

## Pakistan's Military Strategy: Challenges and Response

by

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### Abstract

Pakistan has remained marred with paradoxical security challenges. This plethora of security and other challenges, weak and unstable political system, and military actions has resulted in absence of unanimously accepted national security strategy and with it a defined military strategy. The contours of security threats have dictated Pakistan's military strategy, its applications and development of armed forces. The paper explores Pakistan's military strategy and the challenges faced by Pakistan as a country and the response of these challenges.

**Key Words:** Pakistan's Military, Military Strategy, Pakistan & India, Pakistan's security constraints

### Introduction:

Etymology of Strategy is derived from French *stratégie* and from Greek *stratēgia* 'generalship', from *stratēgos*. The Oxford Dictionary defines Strategy as "A plan of action designed to achieve a long-term or overall aim". The same source further defines strategy as the art of planning and directing overall military operations and movements in a war or battle<sup>i</sup>. Not only Oxford Dictionary, but many other sources also define strategy and military strategy under the same heading. It could have been true in the past but in contemporary time each domain under a sovereign government has to design and define its strategy to achieve the overall strategic objectives of the government, including defense and military strategy. Strategists and historians have made extensive efforts to explain military strategy in accordance with their time, geographic conditions and culture (Sun Tzu; the art and science of options,<sup>ii</sup> Clausewitz: a successful military strategy may be a means to an end, but it is not an end in itself<sup>iii</sup> thus leading to varying definitions, forms, scope and limitations of military strategy. The documented definition of Military Strategy in Pakistan describes it as:

- The application of military resources to help achieve grand strategic objectives.<sup>iv</sup> It is the military component of the grand strategy and is formulated from the political directive. It is concerned with the military strategic objectives and desired end state required to achieve grand strategic aims, the military actions needed to achieve those objectives, the resources to be allocated and the constraints to be applied.
- As per the 1973 Constitution of Pakistan (Article 245); the Armed Forces shall, under the directions of the Federal Government, defend Pakistan<sup>v</sup> against external aggression or threat of war, and, subject to law, act in aid of civil power when called upon to do so.<sup>vi</sup>

Armed forces are complemented by paramilitary forces (commonly known as Civil Armed Forces of Pakistan) under Ministry of interior. Pakistan Armed Forces are virtually central actor in many of today's most pressing security challenges haunting Pakistan. In recent years the military had to simultaneously combat a vicious internal insurgency, suppress international terrorist groups, and respond to Pakistan's worst floods, all while squaring off against a much larger rival in one of the most strategically complex regions in the world that continues to threaten to explode into war for a fifth time since 1947. Furthermore, Pakistan's armed forces oversee the world's fastest-growing nuclear arsenal.

Concurrently, the civil- military relations also remained questionable which lead to military imposing martial law on at least three occasions. At the political government level, a declare comprehensive national security strategy (inclusive of traditional and non-traditional security) is still not available (policy documents like National Defense Strategy and National Security Strategy issued by US Government have not been issued). While a national security policy has been issued (dealing with internal threat under the ambit of Ministry of Interior), a comprehensive military strategy as a document, even if formulated, is not available on open sources.

This article aims to analyze Pakistan geo-strategic security constraints leading to strategic threats that dictate contours of Pakistan Military Strategy and its application for threat mitigation. The sensitive contents of the subject, non-availability of primary sources for research and distant locale compel the scribe to optimize on available open sources through internet only. Furthermore, the subject being highly debated with many contrasting opinions, the views expressed in the article are strictly scribes own and do not in any way reflect the official position of Government and Armed forces of Pakistan.

### **Geo-Strategic Constraints to National Security of Pakistan:**

From both traditional and non-traditional security perspectives, Pakistan has been confronted with threats emanating from both internal and external actors. Since its inception, Pakistan has been confronted with external threats on its eastern and western borders. On its east, sharing a 2912 km long boarder, India posed unprecedented threats. Pakistan shares a disputed porous 2430 km Durand line<sup>vii</sup> with Afghanistan on its West. Pakistan and China have also a 523 km shared border. Similarly, Pak-Iran border is 909 km long.<sup>viii</sup>

Due to the peculiar geo-strategic, global strategic cultural components; cold war, unipolar world, Sino-US new cold war eruption, New Great Game, GWoT, UN's unsatisfactory role, India's hegemonic ambitions, major powers politics in the region, and Pakistan's national cultural components (like history, political, constitutional, economic, socio-cultural, and military) the traditional security has always overshadowed the nontraditional security in the Pakistan. Under the competitive strategic environment, security priorities of Pakistan have always been found dynamic and undergone through various national security priorities however, a comprehensive consensus-based national security policy has never been seriously considered.<sup>ix</sup>A brief description of strategic constraints at each level are appended in ensuing paragraphs:

### **Global Strategic Constraints:**

#### **Cold War Security Priorities:**

During the Cold War era, Pakistan has caught in strategic competition between two opposing ideologies (capitalism and communism). The then leaders tended to support

western powers and entered into defense pacts like South East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) and Central Treaty Organization (CENTO). During that period the external security remained a dominant discourse in Pakistan's foreign policy, however, the internal threats to its security remained unnoticed. The Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan turned the geo-strategic scene at the global and South Asian regional levels. The then military dictator, General Zia-Ul-Haq sided with America against former Soviet Union.<sup>x</sup> America and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia used Pakistan as a proxy and frontline state against former Soviet Union. US and Pakistan spy agencies trained the students of religious seminaries (Madaris), indoctrinated Muslim youth from across the globe with the spirit of holy war (jihad), and provided arms and money to them against Soviets.

