



Armed Conflicts Report

Pakistan (1992 - first combat deaths)

Update: January 2009

Summary

Type of Conflict

Parties to the Conflict

Status of the Fighting

Number of Deaths

Political Developments

Background

Arms Sources

Economic Factors

Summary:

2008 Both newly elected in 2008, President Zardari and Prime Minister Gilani advocated for a new approach to dealing with insurgency. Peace talks between all levels of Pakistani governments and militants were proposed but never materialized due to continual violent attacks. The Pakistani national government then sought in late 2008 to take a forceful approach with militants in its North West Frontier bordering Afghanistan in an attempt to root out insurgents and solidify control. Operations against militants within the region have displaced thousands and estimates put the civilian death toll in the hundreds while the insurgent death toll is in the thousands. U.S. drone attacks escalated late in the year as more than two dozen airstrikes were reported since August. Domestic upheaval resulted in Pakistan due to U.S. drones targeting suspected insurgents on Pakistani soil. Both the U.S. and U.K. have pledged to increase anti-insurgency measures and bolster democratic institutions by funding projects costing millions of dollars within the tribal regions.

2007 Fighting continued throughout various areas of the country while violence intensified between government security forces and foreign militants in North and South Waziristan. Over 1,300 deaths were reported due to violence including some 250 which occurred as the result of suicide bombings. President Musharraf suspended the constitution from the 3rd of November to the 15th of December, sparking international outcry and resulting in Pakistan's suspension from the Commonwealth. Former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto returned from exile only to be assassinated on the 27th of December which resulted in elections originally scheduled for January 2008 being rescheduled for February.

2006 Conflicts in several areas of Pakistan killed upwards of 1,650 people. These took place between Sunni and Shia Muslims; the military and rebels seeking autonomy in the province of Baluchistan; and the military and Islamic militants along the porous Afghan border.

2005 Sectarian violence across Pakistan and military operations in northeastern Pakistan continued. In October a major earthquake in northern Pakistan killed 55,000 people.

2004 Sectarian fighting continued in 2004 as attacks on civilians and security forces, bombing of mosques, and drive-by shootings of politicians killed at least 190 people. Most casualties were civilians who died in the year's two most serious attacks, both bombings of Sunni mosques. President Musharraf was entrenched as head of the government and army until at least 2007 by a bill approved by Pakistan's lower house. Pakistan was declared a "major ally" by US President Bush in recognition of Pakistan's contribution to the fight against al-Qaeda.

2003 Sectarian violence claimed approximately 100 lives this year, with Shia Muslim civilians accounting for

most of the casualties. President Musharraf continued a crackdown on militant groups, to which may be linked an attempt on his life in December.

2002 Sectarian violence claimed dozens of lives this year with Islamic militants stepping up attacks against Pakistani Christians and foreigners.

2001 Sectarian violence continued in 2001 with targeted killings of prominent members of the community. In August, the Sindh provincial government initiated a crackdown on Islamic militants. According to one Pakistani media source, more than 250 people were killed in the violence during the year.

2000 Although violence has declined since the military coup of October 1999, sectarian tensions persisted between the majority Sunni and the minority Shi'ite Muslim groups in Karachi. The killing of prominent religious leaders and political activists resulted in violent protests. At least 150 people were killed in the violence.

1999 Despite the central government's imposition of Governor's Rule in late 1998 in response to Sindh violence, political and sectarian killings persisted in Karachi, albeit at a much reduced level. At least 75 were killed during the year, down from the estimated 1,000 conflict deaths in 1998.

1998 In 1998 reprisal killings between militants of the Muttahida Qami Movement (MQM) and a break-away faction increased violence in the city of Karachi.

Type of Conflict:

State formation/ Failed state

Parties to the Conflict:

1) Government

i) Asif Ali Zardari was elected president in Pakistan on 6 September 2008 receiving a vast majority. Pakistani legislators elected Mr. Zardari weeks after his predecessor, Pervez Musharraf, had resigned due to threat of impeachment. President Zardari accepted the role of president during his swearing-in ceremony in the name of his assassinated wife, Benazir Bhutto. Following the death of his wife in late 2007, Mr. Zardari inherited her title as head of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP). Upon receiving the post of president, Mr. Zardari pledged to resolve the long standing issue of Islamic militancy in Pakistan.

"Zardari has vowed to be tough on militancy, a stance that plays well in Washington, where U.S. officials worried about rising violence in neighboring Afghanistan have pushed Pakistan to clamp down on extremist havens in its borders." [MSNBC, 7 September, 2008]

ii) Yusuf Raza Gilani was made Prime Minister as a result of the Pakistani General Election which took place on 18 February, 2008. Pakistan's two opposition parties, the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and the Pakistan Muslim League (N) (PML (N)) won a combined majority of seats in the election by forming a coalition government to which Mr. Gilani was named Prime Minister. Mr. Gilani was nominated Prime Minister by the PPP with support from its coalition partners.

2) Armed groups: Several parties opposed to the government (and each other) are involved in the violence. These are seen to be primarily ethnic or religious groups. In addition, criminal elements, some working through the groups listed below, also contribute to the violence, a legacy of Pakistan's involvement in the war in Afghanistan and the related drug trade.

a) Sindh nationalists:

-Jeay Sindh (Qadir Magsi Group)

(b) Mohajirs-based groups:

-Mohajir-Qaumi-Movement (M-Q-M) led by Altaf Hussain (in exile in London since 1992) representing Mohajirs (migrants) who moved to Pakistan in 1947 when India was partitioned. Name changed to Muttahida Qami

Movement in 1998;

-M-Q-M (Haqiqi), a breakaway faction led by Afaq Ahmed;

c) Baluch nationalists

- Baluch Liberation Army. This group was led by 80 year old Nawab Akbar Khan Bugti, who was killed in August 2006 in a military offensive.

