

PEACE & RECONCILIATION

A PERSPECTIVE ON THE CHALLENGES FACING OUR WORLD TODAY



By

Prof. Dr. Toaha Qureshi MBE

Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE)

THE BEST INTERNATIONAL EDITION

FROM CONFLICT TO CONSCIENCE: A ROADMAP TO RECONCILIATION

In a world that feels increasingly divided, Peace and Reconciliation by Prof. Toaha Qureshi MBE offers a powerful and thought-provoking reflection on the forces shaping our times. Drawing on decades of experience in interfaith dialogue, counter-extremism, and global engagement, the author invites readers to look beyond headlines and confront the deeper causes of conflict, injustice, and misunderstanding.

This is not just a book about global politics—it is a call to conscience. From Gaza to Kashmir, from the "War on Terror" to rising populism, Prof. Qureshi explores the human cost behind geopolitical decisions while challenging both global powers and communities to reflect on their roles. What makes this work stand out is its balance: it speaks truth to power yet also encourages self-accountability and reform within societies.

At its heart, the book is driven by hope. It reminds us that peace is not achieved through dominance, but through justice, compassion, and honest dialogue. Thoughtful, bold, and deeply personal, Peace and Reconciliation is essential reading for anyone seeking to understand today's world—and to imagine a better, more united future.



Prof Dr Toaha Qureshi MBE is a distinguished British academic, philanthropist, community leader, author, senior international analyst and CVE expert. Among other civic and Police awards, he was conferred the Member of the Order of the British Empire by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II for his outstanding services to the community.

Toaha Qureshi FOUNDATION UK

FIAD PERSPECTIVES OF TOMORROW





In the Name of Allah, The Most Beneficent, The Most Merciful

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Toaha Qureshi Foundation London,
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CONTENTS

Chapter 1: Spark of Script / The First Stroke	15
Chapter 2: 9/11 and George Bush's Crusade	39
Chapter 3: The Gaza Crisis: A Holocaust in the Making?	5959
Chapter 4: The Palestine Issue: Criminal Silence of the World Leadership	8787
Chapter 5: Global Impact of India-Pakistan War	11818
Chapter 6: Is Afghanistan a Cursed Land?	142142
Chapter 7: My diplomatic engagement at Kabul	157157
Chapter 8: Impact of the Iranian Revolution in South Asia and the Middle East	171
Chapter 9: Iran-Isael-US conflict	182
Chapter 10: The Iraq War and the Alleged Chemical Weapons	233233
Chapter 11: Libya & Syria: Burning Frontiers of Conflict	244244
Chapter 12: Through the windows of History-Holocaust of Muslims	250250
Chapter 13: Root causes of extremism and terrorism	268268
Chapter 14: The role of Education in Addressing Extremism 2009	283283
Chapter 15: Divided We Fall, United we Stand	295295
Chapter 16: Rehabilitation of Extremists –Lessons Learnt from the UK	306306
Chapter 17: Jihad: A Struggle, Right vs Wrong	329329
Chapter 18: Double Standard of The West on Russia-Ukrain War	348348
Chapter 19: Turkey's political trajectory from secularism to Islam	354354
Chapter 20: Western World against CPEC	361361
Chapter 21 : Economic Shocks, Global Disruptions, and Post-War Opportunities	366
Chapter 22: Islamic Take on Present International Chaos	371
Conclusion	378378
References	385385
A Pictorial Profile of the Author	

Preface



Toaha Qureshi MBE is a distinguished Member of the Order of the British Empire, conferred by Her Majesty the Queen Elizbeth II, and recognised as a Pakistani British individual with significant influence in the British institutions. His remarkable achievements in the fields of education, counter extremism, de-radicalisation and rehabilitation of those charged under the terrorism related offences in the UK.

Toaha has authored many books on his autobiography, geopolitics, British society, Interfaith harmony, international issues, counter terrorism and faith related matters.

His services in strengthening international relations, interfaith harmony, philanthropy and peacebuilding have garnered widespread acknowledgement. His analyses are regularly featured on Pakistani television channels, as well as on the BBC, CNN, Chanel 4, and several other international media outlets.

Establishment of Toaha Qureshi Foundation, UK-Pakistan

Whoever fails Allah has passed on to His Messenger from the people of the towns is for Allah and for the Messenger, for the kinsmen and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer, so that it may not circulate only between the rich among you. Moreover, whatever the Messenger gives you, take it, and whatever he forbids you from, abstain (from it). And fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is severe in punishment. (Al-Quran: Surah Al-Hashr, Verse 7)

Establishment of Toaha Qureshi Foundation UK:

Surely, Allah does not change the condition of a people unless they change themselves. (Surah Al-Ra'ad, Verse 11)

The best person is the one who learns and teaches the Quran (Hadith)

When I read the above verse and hadith, I understood that, according to Allama Iqbal:

God will not change the condition of any nation until it creates circumstances to be in a certain situation. That is, God helps those who help themselves.

This is what encouraged me to establish various welfare, educational, training and development programmes. Hence, I set up various institutions to fund and monitor these programmes.

The objectives of the Foundation are as follows:

1. Financial Support through Scholarships

   a. Working with universities to offer scholarships to underprivileged students at all levels of education and in all disciplines.

   b. Working with universities to offer scholarships to promote the work of the Holy Prophet (saw) within their institutions. This would enable future generations and young people to conduct research and pursue PhD degrees on this necessary subject.

   c. Working with universities to offer scholarships to MPhil and PhD holders to work on the protection of the ideological boundaries of Pakistan.

2. Building bridges between universities in the UK/EU and Pakistan

   a. Establishing affiliations between universities in Pakistan and the UK, as well as Europe, to help strengthen Pakistan's educational prowess.

3. Supporting Pakistan's state institutions to achieve their objectives
   a. Signing memorandums of understanding (MoU) with other institutions of Pakistan, including the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC) and the National Institute of Education and Khatam-un-Nabiyyin Authority of Pakistan (NRKNA).
4. Developing the nation's youth a. Establishing Khatam-un-Nabiyyin and Rahmat-ul-Alimeen Centres in universities in Pakistan that will support the youth in conducting research using current technology.
5. Promoting the rule of law and tackling injustices
   a. Assisting people in prisons who cannot secure bail due to insufficient funds and are unable to appoint a lawyer.
6. Supporting inter and intra-faith dialogue
7. Promoting soft PR for Pakistan
8. Supporting underprivileged people
   a. Donations to schools for clothing, educational materials and more.
   b. Support for people who cannot afford weddings, etc.

One of the key themes in the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (saw) is the rights of non-Muslim minorities. The Prophet Muhammad (saw) established relations with non-Muslims early in his political career and made covenants with them on various matters and was known to be trustworthy. This serves as a lasting guideline for the entire Muslim Ummah regarding relations and agreements with non-Muslims. After the migration to Madina, the Prophet Muhammad (saw) established a peace treaty with the Jews and Christians in the name of "Misaq-e-Madinah".

My work has led me to numerous interactions and engagements through the interfaith lens, and this has been a guiding principle for me. Toaha Qureshi Foundation UK is currently collaborating on research papers with Bahauddin Zakaria University, Multan, Islamia University, Bahawalpur, Punjab University Lahore, and several other universities.

Introduction

In an era defined by profound geopolitical upheavals, ideological polarisation, and persistent conflicts, the quest for peace and reconciliation has never been more urgent. From the lingering scars of post-9/11 interventions in Muslim-majority nations to the escalating tensions between nuclear powers, the resurgence of far-right movements in the West, and the unresolved grievances in regions such as Palestine and Kashmir, the world stands at a precarious crossroads. These challenges are compounded by economic disparities, the stigmatisation of Islam as synonymous with extremism, and the apparent impotence of international institutions like the United Nations in upholding justice impartially.

This book, *"Peace and Reconciliation - A Perspective on the Challenges Facing Our World Today"* offers a thoughtful examination of these multifaceted crises through a lens grounded in Islamic principles of justice, moderation, unity, and compassion, while drawing on historical precedents, theological insights, and contemporary geopolitical analysis. It critiques the doctrine of "Might is Right" that has shaped much of modern foreign policy, exposes double standards in global governance, and highlights internal shortcomings within Muslim societies such as disunity, corruption, and neglect of self-reform that exacerbate vulnerability to external influences.

At its core, the work advocates for a renewed commitment to the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), exemplified in historical covenants like the Misaq-e-Madinah and the Treaty of Hudaybiyyah, as pathways to interfaith harmony and conflict resolution. Through case studies of nations like Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Malaysia, alongside Pakistan's aspirations as an Islamic Republic, it explores practical avenues for progress: education, soft power diplomacy, economic reform, and collective accountability. Ultimately, this book is a call to action for Muslims to reclaim agency through adherence to the Quran and Sunnah, and for the global community to foster mutual respect, equitable resource distribution, and the rule of law in pursuit of a world where human dignity prevails over domination.

Foreword

In a time of deepening global divisions from proxy wars and nuclear brinkmanship to rising Islamophobia and populist extremism this timely volume by Prof. Dr. Toaha Qureshi MBE provides a compelling and balanced Islamic perspective on the crises afflicting our world, with particular emphasis on the struggles of the Muslim Ummah. Drawing upon his distinguished career in counter-extremism, de-radicalisation, interfaith dialogue, and peacebuilding across the UK, Europe, and Pakistan, the author dissects the roots of unrest: foreign interventions, resource-driven conflicts, internal disunity, and the failures of bodies like the United Nations to address injustices in Palestine, Kashmir, and beyond.

What distinguishes this work is its unflinching honesty. It not only challenges Western double standards and the legacy of the "War on Terror" but also urges self-accountability within Muslim societies, reminding readers of the Quranic injunction that Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change themselves (Surah Al-Ra'd, 13:11). By invoking prophetic examples of moderation and strategic patience such as the Treaty of Hudaybiyyah and analysing successes in nations pursuing Islamic-aligned reforms, Prof. Qureshi charts a roadmap for renewal through education, unity, and soft power.

This book is essential reading for scholars, policymakers, and anyone seeking to understand the complexities of today's world. It transcends mere critique, offering hope through a vision of reconciliation rooted in shared Abrahamic values and universal justice. May it inspire reflection, dialogue, and collective action toward a future of lasting peace and mutual respect.

Authors Word

In 2014, I compiled my autobiography, which includes my observations and experiences, into a book titled *My Journey: From Chak 444 to Buckingham Palace*. This book was published by the Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ) and the Forum for International Relations Development (FIRD) UK. Launching ceremonies were held at the Press Clubs in Karachi, Islamabad, Lahore, and Multan. The book served as an abridged version of my earlier English publication. The research contained within it was widely appreciated by scholars from various fields, both from within the country and abroad. They suggested that, given the depth of my analysis, I should document my views and findings on the escalating unrest, turmoil, fascism, extremism, terrorism, the establishment of peace, the role of the United Nations, and the indifference and weakness of the Islamic world.

Many of my friends were deeply concerned and felt helpless due to the growing unrest in Pakistan and the damage inflicted upon Karachi, Baluchistan, and the Northern Frontier regions because of the parallel system created by terrorists. While I understand the gravity of the situation, I am acutely aware of the broader context.

I am also very worried and lamenting about the international situation and was practically engaged along with various institutes of Britain, Spain, the Netherlands, and Germany to check extremism and terrorism. Their different programmes to hold up extremism there and rehabilitation programs were designed to get those people released on parole and make them again helpful members of society who were arrested under the Terrorism Act and were undergoing their punishment. Therefore, we had a chance to

contact these people and understand their thinking and psychology directly. Hence, I decided to write a book on them. During this research, I conceived that it was not a simple matter as it seemed to be it was a very complicated and profound issue.