### **Post -Cold War till 9/11 Episode:**

The United States withdrew from Afghanistan after the collapse of former Soviet Union. With the withdrawal of American troops and lack of any post- Soviet Union defeat strategy, civil war broke out among various Afghan factions which finally lead to imposition of Taliban Government in 1996.<sup>xi</sup> While Pakistan remained supportive of Taliban Government, Iran continued to support the anti-Taliban Northern Alliance. The 9/11 incident and subsequent Global War on Terror (Gwot) have drastically changed the security priorities of Pakistan.<sup>xii</sup> Pakistan in general and Tribal Areas and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in particular faced a wave of terror along with problems like insurgencies, US drone attacks, military operations, etc. The repercussions of US war in Afghanistan has massively impacted Pakistan's security paradigm.

### **Regional Strategic Constraints:**

#### **Indian factor and Kashmir Issue:**

Kashmir is a disputed issue between Pakistan and India resulted due to notorious Redcliff Award. Pakistan has supported the indigenous freedom movement in Indian occupied Kashmir started in 1989 against Indian atrocities. Various freedom fighting groups like Harkat-Ul-Mujahideen, Jaish-i-Muhammad and Lashkar-i-Tayba started guerrilla warfare against the Indian troops. From 1947 to 1999 Pakistan and India fought 4 wars over Kashmir. After the September 11, 2001 India found an opportunity to start propaganda against the indigenous movement for self-determination in Kashmir and equate it with terrorism.<sup>xiii</sup>

#### **Cold Start Doctrine: Indian Offensive Defense Policy:**

The ultimate designs behind this doctrine were the use of offensive or pre-emptive strikes against Pakistan under the shadow of nuclear weapons. Through this doctrine all three-armed services will launch an integrated strike without employing nuclear weapons. Indian offensive war doctrine was seriously taken into account among the policy makers and military leadership in Pakistan, resulting in redefining warfighting concepts for Pakistan.

#### **The Instability in Afghanistan:**

The unstable Afghanistan has serious ramifications for Pakistan's security and regional security as well.<sup>xiv</sup> As earlier stated that America used Afghanistan as a proxy state against Soviet Union and after collapse of the latter, it was left in rubbles without taking any practical steps for its reconstruction. It has become a land for proxy war against regional powers.<sup>xv</sup> India is trying to use Afghanistan as a proxy state against Pakistan through its spy agency, Research and Analysis Wing (RAW).<sup>xvi</sup> Being an immediate neighbor of Afghanistan, Pakistan cannot remain as silent spectator to witness the damages of its national interests.

### **Complicated relations with Iran:**

Mutual suspicions hamper opportunities for Pakistan and Iran to jointly confront the Baloch insurgencies faced by both nations. Prior to the September 11, 2001 attacks, Iran worked against Pakistani interests by supporting the Northern Alliance against the Pakistan-backed Taliban, while Iran accuses Pakistan of supporting Jundullah, the group believed responsible for several suicide attacks against Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps officers and other Iranian sites in cities near the Iran-Pakistan border.<sup>xvii</sup> Given the contentious relationship between Saudi Arabia and Iran, the close historical ties between Riyadh and Islamabad continue to irritate Tehran which has fueled sectarian conflicts within Pakistan.<sup>xviii</sup>

### **National Strategic Constraints:**

#### **Zia's Jihadist policy:**

General Zia-Ul-Haq's policy of jihad against communist Soviet Union institutionalized the role of religious seminaries in the political system of country. This promoted sectarian terrorism, religious extremism, and Kalashnikov (militant and violent) culture in the society. His domestic policy of Islamization has further aggravated the situation and divided the society.<sup>xix</sup> Both the political and military leadership in Pakistan could not foresee the repercussions of using students of religious seminaries on Pakistani society. These fighting groups were left without knowing their future objective except to establish an Islamic regime in Afghanistan and across the globe. These fighting groups reorganized themselves, opened training camps and also established a global network.<sup>xx</sup> The same Jihadist who were trained against former USSR, thus became a strategic threat to Pakistan. The jihadist groups are further augmented by the militant wings of politico regroup parties which have come out to be presently the gravest threat to national security. With war being waged on western border, a deteriorated political and security situation throughout the country, Gen Musharaf's could not design a comprehensive national security policy during his rule from 1999 to 2008.<sup>xxi</sup>