"The Baluch clans have gone on the offensive. They are sabotaging railways, blowing up gas pipelines and electricity cables, and attacking soldiers both in their garrisons and while they are on patrol on Baluchistan's desert roads. A mysterious group calling itself the Baluchistan Liberation Army has also sprung up." ['Pakistan's Other War', *Time Asia*, June 19, 2006]

d) Sunni-based groups

-Millat-e Islami-ye Pakistan (MIP), previously known as Sipah-Sabaha-Pakistan, which represents Sunni Moslems with support from fundamentalist groups in Saudi Arabia and Libya

-Jamaat-i-Islami (JII) and its student wing, Islamic Jamiat Tulaba (IJT)

-Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, suspected of having links with Osama Bin Laden's al-Qaeda, Jaish-e-Mohammad, Lashkar-e-Toiba, Harkatul Muhajideen among other terrorist groups.

e) Shi'ite-based groups

-Islami Tahrik-e Pakistan (ITP), previously known as Tehrik-I-Jaffaria-Pakistan, which represents Shi'ite Moslems with some financial support from Iran. Led by Mohammad Baqar Najfi

In January 2002, President Musharraf banned five Islamic militant groups including, Sipah-Sabaha-Pakistan and Tehrik-I-Jaffaria. This ban was extended in 2003 following the renaming of several of the groups.

"A ban imposed on three Islamic organizations by the Pakistani government over the weekend, in a move that saw dozens of Islamic activists rounded up across the country, was the continuation of a ban imposed last year, according to a senior government official. 'This is a continuation of the old ban on groups that had become active under new names,' Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmad told IRIN ...Among the outlawed groups were the Sunni organisation, Sipah-e-Sahab-ye Pakistan, which later re-emerged as Millat-e Islami-ye Pakistan (MIP); and its rival, the Shi-ah group, Yahrik-e Ja'fari-ye Pakistan, which, thereafter, renamed itself Islami Tahrik-e Pakistan (ITP). Both the new organisations have been banned..." [*IRIN*, November 17, 2003]

Status of Fighting:

2008 There was continual violence between militant groups and the Pakistani government in 2008, especially in the North West Frontier Province (NWFP), the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), and Balochistan Province. Although peace talks were attempted, they later collapsed and fighting intensified. An increased number of highjackings by militants took place on the major Torkham highway, a supply route that fuels the ISAF mission in Afghanistan. U.S. missile attacks by way of unmanned drones on Pakistani soil were a cause for concern within Pakistan. Reports have indicated that more than two dozen airstrikes by such drones occurred in 2008. These U.S. airstrikes have sought to root out militants in tribal regions along the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan that have been accused of harbouring militants that target ISAF forces in Afghanistan.

"A wide array of militant groups is currently engaged in varying degrees of violence and subversion across the country. A cursory look at the map indicates that the North West Frontier Province (NWFP), the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), and Balochistan are witnessing large-scale violence and insurrections. Violence also increasingly afflicts parts of Punjab, Sindh, and the Gilgit-Baltistan region." [*Pakistan Assessment 2009*, South Asia Terrorism Portal]

"The missile strike that killed the pair was the latest in U.S. campaign of using pilotless drone aircraft to target Islamic militant suspects inside Pakistan. There have been more than two dozen strikes in the past 12 months, and the campaign has drawn sharp protests from Pakistan." [*The Wall Street Journal*, 9 January, 2009]

"Swat plays host to frequent battles between the Pakistani army and Islamic militants trying to enforce a strict form of Islamic law set down by Mullah Fazlullah, a radical cleric." [BBC News, 23 January, 2009]

"Afghan-based U.S. and NATO forces get up to 75 percent of their supplies via routes from Pakistan. The trucks that carry the fuel, food and other goods face constant threats of violence, while growing militant activity has led to attacks on terminals in the nearby city of Peshawar." [AP, 19 January, 2009]

"India says that a Pakistan-based militant group, Lashkar-e-Taiba, masterminded the attack (Mumbai). In the days afterward, the UN Security Council declared that Jamaat-ud-Dawa, a charity in Pakistan, was a front for the outlawed militant organization." [International Herald Tribune, 15 January, 2009]

"Pakistan has had about 100,000 troops on its western border with Afghanistan although it recently withdrew "limited numbers" because of tension with India after a militant assault on the Indian city of Mumbai in November." [International Herald Tribune, 12 January, 2009]

"Over 90,000 troops along with various paramilitary forces are involved in a protracted fight against extremists in the tribal areas of Pakistan." [Global Security, February 16, 2009]

2007 Fighting between government forces and foreign militants as well as sectarian conflicts intensified in North and South Waziristan throughout 2007. Suicide bombings were rampant, claiming at least 230 lives throughout the country and raising fears that sectarian violence spilling over the Afghanistan border will further destabilize the country. Reports that children are being abducted by pro-Taliban militants in northern tribal areas surfaced in June. In early July, government security forces stormed the Red Mosque in central Islamabad, wherein radical clerics and student sympathizers advocating the imposition of Sharia law had barricaded themselves. The storming of the Mosque sparked numerous suicide bombings and reprisal killings, further fuelling fears of destabilization within the capital. Also in July, Taliban leader and one of Pakistan's most wanted people, Abdullah Mehsud, committed suicide after security forces surrounded him in Zhob. In November, President Musharraf suspended the constitution and instituted marshal law, claiming it was necessary to prevent the Supreme Court from creating political chaos and abetting the actions of militants. Also in November, the government deployed some 2 000 troops to the Swat valley region to fight militants linked to pro-Taliban cleric Maulana Fazlullah. Upon returning from exile, former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto was assassinated on the 27th of December while leaving a political rally in Rawalpindi. The assassination sparked waves of street violence, resulting in the deaths upwards of 50

