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OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES IN
PAKISTAN'S FOREIGN POLICY

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Keynote Speaker

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Foreign Minister of Pakistan

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PROCEEDINGS

MR. REIDEL: I am pleased to welcome you all to the Brookings, where we are honored to have Pakistan's Foreign Minister to address us in a few moments. The Saban Center's Project on U.S. Relations with the Islamic World is hosting this event and we're very happy that all of you could come.

Minister Qureshi was educated in Lahore, received a master's in law degree from Corpus Christie College at Cambridge University in 1987, and has gone on to be elected to Pakistan's National Assembly numerous times. He has been a minister in the Punjab government on various issues and in the federal government. He assumed his position as Foreign Minister just a few months ago, but has already traveled throughout the Subcontinent, and yesterday was at the United Nations.

The order of discussion today will be we'll ask the Foreign Minister to speak first. After he is finished, my colleague and friend Steve Cohen, author of numerous books on Pakistan, will make a few remarks. Then we will open the floor to questions from the media and from the audience.

Let me ask you now to remain seated at the end of the program so that we can get the minister out of here expeditiously and on to his next appointment at the White House. I will try to remind you of that in a little less than an hour. Mister Minister, thank you very much for coming to Brookings. The floor is yours.

MR. QURESHI: Distinguished scholars, ladies and gentlemen, I express my deep appreciation to Mr. Strobe Talbott, President of the Brookings Institution,

Steve Cohen, and Bruce, for a warm welcome extended to me in this prestigious institution. I take this opportunity to share my thoughts on the opportunities and the challenges of Pakistan's foreign policy.

We have recently seen a difficult period in our history and we continue to mourn the death of our icon of democracy Benazir Bhutto. But from challenge has come the strength. We are more determined than ever in our history to promote the ideals of peace, security, development, and reconciliation between cultures, values, and societies.

Ladies and gentlemen, in the past, the United States and Pakistan have stood side by side through perilous times. We look forward to continue to work with you and your great country in confronting the problems that nations face in this millennium, terrorism, extremism, poverty, hunger, illiteracy, and disease. The United States and Pakistan have also been long-standing allies. Pakistan's founder, Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, laid the foundation of this relationship immediately after our nation's independence in 1947. Together we now look forward to building a new, more mature, long-term partnership based on common values and common goals.

During the visit of President Bush to Islamabad in March 2006, our two countries affirmed a strategic partnership focused on strengthening the foundation for a strong and enduring relationship and promoting multifaceted cooperation. We are cooperating in various fields including trade and economy, defense and security,

health and education, science and technology, and counterterrorism and nonproliferation. We believe that a deeper and sustained economic partnership between our two countries would contribute to combating extremism by strengthening our economic growth trajectory, by fulfilling the social and economic needs of our people, and by consolidating democratic governance in Pakistan.

Ladies and gentlemen, Pakistan believes that there is an intrinsic link between peace and development. Peace on our borders can strengthen stability and bring economic development as well as the much-needed improvement in the quality of life of our people. Pakistan has suffered twice for Afghanistan, first when we supported the world's efforts to drive out the Soviets which made a vital contribution to the success of freedom movements in Eastern Europe and elsewhere, and then more recently after 9/11. Pakistan can realize its dream of becoming a regional trading and energy hub only if Pakistan is politically and economically stable. We wish Afghanistan peace and stability for their sake and for our own sake.

The fight against terrorism is not America's fight alone. We in Pakistan have been the victims of terrorism and extremism and we have paid a heavy price, and more than one thousand of our brave soldiers have made their ultimate sacrifice while confronting this menace. But the fight against terrorism is a multifaceted fight and not just a military one. Our comprehensive strategy seeks to isolate and marginalize the extremists and combines political engagement, economic

development, and social reforms. In the long-term, socioeconomic development is the key to winning the hearts and minds of the people and because of democratic elections that took place in Pakistan this year, our government now has a legitimate mandate for the people to confront the forces of terrorism wherever they rear their ugly heads and to build a just and equitable society where parents have faith that their children's lives will be better than their own.