#### **Insincere and Weak Political Leadership:**

As per the Objectives Resolutions Annexed to 1973 Constitution of Pakistan,<sup>xxii</sup> governance system in Pakistan is to be Constitutional Democracy.<sup>xxiii</sup> After the demise of Muhammad Ali Jinnah<sup>xxiv</sup> and assassination of Liaquat Ali Khan,<sup>xxv</sup> sincere political leadership vacuum was created. Consequently, democracy in its real sense could not take roots in the weak political system of Pakistan since its independence. This provided opportunities to military leadership to impose martial law in the country several times. The

military has ruled Pakistan for 33 of the country's 71-year history. Two key reasons help explain its dominance: first, upon gaining independence in 1947, Pakistan retained 17% of colonial India's revenue streams but inherited 33% of the military.<sup>xxvi</sup> This gave the armed forces a proportional advantage in the new government. Second, the immediate disagreement between India and Pakistan over the fate of the Muslim-majority state of Kashmir fueled a belief within some Pakistani circles that "Hindu" India was against "Muslim" Pakistan.<sup>xxvii</sup> Together, these factors informed two beliefs that profoundly shaped Pakistan's political development<sup>xxviii</sup> namely, that India is an existential threat, and that the military is Pakistan's greatest guardian against that threat.<sup>xxix</sup> On the other hand, outside the military rule, the parliament was filled in with the feudal and industrial classes of the society with dynastic politics which is the major hindrance in the way of an effective and actual participatory democracy. In short, pseudo-democracy prevails in Pakistan. Role of politicians in the formulation of a feasible national security doctrine is found unsatisfactory.

### **Unrest in Baluchistan:**

Baluchistan has the strategic importance the country due to its geostrategic significance. The Gwadar Port and execution China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) passing through the province has furthered its significance and given an internationalized strategic importance.<sup>xxx</sup> Many external hands are involved to destabilize Baluchistan by exploiting the sentiments of the dissident groups in Baluchistan.

### **Pakistan's Nuclear Capability: A Thorn in eyes of USA:**

The conventional preponderance of India and discriminatory global nuclear non-proliferation regime left the strategic policy makers in Pakistan with no option except to acquire nuclear weapons to strengthen its defense capability and to ensure minimum nuclear deterrence capability. Washington has always targeted Pakistan's nuclear program by imposing economic and military sanctions on Pakistan as retaliation against Pakistan's nuclear program. Military sanctions were lifted after Pakistan joined the US lead war on terror in 2001, however, recently US government under Donald Trump has frozen military aid to Pakistan.<sup>xxxi</sup>

### **Conclusions from geo-strategic constraints:**

Sandwiched between India and Afghanistan, Pakistan's Security perceptions have largely been influenced by its state of relationship with India and Afghanistan superimposed with its relation with US. In short Pakistan is confronted with triple threat scenario which define the contours Pakistan National Security and Military Strategies:

- The perennial conventional, non-conventional and sub-conventional threat from India.
- Emerging Traditional/non-traditional threats from Afghanistan with its genesis embedded over the difference on Durand Line and poor diplomatic relations accentuated through Indian interference.
- The internal threat from highly volatile domestic situation with external linkages. Deep internal fissures resulting in sectarian violence between proxy militant outfits supported by regional countries.

## **Application of Military Strategy:**

In 72 years, Pakistan from military point of view, fought four major wars, lost significant territory to a secessionist movement, served as a frontline for a superpower proxy confrontation, and endured major militant insurgencies and terrorist campaigns. Continued extremist violence against the state and its citizens, and US demands to support operations in neighboring Afghanistan highlight the prominence of Pakistan's armed forces. Drawing even more attention, Pakistan's engagement in a regional nuclear arms race tests the limits of the global non-proliferation regime and significantly raises the stakes and inherent destructiveness in a future war. This Security picture, along with periods of turbulent civilian rule and internal unrest, has historically empowered the military to take what it considered necessary action to defend the Pakistani state.<sup>xxxii</sup> Application of military strategy against the envisaged threat described earlier will be discussed in ensuing paragraphs:

### **India:**

India is Pakistan's principal strategic competitor and has been the single largest factor in the development of the Pakistani military's conventional and nuclear capabilities.<sup>xxxiii</sup> While Pakistan is the 36th largest country in the world in terms of total land area, it has numerous geographic vulnerabilities. For example, it is so narrow at its midpoint that an Indian advance of 300-400 kilometers, the range of Indian tanks prior to refueling could effectively cut the country (and its forces) in half. Furthermore, Pakistan's lines of communication, most importantly the highway that runs between Lahore and Karachi, run perpendicular to a probable Indian advance and could be easily severed if Indian forces gained ground.<sup>xxxiv</sup> Many of Pakistan's major population centers, like Lahore, also lie within relatively easy striking distance of the border. In practical terms, while Pakistan's military could perhaps stem an Indian offensive for a few weeks or months, India's ability to commit more men and resources to the fight would likely ultimately undermine Pakistan's defenses in a prolonged conventional engagement.<sup>xxxv</sup>

Pakistan's Military strategy to counter any Indian threat is "Strategically defensive", but "operationally offensive". Realizing the danger of losing territory in a war against India, Pakistan Army has developed a "Riposte" strategy which calls "strike" corps to take the initiative in a war with India, pushing deep into Indian territory, while other corps hold back the initial Indian advance relying upon initial momentum against a numerically superior enemy. Post Indian Parliament in 2001, the Indian government articulated an increasingly aggressive military doctrine in the form of a "Cold Start doctrine" (CSD) positioning quick strike military units near the Pakistani border. It remains unclear whether Cold Start indeed existed or exists as a viable plan as acknowledged by current Indian Army Chief Gen Bipin Rawat in 2017,<sup>xxxvi</sup> or was an elaborate bluff as denied by a former Indian Army Chief General V K Singh in 2010.<sup>xxxvii</sup>