"Fierce clashes between local tribesmen and foreign militants in Azam Warsak area of the South Waziristan Agency killed 17 people, officials said. Twelve Uzbeks, three tribesmen, including a brother of a tribal elder and two Afghan nations, were among those killed. Officials said the clashes started when some people opened fire on a pro-government elder Malik Saadullah Darikhel near Azam Warsak bazaar, killing his two cousins and a passer-by." [New Kerala Online, February 03, 2007]

"Children in Tank, a remote town at the centre of Taliban activity in north-west Pakistan, are going missing. Reports say children, some as young as 11, are being kidnapped by pro-Taliban militants. Most people in Tank are unwilling to admit it is happening and few will talk about it." [BBC News, June 12, 2007]

"The violence, the latest in a sharp uptick against Pakistan's Shiite minority, has heightened concerns that Iraq's conflict may be feeding sectarian violence here. Whether the conflict in Iraq is capable of igniting Pakistan's simmering sectarian tensions raises questions about a growing global sectarian war." [The Christian Science Monitor, February 02, 2007]

"Pakistan has seen a massive increase in violence, especially in the border tribal areas, since security forces stormed the Lal Masjid, or Red Mosque, in Islamabad earlier this month. The government is under US pressure to strike at Taliban and al Qaeda elements in the same border regions." [Reuters, July 21, 2007]

"Pakistani commandos have cleared the Red Mosque complex of all militants, ending a fierce eight-day siege which left more than 60 dead. More than 50 militants and eight soldiers were

killed in the fighting since President Pervez Musharraf ordered commandos to storm the mosque in the capital Islamabad. The army was sent in to end a week-long siege where militants bent on imposing Sharia Law in the region held hundreds of women and children hostage." [*The UK Telegraph*, July 12, 2007]

"Musharraf suspended the constitution on November 3rd, saying he needed to stop the Supreme Court from creating political chaos and hampering the effort against militants." [*The Associated Press*, November 26, 2006]

"Former PM and PPP leader Benazir Bhutto assassinated leaving Rawalpindi rally, 27 December, throwing country deeper into political turmoil; some 50 killed in ensuing street violence. Cause of death disputed: government said militant Baitullah Mehsud chief suspect." [*International Crisis Group*, 01 January 2008]

2006 Three areas of conflict continued within Pakistan. The first, between Sunni and Shiite Muslims, resulted in suicide bombings and clashes throughout the year. Secondly, the province of Baluchistan increased its efforts for political and economic autonomy from Islamabad, with rebels attacking gas pipelines, railways and power transmission lines and launching rocket attacks on military targets. The military has placed 123,000 troops in the province in attempts to maintain control. Lastly, the regions bordering Afghanistan, North and South Waziristan, continued to see conflict between supporters of the region's strengthening Taliban, and the Pakistani government as it continues to participate in the U.S.-led "war on terror".

"Combat operations are focused on addressing three internal security issues: the conflict within Islam; a revived low-level insurgency in Balochistan; and the 'war against terror' centred on the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATAs) along the Afghan border. These are separate problems, though with some overlap." ['Country Briefing: Pakistan', *jdw.janes.com*, March 22, 2006]

"At least 20 people were killed in continued exchange of mortar fire between Shias and Sunnis fighting that erupted on October 2 over control of the Mian Anwar shrine in the Kalay area of Lower Orakzai Agency in NWFP." [*South Asia Terrorism Portal*, October 6, 2006]

"Waziristan has been the scene of fierce battles between Islamist militants and security forces over the past two years. More than 250 people have been killed in clashes in recent weeks." ['Militants kill 7 Pakistani troopers in ambush', *Reuters*, April 20, 2006]

"The [Balochistan] insurgents regularly attack gas pipelines, electricity transmission lines, railways and military government installations, while clashes between militants and security forces are frequent. Civilians are often caught in the middle of these confrontations." ['Pakistan: Humanitarian situation in parts of Balochistan deteriorating', *IRINnews.org*, April 26, 2006]

2005 Sectarian violence between Shiite and Sunni groups continued throughout Pakistan claiming nearly 200 lives in a series of deadly bombings and violent street clashes. The Pakistani government also continued its offensive against al-Qaeda and allied terrorist groups and tribes particularly in Pakistan's northeastern Waziristan territories where heavy casualties included civilians. Local elections in August were marked by violent clashes between opposing political groups that killed dozens.

"Pakistan has bought the loyalty of four militant tribal leaders in a lawless tribal area bordering Afghanistan after a army operation failed to crush an al-Qaeda-led insurgency...The Pakistani Government has paid about £500,000 to the tribal leaders, who signed a peace deal last month so that they could repay money they had received from al-Qaeda and Taleban remnants last March...However, Pakistan is engaged in a new battle with insurgents in Baluchistan. Thousands of troops have been rushed to the southwestern province to fight rebels blowing up railways and telecom installations. Gas and electricity supplies have been cut and trains have been halted from running after dark for fear of attack." [Zahid Hussain, *The Times Online*, February 10, 2005]

2004 Armed violence continued in the form of attacks on civilians, bombing of mosques, drive-by shootings of politicians and attacks on security forces. The most serious incidents of the year were March and October

bombings of Sunni mosques that killed over 80 people and wounded hundreds more.

"Extremist strikes and sectarian attacks across the country together with mini-insurgencies in two of Pakistan's four provinces have increased public insecurity and criticism of President Pervez Musharraf." [*BBC News*, July 1, 2004]

2003 Fighting between Sunni and Shia communities spread to the southwestern region of the country. In most instances of violence, Shia civilians were indiscriminately attacked, allegedly by extremist Sunni militant groups. The worst such case was the July bombing of a Shia mosque in Quetta, which resulted in 60 deaths. Militants employed guerrilla tactics, such as bombings and drive-by shootings. Extremist sectarian groups opposed to President Musharraf's policies, including his administration's alliance with the US in the "war on terror," sustained attacks on government security forces and narrowly failed to assassinate Musharraf in December.