The working title of this book was initially chosen to facilitate the commencement of work. It was decided that the definite name would be finalised later, after the division of chapters and completion of the book. During the selection of chapters, it became clear that every chapter was so important that it would require a separate book to be written. To fulfil this purpose, I had to travel to many countries, including Palestine, Israel, Turkey, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Belgium, France, Holland, Germany, Norway and Sweden and there I met several political and religious leaders, analysts and educationists and consulted many libraries. In short, during this long educational journey, where I had much more to learn, I also had a chance to find out many veiled facts about Islam.

Purpose of the book

This book is addressed to the entire world, particularly the followers of Ibrahimic faiths, i.e. Jews, Christians and Muslims. As followers of these three Abrahamic religions, we are, in essence, cousins, bound by our belief in the afterlife and the concepts of reward and punishment. Hence, it is essential to prepare the Muslim Ummah to face the current and future challenges of unrest while instilling a sense of responsibility. Additionally, this book aims to draw the attention of Western nations to the cause of global peace, highlighting the fact that the end of the oppressor always leads to ruin, and the supporters of the oppressor share in this destructive fate.

The objectives of this book are as follows:

- To underscore the significance of peace.
- To identify the obstacles to peace.
- To explore the causes of unrest.
- To understand the importance of the rule of law.
- To discourage the war frenzy.
- To raise awareness of the sanctity of life.
- To advocate for the collective use of resources instead of waging war to steal them.
- To highlight the failure of the United Nations in addressing international issues.
- To examine the consequences of the religious world's lack of engagement in international political affairs.
- To differentiate between religion and the 'wars for resources'.
- To provide a theoretical basis for the issues concerning Pakistan.
- To distinguish between extremism, terrorism, and jihad.
- To offer solutions to the aforementioned points.

Chapter 1:

Spark of Script/The First Stroke



Armed guardians of the MAGA faith face off with enthusiastic Trump supporters demanding the republic be "Restored.

This chapter sets the stage for the book's exploration of global unrest by focusing on the current conflicts as symbols of historical injustices and modern power imbalances. It critiques the resurgence of the "Might is Right" doctrine in U.S. foreign policy, examining its ripple effects through Russian interventions in Ukraine, Syria, and beyond, while highlighting escalating tensions between nuclear powers like India and Pakistan.

Return of "Might is Right"

The doctrine of "Might is Right," predominantly associated with American foreign policy, has significantly undermined global

peace by prioritising military and economic dominance over diplomacy and cooperation. This approach has provoked strong counteractions from Russia, evident in its interventions in Georgia (2008), Ukraine (2022–present; escalated in 2025 with intensified offensives seizing over 4,900 square kilometers of territory, including advances near Pokrovsk and Kupyansk, alongside large-scale drone and missile strikes targeting energy infrastructure ahead of winter 2025–2026), South Ossetia (2008), and Syria (2015–2024; reduced presence in 2025 following Assad's ouster, with negotiations to retain limited access to bases like Khmeimim and Tartus amid demands for reparations and normalization under the new Syrian transitional government), which were direct responses to perceived Western encroachment, particularly through NATO expansion (including Finland and Sweden's 2023 accessions, prompting Russian threats of retaliation and increased drone incursions into NATO airspace in fall 2025) and U.S.-backed regime changes (such as the 2024 fall of Assad in Syria, viewed by Moscow as a U.S.-enabled reversal of its influence, and ongoing support for Ukraine's government amid stalled 2025 ceasefire talks under the Trump administration).

These actions reflect Russia's intent to challenge the U.S.-led unipolar world order, escalating tensions and contributing to a volatile international environment. The growing alignment between Russia and China further complicates this dynamic, potentially forcing the United States to reconsider its aggressive stance against the peaceful world. However, the failure to de-escalate international standoffs could heighten the risk of a Third World War within the coming decades, as global powers compete in what resembles a "law of the jungle", a "jungle of concrete" defined by urban warfare and lawlessness rather than natural harmony. The devastating consequences of conflicts in Afghanistan

(2001–2021), Iraq (2003–present), Libya (2011–present), and Syria (2011–present) illustrate this erosion of peace, with hundreds of thousands of deaths, millions displaced, and the rise of extremism and terrorism. These wars have dismantled societal structures, destroyed infrastructure, and fostered an atmosphere of unrest, poverty, leaving a legacy of instability and human suffering that underscores the urgent need for a shift towards multilateral cooperation and de-escalation to restore global stability.

Similarly, in South Asia, two major nuclear powers, India (est. 180 warheads) and Pakistan (est. 170 warheads), have engaged in escalating conflicts driven by longstanding Kashmir disputes and mutual accusations of terrorism support. This was starkly evident in the 2025 Pahalgam crisis, where a militant attack in Indian-administered Kashmir on April 22 killed 26 civilians, prompting India's Operation Sindhoor missile strikes on Pakistani targets on May 7, marking the first drone war and jet dogfight between nuclear states. Pakistan retaliated with multidomain assaults, including cyber operations and base strikes, amid nuclear signalling like National Command Authority meetings, raising fears of escalation. A U.S.-brokered ceasefire on May 10 averted all-out war, but the crisis tested deterrence limits, with experts warning of heightened risks from new technologies and eroded diplomatic guardrails.

Rocket-Man and the Sound of Barking Dog

The prolonged symbolic conflict between the United States and North Korea, characterised by media warfare and provocative rhetoric, has significantly heightened global tensions, particularly following North Korea's successful hydrogen



President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un shares an awkward side-eye moment in front of U.S. and North Korean flags during their 2019 Singapore summit.

bomb test. In 2017, U.S. President Donald Trump escalated the situation by abandoning diplomatic protocols, calling North Korean leader Kim Jong-un "Rocket Man" at the United Nations and warning of national destruction, while deploying military forces to North Korea's borders. In response, Kim labelled Trump "mentally deranged," and Foreign Minister Ri Yong Ho dismissed U.S. threats as "the sound of a barking dog," prompting international calls for dialogue to de-escalate. However, an attack on North Korea by the U.S. seems unlikely, as it would involve devastating chemical and nuclear weapons, rendering traditional warfare obsolete and threatening catastrophic consequences for humanity. Russia has emerged as North Korea's boldest new partner, formalised in a June 2024 mutual defense treaty that has fueled a "quasi-alliance" amid Moscow's Ukraine war needs. Pyongyang has supplied artillery shells, missiles, and up to 10,000 troops (with over 300 confirmed deaths by mid-2025), receiving in return advanced satellite/missile tech, oil, food, and economic aid—enabling over 40 missile tests in 2024 alone and a November 2023 spy satellite launch. This "dangerous partnership" has alarmed the West, prompting Russia to warn against U.S.-South Korea-Japan trilateral exercises in July 2025, while experts fear it emboldens Kim's WMD ambitions and erodes UN sanctions. Ties could wane post-Ukraine, but for now, they grant Pyongyang leverage against U.S. pressure.

Relations with South Korea and Japan, conversely, are at a nadir, with Pyongyang's 2023 "two Koreas" doctrine treating Seoul as a "foreign enemy" and abandoning unification cemented in 2025 speeches and constitutional amendments. Kim Yo Jong dismissed Seoul's August 2025 peace overtures as futile amid ongoing U.S.-ROK drills, while missile tests (e.g., October 28, 2025, ahead of Trump's visit to South Korea) and troop border incursions heighten

risks. Japan faces similar provocations, including hypersonic missile overflights, fuelling Tokyo's push for trilateral deterrence with Washington and Seoul—reaffirmed in their September 2025 New York statement on DPRK denuclearisation. Overall, these dynamics—bolstered by Russia, strained with China, and adversarial with Seoul/Tokyo—amplify North Korea's revisionist posture, complicating U.S.-led diplomacy and risking miscalculation in a nuclearised flashpoint.

The rising superpower alliance of China and Russia, with China's support for South Korea, acts as a check on Western intervention, rendering U.S. threats largely symbolic. Meanwhile, resource-rich but militarily weak Muslim nations fear exploitation by stronger powers, exacerbating global insecurity. This fear has driven a surge in defense budgets, with 2025 global military expenditure reaching $2.72 trillion, led by the U.S. ($916 billion), China ($314 billion), and North Korea (est. $1.5 billion).

Saudi Arabia ($75.6 billion), according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) and the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS). Saudi Arabia's evolving diplomatic ties with Israel quietly advanced through shared intelligence on Iran and U.S.-brokered economic pacts in May 2025 yet publicly stalled by Riyadh's insistence on Palestinian statehood amid the January 2025 Gaza ceasefire and the June 2025 Israel-Iran war, raising questions about its regional adversaries, further complicating Middle Eastern dynamics.

This is underscored by the resumption of direct commercial flights to Israel from Middle Eastern hubs like Dubai (Emirates and flydubai, with four daily services since July 2025) and Istanbul (Turkish Airlines, four daily services ongoing), alongside indirect routes via Athens and Vienna from regional carriers like Israir, signalling pragmatic economic thawing despite lingering

hostilities. These tensions, particularly in the Middle East, risk pushing the world toward a nuclear conflict, where advanced weaponry like F-16s, Apache helicopters, and drones would become irrelevant, potentially depriving humanity of essential resources like electricity and oil, regressing societies to a pre-modern era.

War on Terror or a Crusade?



U.S. soldiers in full combat gear cautiously advance past Arabic-inscribed stone walls during urban operations in Iraq, circa 2003–2004.

On September 11, 2001, al-Qaeda terrorists hijacked four U.S. airliners, crashing two into the World Trade Centre, one into the Pentagon, and the fourth in a Pennsylvania field killing 2,977 people in the deadliest attack on American soil. The aftermath unleashed a global "War on Terror": U.S.-led invasions of Afghanistan (October 2001) and Iraq (2003), sweeping surveillance reforms (Patriot Act), and a redefinition of security fuelling two decades of conflict, trillions in spending, and enduring debates over liberty, empire, and blowback.

The gravity of the issue is evident from the statements made by George Bush, who referred to this attack as a "Crusade" and declared, "You are either with us or against us." He further stated, "This Crusade, this war on terror, is going to take a while." If we observe the current situation in Europe, we see that in democratic

countries like the UK, the activities of right-wing extremist organisations are on the rise. The propagation of hatred against foreigners and refugees influenced the UK's exit from Europe (Brexit). This mindset is not confined to the UK alone; right-wing extremist organisations have spread across Europe. Research conducted by the University of California, Berkeley's Center for Race and Gender and the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) revealed that between 2008 and 2013, 74 anti-Islam American groups received approximately $206 million to promote Islamophobia through their programs (Centre for Race and Gender and Council on American-Islamic Relations, 2016)Subsequent CAIR reports have documented the network's continued growth and funding, with mainstream charities funneling over $105 million to 26 anti-Muslim groups between 2017 and 2019 (primarily via donor-advised funds and family foundations like the Christian Advocates Serving Evangelism Inc., which contributed nearly $60 million to the American Center for Law and Justice alone). By 2024, the Southern Poverty Law Centre identified 31 active anti-Muslim hate groups (down 8% from 2023 due to some chapter closures, like ACT for America affiliates), amid a broader ecosystem of 533 hate groups promoting anti-Muslim rhetoric alongside other bigotries. CAIR's 2025 Civil Rights Report highlighted a record 8,658 anti-Muslim incidents in 2024 (up 7.4% from 2023), linking the surge to ongoing philanthropy-fueled misinformation and policy advocacy by these groups, including efforts to restrict Palestinian solidarity and surveil Muslim communities.

