a way the current process brings us back to where things stood at the time of the Lahore summit. Musharraf has conceded what he refused to concede at Agra, but two and a half years later. India's major concession this time has been to schedule official talks on Kashmir simultaneous to, and possibly ahead of, other issues. The two sides will hold talks

walk away from the SAARC summit without any bilateral agreement, if necessary. In the judgment of Indian policy makers, any agreement that affirmed the centrality of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute while remaining silent on Pakistan's involvement in terrorism against India was one they could happily live without. General Musharraf, on the other hand, appeared anxious for an agreement, for at least three reasons: *First*, Pakistan's international

Musharraf has conceded what he refused to concede at Agra.



covering eight subjects, including trade and economic cooperation, confidence-building measures, terrorism, and Jammu and Kashmir. India has given Musharraf a chance to say that Kashmir will be discussed sufficiently early in the peace process. Pakistanis can construe this as an Indian concession, though there is no commitment by India to a resolution of the Kashmir dispute ahead of other matters.

Another significant development during the SAARC summit was Pakistan's decision to join the South Asia Free Trade Agreement. This is the first time Pakistan has signed on to something that will force it to open trade with India. At present, there's a lot of smuggling between the two countries but very little official trade. Formal bilateral trade could serve as a confidence-building measure in addition to reducing the mutual demonization that has poisoned India-Pakistan ties until now.

Ashley J. Tellis: As far as I can tell, India was in the driver's seat on this one. Although Vajpayee would have liked nothing better than to resume the dialogue with Pakistan for a variety of reasons—strategic, electoral, and diplomatic—India's strength in the bargaining process derived from its quite abundant willingness to

image had suffered a deadly battering in regard to its proliferation record, its continuing entanglement with terrorism, and its failure to root out Islamist extremism within its boundaries. *Second*, the United States was continuing to apply strong pressure on Pakistan with respect to both terminating support for cross-border terrorism against India and redoubling its efforts in the war against Al Qaeda and the Taliban. *Third*, the growing desire domestically for a normalized relationship with India, coupled with the conspicuous threats to Musharraf's own life from the very same extremist forces that Pakistan had bred and nurtured over the years, all taken together, strengthened his incentives to seek an exit from the standoff with India.

The asymmetry in Indian and Pakistani desperation for an agreement accordingly produced a joint statement at the SAARC summit that recorded systematic concessions by Pakistan on virtually every issue of interest to India.

To begin with, the vexed dispute over Jammu and Kashmir is not highlighted as a singularity or as the "core issue" dividing India and Pakistan. Rather—and in opposition to the long-standing Pakistani position—the relevant portion of the joint statement simply affirms that

“the composite dialogue will lead to peaceful settlement of all bilateral issues, including Jammu and Kashmir, to the satisfaction of both sides.” You will remember that this was the issue on which the Agra summit foundered: Musharraf had demanded that India accept the centrality of the dispute over Jammu and Kashmir in the context of their bilateral relations, which Vajpayee rejected. At Islamabad, the Pakistanis accepted the Indian position, which made the issuance of the joint statement possible.

Further, and again consistent with Indian preferences, the joint statement makes no mention of the rights and preferences of “the Kashmiri people” or of their “freedom struggle.” New Delhi has long asserted that, since the 1947 accession of the former princely state of Jammu and Kashmir into the Indian Union is irrevocable and complete, the Kashmiri people per se have no *locus standi* in legal—though not practical—terms as far as resolving the dispute is concerned. Consequently, whenever the problems relating to Jammu and Kashmir are referred to in the joint statement, the document only refers to the two state principals—India and Pakistan—as parties to the dispute.

Finally, the joint statement includes a “personal” assurance from General Musharraf to

over Musharraf’s previous promises, which, by affirming that “Pakistani territory” would not be used to support terrorist operations against India, allowed Islamabad the loophole of “legitimately” exploiting Azad Kashmir for such activities since the latter is in legal terms not Pakistani, but only disputed, territory. Yet another affirmation of the Indian position is included in the joint statement, Vajpayee’s declaration that “in order to take forward and sustain the dialogue process, violence, hostility and terrorism must be prevented.”