"Hazara Shia community leaders have called for increased security, despite life returning to normal following a Sunni militant attack on a mosque in the southwestern Pakistani city of Quetta on 4 July. The Lashkar-e-Jhangvi organisation claimed responsibility for the attack in which 60 people died...

Thousands of Sunni and Shia Muslims have been killed in Pakistan over the past two decades in sectarian violence ... [which has been] mostly limited to the eastern Punjab and the southern Sindh provinces. However, in recent months, Hazaras living in Quetta, capital of the mostly tribal southwestern Balochistan Province, have become a target." [*IRIN*, July 17, 2003]

2002 Fighting continued between Sunni and Shia communities. In addition, government officials, Pakistani Christians and foreigners were targeted by militant Muslim groups.

"Masked gunmen have shot dead three Shia Muslims and injured two others outside a mosque in Pakistan... It was not clear who was behind the shooting, but violence between opposing militants from the majority Sunni and minority Shia communities has claimed hundred of lives in Pakistan in recent years." [*BBC News*, June 18, 2002]

"The Christian community in Pakistan has been the worst hit by extremist attacks over the past year – more Christians have died in these incidents than from any other community. The targeting of the hospital and school, and now the Karachi charity, are the latest in a series of attacks against specifically Christian missions or places of worship." [*BBC News*, September 25, 2002]

2001 Sectarian violence persisted in 2001 with attacks by extremists from all sides. Sunni extremists changed their strategy to targeting prominent community members such as doctors, lawyers and businessmen.

"Police in Pakistan's largest city Karachi are under intense pressure to end an upsurge in sectarian murders of doctors and other professionals in the city. Extremists from the majority Sunni community have been blamed for the killing of four Shia doctors since April, as well as the high profile murder of the head of Pakistan State Oil, Shaukat Mirza. Fanatics from both sides have carried out many deadly attacks in Karachi over the years, but the new tactic is to target prominent personalities in the community." [*BBC*, September 3, 2001]

2000 Although violence has declined since the military coup of October 1999, sectarian tensions persisted between the majority Sunni and the minority Shi'ite Muslim groups in Karachi. The killing of prominent religious leaders and political activists resulted in violent protests. In September, Pakistani police arrested 250 members of the hardline Sunni Muslim group, Sipah-e-Sahaaba. Other police and army operations targeted the two leading ethnically-based parties in Sindh, the Jeay Sindh Qaumi Mahaz (JSQM) and Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM).

[Sources: *BBC News*, 13 September 2000, 21 September 2000]

"A leader of a small Pakistani Shiite Muslim group has been shot dead in the southern city of Karachi. Police say Sardar Hussain Jafri, who headed the little-known group called the Voice of Shia, died on the spot. A person who identified himself as Riaz Basra, leader of the extremist anti-

Shiite group, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, phoned the BBC shortly after the attack to claim responsibility."
[BBC News, 15 May 2000]

1999 Despite the central government's imposition of Governor's Rule in late 1998 in response to Sindh violence, political and sectarian killings persisted in Karachi, albeit at a much reduced level. The intensity of the violence dropped even further after the military assumed federal powers in an October coup.

"Politically motivated violence and sectarian violence continued to be a problem, although in the weeks following the October 12 coup there were few if any reported cases of such violence. Governor's Rule, imposed to correct a serious law and order problem created in part by political tensions in the province, continued in Sindh until the coup." [*Pakistan Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 1999*, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, US Department of State, February, 2000]

1998 In 1998 tit-for-tat killings between the Muttahida Qami Movement (MQM) and a break-away faction increased the level of violence in Karachi.

"The MQM, which changed its name to Muttahida Qami Movement from the Mohajir Qami Movement, is locked in a bloody conflict with a dissident faction called the MQM Haqiqi. Hundreds of people have died in recent months in tit-for-tat killings by the militants of the two factions."
[*The Associated Press*, November 20, 1998]

Number of Deaths:

Total: South Asia Terrorism Portal calculates that in the 2003-2008 period alone, over 13,000 deaths can be attributed to terrorist violence. Sectarian violence across the same time period adds a further 1400 deaths to this total. [Source: *Pakistan Assessment 2009*, South Asia Terrorism Portal]

"About 4,000 people have died in Paksitan in the past 25 years of sectarian strife." [*BBC News*, September 28, 2005]

2008 6715 is the total 2008 fatality count for Pakistan as reported by South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP). Illustrative of the rising violence in Pakistan, the total fatality figures reported by SATP have doubled each year since 2006. Included in the 2008 count are 2155 civilian deaths as well as 654 and 3906 military and terrorist deaths respectively. Other estimates, coming from Pakistani military officials, local news agencies, and international human rights groups support these counts. International human rights groups place estimates of displaced persons resulting from the regional conflict at 350,000. Pro-governmental tribal elders have been targeted by militants who seek to impose their influence in the region and 2008 saw a drastic increase in the number of police forces deaths in the North West Frontier Province as the number of fatalities also more than doubled from the previous year.