This campaign of hate and discrimination took on new momentum under President Donald Trump, and right-wing extremist groups in several European countries, including the Netherlands, Germany, and France, are now aspiring to hold positions of leadership, including premierships and presidencies.

In Germany, the far-right organisation Alternative for Germany (AfD), which opposes Islam, Muslims, and refugees, has surged to second place in the February 2025 federal elections with a record 20.8% of the vote, doubling its 2021 share and securing 152 seats in the Bundestag amid widespread discontent over immigration and the economy. Though no other party will form a coalition with it, the AfD has become the largest opposition force and dominates eastern states, signalling the consolidation of nationalist right-wing power across Europe. The conservative CDU/CSU, under Chancellor Friedrich Merz (who succeeded Olaf Scholz in May 2025 via a "Grand Coalition" with the SPD), governs with pragmatic skill and forbearance, navigating fiscal reforms and EU leadership amid economic recovery.

In France, the far-right National Rally (RN), led by Marine Le Pen and Jordan Bardella, achieved a record 37% in the first round of the 2024 snap legislative elections, propelling it to third place overall with 143 seats in the National Assembly after the second round despite a tactical "Republican front" blocking a majority. The hung parliament has fuelled ongoing instability under President Emmanuel Macron, with RN's anti-immigration stance gaining traction ahead of the 2027 presidential race.

In neighbouring India, Hindu nationalism has grown so powerful that Narendra Modi, the former Chief Minister of Gujarat during the 2002 riots (where over 1,000, mostly Muslims, died amid allegations of state complicity that courts later dismissed as a "false narrative" in 2025 statements), secured a third term as Prime Minister in 2024 via the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its NDA coalition. Though the BJP lost its outright Lok Sabha majority (winning 240 seats), Modi's government, now in coalition, continues promoting Hindutva policies, including the controversial Waqf (Amendment) Act of 2025, amid surging anti-Muslim hate speech and democratic backsliding critiques.

When Pakistan promised to be a front-line state in the War on Terror following the 9/11 attacks, neither Pakistan nor America anticipated the profound consequences. Over the past 20 years, Pakistan has incurred losses amounting to approximately $123 billion. The effects of this war on Pakistan's economy, diminishing foreign investments, and society in general have been deeply damaged. More than 80,000 people, including members of security agencies and civilians, lost their lives in this so-called foreign War on Terror.

A Brief Review of the Use of Muslim Capital



President Donald Trump engages in a conversation with Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan during a 2017 visit to the UAE, with a royal guard standing watch.

Many Muslim-majority countries, endowed with substantial natural resources and capital reserves, have increasingly directed significant portions of their national budgets toward military procurement rather than essential investments in public welfare, education, and healthcare. This trend involves billions of dollars in arms purchases from Western nations, thereby bolstering the defence industries and economies of those supplier countries. Despite these substantial outlays, these nations often continue to grapple with profound feelings of insecurity, driven by regional instability, geopolitical rivalries, and perceived threats from global powers. Comprehensive data on these patterns is readily accessible

through various online resources and reports from reputable research institutions, which are given in the coming pages. To provide a standardised overview, the following analysis draws on empirical evidence compiled by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), complemented by insights from the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS).

Defence Budgets of Muslim Countries (2015-2025)



The national flags of the 22 member states of the Arab League flying proudly together against a bright blue sky, symbolizing pan-Arab unity and shared heritage.

Countries like Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are compelled to allocate a significant portion of their GDP to defense, with respective percentages of 7.1% and 5.5% in 2024 (per SIPRI estimates). In countries such as Pakistan and India, where significant portions of the population live below the poverty line (45% in Pakistan and 2.3% extreme poverty in India, per World Bank 2025 assessments), Pakistan's defense budget for fiscal year 2025–26 is $9 billion, while India's is $78.7 billion. However, there has been some positive progress in Pakistan. The country is now a democracy, and the previous PTI government peacefully transferred power to the PML-N. To eradicate corruption, it is crucial to establish the rule of law and strengthen government institutions.

Meanwhile, the situation in the Middle East, the new wave of

terrorism in Europe and Turkey, the refugee crisis, and the ongoing wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and Syria have robbed the people of their peace. America, despite its immense resources and most advanced weaponry, is also fearful of an unseen enemy, with its citizens unable to sleep peacefully at night. Perhaps that is why its defence budget is higher than that of any other country. In such circumstances, what is needed more than food, clothing, and shelter is the attainment of peace and escape from disturbance. Security is required from both visible and unseen enemies.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (2015-2025)

Country	2015 Budget (USD bn)	2025 Budget (USD bn)	% Change (2015–2024)	Key Notes
Saudi Arabia	87.2	76.0	-13%	Peaked in 2015 amid Yemen conflict; declined due to oil price shocks and fiscal adjustments but stabilized in 2024
Turkey	8.2	15.8	+93%	Steady rise driven by regional security concerns, domestic production, and NATO commitments.
United Arab Emirates	14.7	22.8	+55%	Consistent growth linked to Yemen operations and diversification from oil dependency.
Qatar	6.9	8.5	+23%	Modest increases post-2017 blockade, focusing on air and naval modernization.
Iran	9.8	7.9	-19%	Sanctions and economic pressures constrained growth; emphasis on domestic missiles and proxies.
Pakistan	7.1	9.0	+27%	Incremental rises amid India tensions and counterterrorism, despite economic challenges.
Afghanistan	5.0	0.1	-98%	Pre-2021 figures included U.S./NATO aid; post-Taliban, minimal state spending reported.

Future of socialism, communism, and capitalism



Epic Rap Battles of History style: Adam Smith, father of capitalism, versus Karl Marx, architect of communism the ultimate ideological showdown.

Capitalism is an economic system where private individuals or businesses own and control the means of production, distribution, and exchange of goods and services. It emphasises free markets, competition, and profit-driven incentives, with minimal government intervention. Socialism is an economic and political system where the means of production, distribution, and exchange are owned or regulated collectively, often by the state or cooperatives, to prioritise social welfare and reduce inequality. It emphasises equitable distribution of resources, often through government intervention, public services, and wealth redistribution.

A classless, stateless society where the people collectively own the means of production (factories, land, resources), goods are distributed according to need, and private property is abolished, achieved via proletarian revolution overthrowing capitalism.

Let us examine the various theories, philosophies, and systems of the previous century. We observe that the number of people adhering to the ideas of Karl Marx (1818-1883) and Vladimir Lenin (1870-1924) is steadily declining. In the 1980s, the UK Labour Party's hard left core, led by Tony Benn and the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy, pushed for unilateral nuclear disarmament, nationalisation of key industries, withdrawal from NATO, and mandatory reselection of MPs. Centred in London councils (e.g., Lambeth, Liverpool) and trade unions, this faction briefly controlled the party under Michael Foot (1980–1983), whose 1983 manifesto, dubbed "the longest suicide note in history, "led to

a crushing electoral defeat (27.6% vote share).

Due to the humiliating defeat of the Soviet Union, socialism and communism were badly affected. Thanks to the Pakistani ISI and the resilience of the nation. As General Hameed Gul stated that *"I want to say something for you that perhaps no one else will. The ISI that is being portrayed today as the "murderer of Ram". When the payoff comes, they will say that the ISI, with America's help, destroyed the Soviet Union in Pakistan, and that will be another slogan. The ISI used America's help to checkmate America itself."*

Thomas McInerney said on a TV show. Asked: Well, General, let us not bury the news. The news is that we are winning against ISIS, both in Syria and in Iraq. That is great. Nevertheless, there is Afghanistan. Why are we not winning in Afghanistan? *"One word, Pakistan. Pakistan, for the last almost 16 years, David, has been supporting the Taliban when they said, when George Bush said, you are either with us or against us. They said they were with us. Well, they are not with us, and we must acknowledge that. Nine major cities in Baluchistan are raising money, supporting them in recruiting, as well as training areas. "*

The Russian people were reduced to begging in the streets, and many states left the Union to become independent nations. Communism found no one to claim ownership. However, China, a communist country, brought about a silent economic revolution and is emerging as a global superpower. However, China is also embracing capitalism, becoming part of globalisation, and moving away from true communism, so it cannot be fully categorised as a communist nation.

According to careful estimates, the number of homeless people in America reached 771,480 on a single night in January 2024the highest since systematic tracking began in 2007marking an 18% surge from 2023 amid soaring rents, post-COVID evictions, and

natural disasters (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2024). In the UK, around 354,000 people in England alone were entirely homeless or in temporary accommodation in 2024, with total households in temporary setups across the UK hitting a record ~140,000 (including ~117,400 in England, 16,300 in Scotland, 6,400 in Wales, and rising duties in Northern Ireland)a sharp escalation driven by housing shortages and welfare cuts (Shelter England, 2024). Whether it is socialism, communism, or capitalism, human life seems invisible in all these systems.

Global economic inequality severely undermines human life, with 673 million people (8.3% of the world) facing hunger in 2024 and 343 million in acute food crises across 74 countries, driven by conflict, climate shocks, and inflation. Food banks worldwide distributed 1.7 billion meals in 2023, a 25% rise, while Canada saw 2.2 million monthly visits in 2025, 33% involving children. Inequality shortens life expectancy, erodes trust (50% distrust governments), and fuels despair, with 60% of people globally dissatisfied with their lives, proving that whether under capitalism, socialism, or communism, systemic failures render millions of human lives invisible and expendable.

Populist Leadership and Creation of Far-Right Mobs



Far-right protesters draped in England flags clash with police during the 2024 UK anti-immigration riots, setting wheelie bins on fire and overturning vehicles amid widespread disorder.

In the three decades particularly, the year 2025 has witnessed a marked escalation in far-right protests across multiple continents, driven primarily by anti-immigration sentiments, economic anxieties, and populist rhetoric amplified through social media platforms. This has been made possible only because of the irresponsible and ill-thought-out behaviour of populist political leadership and media. These demonstrations, often organised by established extremist networks, have transcended local grievances to form a transnational movement, with events in Europe, North America, Australia, and beyond resulting in violent clashes, arrests, and heightened societal divisions. In the United Kingdom, the "Unite the Kingdom" rally in London on September 13, 2025, organized by far-right activist Tommy Robinson (real name Stephen Yaxley-Lennon), drew an estimated 110,000 to 150,000 participants, marking one of the largest nationalist gatherings in British history and leading to over 140 arrests amid assaults on police and counter-protesters (CNN, 2025; PBS NewsHour, 2025). Protests targeted asylum-seeker hotels and mosques, fuelled by deliberate misinformation about migrant-related crimes. They echoed broader themes of "Islamisation" and national identity erosion, with international figures like Elon Musk and French politician Éric Zemmour addressing the crowd remotely (The Guardian, 2025a; The New York Times, 2025). Similarly, in France, demonstrations erupted on April 6, 2025, in Paris following the embezzlement conviction of National Rally leader Marine Le Pen, attracting solidarity from global far-right allies including Viktor Orbán of Hungary, Geert Wilders of the Netherlands, and Jair Bolsonaro of Brazil, who decried the verdict as judicial overreach.

Capitalist System and the 2008 Financial Crisis



The epicentre of the capitalist system, the United States, experienced a fiscal crisis in 2008 that was unprecedented since the Great Depression of 1929. The United Kingdom was also significantly affected, with both nations incurring losses amounting to hundreds of billions of dollars to stabilise their banking systems. Thousands of businesses, both large and small, shut down their operations, leading to widespread unemployment and a surge in homelessness as individuals were unable to meet mortgage obligations.

