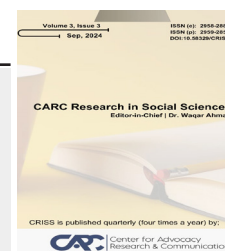




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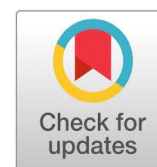
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# Terrorism in Pakistan: Impact on National Security

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## ABSTRACT

Terrorism presents a substantial obstacle in the current global political landscape, leading to changes in approaches to national security. The 9/11 attacks had a significant and far-reaching effect, on South Asia, notably in Pakistan, prompting leaders such as President George W. Bush to intensify worldwide counter-terrorism efforts. This research examines the relationship between terrorism and national security, focusing on Pakistan's experience with cross-border terrorism from Afghanistan, particularly in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The study argues that terrorism surpasses conventional conflict standards and poses existential risks to national security. The study also highlights the impact of terrorist spillover from Afghanistan on Pakistan's territorial integrity, political sovereignty, and core institutions. The study also highlights the degradation of civil freedoms, economic pressures, and social divides due to terrorism. The research advocates for strong counter-terrorism strategies and global collaboration to strengthen national security and maintain global peace. The research advocates for a comprehensive strategy to address terrorism, emphasizing self-sufficiency and global cooperation, aiming to successfully battle terrorism while preserving national autonomy and democratic government in international affairs.

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## INTRODUCTION

Terrorism on a global scale has emerged as a new challenge to the international political system, in which states have played a pivotal role since the Cold War ended. The 9/11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon caused the Bush administration to compare the events of 9/11 to those of World War II. President Bush likened the terrorist attacks to the 21st-century Pearl Harbor tragedy and used the comparison to declare war on terrorism on a global basis.

### Introductory definition

It is necessary to provide a precise definition of the

word terrorism. Terror is inherent in terrorism. Terror derives from the Latin word *terrere*, which means “to cause fear” or “to quake.” When combined with the French suffix *isme* (which means “to practice”), it takes on the meaning of “practicing the act of trembling” or “causing fear.” Trembling and scary are synonymous with dread, panic, and anxiety, which are sometimes referred to as terror. The term “terror” has been in existence for more than 2,100 years. The terror of Cimbricus was a period of intense fear and crisis that gripped ancient Rome in 105 BCE, triggered by the imminent arrival of the Cimbri tribe, known for their deadly nature (Burgess, 2003; Tuman, 2009). So, the term “terrorism” originated during the Reign of Terror (1793-1794) in the French Revolution, coined by the Jacobins to justify their violent acts. This period, marked by widespread government-led violence, claimed thousands of lives. Maximilien Robespierre famously declared terror as a form of swift and harsh justice. The first formal definition of terrorism emerged in France in 1798, describing it as a “government of terror” (Lock, 2013; Shane, 2010; Tuman, 2009).

Terrorism's pervasive presence signifies profound

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disruptions to societal norms and ethical principles. Despite numerous attempts to define it, the subjectivity inherent in political and ideological conflicts has prevented the establishment of a universally recognized definition, giving rise to the adage, “One man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter” (Ismail & Amjad, 2014). This lack of consensus is ironic given terrorism’s prominence in contemporary political discourse and media coverage. Notably, Walter Laqueur, in his seminal work “The Age of Terrorism,” delineates terrorism as the use or threat of violence to achieve specific objectives, inducing fear in victims while leveraging publicity as a crucial tactic. (Laqueur, 1987).

According to Yonah Alexander’s definition terrorism is “the use of violence against random civilian targets to intimidate or to create generalized pervasive fear for the purpose of achieving political goals” (Alexander, 1976). But Stephen Sloan in his writings “Terrorism: The Present Threat in Context” further stated that “the definition of terrorism has evolved over time, but its political, religious, and ideological goals have practically never changed” (Sloan, 2006). The United States Department of Defence states that terrorism is defined as “the calculated use of unlawful violence or threat of unlawful violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological” (“United States Joint Chiefs of Staff,” 1994). The United States Department of State (2001) claims that terrorism is “premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine state agents”.