"The Pakistani military is currently engaged against Taliban and Al-Qaeda-linked militants in Bajaur, where officials say more than 1,500 rebels have been killed and hundreds more captured."
[*AFP*, 20 November, 2008]

"Pakistani security forces are said to have killed up to 2,000 militants since early August during anti-insurgent military operations in the Swat district and the Bajaur tribal region on the Afghan border." [*VOA News*, 13 November, 2008]

"In the tribal area Bajaur, Pakistan army troops have clashed with a resurgent Taliban, resulting in an estimated 4,000 militants and 70 service members killed since August." [*The Washington Post*, 12 November, 2008]

"Today, the number of people who fled Bajaur Agency and the Swat region is estimated at around 350,000 though figures vary. Many of these displaced persons are in Lower Dir, in the Malakand region, Mardan, Charsadda district and Peshawar." [*Doctor's Without Borders*, 29 October, 2008]

"Up to 300 pro-government tribal elders have been killed in North and South Waziristan, two other main militant sanctuaries, over the past few years." [*Reuters*, 24 October, 2008]

2007 The International Crisis Group documents upwards of 1300 deaths, at least two hundred of which were the result of suicide bombings. This figure also includes at least 350 civilian casualties although the data is under-reported so numbers could much higher. [Source: International Crisis Group, *CrisisWatch* monthly bulletins for 2007]

"At least 46 people have been killed in fighting between al-Qaeda militants and local pro-Taliban tribesmen in north-west Pakistan, officials say. Heavy shelling has raged near Wana in South Waziristan tribal area close to Afghanistan. Most of those killed were foreign militants, officials said. At least two children also died in the cross-fire." [BBC, March 20, 2007]

"Fighting between local and foreign militants killed 52 people, bringing to more than 200 the number of dead in recent days in a conflict between Pakistanis and suspected al-Qaeda-linked extremists, a senior official said. Interior Minister Aftab Khan Sherapo said 45 Uzbeks militants and seven tribesman died in battles in South Waziristan, a lawless region used as a rear base by Taliban militants fighting in Afghanistan and where the United States fears that al-Qaeda is regrouping. Since fighting began last week, 213 people have been killed, including 177 Uzbeks and their local allies, Sherapo told The Associated Press." [The Associated Press, March 30, 2007]

"Human Rights Watch called on Pakistan to allow an independent investigation into a suspected missile strike that killed at least 30 alleged Al-Qaeda militants. Opposition MPs from Islamic parties walked out of parliament after the attack on a madrassa in the North Waziristan tribal area, blaming it on NATO and US-led forces in Afghanistan and saying the dead were students." [Agence France Presse, June 20, 2007]

"Two suicide car bombings, one of them targeting Chinese workers, killed at least 36 people in Pakistan, fuelling a sense of crisis after a government raid on an Islamabad mosque. Authorities said they suspected the blasts were part of a wave of attacks, sparked by the siege and storing of the pro-Taliban Red Mosque earlier this month, that has left more than 180 people dead. In the southwestern industrial town of Hub, a suicide car bomber blew himself up as a convoy of Chinese citizens and local security forces passed, killing at least 30 Pakistanis but no Chinese nationals, officials said. Hours earlier, six people were killed when another attacker ploughed his explosives-laden vehicle into the gates of a police college in the northwestern town of Hangu as recruits carried out a morning drill." [Agence France Presse, July 19, 2007]

2006 South Asia Terrorism Portal estimates that terrorist violence killed 1471, and that sectarian violence killed 201 people. A high percentage of these casualties were civilian.

2005 Between 700 and 1,000 people were killed throughout Pakistan.

"Raids, such as those that netted some 200 suspects on July 19th, and full-scale operations, such as those in the border area of Waziristan, have had some success. 'We have killed over 350 terrorists and apprehended more than 700 in the past year,' says Major-General Shaukat Sultan, chief spokesman for the army." [The Economist, July 21, 2005]

"...Pakistan's northern tribal area of Waziristan – the inhospitable and semi-governed border between Pakistan and Afghanistan where a year-long confrontation with militants has cost the Pakistan army over 500 lives." [Amer Ahmed Khan, BBC News, July 8, 2005]

"More than 100 people have been killed in attacks by militants from the Sunni majority and Shiite minority in the past year." [International Herald Tribune, June 1, 2005]

2004 At least 190 people, primarily civilians, were reported killed in sporadic intercommunal violence.

"At least 42 people have been killed and over 100 wounded in an attack on Shia Muslims in the Pakistani city of Quetta, hospital officials say." [BBC News, March 2, 2004]

2003 Independent media reports indicate that approximately 100 hundred people, the majority of them Shia Muslim civilians, were killed in 2003.

"Sectarian violence and tensions continued to be a serious problem throughout the country... At least 100 persons were killed in sectarian violence during the year, most carried out by unidentified gunmen." [US State Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* - 2003, February 25, 2004]

2002 A number of media reports estimate that over 100 people were killed in sectarian violence and attacks on government officials.

"At least 36 people have been killed and about 100 injured in several violent attacks this year against Christian and western targets... Police in Karachi have arrested dozens of alleged Muslim extremists in connection with the recent attacks on Christian targets." [BBC News, September 29, 2002]

2001 According to the South Asia Terrorism Portal more than 250 people were killed in sectarian violence.

"The highest number of terrorist attacks was recorded in Karachi where in 33 incidents, 54 persons were killed. The second [highest] remained FATA, where 61 persons were killed in seven incidents of sectarian violence. Dera Isamil Khan remained [third highest] where 10 people were killed and 19 injured in 6 terrorist attacks. 14 people were killed and 8 injured in 5 attacks in Lahore, 4 killed and 3 injured in 3 incidents in Multan, 4 killed in 2 at Mailsy." [PakNews, August 21, 2001]

2000 At least 150 people were killed in Karachi, mostly due to sectarian violence.

"Pakistani lawyer and Shiite leader has been shot dead by unidentified gunmen in Karachi. Waqar Naqvi, a senior member of the Shiite group, Tehrik-e-Jaffria, was killed along with his teenage son and his driver as he was taking his children to school. No group has said it carried out the killings, but a spokesman for Tehrik-e-Jaffria Hasan Turabi blamed a militant Sunni Muslim group -- Sipaha Sahaba Pakistan." [BBC News, 7 April 2000]