Our effort is to mobilize our people behind the policies of the government as we move forward with a political dialogue to complement our military strategy in that achieving peace agreements with those who desire peace and are willing to lay down their arms. Pakistan will not negotiate with terrorists, and Pakistan will not permit its territory to be used by anyone against any country. While we prefer dialogue over use of force, for obvious reasons we are not shy to employ force where it is required as is evident from the recent operations in the (inaudible)

Ladies and gentlemen, the challenge of terrorism is such that no single country however strong can deal with it alone. This is a global challenge that requires a global response and a global strategy. As allies, Pakistan and the United States need to coordinate closely and cooperate closely. This is essential in order to be able to deal with challenges in the short-term perspective as well as the long-term perspective. The ROZ (?) legislation that was recently introduced in the U.S. Congress is an example of how we can help each other. I am confident that an effective ROZ plan will surely go a long way in helping us expand economic

opportunities and wean the innocent people away from the appeal of extremism and terrorism. Similarly, \$2 billion FATA Development Plan to which the U.S. is contributing \$750 million over a 5-year period would help accelerate economic growth and social-sector development in the tribal areas, thus contributing to the efforts to deliver tribal people from the clutches of poverty, illiteracy, and (inaudible) development.

Ladies and gentlemen, for too long our bilateral relationship has hinged heavily on cooperation in security areas, but luckily, a clear realization from both sides in the post-9/11 phase needs to broaden and deepen the relationship through expanding cooperation across a broad spectrum from agriculture to trade, to energy, to education, to science and technology. We already have institutional mechanisms for promoting cooperation in these areas. The results achieved so far are far below potential. The new government of Pakistan is determined to realize that potential.

Nothing can be more effective in truly broadening the base of our relationship than an expansion in bilateral trade, and nothing can be more helpful in enabling Pakistan to achieve its goal of lifting millions out of poverty and keeping the economy on a sustainable trajectory of stability and growth than market access. For these reasons, there is no alternative to the two countries signing a free-trade agreement of which a bilateral investment treaty can be a part as the U.S. has done with several other countries. And while all key areas of utmost importance to

Pakistan-U.S. collaboration to meet our energy shortages and to strengthen our energy security could hardly be overemphasized.

Ladies and gentlemen, in Afghanistan, Pakistan has a vital stake in peace and stability. We cannot think of a scenario where Pakistan can benefit from the continuing turmoil in Afghanistan. For that reason, it is baffling when we come across the insinuations that Pakistan was in a way responsible for the present or past crises in Afghanistan. We will nevertheless continue our support for Afghanistan's political stability, economic development, and social progress for reasons of our own vested interests. We are also committed to continuing the process of dialogue with our Eastern neighbor India. The time is now for taking bold steps to take the two countries out of a cycle of hostility, acrimony, and mutual suspicion. It is our hope that the leadership of the two countries will not shy away from taking such steps and move beyond the CBMs (?) to engaging in a serious dialogue to address the real issues, notably the core issues of (inaudible) and Kashmir. Pakistan as you know has shown flexibility and emphasized the need for out-of-the-box thinking. There is a general feeling and public perception in Pakistan that a matching response should come from India. The India-Pakistan dialogue should now move from [toward?] resolving the conflicts rather than lingering on with them, and the two countries despite their best efforts would not succeed in achieving any real breakthrough without the support and encouragement of their friends. We appreciate the constructive role that the United States has played in encouraging the peace process

in South Asia, but its role should not remain confined to conflict management, and also extend to facilitating conflict resolution.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have seen in the past that democracy in Pakistan has invariably led to a better relationship between the two countries. Both Pakistan and India have posted the highest rates of growth in the region in the past several years and their economic performance has been (inaudible) better diplomatic, cultural, and trade relationships would only help boost this progress.

However, given the past history of distrust, dramatic changes cannot be expected very quickly, but the trend is certainly positive and is likely to continue under the new government. My recent visit to New Delhi was a step forward in this direction.

Ladies and gentlemen, China will continue to figure prominently in Pakistan's foreign policy. A time-tested relationship with China continues to expand in all fields including trade, investment, economic cooperation, security, energy, and telecommunications. China has also been a key partner in developing the Gwadar port in the southwest of Pakistan which has already become operational. Some speculative theories notwithstanding, Gwadar is an economic project designed to help speed the process of economic development through tapping the opportunities of regional cooperation in transit and trade. Pakistan's relationships with Middle Eastern countries are deeply rooted in the religious and cultural affinities, geographical proximity, and shared historical experiences. These (inaudible) relations

are marked by identity of views and a commitment of mutual support on vital issues. We firmly believe that a just and peaceful resolution of the Palestine issue is important for durable peace and stability in the Middle East. Pakistan has consistently extended support to the two-state solution whereby both Palestine and Israel can live side by side. This will require withdrawal of Israel from occupied Arab territories including Jerusalem and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in accordance with the relevant U.N. resolutions. Pakistan supports the Quartet's roadmap and Arab peace plan based on a two-state solution. We also support the understanding reached at Annapolis for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state addressing all core issues with a timeline of the end of 2008 and for following the Syrian and Lebanese tracks. Urgent efforts are also needed to address the Gaza situation and mitigating the enormous sufferings of the Palestinian people there. The international community, particularly the United States, must help to ensure a just and equitable solution of the long-festering Palestinian dispute.