Terrorists often aim to get fame or attention, which can be referred to as the promotion of the cause. Human interest is always aroused by violence and carnage, and the attention-grabbing aspects of terrorism are heightened by its theatricality, suspense, and inherent risk. In today’s interconnected society, the desire for global acknowledgment promotes transnational acts of terrorism, which progressively escalate to more devastating and sensational acts of violence. Terrorism often aims to disrupt and undermine government procedures, causing administrative weakness and hindering routine operations. It is a deliberate assault on the ruling system to cause insecurity and demoralization among government officials, regardless of its effect on the public’s perception (Marighella et al., 1971). The September 11th terrorist attacks have changed the world’s economic, social, and geopolitical landscape. Terrorist organizations with global affiliations use various regions within a country for recruiting and training individuals, engaging in the illicit trade of weapons, and coordinating joint efforts to instill fear and disrupt economic stability. So, Pakistan is also grappling with the menace of terrorism, undermining and devastating the economy through various avenues (Michael, 2007).

This study aims to first provide clear definitions for terrorism and Pakistan’s national security landscape. Next, it explored the relationship between the two by discussing the Pakistani encounter with Afghanistan’s cross-border terrorism in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and across Pakistan, and how it is a threat to Pakistan’s democracy and internal security.

## Objectives

The following are two basic objectives of this paper:

- To investigate the relationship between terrorism and national security in Pakistan, focusing on cross-border terrorism from Afghanistan
- To assess the impact of counter-terrorism strategies on Pakistan’s internal stability and democratic governance

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature on terrorism and national security, particularly in the context of South Asia, provides a multi-faceted perspective on the dynamics of cross-border terrorism, state responses, and the broader implications for national sovereignty. Abbas and Cheema (2022) discuss Pakistan’s national security policy, highlighting the limitations of traditional security frameworks in addressing non-traditional threats such as terrorism. This aligns with Alvi (2014), who emphasizes the diffusion of extremist ideologies, particularly Salafi/Wahhabi, which have fueled intra-Islamic violence and terrorism in the region. These ideological underpinnings not only affect internal security but also exacerbate cross-border tensions with Afghanistan.

Khan and Wei (2016) probe into the historical role of the Pakistani state and its tumultuous relationship with groups like Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), examining how state policies have oscillated between cooperation and confrontation. This dynamic is crucial in understanding the spillover effects of terrorism from Afghanistan, particularly in regions such as the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). The security concerns in these regions are also echoed by Afridi, Yousufi, and Khan (2014), who explore the military’s role in counter-terrorism operations, particularly in response to the growing threat in Malakand Division. Other scholars, such as Ali and Patman (2019), trace the evolution of Pakistan’s security apparatus, noting that the state’s focus has traditionally been on military solutions, which often fail to address the socio-political roots of terrorism. This militarized response is further discussed by Gregory (2007), who critically assesses Pakistan’s involvement in the global war on terrorism, pointing out the problematic role of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) in both combating and fostering militant groups.

Cohen (2003) and Hussain (2003) underscore the external pressures on Pakistan, particularly from the United States, to take a more aggressive stance against terrorism following the events of 9/11. These external influences are coupled with internal vulnerabilities, as discussed by Hussain (2009), who points out the fragile state of Pakistan’s democracy and governance, making it a fertile ground for terrorist activities. Additionally, the cross-border implications of terrorism are well-documented by Weinbaum and Harder (2008), who discover how Pakistan’s Afghan policies have had long-term repercussions for its national security. They argue that the strategic depth policy, while aimed at ensuring a friendly regime in Afghanistan, has backfired by creating a breeding ground for terrorism that undermines Pakistan’s security. Bove, Rivera, and Ruffa (2020) extend this analysis by linking terrorism to the broader geopolitical strategies of states,

noting that terrorism often serves as a proxy tool in regional conflicts, complicating efforts to achieve long-term peace and stability. This is particularly relevant in the Pakistan-Afghanistan context, where state and non-state actors use terrorism as a means to assert power and influence.

In the end, the literature indicates that Pakistan's national security challenges are deeply intertwined with the socio-political landscape of terrorism, both internally and in its relations with Afghanistan. The state's traditional focus on military solutions has not adequately addressed the root causes of terrorism, necessitating a more comprehensive approach that includes political, economic, and social reforms. This broader strategy would align with global efforts to combat terrorism while preserving Pakistan's national sovereignty and democratic values.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The link between terrorism and national security in Pakistan is examined in this study using a qualitative technique. Primary data is gathered carefully going over the substance of official reports, government papers, and publications on international security. Secondary sources of information on terrorism in South Asia include academic journals, historical documents, and policy reviews.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Terrorism as a Threat to Pakistan's National Security