Pakistan's response to CSD has been two-fold, first the induction of Tactical Nuclear Weapons<sup>xxxviii</sup> in a bid to lower its nuclear redlines along with a blunt refusal to "No First Use" of nuclear weapons policy,<sup>xxxix</sup> second shoring up its conventional capabilities. Considering India's military capability and its declared Cold Start Doctrine, Pakistan Military strategy had to be prepared according to adversaries "capabilities" and not "intentions". Between 2009 and 2013, the Pakistan Army adopted a "New Concept of War Fighting" (NCWF) that aims to improve mobilization time of troops and enhance

inter-services coordination, especially between the Army and the Pakistan Air Force.<sup>xl</sup>With the implementation of the NCFW, the Pakistan Army will be able to mobilize even faster than India.<sup>xli</sup>

## **Afghanistan**

Pakistan's geographic vulnerability in case of military contest with, India limits its military's ability to strategically retreat in the event of a full-scale Indian invasion. Maintaining a friendly regime in Kabul, gives Pakistan the potential to achieve "strategic depth". This is only a Western comprehension of Pakistan's interests in Afghanistan, However, forcefully denied by Pakistan.<sup>xliii</sup>In realist terms, for Pakistan the term strategic depth is an alternate for ensuring that Afghanistan does not pose a threat to Pakistan on its western border in the event of a war against India. Thus, freeing forces from western border to counter Indian numerical superiority on eastern border. For Pakistan from a military perspective, worse than an unfriendly regime in Afghanistan would be a pro-Indian government.<sup>xliiii</sup>In the 1990s, Pakistan supported the Taliban that satisfied Pakistan's basic security needs in Afghanistan. India's diplomatic and humanitarian efforts in Afghanistan have increased many folds since fall of Taliban government, which has fed military concerns for Pakistan. The ongoing dispute over Durand Line, along with Afghan claims on Pashtun and Baloch regions within Pakistan, are a source of concern to Pakistani military. Despite 17 years of military operations in Afghanistan and the combined efforts of NATO (ISAF) and Afghan National Army (ANA) have not been able to subdue the militant Taliban. While Afghanistan had been accusing Pakistan of propping up and providing sanctuaries to the Afghan Taliban on its soil,<sup>xliv</sup>Pakistan also blames Afghanistan particularly after the December 16, 2014 terrorist attack on a military-run school in Peshawar claimed by the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan or TTP.<sup>xlv</sup>

Seventeen years of protracted war in Afghanistan has proven that Militarily the United States cannot defeat the Taliban, if indeed this is the objective, without Pakistan joining the war, which Pakistan will not. Diplomatically, the turmoil in Afghanistan cannot be negotiated without Pakistan. And Pakistan will not join a negotiated settlement if America's position towards it remains unfriendly, if not hostile, and if Pakistan's concerns about India's role in Afghanistan are not satisfied.<sup>xlvi</sup>On the military side, Pakistan is fighting Taliban and other terror outfits inside its territory. However, it becomes an unsustainable position to open every front with every outfit simultaneously. This will only lead to more bloodshed and more terrorism. To stop spillover of terrorist outfit members on either side is Pakistan has commenced fencing its porous border with Afghanistan that is to be manned and mined. If supported by both sides it will be a greater success than if done by Pakistan alone.<sup>xlvii</sup>

## **War Against Internal Threats:**

In the prevailing environment the internal threat with its external linkages remains most dominant threat. Pakistani armed forces have acquired some hard-earned lessons in its hard-fought battle against terrorism and extremists elements in Pakistan society since 2001. In its fight against terrorism although a substantial assistance in the form of hardware was provided by US. However, Pakistan also had to tolerate a number of drone strikes by US in the border areas adjoining Afghanistan which had serious ramifications for Pakistan.

Despite a huge human cost and tenacious military operation against terrorist hideout in boarder areas with Afghanistan, Pakistan gets blamed by US (and of course India) for providing safe heavens to terrorist elements. This is vehemently denied by Pakistan at both diplomatic as well at military fronts. The present Pakistani Prime Minister very vividly announced that Pakistan has suffered the most in the ongoing war on terror, both in terms of human life as well as economically, and that Pakistan would no further engage itself in someone else's war.<sup>xlviii</sup> Notwithstanding the spat between governments of Pakistan and US over counter terrorism, domestically Pakistan has taken substantive steps to root out the evil of terrorism in all its forms.

Although at present the counter terrorism efforts are being spear headed by the Armed forces especially the Army, Constitutionally, the subject remains under the domain of Ministry of Interior with armed forces being requisitioned to support the federal and provincial governments. The effective counter terrorism and counter extremism efforts involve a number of organizations and agencies. These organizations were working in isolation and thus either hindering each other's performance or duplicating the efforts. In order to harmonize and synergize the collective performance of all organizations at different levels National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA) was established in 2013. NACTA derives its mandate from Article 4 of NACTA Act 2013 which is to coordinate counter terrorism planning and actions. In 2014 Ministry of interior also issued first-ever policy document on internal security and counter-terrorism. The National Internal Security Policy (NISP 2014) was conceived and prepared based upon "principles of mutual inclusiveness and integration of all national efforts."<sup>xlix</sup> The Composite Deterrence Plan included the concept of National Internal Security Apparatus (NISA comprising Police and Civil Armed Forces), filling its inadequacies through strengthening and capacity building and its coordinated anti-terrorist effort through National Internal Security Operations Centre (NISOC) under the oversight of the Federal Government.<sup>1</sup>