On balance, then, it appears as if Pakistan made most of the concessions required to produce the joint statement. None of the formulations that destroyed the Agra summit—the centrality of the problem of Jammu and Kashmir, the proposition that no transformation in India-Pakistan relations was possible without progress on Jammu and Kashmir—appear in the Islamabad statement. In retrospect, this should not be surprising because India holds most of the cards both on issues of process—to talk or not to talk—and on issues of substance—to give away territory or not. In contrast, Pakistan’s strategy of using terrorism to whittle away India’s advantages has increasingly faced diminishing returns since the global war



The fundamental problem between the two sides has still not been engaged: Pakistan seeks negotiations to alter the status quo, whereas India accepts negotiations primarily to ratify the same.

Prime Minister Vajpayee that “he will not permit any territory under Pakistan’s control to be used to support terrorism in any manner.” The personal nature of this pledge was deemed an important element of the peace process insofar as it entailed Musharraf putting his personal reputation and credibility with Vajpayee directly on the line. And the particular locution in the joint statement, “territory under Pakistan’s control,” was judged to be a major improvement

on terrorism began after 9/11. Consequently, its objective of securing territory in Jammu and Kashmir now controlled by India lies more and more beyond reach.

Q: What is your general assessment of the prospects for long-term success of the peace initiative?

Ashley J. Tellis: This is a very difficult question to answer satisfactorily. What is obvious right

now is that we have a limited breakthrough because Pakistan has accepted India's principal demands on matters of process. Islamabad has also agreed to certain substantive propositions, such as the unacceptability of terrorism as a means of securing political change, but whether these will be implemented completely, or to India's satisfaction, is anyone's guess. New Delhi, for its part, has consciously not crowed about these Pakistani concessions in order to avoid embarrassing Musharraf and weakening his ability to make a definitive deal with India. This much is clear: Vajpayee is eager to reach a conflict-resolving agreement with Musharraf over Jammu and Kashmir, but not at the cost of a further surrender of Indian territory to Pakistan. Vajpayee also believes that Musharraf may be the best person to make a deal with because he represents the most important constituency in Pakistan, the army; he is a moderate, in the context of the Pakistani political spectrum; and, although he carries a lot of baggage as far as India is concerned (primarily because of his role in the Kargil war), he recognizes that his survival, which is increasingly linked to his success in reforming Pakistan, is inexorably linked to his ability to reach an accommodation with India.

of substance. India, in contrast, sought and accepted the Pakistani concessions on process principally in order to intimate the limits to future compromises that may be forthcoming on matters of substance. In other words, the fundamental problem between the two sides has still not been engaged: Pakistan seeks negotiations to alter the status quo, whereas India accepts negotiations primarily to ratify the same. Unless some way can be found to bridge this chasm, the long-run prospects for successful dispute resolution do not look promising.

A successful resolution in this context will occur only when Islamabad comes around to accepting the current territorial status quo in Jammu and Kashmir, though some "rationalization" of the existing LOC certainly might be possible through negotiations. This is because Pakistan does not have the capability to compel India to abandon any territories presently under its control in the disputed state. The international community, too, has neither the incentive nor the capability to push India in this direction. Therefore, if Pakistan is to be able to claim a modicum of victory at the end of the current negotiating process—assuming that the process itself survives the vicissitudes of the conflictual bilateral relationship—it will

A negotiation carried out on the premise that Islamabad will be able to force on India major territorial changes in Jammu and Kashmir...will come to grief very rapidly.



Having said all this, however, I cannot escape the feeling that, at the end of the day, the national strategies of the two sides are in collision. The limited agreement that was reached at Islamabad, which represents only an agreement to talk about various problems in the bilateral relationship, was procured because Pakistan surrendered on issues of process in order to begin formal negotiations through which it hopes to secure Indian concessions on matters

performance have to adopt a new definition of its interests in Jammu and Kashmir. A negotiation carried out on the premise that Islamabad will be able to force on India major territorial changes in Jammu and Kashmir, or a fundamental transformation in the disputed state's existing sovereignty arrangements, will come to grief very rapidly. But a Pakistani willingness to define anew Pakistan's interests in Jammu and Kashmir in terms of some alterna-

tive principle, say, promoting the well-being of the Kashmiri people, offers greater hope for an eventual lasting accommodation. At this point, however, it is simply not obvious that Musharraf accepts the necessity for such a redefinition of Pakistani interests—the principal condition for any conflict-resolving agreement between India and Pakistan.

willing to give resolution of this dispute the priority Pakistan is seeking. So, there is nothing new here, but General Musharraf has to make this acknowledgment because, after all, he sabotaged the Lahore process in the name of Kashmir. He has to explain to everybody in Pakistan and the world, as well as to his colleagues in the army, why he chose to sabotage



Politically and economically, the cost of competing with India is weakening Pakistan's foundations.