The situation in Iraq remains a matter of concern to the Muslim world. Pakistan attaches great importance to Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity and wishes to see an early end to the violence and return of stability and normalcy to Iraq. Pakistan also attaches great significance to the Organization of Islamic Conference as a representative organization of 57 Muslim states and millions of Muslims living as minorities around the world. Pakistan has a central and leadership

role within the Organization of Islamic Conference. Last year Pakistan chaired the Islamic Conference of foreign ministers. Our focus has been to make the organization more effective and dynamic in order to represent and advance the interests of the Muslim world at the global level and that it should also be a vehicle of greater economic integration in the Muslim world.

Ladies and gentlemen, the newly elected government of Pakistan faces a host of daunting challenges both political and economic, but there are exciting opportunities as well. We are confident that we will succeed in meeting these challenges head on and in realizing our full potential with the support of the people of Pakistan. Support and cooperation of our friends and allies, notably the United States, would be important. Thank you.

MR. REIDEL: Thank you, Mister Minister. I don't want to stand between the audience and you in terms of questions. I'll just say a few words and then we'll go right to questions and answers.

You may not be aware, but the last distinguished Pakistani visitor we had to Brookings was Benazir Bhutto. We met her in one of the rooms just across the way. I think it was her last American appearance before she returned to Pakistan, and we had a long and very far-reaching discussion of the future of Pakistan and the future of U.S.-Pakistan relations. Just before that I think about 2 years ago or maybe 3 years ago Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz was here in this room and gave a public address.

I just want to say one or two things and then we'll go to Q and A, or one thing basically and some ideas that flow from it. This is for the first time in my memory and knowledge a moment when all of Pakistan's neighbors and all the major powers of the world want Pakistan to succeed, or at least they don't Pakistan to fail -- this subtle difference. I think there are two implications for that. That is, it's easier for Pakistan and it's more important for Pakistan to pursue bilateral relations with all the major powers, Afghanistan, India, China, the U.S., and so forth, and you can do that because the others won't object in a sense, Pakistan's relations with other countries is no longer seen as a zero-sum gain.

Secondly and I think most important, we ought to start thinking about triangles. We ought to think about the ways in which Pakistan and one or more countries of the region or the world can address such critical issues as nuclear proliferation, terrorism, and an issue which I think is going to be emerging and is going to swamp a lot of these issues in 5 to 7 years from now, that is environmental degradation which affects Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and China intimately. So I think that we're happy you're here, we're pleased to have heard you, and I'll certainly stop talking in a second, but I think that we have to think ahead, and academic scholars such as at Brookings are thinking not just of the next month or 2 months and when I worked for George Shultz on the policy and planning staff he urged us to think ahead and we were thinking 2 months ahead, and he said think 2 weeks ahead and I realized how compressed the timeframe of policymakers. I would

say look 4 or 5 years ahead when environmental issues in South Asia are going to be critical. With that let me stop, and thank you again for addressing us and I'll open the floor to questions.

QUESTIONER: Thank you, sir. Thank you Mister Minister. Welcome to the United States (inaudible) Mister Minister, two quick questions (inaudible) sir, can you please clear the air a little bit between India and Pakistan as far as the bombings at the Indian embassy in Kabul because they have a blame game going on there? Second quickly, the ongoing political violence in Pakistan especially the lawyers because that is what will bring the stability and peace in the region or in Pakistan.

MR. QURESHI: First of all, I do not want to be drawn into the blame-game scenario because my approach toward India is positive engagement. That interaction that I've had with the foreign minister, with the prime minister, with the (inaudible) minister, while the foreign minister was in Islamabad and I traveled to Delhi was a very pleasant one, it was a very promising one, and I see a positive development in our relations. I see a desire on both sides to move on and get things done, move on on trade issues, move on on people-to-people contact. I think the political leadership in Pakistan that has been elected after the general elections on February 18 is supportive of that. So we stand with nothing to gain for any such misadventure. So please start trusting. There is a trust deficit and we have to build on trust. I will try my best to remove that error or mistrust.