After Army Public School attack on 16th of December 2014, a national consensus was evolved to come down hard on terrorists through a concerted national effort.<sup>li</sup> Whereas the National Internal Security Policy pointed out the broad policy guidelines and reforms in various state institutions, a need to felt to formulate "Action Plan" with specific, quantifiable and time-bound agenda to curb the scourge of terrorism.<sup>lii</sup> A 20 Points National Action Plan (NAP) for countering terrorism and extremism was chalked out by NACTA/ Ministry of Interior in consultation with the stakeholders and approved on 24th of December, 2014 by the Parliament.<sup>liii</sup> The National Action Plan, spelled out the specifics for the counter-terrorism drive in the country and still in progress.

### **Role of the Armed Forces:**

The way Pakistan Army and other security forces dealt with the terrorism and tried to secure the borders and maintain internal peace of the country is truly visible and indeed remarkable. The efforts were and are being carried out in the situation, where there exist extreme political instability and the indigenous problems like lack of religious harmony, sectarianism, poverty, serious border problems etc. Governments in Pakistan have remained cognizant of military specific requirement ensuring allocation of resources for functioning of the armed forces. For year 2018-19 approximately US\$ 9.6 Billion was allocated in the federal budget (18% higher than previous year).<sup>liv</sup>



### **Pakistan Army:**

Since 1947, the army was trained and equipped to fight conventional battles against a known superior enemy. The induction into tribal areas to fight against an amorphous and well-equipped enemy was new to the Army. Despite having experiences of three wars and counter insurgency operations Baluchistan, East Pakistan and even under UN Flag away from home, the war on terror opened a new chapter. During the initial years of the operation, Pakistan Army was neither adequately equipped nor properly trained for frontier warfare in the tribal areas. It lacked mobility both on the ground and in the air because of the difficult terrain and geography. In recent years, Pakistan Army has made very momentous advancement in shifting its strategy and focus from conventional warfare to irregular warfare and low intensity conflicts. Pakistan Army sought the effective coordination and support of other law enforcement agencies to deal with the insurgency, worsening situations on the borders, target killings, suicide bombings and hitting of military convoys etc.

These military operations have substantially improved the overall security situation in the country. All bases of operations and safe havens of militant organizations in Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA)<sup>lv</sup> and settled areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) called PATA (provincially administered) have been dismantled and flushed out through countrywide Operations Raddul Fasad and Zarb e Azab Another tangible step is the fencing of the western border to prevent cross border infiltration.<sup>lvi</sup> Continuous intelligence based operations and the stringent measures introduced under NAP including the re-institution of the death penalty, new cybercrime laws, the renewal of the Afghan Refugee Registration, the revival of the Pakistan Automated Fingerprint Identification System (PAFIS), and the establishment of the Integrated Border Management System (IBMS). As a result of successful operations in the tribal areas, both FATA and PATA has been formally merged with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province through the 25<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment.<sup>lvii</sup>

### **Pakistan Air Force (PAF):**

No two CT campaigns can be the same in terms of reasons/counter measures. The ground forces have fought with commitment, courage and dedication in extremely difficult and unfriendly terrain in north-western region of Pakistan against an adversary equipped with sophisticated warfighting arsenal.<sup>lviii</sup> PAF was thus brought into action to engage the targets with precision and effectiveness thereby softening the ground for friendly forces. The core of CT operations is equally understood and professionally executed by Pakistan Armed Forces through tailor-made procedures acclimatized to meet the exist environment. The joint operation of Army and the Air force not only synergized the battle field tactics but have also evolved the strategies to fight unconventional warfare.

Since intelligence is a key attribute of CT operations, PAF actively undertakes ISR operations in the area of interest for provisioning of real-time target information to own fighters as well as to Pakistan Army. For effective deployment and subsequent engagement, the ground troops require a detailed assessment of target which is also met by PAF through launching ISR missions in the area of interest, providing accurate geo-location, identification of target and detailed picture of terrain. Assessment of damage and confirmation of target engagement is also undertaken by PAF through ISR platforms. The

battle damage assessment missions provide useful information for effective engagement of target, specifically by ground forces. The activities of terrorist elements along the porous western border made it crucial to destroy their focal point and leadership which has been achieved through precision strikes by PAF on terrorists' concentration, training camps,<sup>lix</sup> leadership and logistic reserves in support of Pakistan Army.<sup>lx</sup> PAF's instant response and application of precision guided munitions have ensured in-time and accurate engagement of targets with negligible collateral damage.<sup>lxi</sup>

### **Pakistan Navy:**

Pakistan Navy become part of CTF 150 in 2004 to achieve maritime security in North Arabian Sea. Similarly, Pakistan became part of CTF 151 in 2009 to combat threat of piracy in Gulf of Aden, Somali Basin and North Arabian Sea.<sup>lxii</sup> The main aim of joining these collations is to contribute devotedly towards regional peace and security. Pakistan Navy was successful in curbing unrestricted movements of terrorists in North Arabian Sea, Gulf of Aden, Horn of Africa and Mediterranean Sea. During this tenure, Pakistan Navy carried out various tasks and operations, which compelled the world to acknowledge dedication, passion and professional competence of Pakistan Navy.<sup>lxiii</sup>

Recently, Pakistan's Navy has pulled out of collation operations following disagreements with the US to cut fuel subsidies for Pakistani ships. However, Due to excessive trade activities in Indian Ocean and in order to safeguard national interest in CPEC; Pakistan Navy decided to establish Regional Maritime Security Patrols in the region. Independent Maritime Security Patrols is a Pakistan Navy's initiative to curb terrorism and piracy. Maritime peace in the region is the primary concern of all littoral states of IOR.