States use several rhetorical techniques to construct politically beneficial interpretations in the public sphere, namely by establishing a hierarchical structure within binary distinctions. The cultural framework in which policy choices and discussions are defined and legitimized is shaped by the divisions between within and outside, public, and private, and domestic and international. The claims of national security rely on the rhetorical assets associated with the notion of country. The term "nation" refers to a unified and interconnected collection of individuals who have strong emotional connections based on a presumed shared history and future. These assertions may be implemented by many methods, such as public declarations made by heads of government and top officials, who affirm that the country would mobilize all its troops in the event of an emergency. The nation is often linked to concepts like civilization, culture, society, and family, which are seen as fundamental virtues that can be safeguarded even in the face of a menacing external context. Aggression, menace, and danger are often associated with the other, which refers to foreign entities and the domain of international politics. The notion of state sovereignty, as represented in the classical conception, establishes a binary framework that distinguishes between order and anarchy within and without the modern nation-state. This framework asserts that the state has complete legal and political power in exchange for its responsibility to maintain public order and security (Khattak, 1996).

The concept of national security became prominent after the end of the Cold War and is intricately connected to the United States' ascent as a global hegemon. This highlights the factors that have a direct or indirect impact on the nation's economic strength and security situation. National security extends beyond the mere safeguarding

of (Leffler, 1990) its territorial integrity and defensive capabilities. It involves several aspects such as political, economic, cultural, and military variables that influence the fundamental goals of the nation-state (Patman, 2006). Lippmann argues that national security encompasses more than just national defense. It includes the capacity to resist hostility and the ability to foresee and counteract possible threats (Lippman, 1943). In 1948, President Truman said that the loss of independence contributed directly to the vulnerability of the U.S. and other democratic countries, suggesting that national security encompasses more than just the physical protection of national boundaries (Patman, 2006).

National security, as for Berkowitz and Bock, is "the ability of a nation to protect its internal values against external threat" (Hermann, 1909). However, according to Robert E. Osgood Jr, national security is a "Nation's determination to preserve certain interests... like nation's integrity, political independence, and fundamental political institutions. It embraces not only the survival of a nation but its ability to survive" (Arunkumar & Sakthivel, 2017). The fundamental intrinsic principles of the state may need the backing of many interest groups, such as governmental entities, important people, and religious and political organizations. Consensus is achieved by making trade-offs among interest groups on key ideals that include liberal democracy, liberty of self-determination, freedom of religion, and various other basic human rights (Leffler, 1990). Policymakers articulate the national security objectives to safeguard fundamental principles from external risks. One may argue that liberal democracy remains a fundamental principle of the United States and has influenced its approach to foreign affairs. Therefore, the United States regarded itself as a global defender of liberal democracy in the face of the alleged Soviet totalitarian menace during the Cold War (Cox & Stokes, 2018; Snyder, 1979).

Cohen (2003) perfectly describes the national security of Pakistan "Pakistan is a paranoid state that has its enemies". Pakistan is an amiable nation. A harmonious world order is something that Pakistan is actively pursuing. Respect for the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is unwavering. In doing so, it firmly establishes the idea that the acquisition of territory by force is completely impermissible (Chishti, 2014). The fundamental ideology of security in Pakistan is rooted in the apprehension of potential threats and the anticipation of attacks (Ashley et al., 1989). When it comes to Pakistan's national security, the conflict in Afghanistan is a real concern. Sectarianism, terrorism, armed conflict, and classic and non-classical extremist ideologies pose severe risks to Pakistan today. The public is still uneasy about this, and it has hurt financial security and social peace. Therefore, Terrorists operate in the shadows, where they are both seen and unseen (Chishti, 2014).

Pakistan, as a security state, has a national security policy that primarily focuses on ensuring nation-building, democracy (Ali & Patman, 2019) national cohesion and harmony, sovereignty, nation's territorial integrity, political independence, terrorism, violent sub-nationalisms, fundamental political institutions and cultural values (Abbas & Cheema, 2022; Asia, 2021; Mukhtar et al., 2019).



While these aspects of external security were heavily highlighted by all nations during the Cold War, internal security has emerged as a critical component of national security in the post-Cold War era (Kamath, 2001).

The correlation between Afghanistan's encouragement of terrorist activity across borders has attributed some implications for Pakistan's national security. Recently, Afghanistan is readjusting its position to accommodate the conflicting objectives of the dominant global powers, while also dealing with inconsistent ties with Pakistan. Reconciliation is crucial for defining the boundaries of stability and peace in Afghanistan. The situation in Afghanistan has a direct impact on the domestic security of Pakistan. Ensuring peace and security in Afghanistan is crucial for Pakistan's overall interests (Mukhtar et al., 2019).