The second part your question was the lawyers?

QUESTIONER: The lawyers' association in Pakistan.

MR. QURESHI: The lawyers are advocating restoration of the judiciary that was unfortunately sacked by President Musharraf. This is a crisis not of our creation but we inherited it. We are engaging, we are talking to the lawyers, we talking to their associations, we are talking to political leaderships, we are building an evolving consensus on how to go about solving this issue. We want to do it in a constitutional manner, we want to do it in the correct manner, and we think there are other pressing issues that need to be addressed and the sooner we do it the better it is.

QUESTIONER: (inaudible) Minister Qureshi, what exactly is Pakistan doing to track down insurgents on the border with Afghanistan? Then secondly --

MR. QURESHI: Please speak loudly. I'm not getting you.

QUESTIONER: Sure. I'm with CNN and I'm asking what exactly is Pakistan doing to track down on insurgents on the border with Afghanistan. That's the first question. The second question, I just want to find out more a little bit about this hostage situation. I guess Pakistani Taliban speaker said that he would kill all 29 hostages unless the government releases prisoners by Saturday. Do you know anything about that?

MR. QURESHI: On the hostages issue, we do not negotiate with terrorists and we will not capitulate with threats. We will take action when it is required. On the issue of the cross-border movement, we are engaged and we are talking to our

friends across the border in Afghanistan. Pakistan has done whatever is possible in the given situation. We have deployed over 100,000 troops on our side of the border. We have established something like 1,200 check posts on our side of the border. We have suggested to Afghanistan to introduce a biometric I.D. card system. We've also suggested that let's register regular movement to and fro from Pakistan and Afghanistan. Let's not forget there are 40,000 people who cross the border on a daily basis, there are over 20,000 vehicles that cross the border, and all these crossings are not hostile crossings, they're innocent people going about their normal lives. Let's not forget there are still over 2 million Afghan refugees living in Pakistan, divided families, divided tribes.

Having said all that, we have to address this issue, there are concerns that have been highlighted and we are not oblivious of those concerns, but what we are telling our friends in Afghanistan is the disturbances that they are seeing, the increase in violence that they are seeing in Afghanistan, is not of Pakistan's creation. Okay, to an extent for the sake of argument some of these, sort of these fringe militant elements could have contributed to that, but a lot of your problems are internal in nature. Pakistan has been saying that, but now it's not just Pakistan alone. I was in Dallas discussing Afghanistan and there was a host of countries and well-wishers of Pakistan who said the same. They talked of misgovernance, they talked of incapacity, they talked of institutional grip, they talked of drug trade and the increase

in drug trade. So these are internal issues, the warlordism, rival factions within Afghanistan, those issues are also contributing to the disturbances and instability.

Pakistan can only aggravate the situation toward the south. What's happening in the north? What's happening in the west? What's happening in the east? So it's easy to pass the buck. We do not want to go into a blame game because we feel we have a common enemy, we feel we need a common approach. This war, this fight against extremism has to be fought and won effectively at the global level.

MR. ENGLANDER: Michael Englander, Johns Hopkins University. Dr. Cohen mentioned speaking of triangles and you touched on energy security as a priority moving forward. There has been increased cooperation between your country and Iran in recent months, strengthening our energy security. I wondered if you could comment on those developments are affecting your relationship with the United States and if Pakistan perhaps has an ability to help improve relations between the United States and Iran as part of this triangle that we see.

MR. QURESHI: Pakistan has a serious energy crisis. We have outages and we have hours of load-sharing every year. Our energy requirements are growing at something like 7 percent per annum, perhaps more, it depends on the pace of growth of the economy. It is affecting our economic growth and we need to address our energy concerns.

There are two options that are available to us. One is the IPI, that is, the Iran-Pakistan-India pipeline. We have discussed it extensively. All three countries

feel that it makes a lot of economic sense, and this pipeline can also bring in closer economic cooperation in the region and can become a pipeline of peace as well. The other option that we have is the pipeline from Turkmenistan into Afghanistan, Pakistan, and into India. Unfortunately, the situation in Afghanistan is not helping that project. Our energy needs have to be addressed. We are talking to the United States, we are talking to other friends how to go about resolving that. So we are looking at various options and the IPI is one of the options.