Husain Haqqani: It's not easy to assess the prospect of long-term success without going into what each side might want from the process.

General Musharraf has said that this particular initiative toward India is going to involve four steps. The first step is to start negotiating, and they've started doing that. This is something Musharraf and Pakistan needed, to restore a semblance of regional stability. India's refusal to negotiate with Pakistan without an unequivocal commitment to end support for terrorism was hurting Pakistan's international standing. Pakistan needed the peace process to weaken the impression that Islamabad was the cause of tension. The global focus on terrorism was also eroding any remaining sympathy for Pakistan's legal and political claims relating to Kashmir, especially those related to old United Nations resolutions seeking a plebiscite in Jammu and Kashmir.

The second step, according to Musharraf, is to accept the reality that the issue of Kashmir must be resolved. To me, General Musharraf is stretching here because I think the reality that Kashmir must be resolved was recognized even in Lahore, and the Lahore declaration clearly said that all disputes would be resolved through negotiation, including Kashmir. Of course, recognizing that we have a dispute over Kashmir that we need to resolve does not mean India is

that option for peace in 1999 but is going for the same thing this time around. He has to say it's new, even if it isn't new.

Musharraf's view of the third step in the peace process is very interesting, and this is where I think things could get bogged down. According to him, the third step would be, in the words of a Pakistan government briefing, "through a process of elimination to eliminate anything not acceptable to India, Pakistan, and the Kashmiris." This would be a very difficult phase, because Musharraf and the Pakistani military leadership have traditionally failed to appreciate any nuanced or drawn-out process of attending to the Kashmir dispute. Through the process of elimination, it is clear that what is unacceptable to Pakistan is the status quo, the de facto division of the former princely state of Jammu and Kashmir that leaves India in control of the Kashmir valley. Pakistan remains averse to declaring the cease-fire line or LOC the de jure international border and saying the dispute has been resolved. India would probably want that, followed by negotiations over ways of creating a more open border, more cross-border links, and more economic links. That has not been acceptable to Pakistan, and my feeling, on the basis of being in Pakistan recently, is that it still isn't acceptable.

And what is unacceptable to India? India finds the idea of giving up Kashmir totally unacceptable. As for the Kashmiris, I think that what is unacceptable to the Kashmiris is flexible, because the Kashmiris don't have the hard-line positions on what is unacceptable that India and Pakistan have. The Kashmiris are willing to look at alternatives. Having self-government with greater autonomy than is normally provided by the Indian constitution to Indian states is one

so it always looks for negotiating moments. But my view is, and this may be a very subjective view, that the Pakistan military often misreads the times of weakness and strength. For example, I think that the Lahore summit in 1999 was a time of strength for Pakistan. Both India and Pakistan had just conducted their nuclear tests in 1998. When prime ministers Vajpayee and Sharif met, Pakistan could have said, "We're a nuclear power and you're a nuclear power. Now

I think that what is unacceptable to the Kashmiris is flexible.



of the alternatives some Kashmiris find acceptable. But a settlement on the terms of Kashmiri inclusion in India would essentially be a process between India and the Kashmiris rather than a process involving Pakistan, India, and the Kashmiris. If India moves too fast and successfully in negotiations with the Kashmiris, and the Indians and Kashmiris come up with something that is acceptable to both sides, then that is where the Pakistanis might start feeling left out. The greater issue on the Kashmiri end of the equation would be who speaks for the Kashmiris, with India and Pakistan disagreeing over the legitimacy of Kashmiri parties they do not like.

The fourth step, according to Musharraf, is to go on out of the remaining solutions and to select the one that is acceptable to all three parties. This sounds much easier than it's going to be. And the truth of the matter is that it was tried in the past and failed. Efforts to break the deadlock on Kashmir were undertaken in the 1950s and 1960s, and have been made sporadically since then. But these efforts have always been sidetracked.

The Pakistani military has always wanted to have some kind of a position of strength to negotiate from. Pakistan knows it is relatively weaker,

that the prospect of conventional war is out, let's sit down and talk and make sure we resolve our issues." But the Pakistani military went ahead with the unconventional or subconventional war in Kargil and thought that would enhance Pakistan's strength. The resort to subconventional war in the shadow of nuclear deterrence actually weakened Pakistan's negotiating hand.