### ***The Politics of Durand Line***

After the independence, Afghanistan posed an external danger to Pakistan. Afghanistan rejected the designation of the "Durand Line" as an international boundary due to its longstanding territorial dispute over the western regions of Pakistan. Consequently, Afghanistan opposed Pakistan's inclusion in the United Nations in 1947 (Jaffrelot, 2016). The Durand Line, a consequence of British colonialism, serves as a demarcation between Afghanistan and Pakistan, thereby dividing their Pashtun tribal communities. This geographical boundary has significantly strained the relationship between the two nations for many years. None of the Afghan governments have ever acknowledged the validity of the border even the current Taliban-led government. As Afghanistan refuses to give up its territorial claims becomes a security concern for Pakistan and is referred to as a reason to support interventionist tactics, including attempts to counter and undermine Pashtun nationalist feelings (Gregory, 2007; Weinbaum & Harder, 2008).

According to the Tehran Times (September 21, 2008), Afghan President Hamid Karzai refers to it as the "Line of Hate" since it intentionally separates the Pashtun people, who are part of the Afghan population, by cutting across tribal areas. Paktika Governor of Afghanistan Mohammad Akram Khlvak said in an interview with Radio Free Afghanistan, broadcast by RFE/RL on April 20, 2007, that "First of all, we cannot accept this line". Hussain Ahmad Haqqani, Pakistan's ambassador to Washington also said that "People on both sides of the Durand line consider it a soft border" but he also that the people of Afghanistan will decide the issue of the Durand line, not the Hamid Karzai (Mazhar & Goraya, 2009). Such narratives and policies, which have had significant implications for Afghanistan, have also had a profound effect on Pakistan (Gregory, 2007; Weinbaum & Harder, 2008). Approximately 50,000 to 60,000 individuals cross the porous Pakistan-Afghanistan border every day, ("Wings of FC," 2016) with over 90% of that number coming from Afghanistan entering Pakistan. This migration is unparalleled and goes unchecked (Akhlake, 2013). Based on research published by USIP, the cross-border are used for smuggling drugs, trafficking of people, narcotics, and weapons through underground channels.

### ***The Role of Pakistan in the War on Terrorism and its aftermath***

Following 9/11, Pakistan joined the United States in its War on Terror, which was a challenge for the country

as a whole since it had to deal with the Taliban and other terrorist groups it had produced (Khalid, 2018). Tensions were observed when many soldiers on both sides of the border lost their lives in 2003 due to the skirmishes along the border. Pakistan has mobilized its military forces to the Pak-Afghan border, marking a historic first, to deter the extremism and violence that could take place on its soil. However, many people have strong feelings about this decision. The "remnant forces" of the Taliban regrouped in the rough hilly area close to the Pak-Afghan border after the US-backed offensive in Afghanistan ended, and they launched "hit-and-run attacks" against coalition units led by the US (Griswold, 2004).

There have been several counter-extremist and counter-terrorism operations in Afghanistan and Pakistan, with bases spread out throughout both countries. The terrorist cells operate out of their nations. There is a correlation between transnational terrorism threats and the repatriation and refugee crisis in Afghanistan. Pakistan's border construction is an attempt to protect its territory from terrorist attacks, and it has reduced, but not eliminated, terrorist attacks by strengthening the borders (Khalid, 2018).

Pakistani society has been plagued by Islamist extremism and militancy since 2001, with 2007 and 2008 being particularly dark years. The Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) often recognized as the top anti-government terrorist organization in Pakistan, came together as a cohesive unit in late 2007 under the leadership of Baitullah Mehsud. Representations of this "Pakistani Taliban" have been reported to come from all seven tribal agencies in Pakistan, in addition to several "settled" regions bordering (the formerly known as) Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) (Kronstadt & Katzman, 2019). In addition to firing over the border, Pakistan has grave concerns about what it perceives as Afghanistan providing sanctuary to Baloch rebel organizations and members of the TTP, including Mullah Fazlullahah (Boone, 2013; Yusufzai, 2011). Standing firm and refusing to bow to state authority led to the army's July 2007 attack on Islamabad's Lal Masjid (Red Mosque), where many students were from the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Province. This incident revealed the full depth of Pakistan's militant Islamist influence (Weinbaum & Harder, 2008).

The Pakistani military has responded to the upsurge in militancy in western Pakistan by deploying more than 100,000 regular and paramilitary troops to the region. Their militant enemies are switching up their tactics from hit-and-run skirmishes to more aggressive frontal assaults on army positions, using heavier weaponry. Suicide bombings and the abduction of hundreds of troops have also been devastating blows to the military. The morale of the army took a hit, and some began to doubt the organization's commitment and competence as a result of these defeats. Three fronts have been the focus of months-long conflicts with terrorists: the Swat valley, the Bajaur (where over 1500 militants and foreigners were murdered), and the South Waziristan tribal districts. According to one account, a new militant "headquarters" has been set up in the Upper Dir valley of the KP, suggesting that Taliban troops may have opened a new front there as well.