QUESTIONER: Mister Foreign Minister, again welcome to the U.S. I was in Pakistan as an election monitor in the February election and it was a very uplifting and reassuring experience for all of us who were there in that capacity and we salute you for what occurred that day. After the election I went up into the FATA area in the northwest frontier area to see what was happening in the social arena and many times the schools were listed as being in the villages but there was no school. They were shown on the books of the Department of Education but the schools are not there. No one is teaching, so only volunteers are teaching. I was so happy to hear you say that the war on terrorism has to be much more than a military war and education has to be one of the bedrocks, obviously, one of the pillars in the foundation.

CSIS, one of the local think tanks as well did an in-depth study showing that over 90 percent of American foreign aid to Pakistan has gone to the military. Is the Pakistan government, the new government with your influence, able to help

rechannel that assistance more into education and social development? Are you prepared to sit down and work out a map that would do that, because it's not clear how that is going to proceed now. Thank you very much.

MR. QURESHI: Certainly we need to look at the social sector areas that have been neglected in the past. They have been neglected because of too much concentration on defense and the security apparatus and security environment. We feel that normalization and improvement of relations with India and with our neighbors will enable us to divert some resources into the social sector, and education being perhaps the most important of them.

FATA has been perhaps the most neglected and underdeveloped area in Pakistan. The level of poverty is very high in that area, the level of literacy is very low in that area. Yes, we have infrastructure limitations. We need to expand our physical infrastructure over there to establish the reach of the government as well and to give people a better quality of life. We are talking to friends like the United States to help us do that. We have now an economic development plan for FATA in place. We are talking about establishing reconstruction opportunity zones in the FATA area and the idea is to uplift that area economically, to develop it socially that we give the people alternatives, a better way of life, a different way of living, and education is one of the most key factors, it's a long-term factor, but ultimately education is so important because if we've got to win this war, it has to be won through a change in the mindset and education is the best way of doing that.

MR. MITCHELL: Thank you, Mister Minister. Gary Mitchell from the "Mitchell Report." This really follows on Congressman Moody's question I think. Shortly there will be a new administration in place here and I'm wondering what would be on the wish list of the leadership in Pakistan both in terms of resources from the United States hard and soft, but if you could wish two or three things that would happen in the United States as we have a new administration coming in, what would that be? Looking back 2 years from now, what would you love to see happen here in the United States to strengthen the relationship between the two countries and get at some of the key issues that you've already talked about?

MR. QURESHI: The problems that confront us are long-term and that is why we are talking of a broad-based, long-term relationship with the United States. We've had cyclical treatment and both sides have suffered on account of that and that is why we want a more stable relationship. We would want a relationship that should be people oriented. We want to build on common values, values of democracy, of freedom, rights, human rights, that a large section of our population believes on those values are well-engrained in your society. We want a healthier, a more vibrant civil society in Pakistan. We want not just elections, we want a democratic culture in Pakistan, and the United States and Pakistan's cooperation, economic and other political engagements, can bring that about. So we feel as I said earlier on we've been too focused on military-to-military cooperation and the time

has come for a people-to-people cooperation and the needs of the people have to be addressed and they are social and economic in nature.

QUESTIONER: (inaudible) the Hudson Institute. My question has to do with a domestic issue which is (inaudible) you touched on (inaudible) and I was just wondering what the government is going to do to resolve the issue in Baluchistan given the strained history between the Pakistan People's Party and --

MR. QURESHI: You're too fast for me. Slow down.

QUESTIONER: My question has to do with a domestic issue which serious (inaudible) implications. You touched on China's Gwadar project in your speech. I was just wondering what the current government is going to do to resolve the Baluchistan issue given the strains to your Pakistan between the Pakistan People's Party and the (inaudible) and what exactly are you doing to (inaudible)

MR. QURESHI: First of all, look at the results of Baluchistan. The results of generations speak for themselves. The people of Baluchistan opted for moderates. You had a religious coalition governing Baluchistan that spent millions on development and other things but the people voted them out. Look at the results and look at the faith the people of Baluchistan have put in the Pakistan People's Party. After a long time we are leading the government there. It's a coalition government understandably and the situation in Baluchistan is that we need a broad-based government there.