Right now, Pakistan's hand is much weaker. And this is where I think the problem will come. Because Pakistan is much weaker, India's willingness to give will be much less. Why should they want to change the status quo at a time when Pakistan cannot change the status quo through any other means? And that imbalance may cause certain elements within the Pakistani military establishment to say, "This is not right for us. What are we getting out of it? We have invested fifty-five years and fought several wars, shed blood and lost lives. Let us buy time through protracted talks and wait for a moment when we can get a better deal."

I see that as the next problem now. General Musharraf is also saying that, instead of a sequential process—because India always said "Stop the terrorism and then we'll talk,"—he's finally persuaded India to accept simultaneity: "We'll work on ending the terrorism, you work

on talking to us about Kashmir, and we go from there.” But my feeling is, and this is based on fifteen days in Pakistan recently, that one thing General Musharraf is not doing is lowering the expectations of the average Pakistani and the Pakistani military that Pakistan will eventually get Kashmir. And we’ve seen in other parts of the world, in the case of the Palestinians, for instance, that injecting a dose of realism—for example, saying that elimination of Israel is not an option—helps negotiations become somewhat easier, though not necessarily fruitful or final.

In Pakistan, the general mood even now is still rather gung ho. The hard-liners say, “Since we have nuclear weapons, we can actually force India into making concessions over Kashmir.” India, on the other hand, has been concerned about terrorism, especially in Jammu and Kashmir, and if talks with Pakistan can end the infiltration of militants into Kashmir from Pakistan, that is an Indian success. Once that success has been attained, India’s leaders might say they need nothing more from this process, and that could lead to a stalemate.

So, while the beginning of the peace process is good news, we must remain cautious about its prospects. The outcome of the talks is already subject to limitations imposed by the nature of

jihadis, are truly put out of business. Right now they seem to have been put on hold, told by Pakistani officials to suspend operations without actually being decommissioned. India needs to make Pakistanis feel that it is seriously committed to the welfare of its neighbor and is not just out to humiliate it.

Let’s talk about the jihadis first. We don’t know how many of them are willing to repent, accept a sort of severance pay, and get back into normal life. Many of them still want to continue jihad because they believe in it, and they’d want to change the present situation, of even limited restrictions on their activities, by trying to kill Musharraf again. They could increase terrorism at home, maybe kill people other than Musharraf, and create sufficient pressure within Pakistan to change the government’s policy. Faced with domestic terrorism, there would certainly be those who would argue, “Let these guys go and fight the Indians instead of exploding bombs in Karachi or Islamabad.”

The jihadis have another arrow in their quiver. They could actually hit some target in India. And even though the Indians now, I think, are increasingly convinced that Musharraf is serious about curbing the militants this time around, there would still be consequences. Even



The national strategies of the two sides are in collision.

the Pakistani state, the religious sentiment in some sections of Pakistan, India’s unwillingness to make concessions over Kashmir, and the intractable nature of the Kashmir dispute.

Q: What do you think needs to be done by each side to make the peace initiative bear full fruit?

Husain Haqqani: The first thing Pakistan needs to do is make sure that the Islamist militants, the

if Prime Minister Vajpayee is willing to believe that Musharraf no longer has bad intentions toward India, there would still be an internal dynamic in India. Some Indians would continue to react and put pressure on their government and say, “Why are we tolerating this?”

If the Indians then decided to break off talks because Musharraf had failed to curb the jihadis, his political support and legitimacy at home would shrink further. Two years ago,

when I left Pakistan, General Musharraf had a lot more support than he does now. It's very interesting; two years ago he had a lot less support in India and in the United States than he does now. But at the present moment, I find a lot more people sympathetic to him in the United States and among Indians than there were two years ago. There are Americans and Indians who really think that this is a man taking risks, this is a man under threat. But the situation in Pakistan is different.