Notable U.S. and British financial institutions such as Merrill Lynch, Fannie Mae, HBOS, the Royal Bank of Scotland, Bradford & Bingley, and Northern Rock faced bankruptcy. In response, the U.S. Congress enacted a $700 billion bailout package, signed into law by President George W. Bush, to rescue these institutions. Additionally, the Federal Reserve injected $236 billion into Wall Street to mitigate the crisis. Lehman Brothers, a prominent investment bank with 25,000 employees, filed for bankruptcy, owing $619 billion to clients. Similarly, American International Group (AIG), the largest insurance company in the U.S., with assets totalling $1 trillion, suffered a loss of approximately $100 billion, leading to an $85 billion government bailout.

The repercussions of the 2008 crisis were felt globally, with European countries like Ireland, Spain, Portugal, and Greece on the brink of bankruptcy. In response, the G-20 nations collectively established a $2.2 trillion support package to stabilise the global

economy. As of March 2025, the United States' national debt stands at approximately $36.56 trillion, comprising $29 trillion held by the public and $7.4 trillion in intragovernmental holdings. This represents about 116% of the nation's GDP (Guardian).In the United Kingdom, public sector borrowing reached £151.9 billion in the fiscal year ending March 2025, £14.6 billion above forecasts. Consequently, the national debt has escalated to £2.64 trillion, approximately 95.8% of GDP. The capitalist model, particularly its laissez-faire variant, has played a crucial role in driving economic growth and innovation. However, the 2008 financial crisis exposed significant vulnerabilities within this system, including excessive risk-taking by financial institutions, inadequate regulatory oversight, and the prioritisation of short-term profits over long-term stability.

The Impotence of the United Nations



United Nation School destructed by Israeli forces.

Currently, the main issues facing the Muslim Ummah include the problems of Kashmir and Palestine, the plight of Muslims in Myanmar, the situation in Afghanistan, and the ever-increasing uncertainty in the Gulf and the Middle East. To address and find a permanent and viable solution to these problems, we must first understand the underlying reasons and objectives behind the hypocrisy of Western diplomats. When they visit Pakistan, they speak about human rights and the security of minority rights. However, when it comes to the atrocities against Kashmiris, Sikhs, and the Muslim, Christian, and Dalit minorities in India, they fall silent. A contemporary Muslim finds it

challenging to understand why, over the past six decades, the problems of Palestine and Kashmir have only become more complicated, while the situations in East Timor and South Sudan were quickly and skilfully resolved by creating two separate states. Isn't this an open contradiction of the United Nations when it comes to Muslim issues?

The free and sovereign states of Iraq and Libya were destroyed, and their leaders were treated with disrespect. Subsequently, unrest spread to Syria, and efforts were made to remove its ruler, although these attempts were unsuccessful. Meanwhile, the leader of North Korea continues to threaten the world while advancing his nuclear and missile technologies, yet the global powers do nothing to stop him. A common Muslim is left to ask: Why this contradiction in the actions of the United Nations?

Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition



Two high-ranking military officers one from Pakistan and one from Saudi Arabia sit formally at the headquarters of the Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition (IMCTC) in Riyadh, flanked by their national flags.

The Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition (IMCTC) was established in 2015 with 34 members and now consists of 41 countries. It operates under the leadership of the Saudi Crown Prince and Deputy Prime Minister, Muhammad bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud. Often referred to as the "Muslim NATO," its

head office is in Riyadh, and in 2016, the retired Chief of Army Staff of Pakistan's military, General Raheel Sharif, was appointed as its first head. Some critics believe this appointment was influenced by the National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO) to ensure the stability of the Nawaz government. The decision to appoint a retired Pakistani military chief as the head of a military coalition of 41 Muslim countries, while excluding Iran, a Shia-majority country, has raised concerns about the potential for creating a new bloc and escalating tensions, possibly leading to a devastating conflict. This situation has caused significant unrest within Pakistan's Shia community and could have severe consequences for the country. For Saudi Arabia, continuing the coalition is becoming increasingly complex, as the kingdom is entangled in numerous challenges.

Why is it that this coalition could not provide an infrastructure of peacekeeping forces to the United Nations to stop genocide in Gaza by the Israeli forces? The genocide of Muslims in Myanmar is no secret, yet the supposed champions of human rights have taken no significant action. Following the war policies of Western nations, led by the U.S., which labelled Islam a "terrorist" religion, the world has seemingly been given a free pass to oppress Muslim-majority regions (as seen with the Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar). These policies allow the displacement of Muslim populations to turn Muslim-majority areas into Muslim-minority ones, while labelling movements for freedom or self-determination as "terrorist" and oppressing them. No government has effectively intervened in their favour, except for the Maldives, which recalled its diplomat in protest the oppression of the Rohingya Muslims and the Burmese government. No other country dared to sever diplomatic ties with the Burmese regime.

Did Saudi Arabia lead the 41-country military alliance merely as a symbolic gesture to serve coffee and dates? This alliance must adopt a strategy like NATOs to safeguard its interests. It should undertake peace missions to Myanmar, at the very least to halt the genocide of the Rohingya Muslims.

The Believers Hold Each Other as Brothers

The eight-year war between Iran and Iraq and then the war between Iraq and Kuwait have discouraged the Muslims. No Islamic organisation or Islamic country dared to follow the enjoining of God in verse Al- Hujurat, could manage reconciliation among them; instead, they became a party to destroy them.

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ ۝

Translation: All believers are but brothers, therefore seek reconciliation between your two brothers, and fear Allah, so that you may be blessed with mercy. (49:10)

After the Gulf War (the American occupation of Iraq), Pakistan and Afghanistan became the victims of extremism to such an extent that in Pakistan, even mosques the most significant symbols of peace in society were no longer safe. The mosque, traditionally considered a house of security, became a target. Terrorism spread to schools, colleges, universities, shrines, madaris (religious schools), Imam bargahs (Shia mosques), streets, and bazaars, leaving people afraid to step outside their homes. Fear ruled everywhere: fear of personal enmity, fear of terrorism, and fear of attacks from across the border. Minorities living in the country also felt insecure, with their places of worship, hospitals, homes, and lives becoming targets of violence. As a result, the divide between Muslims and non-Muslims continued to widen.

The most critical aspect of this perilous situation is the lack of understanding or the misleading perceptions surrounding the issues at hand. If we examine the public speeches and political rallies in Pakistan, we see an overwhelming display of emotionalism, which only serves to fuel hatred. Some leaders talk about hoisting a flag at the Red Fort, while others focus solely on recounting grievances against Jews and Christians from the past

sixty years. When a new issue arises, it is often linked to the IMF, the U.S., or Western countries. No one stops to ask: where do we stand? Why, as Muslims, have we become the targets of the conspiracies of others? Perhaps, we are blaming others for our own deficiencies, inaction, and moral failings. Strangely, no one seems to consider whether, by blaming others for our shortcomings, we are, in fact, denying our own responsibility. As a result, with each passing day, instead of improving our situation, we find ourselves sinking deeper into frustration. We avoid self-accountability and national responsibility, while continuously blaming others for our lack of self-respect and inactivity.

Therefore, it is the need of the day that the basic issues that brought us to such circumstances should not only be pointed out but also should be tried to find an effective solution. God Almighty says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنفُسِهِمْ

Translation: Surely, Allah does not change the condition of a people unless they change themselves. ..(11:13)

In this auspicious verse, the change of circumstances means that when a nation starts disobedience of its Creator, despite His uncountable blessings, and leads an immoral and sinful life, that nation is responsible for leading a changeful and malevolent life, and God lifts His blessings. Now the blessings of God will start again when the nation returns to good deeds. Though this verse is sometimes explained in the following couplet, the actual meaning of this verse is related to the change from good to evil.

Moreover, in simple words, an ancient proverb describes the above verse, "God helps those who help themselves."

However, it is true that if a nation does not heed to improve its circumstances and does not care for its reformation, God will open doors of His guidance and help.

The promise of God's help is not for those who do not intend to

reform themselves; rather, this promise is only when someone is worried about their own reformation.

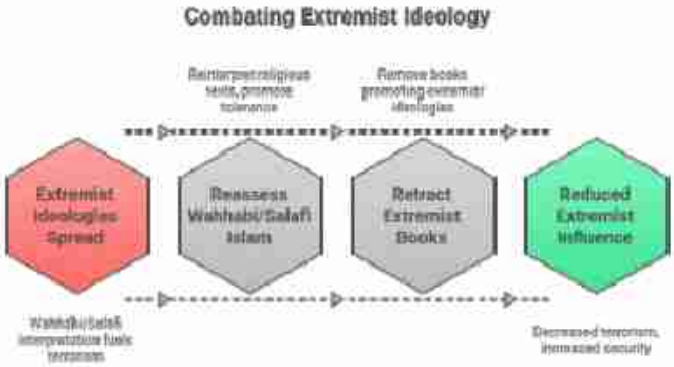
وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا

Translation: As for those who struggle in Our cause, we will surely guide them along Our Way. Furthermore, Allah is undoubtedly with the good doers. (30:69)

Global Centre for Combating Extremist Ideology (GCCEI)



U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken meets with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan and other Gulf officials during a 2021 diplomatic visit to Riyadh.



In the current international climate, the Islamic world appears to be the most affected. Saudi Arabia's increasing defence spending, the new dispute with Qatar, and its agreement with the United States to purchase $350 billion worth of weapons highlight the insecurity the kingdom feels. The question arises: whom does Saudi Arabia

perceive as a threat, requiring such a vast defence budget? Against whom are these weapons meant to be used?

During President Trump's recent visit to Saudi Arabia, a centre was established through U.S.-Saudi cooperation, called the *Global Centre for Combating Extremist Ideology* (GCCEI). The purpose of this centre was to reassess the Wahhabi/Salafi interpretation of Islam, which has been associated with the rise in terrorism. Under this centre, millions of books promoting extremist ideologies, which were initially created with American support during the Afghan Jihad against Russia, are being retracted. These books have continued to be published for years, and Europe has been calling for accountability on this matter.

The gravity of this situation is highlighted in a response given by U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson in the Senate, during a question from Senator Scott Perry. Question by Senator Scott Perry

"Regarding the deal with Saudi Arabia, I could not get an answer on how we are monitoring their continued support of the exportation of Wahhabism, Salafism, and the terror that goes along with that fundamentalist view of Islam around the globe. Do you know of any metrics that the department is following to support their claim that they are working on that? How are we gauging that?"

Answer by Secretary of State Rex Tillerson

"One of the outcomes of the President's summit in Riyadh was the creation of the centre to counter extreme Muslim messaging in Saudi Arabia. This centre now exists. It was inaugurated while we were there. The centre has several elements to attack extremism around the world. One of the elements that we are discussing with them is the publication of new textbooks that will be used in schools and mosques around the world. These new textbooks aim to

replace those that currently advocate extreme Wahhabi viewpoints justifying violence. We have asked them not only to publish new textbooks but to retrieve and remove the existing ones. This is just one example. This centre will have a very broad range of activities, including social media, broadcasting, and how young imams are trained in theological centres. We are working with them today to establish the new centre, and we will hold ourselves accountable to the measures we implement. That is one of the key objectives the State Department is working on with Saudi Arabia and other partners as we bring this initiative to fruition."