1999 At least 75 people were killed in Karachi due to political violence.

1998 More than 1,000 people died in violence.
[Associated Press, November 20, 1998]

"At least 750 people have been killed in Karachi this year, mainly, says the MQM, as a result of attacks on itself by a breakaway faction." [The Economist, November 7, 1998]

Political Developments:

2008 A February Pakistani general election resulted in the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and the Pakistan Muslim League (N) party forming a governing coalition with a combined majority of seats. Asif Ali Zardari from the PPP was elected president in Pakistan on 6 September 2008. He accepted his presidency in the name of his assassinated wife, Benazir Bhutto. With the new North-West Frontier provincial government being elected to power in February, a movement towards diplomacy and peace was made a priority for dealing with regional instability. The newly elected government sought to promote peace talks and a ceasefire with militant groups operating within the tribal belt on the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Peace talks were suspended by Commander Baitullah Mehsud of the Pakistani Taliban due to the refusal of their demands for the removal of government troops from Waziristan, Darra Adamkhel and Swat. On another front, the Pakistani government made numerous attempts to talk Pashtun elders into asserting their authority over the region in an attempt to gain influence over the militants operating within the region. Criticism was raised against the Pakistani national government by opposition parties for not taking a diplomatic stance against multiple missile attacks by U.S. drones on Pakistani soil. In the aftermath of the November Mumbai attacks in India, National Security Adviser Mahmoud Ali Durrani acknowledged that the single surviving gunman of the attacks was of Pakistani origin. Durrani was later fired for this statement which was deemed "irresponsible behavior" by the office of Pakistan's Prime Minister.

"Pakistani officials have acknowledged for the first time that the lone surviving suspected gunman

from November's attacks on the Indian city of Mumbai attacks is of Pakistani origin. Shortly after the announcement the country's senior security adviser was sacked, apparently for leaking the news without government approval." [Aljazeera, 8 January, 2009]

"The government has long been under criticism from opposition parties for not taking a firm diplomatic stance against the missile attacks by U.S. drones. They say the strikes may be part of a secret deal between Islamabad and Washington, but the government denies the allegations. The attacks have killed at least 200 people, mostly militants." [VOA News, 22 December, 2008]

"The North-West Frontier Province government, following elections in February, is led by the secular Awami National party, which has tried to promote peace talks with militant groups. However, in two parts of the province, Swat Valley and Hangu district, which is on the edge of the tribal belt, it has been forced to call on the army and paramilitary forces to combat insurgent groups that are allied to Mehsud's Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan." [The Guardian, 19 July, 2008]

"Commander Baitullah Mehsud of Pakistani Taliban has stopped peace talks with the government because of the latter's refusal to withdraw army troops from tribal areas. Baitullah's spokesman Maulvi Umar said on Monday that the talks were stopped because the government had refused to pull out troops from Waziristan, Darra Adamkhel and Swat. He blamed the government for the breakdown in negotiations facilitated by tribal interlocutors." [DAWN, 28 April, 2008]

"Maj. Gen. Athar Abbas, a spokesman for the Pakistani Army, blames the current situation on militants' failing to heed a cease-fire made with the government last May. The lack of an Army presence created a power vacuum, which allowed militants to reestablish themselves, he says. He also blames the provincial government for not making up its mind on whether to cut deals with the militants or crack down on them, and believes this may have tempered the Army's willingness to fight." [Christian Science Monitor, 30 January, 2009]

2007 Political turmoil continued to consume the country as the result of intensified border struggles with foreign militants and Taliban supporters. President Musharraf suspended the constitution on November 3rd and instituted a state of emergency, claiming that the Supreme Court was aiding foreign militants. The constitution was subsequently re-instated on December 15th following Pakistan's suspension from the Commonwealth as well as a fierce international backlash. Accusations of human rights abuses continued as thousands were arbitrarily arrested following the declaration and continue to remain incarcerated without charge. President Gen. Musharraf stepped down as head of the country's military in November and appointed Gen. Ashfaq Kayani as his successor. Former exiled Prime Ministers Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto returned towards the end of the year and after narrowly escaping an assassination attempt, Benazir Bhutto was killed on the 27th of December. Presidential elections were rescheduled for February 2008.

"President Gen. Musharraf imposed martial law 3 November (termed "state of emergency plus"), as court set to rule on 6 October re-election. Chief Justice Iftikhar Chaudhry sacked, other superior judges asked to sign oath of allegiance to Provisional Constitution Order suspending constitution, prompting scores of resignations. Heavy crackdown on dissent followed: thousands of opposition supporters arrested, independent media outlets shut down; government said 3,400 freed 21 November but many still imprisoned." [International Crisis Group, 01 December 2007]

Former PM Nawaz Sharif returned from exile 25 November to register for January polls but said APDM coalition would boycott if judiciary not re-instated; PPP chair Benazir Bhutto may also boycott, decision due 15 December. Violence in NWFP and Tribal Areas continued; notably Swat valley, where army launched further offensive, and in Parchinar, Kurram agency, where communal clashes killed nearly 100. 15 killed in twin attacks on Rawalpindi military HQ 24 November. [International Crisis Group, 01 December 2007]

"The Commonwealth voted to suspend Pakistan's membership after Musharraf failed to meet their deadline to quit the military and end anti-democratic measures. The international organization last kicked Pakistan out of the Commonwealth in 1999 after Musharraf seized power in a bloodless coup. Membership was reinstated five years later." [CBC News, November 23, 2007]

"Spokesman Rashid Qureshi said Musharraf would make "farewell visits" to his troops before ending a military career that began in 1964. Musharraf planned to promote his anointed successor, Gen. Ashfaq Kayani, to the military chief's post, the aide said." [*The Associated Press*, November 26, 2006]

"Former PM and PPP leader Benazir Bhutto assassinated leaving Rawalpindi rally, 27 December, throwing country deeper into political turmoil; some 50 killed in ensuing street violence. Cause of death disputed: government said militant Baitullah Mehsud chief suspect." [*International Crisis Group*, 01 January 2008]

2006 Militant Islamists, dubbed the "Pakistani Taliban", strengthened their power in the provinces of North and South Waziristan. In March, clerics in these provinces announced the enforcement of Sharia law, and that it would be the only means to solve disputes. President Musharraf accused India of arming and financing Baluch rebels, which India denied.