General Musharraf has no significant domestic constituencies of support, because he's not a constituency builder. There are many people who actually agree with him, but they have political reasons for not backing him because he does nothing for them domestically. As army chief, it may be easier for him to do a deal with India and not be accused of being a traitor. But that hasn't prevented certain people from accusing him of selling out Pakistan's interests. In the past, whenever a Pakistani ruler, civilian or military, managed to arrive at a deal with India that did not include any concession for Pakistan on Kashmir, his domestic standing weakened. The military and its Islamist allies forced changes in government in the past, through coups or palace coups, on the grounds that peace initiatives relating to

the internal dynamic of the Pakistani military and society could influence the extent to which Pakistan would remain committed to the process. General Musharraf will have to deal with these twin issues to make the talks a success. The public discourse in Pakistan would have to be moved away from "We must get Kashmir to be a nation in the full sense" to a realization of the tight spot Pakistan is in. The Pakistani military and people need to be made aware of the fact that Pakistan is gradually losing its fight with India. Politically and economically, the cost of competing with India is weakening Pakistan's foundations. Thirty-one percent of its people now live below the poverty line, and even after spending 5 percent of gross domestic product on defense, Pakistan cannot match India's defense spending, which is around 2.5 percent of GDP.

On India's part, it is crucial that India come up with something that will make the Pakistanis feel that they are actually getting a better deal than they would have if they weren't going through with this process. India would have to keep its rhetoric on terrorism to a minimum and hold out assurances that it is not only reconciled to Pakistan's breaking away from British India in 1947—the partition—but is now truly inter-

Pakistan remains wedded to terrorism as an instrument of leverage vis-à-vis India.



India amounted to selling out Pakistan's national interest. The first Benazir Bhutto government was accused of selling out Pakistani interests between 1988 and 1990, mainly because of Bhutto's supposed rapport with Rajiv Gandhi. And the Nawaz Sharif government came under attack for initiating the Lahore process and for a "hasty withdrawal" from Kargil.

So, on the one hand, the jihadis could undermine the peace process, and on the other,

ested in its neighbor's well-being. Given the two nations' history, that is a tall order.

The thorniest issue in India-Pakistan relations is Kashmir. Here, the test is to keep the process going while both sides try to bring about a substantive change in the expectations of their people, especially on the Pakistani side. I was six years old when I was told that Kashmir belonged to Pakistan and that we would get it one day. I hope I am a little wiser than the six-

year-olds who are being told that today. I think that it will take some time to make that substantive change in expectations, and until that time comes, we need to go ahead with little steps such as a bus service linking the Indian- and Pakistani-controlled sides of Kashmir. There could be open travel across the LOC to facilitate meetings between divided families. And then there is something that the Indians have not yet been willing to consider—meetings

Pakistan has to do immediately is suspend indefinitely its support for terrorist groups infiltrating the LOC and engaging in violence either in Jammu and Kashmir or elsewhere in India. This has not happened as yet: Although infiltration across the LOC has been reduced relative to historic norms, the level of violence in Kashmir is still unacceptably high from India's point of view. Further, the infrastructure of terrorism remains intact. Again, although some of



Pakistan is gradually losing its fight with India.

between political leaders on both sides of Kashmir: an intra-Kashmir dialogue that would buy us some time while a more permanent solution to the region's final status is found. Then the Pakistani leadership would be able to tell the Pakistani people, "The Kashmiris are talking among themselves; give them time to come up with creative solutions, and then we'll come up with solutions based on the solutions the Kashmiri leadership has come up with."

Ashley J. Tellis: Conclusively *resolving* the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, as opposed to simply *managing* this quarrel, will require involved discussions that will take a long time. It is not something that will be concluded in a matter of months; it will very likely take several years. Consequently, there are many things that need to be done by both sides both in the short run and in the long run to bring negotiations to a successful conclusion.

Let me start with the short run. The key challenge facing both sides in the near term is to keep the process of dialogue itself going—despite whatever obstacles may, and probably will, episodically appear. Let me flag two things in this connection that will be required, first, of Pakistan. The most important thing that

the more conspicuous terrorist training camps in Pakistani Kashmir have been shut down, Indian intelligence has concluded that some of these have been relocated, while new facilities have opened in other locations. The volume of communications traffic across the LOC between Pakistan's intelligence handlers and the terrorist groups, as well as among the terrorist groups themselves, has not decreased either. Pakistan's efforts—on its side of the LOC—to intercept any infiltration efforts carried out by the terrorist groups independently have also been marginal, leading Indian policy makers to conclude that Musharraf has, at best, only commanded the jihadis to lie low while he tests India's intentions at the negotiating table.