While special commandos from the Special Services Group, trained and supplied by the United States, have

been dispatched to the tribal regions, Pakistan has also sent large regular army formations to replace troops from the Frontier Corps in some areas close to the Afghan border. In 2008, the FATA was the scene of intense clashes between religious extremists and government security forces. After Bhutto was assassinated in December 2007, the Pakistani army launched a massive assault in South Waziristan, where they believed terrorists loyal to Baitullah Mehsud were hiding. Throughout the year, there were instances of intense fighting in the region. The conflict forced about half of the 450,000 people who lived in the Mehsud areas to flee their homes (Kronstadt & Katzman, 2019).

Following the US withdrawal, the TTP used the provinces of Nuristan, Kunar, Gardaiz, Paktika, and Nangarhar as bases from which to conduct assaults into Pakistan. More than 368 cross-border assaults against Pakistani check stations in Upper Dir, Lower Dir, Chitral, and the Bajaur and Kurram regions in FATA, were reportedly carried out by the TTP in 2012 (Khan, 2014). Along with attacking checkpoints, the TTP has carried out other significant assaults in Pakistan, including the September 2015 assault on the Pakistani Air Force facility Badhabar in Peshawar and the December 2014 attack on the Army Public School, which resulted in the deaths of 140 students ("TTP Bases in Afghanistan," 2015). Therefore, the existence of the TTP has increased tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan and has created an additional front in the fight by launching further assaults in tribal regions of Pakistan, including KPK and Balochistan ("Policing Urban Violence in Pakistan," 2014). In short, it is believed that there were 164 terrorist-related fatalities in 2003, but 3,318 in 2009. There were 35,000 casualties in Pakistan in 2010 (Afridi et al., 2014). There have been 2,113 sectarian assaults in Pakistan, with a total of more than 85,000 fatalities and 5,824 wounded (Syed & Javed, 2017). Among these attacks, 10,000 armed persons were involved.

The Afghan government was informed by Pakistan in 2016 that the country was planning new boundaries that would "ease cross-border movements" while simultaneously "curbing uncontrolled and illegal cross-border mobility." All Afghans entering Pakistan, including Afghan students studying in Pakistan, were to have their passports and visas validated and legalized as part of this initiative, which also included the construction of a gate at the Torkham crossing. This project is an element of the National Action Plan, which was launched in 2015 to reduce terrorist attacks and strengthen security along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, which has been a major source of tension between the two countries. People entering Pakistan from Afghanistan used to be able to do so without proper documentation due to an uncontrolled border system. As a result, the border was outsourced to extremist operations, which hurt both governments' interests, whether willingly or not (Khalid, 2018).

At least one hundred worshippers were killed and over 200 injured in a suicide bombing that rocked a mosque in Peshawar in January 2023. A TTP spokesperson has disputed that the Jamaat-ul-Ahrar branch was responsible for the incident, although they had earlier claimed responsibility as a means of exacting revenge for the death of Omar Khalid Khurasani, the group's previous leader, who had been murdered in a roadside explosion in August 2022. Rogue

groups are more likely to resort to violence against civilians if the leadership denies responsibility, which suggests possible internal conflicts. Claiming to have allied with two terrorist factions in Baluchistan, the TTP has also extended southward into the KP province. As a result of the growth and the persistent assaults on Pakistani law enforcement agencies, Pakistan declared a statewide effort to drive out the terrorists in April 2023 ("Instability in Pakistan," 2024). Shehbaz Sharif, Pakistan's prime minister, has also issued a stern warning against terrorist attacks "We will not tolerate any kind of terrorism from across the border. Under no circumstances" ("Why Is Pakistan," 2024). Moreover, The provision of shelter by the Taliban makes it very unlikely that Pakistan would be able to destroy the TTP ("Instability in Pakistan," 2024).