We are engaging with the Baluch leadership. We feel the military option is not the option. We (inaudible) the people's option. That is why we feel that Baluchistan has to be given that sense of participation. They have to be engaged. We have to talk to them. They are an important (inaudible) Pakistan that has been ignored. They feel that they've been marginalized in development, in the political arrangement of Pakistan, and we are trying to overcome that. The leader of my party went public and apologized to the people of Baluchistan that we were not responsible for the operation, we were not responsible for the tragic killing of Mr. Bugti, but we went and we extended an olive branch and we will engage the leadership in Baluchistan; Mr. Mengal, they were behind bars, we released them, and we are facilitating an environment in Baluchistan and we want to address the issue politically.

In the constitutional package that we are proposing, we are addressing the issue of provincial autonomy, and they are very sensitive about provincial autonomy. We are also addressing the issue of distribution of resources on a more frequent and a more equitable basis. And in our package, instead of 5 years we are proposing that every 3 years the National Finance Commission should meet and redistribute resources. So we are engaging Baluchistan and we feel that we will be able to create an environment which is for Pakistan and for a democratic plural order.

MR. KUPEK: Bob Kupek , an independent energy consultant. About 6 years ago Pakistan and India came dangerously close to a nuclear military

confrontation. You mentioned the continuing dialogue with India over Kashmir. What do you think are the prospects for resolving that peacefully within the next 3 to 5 years?

MR. QURESHI: On Kashmir, it's a long-standing dispute. If you ask me, there are no quick fixes and there are no quick solutions. At times, people have given this impression that it's around the corner and we're just going to resolve it. No. We have to be honest, we have to be realistic. But it is an issue that needs to be addressed and we cannot keep it under the carpet indefinitely. That is why we are building an environment that builds confidence. For any resolution, the most important thing is trust, belief, and that is what we are trying to build.

We have introduced through this composite dialogue a number of Kashmir-related CBMs. That has given confidence. That has facilitated people from both sides, given greater access, we are thinking of enhanced trade across the LOC, more movement. There are other CBMs that we are talking about, and in the fifth round we will share them. I have shared them with the Indian leadership when I was in Delhi. So we have to as I said look out of the box as well. We have to look at innovative ways of resolution and we have our minds open to such issues. That is why when I went to Delhi I said that dialogue is important but we have to make this dialogue result-oriented. It has to be meaningful because if we do not make it result-oriented, then people who advocate dialogue will lose faith in dialogue.

I had the leadership of (inaudible) Kashmir in Islamabad and we had discussions. At the moment they are supportive of the composite dialogue. So let that hope live and let us deliver on that hope. But [if?] we fail to deliver, then we slide back to a sad situation which we do not want.

MS. NORTHERN: Jackie Northern with National Public Radio, NPR. There have been several reports that have come out over the past year to year and a half talking about the Taliban growing in strength and numbers and that type of thing. Presumably when you meet with American officials here during your visit, that's going to come up and I wonder if what you can offer them how you can combat the Taliban, the growing numbers. And part B to that question is would Pakistan be willing to look again at the issue of allowing more U.S. servicemen on your soil, special ops, what-have-you, to help combat the Taliban?

MR. QURESHI: First of all, the result of general election has given us confidence that the people of Pakistan have outrightly rejected the Talibanization of Pakistan and people who are advocating that option have been voted out by the people of Pakistan. So there is a large constituency in Pakistan, the overwhelming majority, that does not believe in the values that they advocate. We subscribe to a different set of values and we are building on them. We are trying to give the people confidence in the tribal areas by engaging with them politically that, yes, our thinking is different and we have to stand up for what we believe in and we have to take on this element that is destroying our way of life. So we are adopting a multipronged

approach in dealing with the Taliban and we will -- political engagement, isolating the hardcore terrorists, marginalizing them so that we can have a more targeted, focused attention toward them, taking them on by force is required, and when it is required, we have used force and we will use force, but also addressing their genuine, the socioeconomic needs of that area that has been neglected in the past, we are trying to address them as well, and also restrengthening civilian structures that had weakened over the years. Military personnel? No. We think we can deal with the situation ourselves and we will not allow foreign troops on our territory.

QUESTIONER: (inaudible) I'm from the Hudson Institute. There is a report that there is an increasing number of foreign fighters who are coming to the tribal areas especially there are direct flights from the Gulf States to Pakistan and also through Iran. At the same time there's one more. Let us leave aside President Karzai's administration on part, but there is a large perception of Afghan people in Pakistan because they don't trust anymore its laws and you emphasize on the word trust. So how much importance is that of you like the trust of the Afghan people? Thank you.