The establishment of this centre and the changes to the textbooks raise essential questions about the American administration's accountability. It appears that, both publicly and covertly, textbooks are being altered, and religious schools (madrassas) are being monitored, as is happening in Saudi Arabia. In the guise of combating extremism, one notable change is that women in Saudi Arabia are now allowed to drive. While personally, I am not opposed to this development, the timing of this change immediately following Trump's visit appears to be politically motivated.

This chapter warns that unchecked dominance and regional conflicts risk igniting a Third World War, calling for de-escalation, multilateralism, and a re-evaluation of global alliances to foster stability and prevent further human suffering in vulnerable regions.

Chapter 2:

9/11 and George Bush's "Crusade"



September 11, 2001: Thick black smoke billows from the North Tower of the World Trade Centre shortly after American Airlines Flight 11 struck it at 8:46 a.m. a haunting moment that changed the world forever.

The American World Trade Centre attack occurred on September 11, 2001, and America immediately presented its demands: close all training centres associated with Bin Laden and grant U.S. forces unrestricted access to Afghanistan. Otherwise, Afghanistan would face military action. The U.S. also threatened General Musharraf of Pakistan, asking, "Friend or enemy?" In the case of cooperation, Pakistan was required to provide its land for American operations and supply full information to dismantle the Taliban government; in the case of enmity, Pakistan might also be attacked. The intensity of the situation was reflected in President Bush's declarations, such as calling it a "Crusade," and his statement, "You are either with us or against us," signalling the global divide.

The Pakistani leadership, rather than confronting the world's sole superpower, chose to cooperate and declined to support the

Taliban. Mullah Omar, however, had already declared that while they could accept war and the fall of their government, they could not hand over their guest, Osama bin Laden, to America. In the face of this, Pakistan allowed the U.S. to use its airports and provided all relevant information, but Pakistan also sought to avert war. Notably, General Mahmood, the Chief of ISI, who was in America on September 11, visited Afghanistan multiple times in attempts to prevent war. His final effort involved trying to persuade Maulana Fazal your Rehman, Qazi Hussain Ahmad, and Maulana Sami ul Haq to meet Mullah Omar, but Fazal your Rehman refused, unwilling to serve as an intermediary.

After the 9/11 tragedy, the U.S. issued an ultimatum for the Taliban to hand over members of Al-Qaeda or face military action. The UN also passed a resolution demanding that Afghanistan comply. The Taliban had three options: hand over key Al-Qaeda figures, risk the destruction of their country, or send Osama to another nation. The Taliban chose to refuse, understanding that this meant the potential fall of their regime and the inevitable loss of lives and property.

General Musharraf later revealed in a 2006 interview with The Guardian that President Bush had issued a direct threat: if Pakistan did not cooperate, it would be "driven to the Stone Age."

Who is Responsible for the 9/11 Attack?

The question of who is responsible for the 9/11 attacks continues to be discussed, not only in Islamic countries but also in the West. It is not only common among Muslims, but several non-Muslim American engineers, architects, and scientists,



Osama bin Laden on the iconic FBI "Wanted Dead or Alive" poster complete with that infamous raised-hand photo, plastered in New York City with a watchful NYPD officer standing guard.

after conducting proper research, have suggested that the 9/11 attacks were not the act of some foreign group. Instead, they argue that the building was demolished in a well-planned conspiracy. These individuals formed an organisation called "Architects and Engineers for 9/11 Truth," which includes nearly 3,000 top engineers and architects. They assert that the building was brought down according to a planned explosion.

Several analysts suggest that the buildings were demolished to fulfil the latent objectives of the CIA, such as completing the project of an oil pipeline through Afghanistan. This theory was also supported by British politicians, but the American government refuted it. Another theory is that the Israeli agency Mossad, along with the CIA, was involved. Four thousand Jews who worked in the Trade Centre were absent on that day, leading to the claim that the Jews were responsible for the attack and had prior knowledge of it. However, several American Jews were killed in the attack, as well as 49 Jews from Israel. It is possible that some Jews were absent due to a religious festival, but many Muslims also lost their lives.

Is Al-Qaeda Responsible for the 9/11 Attack?



9/11 Truthers marching in the streets, proudly holding a banner declaring "World Trade Building 7 Didn't Just Blow Itself Up!

Unfortunately, after the 9/11 incident, Osama bin Laden and other key leaders of Al-Qaeda made statements that complicated their situation. Osama bin Laden, in his statement broadcast on ABC News on May 2, 2011, expressed wholehearted sympathy for the attackers and supported them. In his statement of October 7, he declared that the attackers were good young Muslims whom God had blessed with the intention to carry out the attack, and that eternal blessings awaited them in heaven. The spokesman for Al-Qaeda, speaking on Al Jazeera TV on October 13, advised Muslims to avoid living in high buildings or travelling by air due to the possibility of more suicide attacks. Later, in an alleged interview, Osama claimed to have nuclear and chemical weapons.

In an interview with Pakistani journalist Hamid Mir, Osama openly admitted that Al-Qaeda played a role in the 9/11 attacks. This admission provided ample justification for action against them.

If Osama had been handed over to the U.S. at that time, even if no solid proof had been found against him, the trial could have continued for years, and punishment would eventually have been decided. However, instead, the Taliban rejected the idea of handing over Osama, which led to widespread destruction for all parties involved, including Al-Qaeda. The Taliban were defeated, and the destruction of Afghanistan was set in motion. This allowed right-wing racist organisations to exploit anti-Islam sentiments, and such organisations have only grown stronger.

On October 29, 2004, Osama bin Laden released a video in which he clearly took responsibility for the attacks. A portion of his statement read:

"And as I looked at those demolished towers in Lebanon, it entered my mind that we should punish the oppressor in kind, and we should destroy towers in America so that they taste some of what

we endured, and so that they be deterred from killing our women and children."

Distinguished Pakistani journalist Hamid Mir revealed that when he met Osama shortly before 9/11, he saw the pictures and information of Ata Muhammad, a central figure in the 9/11 attacks, on Al-Qaeda's computer. He learned that a significant responsibility had been assigned to Ata Muhammad. Surprisingly, this meeting, where a seasoned journalist was shown the picture of Ata Muhammad, seemed to have been done deliberately so that it would become part of the record or be passed on to the organisation arranging the meeting, indicating that Ata was connected to Al-Qaeda.

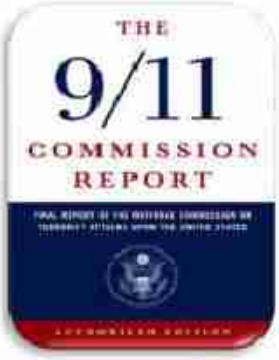
In 2007, on the sixth anniversary of 9/11, Osama praised a suicide attacker involved in the 9/11 attacks. Dr Amer Aziz, Osama's personal physician, told Dr Israr Ahmad that, in response to a question, Osama admitted ordering the attack. Dr Israr later shared this information in an interview with journalist Naeem Bloch, which was published in the Daily Jinnah in October 2005. Dr Amer Aziz was a revolutionary Muslim orthopaedic specialist.

Professor Dr. David Ray Griffin expressed concerns in his book A 571-Page Lie, stating that General Mahmood had met with George Tenet, the CIA Director, one week before the 9/11 attacks and discussed paying Ata Muhammad $100,000. Some believe that simple individuals were used in such conspiracies. However, the reader must decide whether this was a case of simplicity or a conspiracy. The lie told on such a large scale was so convincing that it made everyone believe it was the truth. This secret may eventually be exposed, much like the information revealed by WikiLeaks.

It is possible that other entities aided Al-Qaeda, but the full details

will likely be uncovered in time. In response to this analysis, one might argue that conspiracy theories also exist in the U.S. Just as many in our country believe in conspiracy theories, there are also Americans who believe such theories. Recently, in a Hollywood film, there was an attempt to prove that humans never landed on the moon. Similarly, in a well-known documentary, it was suggested that Arabs were responsible for the 9/11 attacks. Anything can be said based on conspiracy theories, but the truth is always based on concrete evidence.

Commission 9/11 Report or "A 571-Page Lie"?



U.S. President Bush and the U.S. Senate formed the "9/11 Commission" about thirteen months after the September 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Centre, on November 27, 2002. The purpose of this commission was to investigate the circumstances surrounding the 9/11 attacks thoroughly.

The report of this commission, which consists of 500 pages, was made public on July 22, 2004, although 28 pages were withheld. These pages were later released through the Senate in 2016, revealing Saudi interference and facilitation of the attacks. The commission was made up of 10 members, and George Bush appointed Henry Kissinger as its chairman. However, he resigned due to public pressure, and Thomas H. Kean, former Governor of New Jersey, was appointed as chairman. The commission employed around 78 staff members and spent 15 million U.S. dollars on the investigation. However, Afghanistan was attacked before the report was even released.

Professor David Ray Griffin, a prominent analyst on terrorism, severely criticises the American perspective on the 9/11 incident

and calls this report "A 571-Page Lie." He questions how the commission could be independent when a member of the Bush Administration was its executive director. According to a review by 9/11: A Global Research Think Tank, Professor Griffin points out more than 100 instances where the book seemed to have been shaped by a particular government policy. He argues that crucial evidence was omitted from the report, including:

The statement from the American company UNOCAL that proper security for the gas and oil pipeline from Central Asia was beyond the Taliban's capability (this information informed the American administration before 9/11 that it was necessary to remove the Taliban government).

Evidence suggests that during a meeting between American representatives and the Taliban in July 2001, no agreement was finalised (according to the American agenda). This led to expectations that a war would start by October 2001.

The involvement of people connected to the oil industry, such as Vice President Dick Cheney, who had strong ties to the oil company Halliburton, which profited massively during the Iraq war.

Several pieces of evidence were not included in the report, such as the visit of the Director-General of ISI, Pakistan, to America a week before 9/11 and his meeting with CIA Director George Tenet. During this meeting, he reportedly asked to pay Ata, the mastermind of the 9/11 attacks, $100,000. Furthermore, the involvement of Osama bin Laden's treatment at an American hospital and meetings with Saudi intelligence officials was also excluded from the report.

American scientists, engineers, and analysts have raised several questions regarding the official report. They claim that the report was crafted to align with the government's stance, making it a "bag full of lies." This has left the average person unsure of what to believe, especially given the widespread use of conspiracy theories.

Over 2,500 professors, architects, and engineers have stated that the 9/11 attacks were part of an American conspiracy.

Strangely, it is reported that some Arab hijackers left their passports behind, were not immediately obstructed, and then some external forces hijacked American aeroplanes, flying them freely for an hour without the U.S. Air Force being able to stop them. Additionally, the building collapse appeared to be part of an automatic destructive system.

American Taxpayers' Expenditure on Bush's "Crusade"

American authorities failed to grasp that waging a war against a



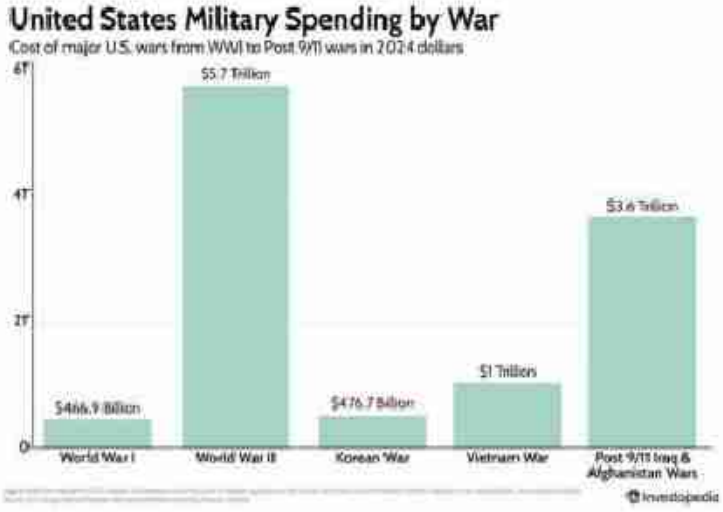
nation does not guarantee that it will end according to their will. Foreign armies, particularly in guerrilla warfare, struggle to win. The Taliban, using guerrilla tactics, kept the U.S. forces engaged for years. Foreign armies cannot sustain such wars indefinitely, as they take a toll on both the soldiers' morale and the nation's economy.