When the Taliban regained control of Kabul in 2021, both Islamabad and Tehran voiced concerns over transnational militant organizations' increasing cross-border terrorist threats from sanctuaries in Afghanistan. Islamabad claims that the interim Taliban government in Afghanistan is providing safe haven to members of the internationally blacklisted terrorist group TTP, who are then allegedly planning and carrying out attacks across the border against Pakistani security personnel and civilians (Gul, 2024). There is a cumulative danger to regional stability posed by terrorist organizations like TTP. It is very cognizant of the difficulty the Afghan government has in dealing with the danger that TTP poses. As a result, Pakistan will keep trying to stop terrorist groups from undermining ties between Afghanistan and Pakistan and identify common ground in the fight against terrorism. An already tense situation between Pakistan and Afghanistan escalated on March 18, 2024, when Pakistan acknowledged conducting "intelligence-based anti-terrorist operations" within the country ("Operation against Terrorist," 2024).

The Taliban government in Afghanistan seems to have bolstered the TTP, demonstrating more allegiance to the terrorist group than to the Pakistani state, despite the fact that Pakistani security forces have achieved some success against the TTP. The deportation of thousands of Afghan immigrants by Islamabad, on the grounds that they were involved in terrorist attacks and street crimes, has also been a source of concern. The resurgence of the Taliban in Afghanistan is the root cause of the worsening relationship between Pakistan and the Taliban. Pakistan has come to terms with the fact that the Taliban's return has given the TTP more confidence and a safe haven, rather than the ally it had hoped for in its neighborhood. Given that the Taliban were born out of Pakistan's 1980s strategy of supporting strict Sunni Islam in Afghanistan and north and west Pakistan, this is ironic ("Why Is Pakistan," 2024).

More than that when the Taliban took control of Afghanistan's government both civilians and security personnel in Pakistan were targeted by a wave of terrorism. The US's pledge to work with Pakistan on counter-terrorism efforts became less clear, however, and that was the sticking point. This denial approach has deep historical roots in Pakistan and is hence not new. The former prime minister of Pakistan Imran Khan has said time and time again that our country has suffered heavy casualties in previous conflicts, but has received little international recognition

for its efforts (Mir, 2021). The question then was how long could the US perish Pakistan's Counter-terrorism strategy and would help in halting the spillover of terrorism from Afghanistan?

The fight against global terrorism has received unexpected backing from Pakistan (Hussain, 2009). Hans Morgenthau argues that the Realistic school of international relations is based on the principle of reciprocity (Besley, 2021). The United States has said that it would target bin Laden along with Afghanistan in its fight against worldwide terrorism. Is there any assurance that the US would not use Pakistan's worries about the impact of terrorism on Afghanistan for political gain? Is it time for Pakistan to resume its role as a US puppet? Belonging to one camp and cooperating with another are two quite different things.

### **Fundamental Government Institutions**

Persistent transnational terrorism poses a danger to Pakistan's democratic ideals (Rizvi, 2011). Aside from casting doubt on the veracity of democracy as a principle and its actual implementation, the positioning of military troops to enforce stability in FATA and other regions not only raises concerns about potential human rights abuses at the local and global levels (Tameez, 2015) but also raises questions over democratic function. The confidence of terrorists in elections is also nonexistent. As Pakistanis rushed to the polls on February 8, 2024, to choose a new parliament and four provincial legislatures, the army said that at least 12 people, comprising 10 security officers, were murdered in what they called "terrorist attacks" in the country's southwest and northwest (Sajid, 2024). This means that democratic elections are not legitimate (Lashari & Mirza, 2013; Shah, 2019).

Democratic principles provide a legal framework for human rights, but terrorism creates a threat to a democratic society, international peace and security, and the rule of law (Khattak, 1996). While fighting terrorism, human rights are being abused (Hoffman, 2004; Jawad, 2020). A dilemma known as Lincoln's Dilemma arises when national security imperatives force governments to choose between violating human rights to maintain national integrity and protecting human rights at the expense of national integrity. Every nation's policymaker confronts this problem; it is not just a theoretical notion. Waging a civil war to protect the nation's integrity was Lincoln's solution to his issue. Lincoln promoted war and rebuilding measures while skillfully using the age-old spoils system to achieve party and regional cohesion (Ross, 1947).

The Black Panther Movement in the United States had resorted to terrorist tactics in the early 1970s, but Richard Nixon showed his will to maintain social harmony by brutally suppressing them. Then it became known that it was allegedly getting money from a number of Arab countries, Algeria included. In his memoirs, he made it clear that eliminating the Black Panthers' terrorist attacks was not an easy task, and he said, "When the issue juxtaposes the lives of innocent citizens and the possible curtailment of personal liberties, we all cherish, the answers are never easy." An effective solution was offered by Nixon's actions.