### **Strategic Forces:**

Pakistan attained its Nuclear weapons status in 1998 and has an elaborate nuclear command and control mechanism comprising National Command Authority, Strategic Plans Division and Strategic Forces Command (Army, Navy and Air Force). From minimum credible deterrence, Pakistan has modified nuclear posture to create a full-spectrum deterrence with new short-range nuclear-capable weapon systems to counter military threats below the strategic level. The efforts seek not only to respond to nuclear attacks, but also to counter an Indian conventional incursion onto Pakistani territory. After successful testing of Submarine Launched Cruise Missile (SLCM) BABUR-III on 9 January 2017, Pakistan has completed its nuclear tirade<sup>lxiv</sup>.

### **Pakistan Future Military Programs:**

Traditionally Pakistan military hardware was west based. However, the military equipment and spare supportability has been marred due repeated US/Western Countries sanctions. Although these sanctions have forced Pakistan military development programs to be more indigenous and home grown, it has also compelled Pakistan to look towards other partner, like China, Russia and Turkey to meet its defense equipment requirements.

Military projects with China like joint production of Al-Khalid Main Battle Tank, JF-17 Fighter Aircraft and construction F-22P Frigates have already been completed. Pakistan has also acquired gunship helicopters from Russia (Mi-35 M)<sup>lxv</sup> and ATAK helicopters being acquired

through Turkey.<sup>lxvi</sup> Pakistan Airforce have achieved massive impetus through induction of air to air refuellers and AWACS aircraft would advance it JF-17 Project to maturity through production of JF-17 Block III.<sup>lxvii</sup> Realizing the importance of maritime stability, the Navy's budget for 2018-19 was increased by 21.4%.<sup>lxviii</sup> Pakistan Navy has already contracted construction of 8 Diesel Electric submarines with China (4 would be constructed in Pakistan),<sup>lxix</sup> 4 MILGEM corvettes with Turkey (2 Would be constructed in Pakistan including transfer of technology)<sup>lxx</sup> and 4 Type 054 A Frigates from China.<sup>lxxi</sup>

### Conclusion:

Owing to the legacy of belligerence, a lingering core issue like Kashmir, territorial sensitivities, internal vulnerabilities and restricted defense budget, Pakistan's security strategy has multifarious challenges. Despite unfavorable and hostile conditions, Pakistan Armed forces have been fully able to execute their constitutional mandate of defending the country's sovereignty. Threat of conventional and nuclear forces will have to be adroitly balanced in land, air, maritime and strategic domains against superiority in numbers "to deny the much-craved space for limited war" to India. In view of financial constraints, the comprehensive national security strategy challenge for Pakistan lies in utilizing full spectrum strategic deterrence to avoid an arms race with India, while equitably maintaining core military capabilities. Redress of these vulnerabilities in a regular war will only be possible through increased unity of command through a well-articulated military strategy to synergize all military actions.

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<sup>v</sup> *Constitution of Pakistan.* (1973) Retrieved November 28, 2018 from <http://www.pakistani.org/pakistan/constitution/part12.ch2.html>

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<sup>vii</sup> Durand Line is a boundary established in the Hindu Kush in 1893 running through the tribal lands between Afghanistan and British India, marking their respective spheres of influence; in modern times it has marked the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. The acceptance of this line, which was named for Sir Mortimer Durand, who induced Abdor Raḥmān Khān, amir of Afghanistan, to agree to a boundary may be said to have settled the Indo-Afghan frontier problem for the rest of the British period.

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<sup>viii</sup>Khan, A. , Jaspal, Z. N. & Yasmin, S. (2016). The National Security Policy paradox in Pakistan: strategic constraints, ramifications and policy recommendations. The *Dialogue*, Volume XII; Number I. pp. 15-36

<sup>ix</sup>Ibid.

<sup>x</sup>General Zia ul Haq seized power from Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in a coup on July 5, 1977, and became chief martial-law administrator while retaining his position as Army chief of staff. He sided with USA against Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. He also broadened his base of support and worked for the Islamization of Pakistan's political and cultural life. He died in an airplane crash in 1988.

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<sup>xii</sup>Ibid.

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<sup>xxi</sup>Pervez Musharraf is ex - Pakistani Chief of Army who took power in a coup in 1999. He served as president of Pakistan from 2001 to 2008.

<sup>xxii</sup>*Constitution of Pakistan*. (2019). Retrieved November 28, 2018 from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constitution\\_of\\_Pakistan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constitution_of_Pakistan)

<sup>xxiii</sup>*The Constitution of Pakistan, The Objectives Resolution; Annex 2(A)*. (1973). Retrieved December 1, 2018 from <http://www.pakistani.org/pakistan/constitution/annex.html>;

<sup>xxiv</sup>Mohammed Ali Jinnah, also called Quaid-i-Azam (Arabic: "Great Leader"), founder and first governor-general (1947–48) of Pakistan.