The Bush administration's "War on Terror" has cost around $2 trillion, while the American national debt has reached $19 trillion. The American Congress initially approved $22.9 billion for the war on terror, but the costs ballooned to $59 billion in 2002, $112 billion in 2003, and $235 billion in 2008. Every year, around $100 billion is spent on this war. While Congress originally approved $1.7 trillion, the total expenditure has now reached $2.1 trillion.

Different think tanks have put the total war expenditures at between $2 trillion and $5 trillion. In the so-called "War on Terror," the U.S. has spent $783 billion in Afghanistan alone, which means the U.S. spends about $4 million every hour on this unnecessary war. Similarly, the invasion and ongoing occupation of Iraq (a country with no presence of terrorism, al-Qaeda, or ISIS) has cost the U.S. around $820 billion, equivalent to spending $170,000 every hour. U.S. taxpayer money continues to be spent in Syria. The human cost has been staggering: one million lives lost, about 10 million displaced, and hundreds of thousands injured or psychologically scarred.

If America had invested this vast amount in the education, healthcare, employment, and environmental needs of its people, many of its internal problems could have been resolved, including homelessness, unemployment, and poverty.

Despite spending billions of dollars on these wars, terrorism has not been eradicated; rather, it has spread globally, particularly in Europe.



Tucker Carlson's 9/11 Bombshells: 10 Attention-Grabbing Headlines

There has been a raging conspiracy theory that Israel was somehow implicated in 9/11. Do you tackle that kind of conspiracy theory in the series?



Tucker Carlson taking the stage at a Trump rally.

Tucker Carlson says in his podcast, *"I do not repeat every theory about it. They are endless. Furthermore, as to the question that you asked specifically about Israel, no, of course I did not allege that, you know, the Jews did it. I do not even know what that means. In fact, saying things like that is a way to discredit real questions. Benjamin Netanyahu, on camera right after, said this is a good thing. It brings the United States into a conflict that we have been involved in on an existential level for decades. He said that out loud. We know that a group of Israeli art students, who clearly were not art students, clearly some of them were clearly aligned with Israeli intelligence, were arrested and held for quite some time in the United States before being released without charges. Moreover, we know that a group of them, again, I am quoting an FBI document here, not the Internet, filmed the attacks on 9/11, and I am quoting, seemed to have foreknowledge of those attacks. Now, you were not allowed to follow up on any of this. Fox News did a series with Brit Hume and Carl Cameron, which many people have seen in a bootleg version on the Internet, but they did it like within weeks, saying, what is this? There was an Israeli spy ring in the United States, and they clearly knew 9-11 was coming. This is Fox News. They pulled that under pressure. They pulled that off the Internet, and subsequent generations have been forbidden from noting what is now factually accurate. Those are factually accurate statements. "*

What, to you, are the biggest lies perpetrated on the American people from 9/11?

"Huge parts of the 9-11 story were left out of the commission report. For example, what happened to Building 7, which was not only not next to the Twin Towers, which were hit by aeroplanes, but had a building in between itself and those buildings, collapsed that afternoon for reasons that no one has been able to explain since. You are not a lunatic for asking. There is no plausible explanation for how that building collapsed. So, let us talk about that. That is not even.

Tucker Carlson spotlights the FBI-documented Israeli "art students" with apparent 9/11 foreknowledge and Netanyahu's on-camera glee, facts buried by media pressure, not conspiracy. The inexplicable free-fall collapse of WTC 7, omitted from the Commission Report, remains the smoking gun proving the official narrative is a deliberate lie.

9/11: Prof. Jeffrey Sachs' Revelations

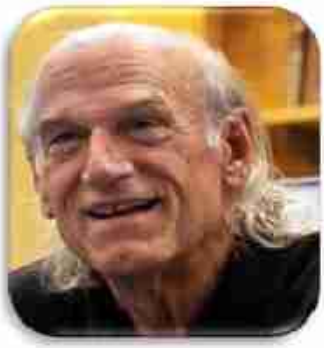
Jeffery Sachs, in an interview with Tucker Carlson, says, *"Wesley Clark, the general who headed NATO, went to the Pentagon just after 9/11, and famously, he was shown a piece of paper that said, we are going to have seven wars in five years. Moreover, he was utterly dumbfounded. He said, what does this have to do with anything? This is a memo that describes how we are going to take out seven countries in five years, starting with Iraq and then Syria, Lebanon, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, and finishing off Iran. Seven countries. We have been at war in six of them now, including in Syria."*



Jeffrey David Sachs an American economist and public policy analyst who is a professor at Columbia University, where he was formerly director of The Earth Institute.

Jeffrey Sachs' revelation on Tucker Carlson's show about Wesley Clark's post-9/11 Pentagon encounter is chilling confirmation of premeditated regime-change warfare. Clark, NATO's former Supreme Allied Commander, saw a memo outlining the sequential destruction of seven sovereign nations: Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, and Iran, within five years. Two decades later, the U.S. has indeed waged direct or proxy wars in six of them, with Iran perpetually in the crosshairs. This was not a reactive defines against terrorism; it was a neoconservative blueprint for hegemonic control, executed with ruthless consistency. The human toll of millions of dead, displaced, or radicalised stands as an indictment of an imperial doctrine sold as "spreading democracy.

Minnesota Governor's 9/11 Bombshell



Minnesota Governor's Jesse

Minnesota Governor, in his interview with Piers Morgan, says, "Okay, let me ask you this, Piers. Wait a minute. Let me ask you something. How much studying have you done of 9-11 operations? Other than what the government's told you and what the mainstream media has told you. I have been studying it for years. I was the editor of a national newspaper. I have talked to people. Moreover, we covered it in depth every day for five or six months. Really? So, I know a lot about it. Let me ask you this, then. You cannot say that any member of the Bush administration knew it was going to happen or wanted it to happen. It is a ridiculous thing to say. Ridiculous. OK, let us talk about your BBC. I have a tape. A BBC reporter broadcasting directly back to England, talking about a third building that has collapsed, World Trade Centre Building 7, talks for seven minutes, all the while she is talking, World Trade Centre Building 7 is still standing right behind her. It did not fall for another half hour, yet they were doing a pre-broadcast back to England that, yes, it is

true, that this building collapsed. Fell, and it had not fallen yet."

The BBC's premature announcement of the WTC collapse while it stood visibly behind the reporter exposes either staggering foreknowledge or scripted narrative control, shattering trust in official 9/11 timelines. This is not a conspiracy; it has documented footage demanding explanation from those who dismiss independent scrutiny as "ridiculous."

Yvonne Ridley embraces Islam

The media generally portrays the Taliban as opponents of democracy, freedom of expression, and justice. However, the experience of British journalist Yvonne Ridley, who the Taliban arrested for illegally crossing the Afghan border, presents a different picture. After spending ten days in Taliban custody, Ridley was treated with respect and kindness. Impressed by their good treatment, she converted to Islam and adopted the name Mariam. In her book In the Hands of the Taliban, she writes:



British journalist Yvonne Ridley.

"When I was released, everyone expected me to relay horrific tales of brutality, but the Taliban treated me with great respect… very, very well. While the Taliban had faults, they were, overall, likeable. Discovering Islam was an eye-opener. Islam is a great unifier, a religion of social justice that transcends race and national borders. It has inspired more scholars, mystics, and poets than soldiers. Since the Crusades, the West has held a stereotypical image of Islam, falsely claiming that women are subjugated. I admire how Islam supports and promotes women."

Had the Taliban adopted a more diplomatic approach and initiated dialogue with international bodies such as the United Nations, and had Pakistan helped facilitate this process, Afghanistan might have

been able to establish a more moderate, inclusive, and peaceful government. However, many critics believe that America's pursuit of oil interests in Afghanistan, particularly the pipeline project, would have hindered any such peaceful resolution.

The End of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan

The Taliban's downfall can be traced to several factors, including their failure to unite the country and their inability to gain the



Taliban supporters in Afghanistan waving the white flag of the Islamic

support of non-Pashtun ethnic groups. Their authoritarian rule, coupled with ethnic discrimination, further alienated large segments of Afghan society. The infighting between the Taliban and other factions contributed to Afghanistan's continued state of lawlessness and civil unrest.

Pakistan, which had supported the Taliban for strategic reasons, failed to play a meaningful role in securing a peaceful political settlement. Meanwhile, the West also failed to integrate the Taliban into the international community, further isolating Afghanistan. The collapse of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan was the result of multiple factors, including ethnic divisions, the Taliban's lack of political sophistication, and the failure of both Pakistan and the West to establish a sustainable peace framework. Their opposition to the Soviet invasion fuelled the rise of the Taliban, but the same rigid ideology that enabled them to gain power also led to their downfall.

Meeting of Pakistani Religious Clerics with Mullah Omar

Following the certainty of an American attack, Pakistan's prominent religious scholars, including Maulana Saleem Ullah Khan, Maulana Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani, Maulana Hassan Jan, Mufti Nizam ud Din Shamzai, Dr Sher Ali, Qari Saeed Rehman, Qari Atiq your Rehman, and Mufti Jamil Ahmad Khan, held an important meeting with Mullah Omar and his associates. This meeting was arranged with the guidance of Hazrat Maulana Qari Muhammad Hanif Jalundhari, the Director of Wafaq ul Madaris al Arabia.

The delegation discussed the situation in Afghanistan and advised Mullah Omar to seek a peaceful resolution. They proposed consulting the Islamic Fiqh Academy, a subsidiary of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), to issue an Islamic verdict on the matter. This approach would buy time, allowing for further deliberation while avoiding immediate conflict. Despite these suggestions, Mullah Omar remained firm in his stance and rejected the counsel. The talks ended without a resolution, and Mullah Omar's belief in the power of his actions seemed aligned with Iqbal's poetry, which emphasises self-reliance and determination.

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Afghan women in Kabul marching in solidarity with the Northern Alliance, holding portraits of the legendary anti-Taliban commander Ahmad Shah Massoud.

When the Taliban government refused to hand over Bin Laden and his associates to the U.S., America began a severe bombardment of Afghanistan. Concurrently, Northern Alliance forces intensified their attacks. As a result, the Taliban government was overthrown within three months. Hamid Karzai took Kabul, and American and NATO forces landed in Afghanistan. The attack was inevitable, as it was clear that thousands of innocent lives would be lost. Moreover, at that time, it was impossible to foresee the global consequences this would have in the future. If a powerful country, such as China or Russia, were to attack another country in the future, how would the world respond?