In other words, Pakistan remains wedded to terrorism as an instrument of leverage vis-à-vis India. It has attempted to finesse this fact by calling the terrorists operating in Jammu and Kashmir "freedom fighters." Whether this is accurate or not is irrelevant. So long as India believes they are terrorists, how Musharraf treats them will have a critical bearing on whether New Delhi remains at the negotiating table. So the very first thing that Pakistan has to demonstrate by spring of this year (when the snows melt in Jammu and Kashmir and

infiltration becomes easier) is that its renunciation of support for terrorism is in fact a strategic—irreversible—change of course vis-à-vis India and not merely a tactical inflection that can be readily altered should the negotiating process become difficult for Islamabad. This is a vital precondition for the very survival of the dialogue process, not to mention an absolute necessity for minimizing the prospect of “catalytic wars” breaking out as a result of some major terrorist attack in India.

The second issue, after the suspension of support for terrorism, relates to the composite dialogue itself. This dialogue encompasses multiple issues ranging from peace and security problems through resource disputes to cultural exchanges. Almost by definition, the extent and pace of progress will differ across these issue areas. This is the key question confronting Pakistan here: Will it permit negotiations in various areas to reach a satisfactory conclusion as and when possible? Or will the progress that can be made in some issue areas be held hostage to resolving the more difficult problem of Jammu and Kashmir on terms favorable to Islamabad? If Pakistan chooses the former course, the prospects for a sustained dialogue improve sharply; if Pakistan chooses the latter,

up with creative strategies that allow Islamabad to enjoy some fruits of progress relatively early so as to enable Musharraf to persist with a strategy of negotiations as opposed to returning to terrorism. These will also give the Pakistani leadership political cover to begin the long and arduous process of conditioning popular expectations to accept the improbability of major territorial changes in Jammu and Kashmir. Of course—and I emphasize this—all this assumes that Pakistan appreciates the limits of the possible in Jammu and Kashmir. If it does, an Indian strategy of providing near-term palliatives will help Islamabad manage any unreasonable domestic expectations about securing radical change in the disputed state. If it does not, however, all such Indian gestures will appear only as exercises in prevarication, designed to string Pakistan along a course of fruitless negotiation that can only end in unmitigated frustration.

While India tests Pakistan’s intentions in this regard, there are a variety of things New Delhi can do in Jammu and Kashmir because they are good in themselves, because they would help reduce the alienation experienced by the Kashmiris, and because they would address concerns that ought to be important to Pakistan. These include expanding modes of travel across

General Musharraf has no significant domestic constituencies of support.



the engagement process is likely to have a coruscating but brief life.

In the near term, India too has important responsibilities. The biggest challenge facing New Delhi is how to keep Islamabad at the negotiating table given that the only feasible final settlement in Jammu and Kashmir favors India and not Pakistan. Since the substantive positions held by the two sides on this issue are so far apart, the test for India will be to come

the LOC; increasing ease of legal transit between the divided halves of the state; making stronger efforts at political reconciliation with the moderate Hurriyat factions, other moderate separatists, and the Indian Kashmiris as a whole; and exercising tighter control over how Indian military operations affect the civilian populace of the state. But the list can go on and on. As I said, these initiatives are good for all three reasons I identified earlier. But they are also critical for

another purpose: If the solution to the Kashmir conundrum finally is to be found only in a redefinition of the terms of the dispute, then to the degree that life in Jammu and Kashmir slowly comes closer to normal, Pakistan could feel vindicated that its fifty-five years of struggle over the state have not been entirely in vain. Far from serving merely as confidence-building measures, these initiatives could therefore become the building blocks that enable Pakistan, at some

seeking a rapprochement with India and, thereby, progressively weaken the choke hold of Islamabad's military and intelligence services over its political choices. In the near term, this strategy cannot succeed without the acquiescence of General Musharraf and his military cohort. That is why the question of whether Musharraf possesses "the vision thing" is so important. In the longer term, the military may diminish as a factor in Pakistan's political life—



The India-Pakistan peace process will succeed only when New Delhi and Islamabad—and not outsiders—conclude that they must accomplish something of value.

point down the line, to declare victory and save face over Jammu and Kashmir.