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- <sup>xxv</sup>Liaquat Ali Khan, first prime minister of Pakistan (1947–51).
- <sup>xxvi</sup>History.com Editors. (2010). *India and Pakistan win independence*. Retrieved December 1, 2018 from <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/india-and-pakistan-win-independence>
- <sup>xxvii</sup>Pervaiz, F. (2018). *Why the military rules in Pakistan?* Retrieved December 1, 2018 from <https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/why-military-rules-pakistan>
- <sup>xxviii</sup>Pervaiz, F. (2018). *Pakistan's military- democracy complex*. Retrieved. December 1, 2018 from <https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/pakistans-military-democracy-complex>
- <sup>xxix</sup>Pervaiz, F. (2018). *Why the military rules in Pakistan?* Retrieved December 1, 2018 from <https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/why-military-rules-pakistan>
- <sup>xxx</sup>CPEC is a joint project that China and Pakistan agreed to finance through Chinese and Pakistani investments. While the project has been welcomed by Greater Eurasia (including Russia, Iran, and Central Asia) besides the United Kingdom and Western European countries, albeit vehement opposition by India.
- <sup>xxxi</sup>Sampathkumar, M. (2018). *Trump Administration Freezes Military Aid to Pakistan*. Retrieved December 1, 2018 from <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us-politics/trump-pakistan-aid-latest-suspended-frozen-state-dept-news-a8142691.html>.
- <sup>xxxii</sup>Aguilar, F., Bell, R., Black, N., Falks, S., Rogers, S. & Peritz, Aki. (2011). *An introduction to Pakistan's military*. Harvard Kennedy School; Cambridge
- <sup>xxxiii</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>xxxiv</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>xxxv</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>xxxvi</sup>Sood, M. (2017). *Pakistan's response to cold start doctrine*. Retrieved December 1, 2018 from [http://www.claws.in/images/publication\\_pdf/1480584591\\_NEWLATESTIssueBriefMeenakshiSood\(23March2017\)\(1\).pdf](http://www.claws.in/images/publication_pdf/1480584591_NEWLATESTIssueBriefMeenakshiSood(23March2017)(1).pdf)
- <sup>xxxvii</sup>Doshi, Y. (2010). *The Cold End of Cold Start Doctrine*. Retrieved November 30, 2018 from [http://www.ipcs.org/comm\\_select.php?articleNo=3258](http://www.ipcs.org/comm_select.php?articleNo=3258)
- <sup>xxxviii</sup>Pakistan has opted to develop a variety of short-range, low-yield nuclear weapons, called Tactical Nuclear Weapons (TNW), as a defensive, deterrence response to an offensive doctrine by India
- <sup>xxxix</sup>Mirza, A. M. (2015). *The Debate on Nuclear First Use and No First Use: The Case of Pakistan*; Retrieved December 1, 2018 from <https://southasianvoices.org/the-debate-on-nuclear-first-use-and-no-first-use-the-case-of-pakistan-3/>

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- <sup>xli</sup>Yousuf, K. (2013). *Countering Cold Start: Military to Adopt New War Concept*. Retrieved November 19, 2018 from <https://tribune.com.pk/story/558604/countering-cold-start-military-to-adopt-new-war-concept/>
- <sup>xlii</sup>Sood, M. (2017). *Pakistan's (non-nuclear) plan to counter 'cold start.'* Retrieved November 19, 2018 from <https://thediplomat.com/2017/03/pakistans-non-nuclear-plan-to-counter-cold-start/>
- <sup>xliii</sup>*Pakistan seeks no Strategic Depth in Afghanistan, US told.* (2012). Retrieved November 30, 2018 from <https://www.thenews.com.pk/archive/print/625312-pakistan-seeks-no-strategic-depth-in-afghanistan-us-told>
- <sup>xliiii</sup>Weinbaum, M. G. (1991). Pakistan and Afghanistan - The Strategic Relationship; *Asian Survey*; Vol. 31, No. 6 (Jun., 1991), pp. 496-511
- <sup>xliiv</sup>Khattak, D. (2018). *Are We Finally Seeing a Breakthrough in Afghanistan-Pakistan Relations?* Retrieved December 1, 2018 from <https://thediplomat.com/2018/06/are-we-finally-seeing-a-breakthrough-in-afghanistan-pakistan-relations/>
- <sup>xlv</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>xlvi</sup>Hussain, T. (2018). *What Pakistan needs from America's Afghan war effort*; Retrieved November 30, 2018 from <https://nationalinterest.org/feature/what-pakistan-needs-americas-afghan-war-effort-25040?page=0%2C1>
- <sup>xlvii</sup>Ali, Y. A. (2018). *Does Pakistan have an Afghanistan strategy?* Retrieved November 30, 2018 from <https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2018/02/06/does-pakistan-have-an-afghanistan-strategy/>
- <sup>xlviii</sup>Pakistan Will Not Fight Any Other Country's War: PM Imran Khan (2018). Retrieved December 1, 2018 from <https://www.hindustantimes.com/world-news/pakistan-will-not-fight-any-other-country-s-war-pm-imran-khan/story-7lNfiQ6ozMfYeO5KBlz05N.html>
- <sup>xlix</sup>*National Internal Security Policy, 2014* (2014). Retrieved November 30, 2018 from <https://nacta.gov.pk/nisp-2014/>
- <sup>l</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>li</sup>Peshawar school massacre was the terrorist attack in which seven heavily armed Taliban terrorists stormed an army-run primary and secondary school in Peshawar, Pakistan, on December 16, 2014, killing 150 people, of whom at least 134 were students
- <sup>lii</sup> Lorell, M., Graser, C. J. & Cook, C. R. (2019). *Price-Based Acquisition. Issues and Challenges for Defense Department Procurement of Weapon Systems*. Retrieved December 1, 2018 from [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/235168976\\_Price-Based\\_Acquisition\\_Issues\\_and\\_Challenges\\_for\\_Defense\\_Department\\_Procurement\\_of\\_Weapon\\_Systems](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/235168976_Price-Based_Acquisition_Issues_and_Challenges_for_Defense_Department_Procurement_of_Weapon_Systems)

