

Pakistan Focused. Independent Questions. Independent Answers.



Focusing Pakistan on the issues of:

- Democratic Governance
- Security and Terrorism
- Environmental Issues

CRSS stands for impartial, nonpartisan and realistic research on all issues Pakistani. CRSS is a nonprofit organization; civil society's first – and so far the only – such initiative.

**Our mission: To analyze issues facing Pakistan and her citizens.**

CRSS is not a part of any political grouping or party and firmly adheres to academic as well as scholarly neutrality. Our aim: To explore any issue by asking "Independent Questions" and endeavoring to provide "Independent Answers."

All the material at [www.crss.pk](http://www.crss.pk) is placed for public knowledge and consumption. CRSS will not be responsible for any political use of the information given on the website.

---

**Center for Research and Security Studies**

House # 60, Main Nazim-ud-Din Road, F-6/1, Islamabad

Tel: (+92-51) 8314801-3. Fax: (+92-51) 8314804

Email: [pager@crss.pk](mailto:pager@crss.pk). Web: [www.crss.pk](http://www.crss.pk)

# Counter Terrorism after President Musharraf

---

## 1. Background:

For six years, Pervez Musharraf has been the principal character in the US-led War on Terror being waged in the aftermath of September 11, 2001 terrorist events. However, an important reason why Musharraf has been able to sustain a leadership role in this war, acknowledged duly by the world community, is the consistent support he received from the Bush Administration, even amid drastic decline in his domestic public support. President Bush is already in the last leg of his second presidential tenure. By November, the United States will have a new President from among the two presidential contestants, Democratic Barak Obama and Republican John McCain. It is difficult to imagine that either of them will extend the same level of support to Musharraf as was available to him from President Bush.

The manner in which the political events in Pakistan since the election of March 18 have unfolded, including the rapid assertion of civilian democratic forces and the growing momentum towards resolution of the judicial issue, have already considerably weakened Musharraf's domestic political clout. In the light of Musharraf's fast dwindling external and internal support base, it is about time we in Pakistan and the world at large start preparing for a period in which religiously-grounded terrorism remains a principal international threat, with Pakistan as one of its main breeding grounds, but the strategy to manage this threat goes beyond the legacy of Bush and Musharraf.

## 2. Present Situation and Analysis:

The US strategy in the War on Terror is expected to change under the new American administration, especially if it came under the Democratic Party leadership. Even if Republicans were able to exploit the Democratic divide on race and gender issues, as visible from the party's recently-concluded primaries in favor of Obama, and elect McCain as President, a transformation in America's counter-terrorism preferences will still be in the offing. Neo-conservatism of the Bush era, during which the post-9/11 US-led counter-terrorism effort remained premised on the exercise of military means alone, with its focus shifting heavily from Afghanistan to

Iraq since spring 2003, will most likely give way to a new phase in the War on Terror.

During this new phase, not only the emphasis of the US-led counter-terrorism strategy may place more emphasis on finding a comprehensive solution to the problem of international terrorism, inclusive of both military and non-military means but with a clear tilt towards the latter, its regional focus may also gradually shift away from Iraq and towards Afghanistan, which has been a hub of al-Qaeda led international terrorist predating 9/11.

In all likelihood, therefore, Pakistan's role as a frontline US ally in the War on Terror will continue in the foreseeable future. The June 2 bombing of the Danish Embassy in Islamabad make it amply clear that the terrorist threat from religious extremists remains a principal domestic security challenge for Pakistan even under a democratic dispensation which has preferred to negotiate peace with religious militants, however with some conditions. Since domestic terrorist events such as the above have regional and international implications, the international community, particularly the United States and its Western allies, will continue to expect from the country's leadership to proactively combat terrorism. In popular perceptions, Musharraf has merely been a Bush's protégé, who extended the Bush Administration's Neo-Conservative agenda and, in return, received unbridled from it. Pakistan's counter-terrorism strategy beyond Musharraf, especially considering the recent civilian democratic in the country's politics, should, therefore, include a gamut of steps that serve America's interests as much as they serve Pakistan's.

In fact, the new coalition government has already undertaken a shift in the country's counter-terrorism strategy, by offering a conditional peace to pro-Taliban militants in Waziristan and signing a peace accord with the militants in Swat. Bush administration's reservations on the issue are understandable, but meaningless in the wake of the impending change in US government and leadership.

CRSS looks positively at the democratic government's bids towards reshaping Pakistan's counter-terrorism approach, as they may a long way

**The government should practice a zero tolerance policy, including the use of military means, against an individual or organization using Pakistani territory for carrying out domestic or international terrorism**

in addressing the domestic and regional terrorism challenge facing the country.

### **3. Recommendations:**

CRSS would like to strongly emphasize on the following:

1. As part of its “comprehensive package” for combating religious extremism and terrorism, the new government shall continue to reach out to extremist organizations, offering them concrete incentives, primarily aimed at socio-economic development of FATA and Swat regions, but making them conditional upon their renunciation of terrorist activities inside and across Pakistani territory.
2. The government should practice a zero tolerance policy, including the use of military means, against an individual or organization using Pakistani territory for carrying out domestic or international terrorism, especially those affiliated with al-Qaeda, Afghan Taliban or Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU).
3. The government should re-double its efforts for engaging the international community in the socio-economic development of FATA and Swat regions, including the development of the educational institutions and reforming their syllabi.
4. For its part, the international community, especially the United States and its western allies, should understand that the assertion of civilian democratic forces in the country’s politics offers them a unique opportunity to solve the problem of terrorism insofar its linkage with Pakistan is concerned. It is only by empowering the democrats in Pakistan that the historically-rooted nexus between the Establishment and Extremists can be exposed, and an important Pakistan-specific root-cause of terrorism can be addressed.