"Clerics announced the enforcement of Sharia in South Waziristan on March 10, 2006 saying that disputes would now be resolved through Islamic laws instead of the tribal Jirga. An announcement to this effect was reportedly made during Friday prayer sermons in Wana and other towns of South Waziristan. The announcement came following letters from local Taliban commanders to all prayer leaders asking them to enforce the Sharia." (*South Asia Terrorism Portal*, accessed March 2007)

2005 President Musharraf further consolidated his power as parties allied to the president fared well in disputed August local elections.

"Allies of Pakistan's president, General Pervez Musharraf, have scored major gains in the first two phases of local government elections over the past two weeks, a development likely to further consolidate his grip on power before general elections in 2007, according to analysts here." [*International Herald Tribune*, September 1, 2005]

2004 President Pervez Musharraf will remain head of the army and government until at least 2007, after a bill passed in Pakistan's lower house extended his tenure in both roles. Musharraf also named Shaukat Aziz, a political novice, as Prime Minister in August. Although the government ordered an inquiry into a March attack on civilians, several strikes were called (mainly in Sindh province) to protest government handling of the conflict. The Sindh provincial government failed to form a "coalition of national unity" with the seven opposition parties in an attempt to stem the tide of conflict and the minister of the Sindh province resigned after violence escalated in June. US President Bush declared Pakistan a "major ally" in recognition of its contribution to the fight against al-Qaeda allowing Pakistan access to special benefits including expanded foreign aid and priority delivery of military equipment.

"The reins of power have once again been handed over in Pakistan. And once again, it's a man hand-picked by the country's military ruler, Gen Pervez Musharraf. And though it has all been done constitutionally, the question being asked is whether a political novice like Shaukat Aziz has the competence and capability to deal with the country's complex political and law and order situation, or even bigger issues like combating al-Qaeda-backed terrorism." [*BBC News*, August 28, 2004]

2003 The leader of the militant Sunni organization Millat-e Islami-ye Pakistan (MIP) was assassinated in October, leading to rioting in Islamabad. The government sustained a crackdown on banned Sunni and Shia militant groups and arrested their leaders. President Musharraf continued to support US initiatives in the "war on terror" in neighbouring Afghanistan, a position not welcomed by many Pakistani citizens.

2002 In January, the government banned five militant Islamic groups, including the Sipah-Sabaha-Pakistan and Tehrik-I-Jaffaria. A number of groups reacted to the ban and to Pakistan's support of the US-led "war on terror" by attacking foreigners and Pakistani Christians, prompting the Christian community to demand protection from the government and the international community. The government responded by introducing new security measures around non-Muslim places of worship. Fighting continued between the Sunni and Shia communities in Sindh despite government efforts to increase security in the province.

"A suicide bomber blew up a bus yesterday in Pakistan's port city of Karachi, killing 14 people - most of them French nationals - including himself... Many experts say it is pointed retaliation at Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf's crackdown on Islamic militant groups and for allowing US troops to cross the Pakistani border to hunt down Al Qaeda fighters... Some experts are pointing to Muttahida Quami Movement..." [*The Christian Science Monitor*, May 9, 2002]

2001 In August the government of the Province of Sindh initiated a crackdown on Islamic militants, arresting more than 200 people in raids.

"Police in Pakistan have detained more than 200 people in raids on militant Islamic homes and offices in Karachi and the southern Sindh province. The crackdown was launched after the Sindh provincial governor imposed a ban on fundraising in the name of jihad, or holy war." [*CNN*, August 22, 2001]

2000 Facing increasing pressure from the international community to restore democracy, military leader General Pervez Musharraf ruled out the possibility of holding general elections or reviving the suspended Pakistan parliament within the next two years.

1999 On October 12, Prime Minister Mian Nawaz Sharif was ousted from power in a bloodless military coup led by Army Chief of Staff General Pervez Musharraf.

1998 A month after the MQM walked out of the provincial government coalition, the federal prime minister, Nawaz Sharif, declared Governor's Rule (a state of emergency) in Karachi, called out the army to quell the violence, and announced the establishment of military courts for the city.

Background:

The migration of Indian Muslims (mohajirs) into Sindh and Baluchistan provinces following the 1947 India-Pakistan partition, combined with a more recent influx of large numbers of Pashtuns and Punjabis, created economic tensions with the indigenous, generally poorer, Muslim population. These have fed a complexity of conflict. Sindhis are calling for a Sindhi state; the mohajirs, led by the MQM, are seeking a separate state around the provincial capital, Karachi; Baluchs desire political and economic autonomy. There are also sectarian differences between the majority Sunni and minority Shi'ite Muslims.

The proximity of the Afghanistan war has fed the violence by providing weapons, criminal elements, including drug traffickers, and reported foreign support for Muslim extremism. From June 1992 to November 1994 the Pakistan Army was deployed in a major, and ultimately unsuccessful, operation to control Karachi and after the army's withdrawal, police and paramilitary troops contributed to a rising toll of shooting deaths in the city. Following early 1997 elections, the MQM joined the majority Muslim League in the national and Sindh provincial governments. A month after the MQM walked out of the provincial government coalition in late 1998, the then federal prime minister, Nawaz Sharif, declared Governor's Rule (a state of emergency) in Karachi, called out the army to quell the violence, and announced the establishment of military courts for the city. Since a coup in October 1999, the Pakistan government has been controlled by the military under General Pervez Musharraf and sectarian violence has declined. The Pakistani government intensified its crackdown on militant sectarian groups following the 2001 US invasion and occupation of Afghanistan, fueling further resentment between the extremist groups and the government. Several attempts have been made in recent years on President Musharraf's life.