MR. QURESHI: There are two phases to your question. The first is foreigners coming in through flights. Let me assure you, sir, that we have now a fairly watertight arrangement on our airports and our friends and allies know the system that we have put in place. I can't say it's foolproof or 100 percent, nothing is 100 percent, people slip in even here with modern technology, people come in. But

we have in place the mechanism to monitor and check and curtail that and we are doing it in a very effective manner. There are some who could come through the land routes through the border and we are also taking measures to curtail it, and we have taken measures.

On the question of trust, I don't know what Pakistan can do more. Pakistan has hosted Afghans in very difficult times. Pakistan has suffered. Our economy has suffered and we have opened our hearts and arms and minds to Afghan people, and if that is not enough, we're willing to do more, but we have done and we have paid a price. A lot of our ills that we have in Pakistan are on account of Afghanistan. We had a very peaceful border. The western border was never our concern. Our concern in the past has always been the east. Now it's the western border we are looking toward.

So we have done our best to give stability, to be good hosts to our Afghan brothers and sisters. Suggest what else do you want. We are willing to do that.

QUESTIONER: (inaudible) Stimson Center. Could you articulate the differences between Pakistan's U.S. foreign policy between the last government and the new government?

MR. QURESHI: The differences?

QUESTIONER: Between Pakistan's U.S. policy if any.

MR. QURESHI: As I said, our relations with the United States are very cordial and they have improved considerably. There was a feeling of letdown when

after the Soviets pulled out and we were left in the lurch in the open to defend ourselves and to deal with the consequences of war, but I think we have crossed that hurdle. There is greater contact. The engagement is very productive, very constructive. Today we have more congressional delegations coming to Pakistan and there's people-to-people contact that is developing and we need to encourage it even more so that there's a better understanding. The people travel to Pakistan, the more Pakistanis travel here, they will understand there are concerns, and we have to address those concerns on both sides. So I think we have a very healthy arrangement and a very healthy relationship, and I see it developing further in the days to come because it is in our mutual interest to have a very solid, long-term, broad-based, stable relationship.

QUESTIONER: (inaudible) with the Pakistani American Leadership Center. As an organization that represents the Pakistani-American community, we're really encouraged that you're talking about a long-term U.S.-Pakistan partnership. One initiative that we have been really encouraged by in the U.S. Senate is an initiative by Senator Biden with Senator Lugar and Senator Hagel and several other senators to have this initiative where it's going to tripe nonsecurity assistance to Pakistan to the tune of \$1.5 billion a year every year for the next 10 years. If you could explicitly speak to that.

My second question to you is, and we've also worked with Ambassador Haqqani on this, a lot of times in the West we hear about the reason for militancy is

to agitate for the supremacy of Islamic law in these northern areas. What specifically can these militants not do under current Pakistani law that they're looking for from Islamic law in these areas?

MR. QURESHI: The first part of your question is the new Biden approach to our relationship. I think there is realization and I feel very encouraged when I see almost a bipartisan consensus on how to engage Pakistan. That is a very healthy sign. And there is a bipartisan consensus in Pakistan on how to have a long-term relationship with the United States which is mutually beneficial. Only a relationship which is based on mutual interests and benefit will be everlasting. That's one. And this should be encouraged further.

On the issue of -- the second part of your question was?

QUESTIONER: It dealt with militants are agitating for the supremacy of Islamic law in these northern areas. What can they current not do under Pakistani law that they're looking to do?

MR. QURESHI: The constitution of Pakistan as it exists today clearly says that there can be no law which is violative of the injunctions and the spirit of Islam so I don't know what new law they want. They are free to practice their religion. They are free to do what they want to do. There is no restriction. Islam is under no threat in Pakistan. People are mingling freely, they are practicing their religious beliefs freely, and there is no restriction as such.

MR. REIDEL: Thank you again on behalf of the Brookings Institution. And again if I could ask you to remain seated for a moment while (inaudible) on their way to the National Security Council.

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CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY PUBLIC

I, Carleton J. Anderson, III do hereby certify that the forgoing electronic file when originally transmitted was reduced to text at my direction; that said transcript is a true record of the proceedings therein referenced; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were taken; and, furthermore, that I am neither a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

/s/Carleton J. Anderson, III

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