Though the initial police raids on Panther headquarters started in December 1968, President Richard Nixon's orders

to suppress the Black Panthers came after he became office at the beginning of 1969, after his election in November 1968. A great deal of overt repression occurred in 1969 as a result of several measures taken by the FBI including local police, including warrantless raids on Black Panther offices, destruction of property, gun fights, and the arrest of Black Panthers for resisting arrest. According to documents that were eventually made public, the FBI raids targeted the Black Panthers' social service activities, including the breakfast program, and stole and destroyed food, property, and funds related to these initiatives out of concern about the group's popularity. Numerous bombings of Black Panther headquarters occurred, most likely at the hands of police. Black Panther leader Huey Newton ordered all Panthers to carry weapons and defend themselves violently if the police tried to enter their homes or offices without a warrant. Those who did not comply were to be expelled from the party (Oliver, 2017). However, the decision-makers in Pakistan's national security strategy have let the crisis go on, which has only made matters worse for civil society (Mukhtar et al., 2019).

When dealing with terrorism, a focus on military responses is evident (Bove et al., 2020). But finally, at the tail end of August 2021, the United States withdrew from Afghanistan, ending the conflict that had raged for twenty years. Even if American forces were formidable on the battlefield, they were not helped by a corresponding triumph in rhetorical warfare. The Taliban quickly reentered the area while American soldiers were not there (Rowell, 2024). Since American democracy has been so unsuccessful in Afghanistan, the issue now is how Pakistan can thrive. How can Pakistan improve if Afghanistan is already a failing state? As a result, there is a combination of political pressure and personal motivation to promote cross-border terrorism along with backing the Taliban (Gillani, 2023; Murid Partaw, 2023). Bill Clinton, emphasized that "It is difficult to be a democracy bordered by nations whose governments reject democracy." However such statements erode credibility as compared to the tyranny under the Taliban authorities and its support (Pforzheimer & Wardak, 2023) to their terrorist tactics. That is why terrorist advocates feel driven to undermine democracies in the countries they target (Kamath, 2001).

According to Schetter (2005), Afghanistan is a primarily Muslim state with a diverse population of languages and ethnicities (Fluri, 2021). Share culture and history with bordering Afghanistan. However, there is an estimate made in July 2020 that more than 6,000 TTP militants are believed to be in Afghanistan (MIR, 2020). The issue of Taliban backing for the TTP strains relations with Pakistan and the rest of the globe (Schetter, 2005). when the Taliban took over Afghanistan in 2021 and the TTP increased their terrorist strikes within Pakistan (Bajpae, 2024).

Pakistan is also experiencing religious terrorism which is quite different from that of other Muslim nations. Part of Pakistan's decades-long radical Islamic narrative, both at the state or official level and in society at large, is what leads to acts of terrorism committed in the name of Islam (Rahman et al., 2013). Civil society and the media in Pakistan must also encourage people to resist radical propaganda by refusing to cover domestic disputes through



the prism of religion, which weakens people and makes them more receptive to it (Khan & Wei, 2016). The public's faith in the state's capacity to protect people and property was also weakened by the repeated terrorist attacks in the border region and a decline in governmental authority in several rural Sindh communities. A growing proportion of society's marginalized groups started looking for safety behind linguistic, ethnic, or sectarian proximal identities (Hussain, 2003). Secularism is a liberal political governance paradigm that is losing support from the general people as a result of this.

### Internal Security

National security encompasses both external security dimensions and internal security, both of which are equally significant. The ending of the era of the Cold War has heightened the significance of domestic security. This is where the significant effect of terrorism is experienced. During the Cold War, the perception of threats was separated into two distinct areas: one focused on crime, law enforcement, and maintaining order inside a country, while the other focused on warfare and the prevention of conflicts between nations. The issue of internal security was a matter of importance, albeit it did not pose a threat to existence. The concept of mutually assured annihilation was a significant aspect of external security (Bigo, 2006). Global terrorism is considered a formidable adversary that warrants the alteration of the National Security Strategy of nations within the international system, leading to the temporary suspension of some civil and, notably, human rights. Paradoxically, the decrease or vanishing of several notable terrorist individuals or whole organizations has been disregarded or deliberately dismissed as inconsequential to the "new" kind of terrorism (ONAY & KYRIAKIDIS, 2008). Terrorism, like what occurred in Afghanistan, is often referred to as low-intensity warfare. It is a misnomer because although the perpetrators of the war may regard it as a low-intensity conflict, it causes significant harm and loss of life to the victim countries (Drew & Snow, 2006).