From November 3rd to December 15th 2007, President Musharraf suspended the constitution claiming the Supreme Court was hampering initiatives to combat foreign militants, a decision that resulted in fierce international backlash as well as Pakistan's suspension from the Commonwealth. Musharraf also stepped down as head of the country's military, assuming power as a civilian. Shortly following her return from exile in 2007, ex-Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto was assassinated in Rawalpindi on December 27, 2007. Elections originally scheduled for January 2008 were rescheduled to February due to elevated levels of political turmoil surrounding Bhutto's assassination.

"President Gen. Musharraf imposed martial law 3 November (termed "state of emergency plus"),

as court set to rule on 6 October re-election. Chief Justice Iftikhar Chaudhry sacked, other superior judges asked to sign oath of allegiance to Provisional Constitution Order suspending constitution, prompting scores of resignations. Heavy crackdown on dissent followed: thousands of opposition supporters arrested, independent media outlets shut down; government said 3,400 freed 21 November but many still imprisoned." [*International Crisis Group*, 01 December 2007]

"President Musharraf lifted state of effective martial law 15 December, after decreeing constitutional changes immunising him from challenges to October re-election and acts committed during emergency. Supreme Court permanently replaced as 14 judges gave oath same day." [*International Crisis Group*, 01 January 2008]

"Former PM and PPP leader Benazir Bhutto assassinated leaving Rawalpindi rally, 27 December, throwing country deeper into political turmoil; some 50 killed in ensuing street violence. Cause of death disputed: government said militant Baitullah Mehsud chief suspect." [*International Crisis Group*, 01 January 2008]

"The Commonwealth voted to suspend Pakistan's membership after Musharraf failed to meet their deadline to quit the military and end anti-democratic measures. The international organization last kicked Pakistan out of the Commonwealth in 1999 after Musharraf seized power in a bloodless coup. Membership was reinstated five years later." [*CBC News*, November 23, 2007]

Arms Sources:

The Pakistani government recently imported weapons from the United States, the UK, Italy, France, China, Russia, Sweden, Indonesia, and Libya. The alliance formed between Pakistan and the US in the "war on terror" has led to an increase in US military assistance to Islamabad. The government also depends on domestic supplies. The rebel movements have been supplied by the "Afghan Pipeline" – US weapons during the 1980s, and Eastern European arms since.

[Sources: *World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers 1999-2000*, *The Military Balance 2000-2001 to 2004/2005*; *SIPRI Yearbook*, 2002-2005]

"Pakistani officials say they plan to supply assault rifles to thousands of tribesmen to fight the militants. The strategy of supporting tribal militias to evict militants bears a parallel with the Awakening Council movement in Iraq, in which Sunni tribesmen have risen against al Qaeda and driven them from their neighbourhoods with help from the U.S. military." [*Reuters*, 24 October, 2008]

"Baluch leaders say that rich compatriots in the Persian Gulf are providing the money needed to buy weapons in the flourishing black market." ["Pakistan's Costly 'Other War'", *Washingtonpost.com*, February 15, 2006]

"Individual licences for British arms to Pakistan have increased in value from £15m in 2002 to £40.5m last year." [Richard Norton-Taylor, *The Guardian*, May 21, 2005]

"Pakistan and the UK have signed an arms deal to allow Islamabad to purchase British military hardware, a defence ministry statement said here." "The two sides agreed to hold joint exercises, exchange observers and to jointly fight the war on terror." [*AFX News*, May 18, 2005]

"...the Bush administration approved the sale of \$1.3 billion of military items [including 24 F-16 fighter planes]." "...Congress was notified that the administration would sell Pakistan naval reconnaissance planes, TOW heavy anti-armor guided missiles, and Phalanx close-in defense systems for ships." [*Boston Globe*, March 29, 2005]

Economic Factors

Economic factors are at the heart of the discontent in the province of Baluchistan, which has the majority of Pakistan's natural resources, including natural gas, uranium, copper and oil. Despite being the sight of these

resources, Baluchistan is one of the poorest provinces, and has received only 12 percent of the royalties it is due from gas revenues. Plans by President Musharraf to further develop Baluchistan's oil resources have aggravated these already existing tensions.

"It [Pakistani Government] has allocated 8.4 billion rupees (\$104 million) for development in the [tribal] region this year but given an economic crisis, it remains to be seen how much is spent. The United States has earmarked \$750 million for projects in the tribal areas." [Reuters, 24 October, 2008]

"What the Baluch, Sindhis and a third, more assimilated ethnic minority, the Pashtuns, want above all is an end to blatant economic discrimination by the dominant Punjabis. Most of Pakistan's natural resources are in Baluchistan, including natural gas, uranium, copper and potentially rich oil reserves, both onshore and offshore....For decades, Punjabi-dominated central governments have denied Baluchistan a fair share of development funds and paid only 12 percent of the royalties due to the province for the gas produced there." ["Pakistan's Costly 'Other War'", *Washingtonpost.com*, February 15, 2006]

"In particular, tensions have been aggravated by the determination of the Pakistani president, General Pervez Musharraf, to develop the area's oil and gas fields, the largest in the country, as well as his aim to build a pipeline across the region to carry oil from Iran and a strategic deep seaport to expand trade with China, residents say." ["In Pakistan, war on a second front", *International Herald Tribune*, April 2, 2006]

Project Ploughshares
57 Erb Street West
Waterloo, Ontario, Canada N2L 6C2
tel (519) 888-6541 fax (519) 888-0018 Email: plough@ploughshares.ca