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- <sup>liii</sup> *National Action Plan 2014*. (2014). Retrieved December 1, 2018 from <https://nacta.gov.pk/nap-2014/>
- <sup>liv</sup> Baqar, S. S. (2018). *Budget 2018-19: Rs 1.1 trillion proposed for the defense*. Retrieved December 2, 2018 from <https://www.dawn.com/news/1404337>
- <sup>lv</sup> Territories of Pakistan include **Federally Administered Tribal** Areas referred to as FATA (seven agencies along the Afghan border, adjacent to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa). The British colonial administrators of India created a buffer state as a safeguard against Russian expansionism in Central Asia. Colonial administrators oversaw but never fully controlled the region, through a combination of British-appointed agents and local tribal elders through imposition of tribal laws instead of the general laws of the country.
- <sup>lvi</sup> Raja, A. H. (2018). *Progress achieved by Pakistan in counter terrorism*. Retrieved December 2, 2018 from <https://dailytimes.com.pk/260912/progress-achieved-by-pakistan-in-counter-terrorism/>
- <sup>lvii</sup> The Gazette of Pakistan. (2018). Retrieved December 2, 2018 from <https://fata.gov.pk/Global.php?id=28&fid=2&pId=23&mId=13>
- <sup>lviii</sup> *PAF's Counter-Terrorism Campaign*. (2018). Retrieved December 2, 2018 from <https://defence.pk/pdf/threads/pafs-counter-terrorism-campaign.553935/>
- <sup>lix</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>lx</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>lxi</sup> *PAF's Counter-Terrorism Campaign*. (2018). Retrieved December 2, 2018 from <https://defence.pk/pdf/threads/pafs-counter-terrorism-campaign.553935/>
- <sup>lxii</sup> *Combined Task Force 151*. (2018). Retrieved December 2, 2018 from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Combined\\_Task\\_Force\\_151](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Combined_Task_Force_151)
- <sup>lxiii</sup> *PAF's Counter-Terrorism Campaign*. (2018). Retrieved December 2, 2018 from <https://defence.pk/pdf/threads/pafs-counter-terrorism-campaign.553935/>
- <sup>lxiv</sup> Club, T. N. (2017). *Pakistan Enters the Nuke Triad Club*. Retrieved December 2, 2018 from <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpretor/pakistan-enters-nuke-triad-club>
- <sup>lxv</sup> Gady, F. S. (2018). *Pakistan begins receiving advance attack helicopters from Russia*; Retrieved December 2, 2018 from <https://thediplomat.com/2018/04/pakistan-begins-receiving-advanced-attack-helicopters-from-russia/>
- <sup>lxvi</sup> Gady, F. S. (2018). *Pakistan to receive 30 helicopter gunships from Turkey*. Retrieved December 2, 2018 from <https://thediplomat.com/2018/06/pakistan-to-receive-30-helicopter-gunships-from-turkey/>

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<sup>lxvii</sup>Global Security; JF-17 Thunder; Retrieved December 2, 2018 from <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/pakistan/jf-17.htm>

<sup>lxviii</sup>Baqar, S. S. (2018). *Budget 2018-19: Rs 1.1 trillion proposed for the defense*. Retrieved December 2, 2018 from <https://www.dawn.com/news/1404337>

<sup>lxix</sup>*China to Provide Eight Submarines to Pak Navy*. (2016). Retrieved December 2, 2018 from <https://pakobserver.net/china-to-provide-eight-submarines-to-pak-navy/> viewed 2 Dec 2018.

<sup>lxx</sup> *Pakistan Navy Procuring 4 MILGEM Type Corvettes from Turkey*. (2018). Retrieved December 2, 2018 from <http://www.navyrecognition.com/index.php/news/defence-news/2018/july-2018-navy-naval-defense-news/6337-pakistan-navy-procuring-4-milgem-type-corvette-from-turkey.html>

<sup>lxxi</sup>*Two More Type 054 A Frigates from China for Pak Navy*. (2018). Retrieved December 2, 2018 from <http://www.navyrecognition.com/index.php/news/defence-news/2018/june-2018-navy-naval-defense-news/6261-two-more-type-054a-frigates-from-china-for-pakistan-navy.html>