A better approach might have been to enforce economic sanctions on Afghanistan. This would have forced the Taliban to eventually bow to international pressure, as their government was not as strong as those of Iran or Iraq, making it unlikely to withstand sanctions. Critically, the U.S., a superpower, was ultimately defeated by the under-equipped Taliban. Analysts suggest that the hostility of the CIA toward the ISI created a significant rift, depriving the CIA of vital intelligence assistance. The ISI, one of the world's top intelligence agencies, knows Afghanistan's terrain better than anyone else. Despite this, hundreds of thousands of foreign soldiers could not defeat a small number of Taliban fighters. Since the UN and other international bodies did not intervene to prevent the U.S. attack on Afghanistan, they also failed to prevent similar actions in Libya, Iraq, Yemen, Somalia, and Syria. As a result, hundreds of millions of people have been forced to migrate, hundreds of thousands have died, and millions more are injured or psychologically scarred. According to Veterans PTSD statistics, about 2.7 million American soldiers returned from Iraq and Afghanistan in 2014. Twenty per cent of them suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and depression. This translates to over 540,000 soldiers experiencing psychological distress. The

VA Suicide Data Report from 2012 states that between 5,000 and 8,000 U.S. soldiers commit suicide each year. These are in addition to billions of dollars lost and widespread destruction of infrastructure. Yet, the most alarming aspect is that these wars, conducted in the name of "fighting terrorism," have contributed to the rise of terrorism and extremism worldwide. The world is increasingly unsafe, and we seem to be hurtling toward a third world war.

Statement of General Nick Carter, Deputy Commander of NATO



General Nick Carter, Deputy Commander of NATO.

General Nick Carter, Deputy Commander of NATO, acknowledged the importance of dialogue over war in Afghanistan. He stated: "I think that at that stage, if we had been very prescient, we might have spotted that a final political solution to what started in 2001, from our perspective, would have involved getting all Afghans to sit at the table and talk about their future. The problems that we have been encountering over the period since then are essentially political, and political problems are only solved by people talking to each other." I have presented these suggestions on many significant platforms, including at the International Centre for Counterterrorism in The Hague and at the inauguration of the Bow Group, a think tank associated with the Conservative Party of Britain in 2010. In these speeches, I advocated for the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan, suggesting that the UN replace them, and that impartial elections be held with full Taliban participation. If the Taliban were to win, the UN should facilitate the handover of power to them, rather than undermining them. I also discussed the

importance of dialogue with Rory Stewart, MP, and Colonel Richard Camp on Channel 4, and with the British Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the British High Commission in Islamabad, as well as with the South Asia Free Media Association (SAFMA). My position has always been that dialogue and the training of people, not violence, should be emphasised.

Solutions to current crisis in Afghanistan

Afghanistan is mired in a deepening humanitarian catastrophe as of September 2025, with over 22.9 million people more than half the population—requiring urgent aid amid food insecurity, rampant malnutrition, and health crises. Recent earthquakes in early September have killed hundreds and displaced thousands in eastern provinces, exacerbating an already fragile situation where 75% of the population lives in poverty and economic growth at 2.7% barely keeps pace with population increases. The influx of over 180,000 returnees from Pakistan and Iran this year alone, totalling 2.7 million since 2023, has strained resources, with many facing forced repatriation and overcrowding. Human rights violations are stark, particularly against women and girls, who are banned from universities, NGO work, public speech, and even reading books by female authors; a woman dies every four hours from violence, forced marriage, or suicide, while ethnic minorities like Hazaras endure targeted risks. Security is relatively stable but tense, with ISIS-K threats and regional frictions over borders, compounded by U.S. talks on reclaiming Bagram Airbase.

Possible solutions demand a coordinated, long-term approach to trade not aid, diplomacy, and accountability without legitimising the regime. Boosting humanitarian funding to the full $3-4 billion UN target for 2025 is critical, focusing on cash transfers, nutrition programs, and quake recovery delivered through women-led channels to circumvent Taliban restrictions. Regional diplomacy, via IOM and UNHCR plans, should pressure Pakistan and Iran to

pause forced returns while enhancing border services, skills training, and job creation for refugees to enable voluntary repatriation. Engaging the Taliban through UN-led talks could condition aid and potential recognition on rolling back oppressive decrees, like restoring girls' education, with global Security Council advocacy for monitoring and enforcement. Economically, targeted sanction relief could revive banking and infrastructure such as flood defences, schools, and hospitals to generate livelihoods, paired with anti-corruption reforms. Ultimately, amplifying Afghan civil society voices through international forums and supporting exile networks will foster accountability, turning the tide from crisis to stability if donors commit fully.

Afghanistan is not cursed; it is chosen by history as the crossroads where empires stumble and prophets rise. Alexander bled here, the British fled twice, the Soviets crumbled, and America's trillion-dollar crusade ended in a panicked Kabul airlift. Yet every invader left the same lesson carved in blood: no foreign boot can outrun Afghan soil. The Taliban's return is not triumph but *trusteeship* a second chance to prove Islam is mercy, not machete. Their first reign failed for rushing Sharia without schooling hearts; their second must succeed by schooling girls, feeding orphans, and trading poppies for pomegranates. Let the Doha table become Hudaybiyyah 2.0: concede Bagram for bread, weapons for wells, pride for peace.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنفُسِهِمْ

Translation: Surely, Allah does not change the condition of a people unless they change themselves.

(Quran Surah Ra'ad13:11)

Chapter 3

The Gaza Crisis: A Holocaust in the Making?



This chapter delves into the systematic violence and displacement faced by Palestinians in Gaza since the 1940s, framing it as a modern genocide driven by Israeli occupation and illegal settlements. It draws parallels to historical atrocities, emphasising the loss of innocent lives and the international community's complicity through inaction. Forced expulsion of Palestinians from their homeland and illegal settling of Zionists from all over the world in occupied Palestine since the 1940s. A continuous illegal war has been imposed, and hundreds of thousands of innocent Palestinians (Christians as well as Muslims) have been killed or forcibly displaced. Over the past few years, the ongoing genocide between Israeli forces and Palestinians has led to devastating consequences for the civilian population of Gaza. While the term "Holocaust" is traditionally associated with the genocide of six million Jews during World War II, some advocates and observers have increasingly used the term to describe the systematic, mass-scale violence and suffering being experienced by the Palestinian civilian population, particularly in Gaza. The persistent pattern of violence, displacement, and deprivation seen in Gaza over recent years strongly suggests that a systematic assault on the lives of Gaza's Muslim population is unfolding. Authorities in Gaza reported that more than 45,000 people have been killed in the enclave in the last 14 months, as humanitarians condemned new deadly airstrikes across the war-torn Strip, including on a UN school-turned-shelter (United Nations, 2025).

Difference between the Dome of the Rock and the Aqsa Mosque



The Dom of the Rock



The Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem

The Dome of the Rock and Al-Aqsa Mosque, both located within the Al-Haram al-Sharif compound in Jerusalem, are distinct Islamic landmarks often confused due to their proximity and shared religious importance. The Dome of the Rock, constructed in 691 CE by Umayyad Caliph Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan, is a shrine rather than a mosque, featuring an iconic octagonal design with a golden dome and intricate tilework, housing the sacred Foundation Stone believed to be the site of Prophet Muhammad's ascension during the Miraj.

In contrast, Al-Aqsa Mosque serves as an active place of worship with a rectangular structure, a silver/black lead dome, four minarets, and a capacity for thousands, with its origins tracing back to the Prophet Muhammad's time and significant expansions by Caliph al-Walid I between 705–715 BCE. Al-Aqsa Mosque was the first qibla (direction) of prayers for Muslims at the time of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). However, then in 623 BCE Muslim qibla changed from Jerusalem to Makkah and is explicitly mentioned in the Quran (Surah Al-Isra 17:1) as the "farthest mosque" where Muhammad led all prophets in prayer, offering multiplied prayer rewards and functioning as the primary mosque in the compound. Historically, the Dome of the Rock was briefly a church under Crusader rule (1099–1187 BCE) before being reconsecrated, while Al-Aqsa has undergone multiple rebuilds due to earthquakes and invasions, reflecting their different roles and architectural evolutions.

Casualties in Gaza



A night time explosion lights up the sky over Gaza City as an Israeli airstrike impacts a target.

In this recent (2024-2025) genocide of Palestinians, according to the United Nations, the death toll for Palestinians reached 45000, including children. The situation in Gaza has escalated dramatically, with UNICEF reporting that more than 14,500 children have been killed, and many more are believed to be trapped under the rubble. UNICEF Executive Director Catherine Russell shared that famine is increasingly threatening the northern regions, while humanitarian access remains severely restricted. The violence led to widespread destruction of civilian infrastructure, including homes, hospitals, and schools. More than 1,000 residential buildings were destroyed, displacing thousands of Palestinians (International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC], 2021). Israeli airstrikes targeted civilian areas, worsening the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. The death toll in Gaza has surpassed

45,000, with over 968 fatalities reported in the West Bank (ICRC, 2021). Furthermore, over 109,000 people have been injured in Gaza, and more than 15,000 in the West Bank (ICRC, 2021). Approximately 90% of Gaza's population has been displaced from their homes, often more than once (ICRC, 2021).

Catherine Russell, Executive Director of the United Nations, also highlighted that virtually all of Gaza's 1.1 million children urgently need protection and mental health support. She cited media reports indicating that at least 69 Palestinians have died in the last 24 hours, from Beit Lahia in the north to Rafah in the south, due to ongoing Israeli military activity.

Israeli Attacks on Aid workers and Journalists



Members of the Palestinian Red Crescent Society (PRCS).

Deconfliction has clearly not been working well during Israel's assault on Gaza. On April 2 2025, the UN Secretary General, António Guterres, said 196 aid workers, including 175 from the UN, had been killed in Gaza. The New York Times has published a visual investigation describing six Israeli attacks on aid workers. Well before the Gaza invasion, press freedom groups documented hundreds of attacks on media by the Israeli military. This is not a new phenomenon; a BBC driver in Lebanon was killed by an Israeli shell in 2000, and a British coroner's court found, in

2006, that documentary maker James Miller had been unlawfully killed by Israeli soldiers while working in Gaza. During this entire genocide operation, Israeli forces have not allowed a single foreign news reported or media personnel in the region. Unfortunately, the United Nations and European countries completely failed to uphold their own set human rights standards, hence the genocide continues.

A Reuters photographer was killed by an Israeli tank in Gaza in 2008. In 2022, Palestinian-American Al Jazeera reporter Shireen Abu Akleh, despite reportedly wearing "press" identification, was killed in Jenin by Israeli soldiers. Even though foreign media have been kept out of Gaza by Israel, many residents try to send reports to global audiences online. The International Federation of journalists has estimated that since the hostilities began, the death toll of civilians has included "at least 109 journalists and media workers, a mortality rate of over ten percent, dramatically higher than any other occupational group since 2025".

A month into the invasion of Gaza, the leader of the local journalists' union pleaded for support. He described how the family of Al Jazeera correspondent Wael Al-Dahdouh was killed. Another journalist died as an ambulance trying to save him came under attack.

Humanitarian Aid Blockade by Israel



Displaced Palestinian children in Gaza sit in a long line on the ground, clutching metal pots and bowls as they patiently wait for food distribution amid the humanitarian crisis caused by the ongoing Israel-Hamas war.