Accordingly, a successful transformation of the political environment within both the Indian- and Pakistani-controlled areas of the state, coupled with progress in other issue areas of the composite dialogue between New Delhi and Islamabad, could—not will—provide a basis for eventually changing the Pakistani position with respect to the terms of accommodation with India. Right now, the Jammu and Kashmir dispute is driven entirely by a territorial definition pertaining to who controls what territory. If the terms of discourse can somehow be changed to reflect a concern for the conditions facing all populations existing within the boundaries of the disputed state, the prospects for resolving the dispute become infinitely brighter. Whether this transformation in worldview finally occurs, of course, will depend principally on the one institution that is central to politics in Pakistan: the army. Whether the army will be able to forgo its own interest in sustaining permanent conflict with India, however, still remains to be seen. Indian policy makers hope that growing intersocietal contacts between the two countries will slowly strengthen those constituencies in Pakistan

though, if I were a betting man, I would say the odds were against it—but, in any instance, India has in my judgment few alternatives to pushing for progress within Jammu and Kashmir and in the composite dialogue with Pakistan—and then hoping for the best!

Q: What must the United States do to help the process succeed?

Ashley J. Tellis: I am tempted to say, half in jest, that what the United States should do at the moment is simply lay off! More seriously, though, it is important to recognize that the U.S. role in bringing about renewed dialogue between the two sides has been quite modest, and I do not think that is necessarily a bad thing. The India-Pakistan peace process will succeed only when New Delhi and Islamabad—and not outsiders—conclude that they must accomplish something of value. In this context, the United States has an important but limited role right now, and that consists primarily of using its influence with both sides to ensure that the process of dialogue simply stays on track, that both India and Pakistan persist with their conversation even when the going gets difficult. Obviously,

Washington has separate and different interests in India and Pakistan—those interests presumably will be pursued even as the bilateral dialogue in the subcontinent proceeds. I hope, however, that the Bush administration will remain mindful of the need to ensure that its initiatives with each side strengthen, not undermine, the evolving dialogue.

The biggest challenge here, of course, will be managing U.S. relations with Islamabad—

strengthening Pakistan's stability over the long term. There are many reasons for this outcome, but let me simply flag two important ones here. *First*, the U.S. government has not been appropriately configured to deal with deep-rooted structural problems that go beyond the challenges of day-to-day diplomacy. *Second*, attempting to remedy Pakistan's structural deformities would have required the United States to forgo many important immediate

The key challenge facing both sides in the near term is to keep the process of dialogue itself going...



which are important to the success of Operation Enduring Freedom—in a way that has the following three effects:

- strengthening Pakistan (which people keep forgetting is not synonymous with strengthening the Pakistani military), not weakening it further.
- not undermining U.S. interests in India, which possesses greater geopolitical weight in the subcontinent and is important to a stable balance of power in Asia over the longer term.
- assisting Pakistan in reconciling itself to the existing geographical reality in Kashmir rather than hardening its determination to overthrow the status quo through continued conflict.

I am personally quite pessimistic about the United States' ability to meet this complex challenge successfully. As Dennix Kux has demonstrated in his marvelous history of U.S.-Pakistani relations—*The United States and Pakistan 1967–2000: Disenchanted Allies*—the United States and Pakistan have all too often secured their mutual short-term interests to the neglect of what was really required for

gains, which successive administrations have been unable to do without increasing the risks either to their own political fortunes or to the American people.

If the United States is lucky enough to survive its current tightrope walk between India and Pakistan without exacerbating their mutual security dilemmas, there may be opportunities for a more concerted U.S. involvement in the South Asian peace process over time. The best occasion for such intensive involvement would be when Pakistan recognized the limits of possible change in regard to Jammu and Kashmir and sought assistance in consummating a conflict-resolving peace agreement with India. Even before this point, however, the United States could play a helpful role by providing ideas and suggestions, but such interventions would be effective only if both sides welcomed them. When both countries show evidence of policy realism and are beginning to deeply engage each other on the substance of the dispute, and when a breakthrough appears within the realm of possibility—and all this obviously will take a long time—the United States arguably could have a critical role to play. At that point, what Washington could do best is to reassure Islamabad that it is not alone as it makes the

hard choices that will be necessary for the attainment of a durable peace. An American willingness to play such a role through diplomatic engagement and economic rewards could make a difference to the eventual success or failure of the peace process.

Husain Haqqani: I think that the American role is essentially one of an encourager and a facilitator, and that's about it. In fact, I think it suits the parties to sometimes exaggerate the American role to explain why they are doing what they are doing. But the truth of the matter is that the Indians and the Pakistanis are quite capable of creating crises and occasionally resolving them without American assistance.