The September 11 terrorist attack on US soil involved a total of nineteen individuals who were affiliated with the radical Islamist extremist organization Al-Qaeda (Bergen, 2024; Keay, 2021). If terrorists were capable of causing havoc and death on the same scale as what we have observed, governments would not need to keep a permanent military force. Moreover, complications and hazards occur due to the arduous task of distinguishing and segregating terrorists from civilians to combat them. Terrorism fosters the emergence of internal adversaries. Hence, once terrorism emerges, it is imperative to suppress it mercilessly, and if needed, use overwhelming force to eradicate it rather than allowing it to persist (Plümper & Neumayer, 2010).

Terrorism fosters alienation among populations based on religious affiliations. It is the greatest perilous manifestation of societal discord. The pervasive emotions of mistrust and suspicion among residents pose a persistent threat to the long-term stability of internal social peace (Crenshaw, 1981). On the 12th of September 2001, NATO convened an emergency session in response to the 9/11 events. NATO activated Article 5 for the very first and only occasion in its

history. The United States launched a military intervention in Afghanistan intending to eliminate the Taliban and Al-Qaeda, a terrorist organization ("International Community Responds," n.d.; Laub, 2017). Considering the impact of a single strike on the Americans, one can readily envision the consequences of terrorism on the general population of Pakistan, who have endured over 10 years of Islamic terrorism.

Terrorism poses a significant economic burden since it compels the government to allocate limited resources toward counter-terrorism efforts. If one were to calculate the expenses associated with pensions for military forces members who have died in action, compensations for civilians who have been slain, and the total financial load on the government, the resulting amount may be quite high. Pakistan sustained a total cost of US\$ 123.13 billion from 2002 to 2016 as a result of terrorism, including both direct and indirect expenses (Khalid, 2020).

### CONCLUSION

The field of global politics is essentially focused on the examination of nation-states and their interactions with one another. However, it is important to note that states are ultimately comprised of individual citizens. The international system, comprised of nation-states, is inherently comprised of persons, therefore necessitating the inclusion of individuals in the analysis of international affairs to a certain degree ("The Role of Individuals", 2011). Terrorism has blurred the line between the state and the individual, which is crucial for conducting international interactions. Conversely, it has also eliminated the distinction between exterior security and internal security (Kelman, 1970).

The terrorist assaults on the US have brought attention to terrorism, prompting Americans to engage in a world-wide campaign to address this threat. The United States had established the notion that what one person perceives as a terrorist, another person may see as a freedom fighter. The Afghan Taliban as well as TTP have adopted a shared lexicon that regards terrorists as individuals fighting for liberation. A considerable number of those who were formerly regarded as "freedom fighters" have now transformed into militants and terrorists with more ambitious goals. They use takfir and unashamed, merciless violence as their primary means of achieving their objectives (Alvi, 2014). The TTP and the Taliban have fought together in Afghanistan and have certain doctrinal similarities, it is important to note that they are distinct organizations. The TTP has discernible anti-Pakistan goals whereas the Taliban concentrates on Afghanistan. Nevertheless, both entities primarily consist of and get backing from the ethnic Pashtuns, a population that extends over the Afghanistan-Pakistan border area.

An expert suggests that the Taliban's seizure of power in Afghanistan would inspire the TTP to change its attention from international jihad to a concentration on Pashtun-centered "ethno-separatism." There has been an increase in the number of TTP assaults against Pakistani security personnel in 2021. The TTP might potentially gain advantages from the Taliban's assumption of power and the following liberation of TTP detainees in Afghanistan. The potential existence of TTP in Afghanistan might potentially strain the relation-

ship between Pakistan and the Taliban. In October 2021, the Taliban's "inappropriate behavior" led to the suspension of state-run Pakistani International Airlines flights from Kabul, causing tension between the two parties (Thomas, 2021).

Hitherto, individuals who advocated for treating all acts of terrorism as an illegal expression of hatred were disregarded. Regrettably, their appeals for a uniform and unwavering reaction to terrorism were disregarded. By granting international recognition to terrorism, the United States has effectively eliminated the distinction between "good" and "bad" terrorists. Gradually, the notion that terrorism itself is a malevolent force and should be eradicated via global collaboration is gaining traction. However, the key insight for Pakistan in the current global battle against terrorism, as elucidated by Popović, (2020) is that according to Morgenthau, there exists a principle that in international relations, the only assistance available is self-help. Although the United States may refer to the fight against extremism as and terrorism the inaugural conflict of the 21st century, the adversary is dispersed. Pakistan must successfully address its identified adversary to safeguard and uphold its national integrity.

## Conflict of Interests

The authors has declared that no competing interests exist.

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