The one thing the Americans do is give a sense of security to the Pakistanis, even if it's temporary. The Pakistanis would feel much weaker when negotiating with India if they did not know that Uncle Sam was there and could have a positive influence on the other side. So, encouragement and facilitation is really what the United States can do to help the process.

At some point, however, there would have to be creative solutions for Kashmir and, for the Pakistani military, a role other than being the large force waiting to secure Kashmir for

ciently contemporary. Many of the things they are taught and think about, and the issues they talk about, are different. Economic failure or domestic political problems are not issues that concern them as much as pursuit of the abstract national interest they have defined for years in terms of rivalry with India. When the Americans say that the Pakistani standard of living must rise or investment must flow so that the people can start having better education and health care, this doesn't appeal to the Pakistani generals. The United States could invest some time and energy in helping to change the Pakistani military mind-set. Of course, if the United States could persuade Indians to start being a little less questioning of Pakistan's *raison d'être*, that would help too, but that might be asking too much. But I don't think it is time yet for a Camp David kind of involvement by the United States. And I don't think either side would be willing to accept something like that.

The United States does not help when it raises Pakistani expectations resulting from close ties with Washington. The Pakistanis have some point in saying to the Americans, "If you want nuclear weapons to play a lesser role in South Asia, you have to help us have some level of qualitative parity with India on the conven-



What Pakistan needs is a strategic shift in its military thinking.

Pakistan. But if these creative solutions originated from America, they would have to be very subtly conceived there, and would have to seem to have originated in the India-Pakistan region.

Let me just add that the Pakistani military is still very much an early-twentieth-century military. It's not a twenty-first-century military yet in its strategic vision. So, its leaders still have Clausewitzian ideas, and their concepts of sovereignty and their political ideas are not suffi-

tional side." But a close military relationship with the United States always encourages Pakistanis to start thinking along the lines of continuing competition with India. These days, discussion in Islamabad is once again about how to use the American connection to improve the Pakistani air force, in the form of new F-16 fighter aircraft.

Unrealistic expectations of the U.S. alliance make any peace process with India *ad hoc*.

What Pakistan needs is a strategic shift in its military's thinking. Pakistanis need to realize that theirs is a nation with a relatively small GDP—around US\$75 billion in absolute terms and US\$295 billion in purchasing price parity. It suffers from massive urban unemployment, rural underemployment, illiteracy, and low per capita income. One-third of the population lives below the poverty line and another 21 percent lives just above it, which results in about half the people of Pakistan being very, very poor. The number of people living in poverty is increasing every year in Pakistan, while it is decreasing in India. What the Pakistanis need to ask themselves is, “Are the victories we have sought in Kashmir and Afghanistan worth the suffering we’re putting ourselves through? Will we even be able to win our war for pride if we keep going the way we’re going?”

The constant praise the U.S. government heaps on General Musharraf and the sense of

being an important international player that comes from such praise do nothing to move Pakistan's leaders toward a much-needed reality check. But that is definitely an area where U.S. policy makers can make a contribution. They can help Pakistan take stock of its own position, instead of making it feel that it is more powerful or globally important because it has America's blessing.

American think tanks and the American news media also have a role because they too can help the Pakistanis get a better idea of reality. At the same time, the Indians need a little more convincing that Pakistan is not something they can just forget about, and move on, as some Indians have occasionally said they would like to do. I think Vajpayee has been very smart in recognizing that India's ambition to be a great player on the world stage will simply not be realized until this thorn in its side—Pakistan—is attended to. The United States can help reinforce that realization.

About the Authors

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Haqqani's journalism career has also included assignments as East Asia correspondent for *Arabia—The Islamic World Review* and Pakistan and Afghanistan correspondent for the *Far Eastern Economic Review*. He contributes to numerous international publications, including the *Wall Street Journal*, the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Financial Times*, the *Boston Globe*, the *International Herald Tribune*, and the *Gulf News*. He regularly comments on Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Islamic politics and extremism on BBC, CNN, NBC, and ABC.

Haqqani has also had a distinguished career in government. He served as an adviser to Pakistani prime ministers Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi, Nawaz Sharif, and Benazir Bhutto. From 1992 to 1993, he was Pakistan's ambassador to Sri Lanka.

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