Israel's Defence Minister, Israel Katz, declared last week that "no humanitarian aid will enter Gaza," effectively signalling the Israeli government's intent to persist in the collective punishment of Gaza's civilian population, which constitutes a blatant violation of international humanitarian law, which amounts to clear genocide. By blocking essential humanitarian aid, Israel is knowingly exacerbating the suffering of innocent civilians, further intensifying the ongoing humanitarian crisis. The UN World Food Programme (WFP) echoed these concerns, emphasising the growing desperation for food among Gazans. WFP's Head of Emergency Communications, Jonathan Dumont, stressed that in the absence of a ceasefire, it is critical to find a way to get food supplies into Gaza. Katz justified this action by claiming that restricting aid serves as a tool to pressure Hamas, stating, "Blocking this aid is one of the main pressure levers preventing Hamas from using it as a tool with the population." This statement reflects a deliberate disregard for the rights of civilians under international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention, which prohibits collective punishment. Katz further emphasized that "no one is currently planning to allow any humanitarian aid into Gaza, and there are no preparations to enable such aid," demonstrating an intentional obstruction of life-saving assistance to those in desperate need (Al Jazeera, 2021). This begs the question that if an iota of this genocide were happening by a Muslim country, what would have been the response of the United Nations and Western countries? We know the answer, but about Israel, every Prime Minister and president of Western countries melt down in favour of Netanyahu in this instance. Many prominent NGOs and international organisations, such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, have long denounced Israel's weaponisation of aid in Gaza as an act of genocide. In response to Defence Minister Israel Katz's recent remarks, these organisations once again condemned Israel's genocidal policies,

urging Israel's Western allies to take meaningful action to uphold international law.

Despite these ongoing condemnations and calls for action, little has changed. After 18 months of relentless war, Israel continues to bomb, shoot at, displace, and starve innocent civilians, including children and newborn babies, openly declaring its intent to persist with these unlawful actions indefinitely. This continues with the full political, military, and diplomatic support of its Western allies, including Britain. Dumont described the devastation on the ground, noting the complete lack of electricity, running water, and sewage treatment. Most people have lost their homes and are now living in tents or open in the streets. He observed that while food aid is being distributed, people's desperation is visible as they come for meals. To prevent famine, Dumont underscored the need for a consistent flow of food to reach Gaza.

Global Powers: Partners in Crime

Evidence from both Britain and the United States reveals that both countries continue to supply weapons to the Israeli army to be used against the innocent civilians in Gaza, despite being aware of their use in committing human rights abuses, which contravenes the laws of both nations. In the UK, the Foreign Office's assessment process highlights that "the government's current inability to come to a clear assessment on Israel's record of compliance with International Humanitarian Law poses significant policy risks." Despite these concerns, they were ultimately dismissed, and former Foreign Office Minister Andrew Mitchell assured MP Zarah Sultana that there was no cause for concern, citing Israel's supposed commitment to international law (Middle East Eye).

In the United States, an investigation by *The Guardian* reveals that special mechanisms have been used in recent years to protect Israel from US human rights laws, allowing the continued flow of arms despite violations. Both stories underscore the urgent need to halt

arms supplies to Israel, as it continues to disregard basic human rights constraints on the use of these weapons (Jewish Voice).

In 2025, the discontent between American Jews and Orthodox Jews has intensified amid multiple crises, particularly the ongoing Israel-Hamas war, surging antisemitism, and Israel's military draft controversy. The war in Gaza has deepened ideological rifts, with 61% of American Jews (mostly non-Orthodox) viewing Israel's actions as war crimes and 40% as genocide, according to a Washington Post poll. At the same time, Orthodox communities largely maintain staunch support for Israel, leading to accusations of insularity and moral rigidity from liberal Jews (Washington Post, 2025). Conversely, some Orthodox rabbis have broken ranks, signing letters demanding "moral clarity" on the humanitarian crisis and condemning settler violence in the West Bank, highlighting intra-Orthodox tensions (New York Times, 2025). Antisemitism has reached crisis levels, with Orthodox Jews disproportionately targeted in assaults such as three attacks in New York in February alone and incidents like the April mob chase of a woman near a Brooklyn Chabad synagogue amid pro-Palestinian clashes, prompting non-Orthodox Jews to criticise Orthodox "extremism" in response to far-right figures like Itamar Ben-Gvir (ADL, 2025; Guardian, 2025).

The Israeli Supreme Court's 2024 ruling ending Haredi draft exemptions has spilled over to the U.S., sparking massive October protests by ultra-Orthodox groups like Satmar in New York drawing 10,000 against forced conscription, which they deem a violation of Torah oaths for diaspora peace further alienating them from Zionist-leaning American Jews who see exemptions as unfair amid wartime needs (JTA, 2025; Times of Israel, 2025). Internal challenges, including a "matchmaking crisis" among Orthodox singles due to reliance on rigid shidduchim systems, and emerging

anti-occupation voices in Modern Orthodox circles, underscore broader fragmentation, with non-Orthodox Jews increasingly hiding identities out of fear (56% altering behaviour per polls) while Orthodox insularity is blamed for exacerbating communal divides (Jewish Chronicle, 2025; TIME, 2025).

In the final plenary of the European Parliament in April 2024, its president, Roberta Metsola, said as she listed the EU's achievements over the previous five-year cycle that 'we have stood up for humanity in the Middle East' this report leads to a starkly different conclusion as the title of this report is completely misleading with regards to the Palestinian genocide carried out by Israeli forces. Israel is committing a genocide, and not only has the EU done nothing to stop it but has been complicit in it by providing arms and financial aid. Future generations will not understand how European institutions backed a genocidal regime to the hilt, even in the face of irrefutable evidence that there were war crimes, crimes against humanity and a genocide being committed against the Palestinian people in Gaza. On 21 November 2024, following an investigation of war crimes and crimes against humanity, the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued arrest warrants for two senior Israeli officials, Benjamin Netanyahu, the prime minister of Israel, and Yoav Gallant, the former Minister of Défense of Israel, alleging responsibility for the war crime of starvation as a method of warfare and the crimes against humanity of murder, persecution, and other inhumane acts during the Gaza war. The warrant against Netanyahu is the first against the leader of a Western-backed democratic country for war crimes.

On 7 October 2023, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu forewarned of Israel's genocidal intent. Similar statements from top Israeli officials in the following days, coupled with the ferocity of the military campaign in Gaza, meant that experts on genocide

swiftly began sounding the alarm of war crimes by the Israeli Prime Minister. Rather than heeding these warnings, the EU added fuel to the fire by providing political cover and material support to Israel. This report details the extent of that support and argues that without it, particularly in respect of arms sales and permitting arms shipments to transit through European ports from the US, Israel's genocidal regime would have been isolated early on and forced to shift course. EU member states, all of which are parties to the 1948 Genocide Convention, have been formally put on notice since January 2024 following the ICJ's interim ruling.

The ICJ declared Israel's occupation "unlawful," and preliminary rulings in a case brought by South Africa alleging genocide in Gaza, which ordered Israel to prevent genocidal acts, ensure humanitarian aid enters Gaza, and halt its offensive in Rafah. The ICJ has not yet ruled on the genocide allegations themselves, a decision that is expected later, but has ruled that the claim is "plausible".

Then, as now, EU member states failed to act. EU–Israeli relations are underpinned by the Association Agreement, which contains a human rights clause. This has not been invoked despite the clear violations of human rights law taking place. Had the EU triggered this clause, it could immediately have cut trade ties with Israel and pressured it to stop the genocide. It chose not to, in violation of its own norms. The EU has channelled vast sums of public money to Israeli research institutions over previous and current research funding programmes. This funding has continued to flow, and research projects are still being approved even as Israel carries out a genocide. The fact that European public money is being channelled to arms companies and other entities involved in the perpetration of Israel's onslaught in Gaza means, in effect, that the EU is financing a genocide. Moreover, arms trade between

European states and Israel has flourished in recent years, with much of the weaponry provided by EU member states being used today in Gaza.

Since October 2023, EU leaders have continued to engage their Israeli counterparts, following in the footsteps of European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, who set the tone of the EU's response, giving the green light to Israel's genocide. As the HR/VP stood in Tel Aviv in November, the Israeli military was raiding hospitals amid reports of numerous mass graves and people being buried alive by bulldozers. Even after 117 people were massacred by the Israeli army while scrambling for food aid, the European Parliament voted down a resolution for a 69-arms embargo. Furthermore, most recently, a European Commissioner was 'honoured' to meet with Netanyahu in Tel Aviv as images emerged of a massacre in which people, mostly children, were burned alive in tents in Rafah. This report documents countless similar examples, meaning that even when the EU did deploy somewhat more critical language towards Israel, its rhetoric was never backed up with concrete action, showing that there was never any intention of restraining Israel. Moreover, the EU has continued its close ties with the US, Israel's closest ally, adopting a 'business as usual' approach that has served to normalise genocide.

The EU has proven to be entirely unwilling to stop a genocide. It has abandoned any façade of being concerned with human rights and the rule of law and has exposed its racist and imperialist core going back over centuries. Nevertheless, people across Europe refuse to fall into line with the shameful complicity of political leaders and, like others around the world, are exposing and challenging the structures of power that drive militarism and war. The struggle for Palestinian liberation has become the pinnacle of the global anti-colonialism and anti-war movement that loudly

proclaims, 'no one is free until Palestine is free. (Translational Institute)

A Continuing Cycle of Violence and Suffering

The casualty figures from 2020 to 2025 illustrate a stark reality: Gaza has been, and continues to be, a flashpoint for immense human suffering. In Gaza, it is the civilians who suffer the most from the bombardment, displacement, and destruction. On the Israeli side, while the number of casualties is lower, the fear and insecurity caused by Hamas's rocket attacks have had a significant psychological impact.

The disproportionate toll on Palestinian civilians in Gaza, combined with the cycle of violence, has led many human rights organisations to call for an end to the blockade and a new approach to peace. Amnesty International (2021) has called for accountability, as both Israel and Hamas have been accused of committing war crimes. The repeated flare-ups of violence have led to calls from the international community for a ceasefire and a return to negotiations aimed at resolving the underlying political issues that fuel the conflict.

Current Turmoil and Hostilities in Gaza



World leaders pose for a group photo in front of a prominent "PEACE 2025" summit.

The Israel-Palestine conflict, now entering its third year, has seen intensified Israeli military operations in the Gaza Strip. To establish full operational control over significant portions of the western Netzarim Corridor and issuing evacuation orders to civilians, described as their 'last chance' to move south (Reuters, 2025). Total death toll exceeding 66,000 since October 2023, with nearly half of these recent casualties occurring outside central Gaza City areas (Al Jazeera, 2025). Humanitarian challenges persist, including reports of Israeli naval vessels intimidating a Freedom Flotilla aid convoy approaching Gaza's coast, jamming communications and prompting security concerns (Reuters, 2025).

Qatari mediators have expressed optimism for 'momentum' in ceasefire negotiations, as Hamas reviews a U.S.-proposed framework for peace talks in Doha involving Egyptian and Turkish representatives (Al Jazeera, 2025). Daily casualties average around 100 due to military operations and aid-related shootings, exacerbating famine risks (UNRWA, 2025). Buffer zones and corridors now cover approximately 75% of Gaza's territory, severely limiting habitable land (Security Council Report, 2025; OHCHR, 2025).

Trump Meetings on Gaza

On 29 September 2025, U.S. President Donald Trump hosted Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at the White House for a joint press conference, where they announced a comprehensive 20-point peace proposal for Gaza (BBC, 2025; New York Times, 2025). Trump hailed the plan as a potential 'great day in civilisation,' securing Netanyahu's public endorsement despite domestic political risks to his coalition from far-right critics (CNN, 2025; Axios, 2025). The discussions focused on immediate hostage releases and phased Israeli withdrawals, with Trump issuing a stern ultimatum: Hamas has 'three or four days' to accept, or Israel

will resume full-scale operations (NBC News, 2025; Al Jazeera, 2025). Subsequent indirect talks in Doha involve Qatari and Egyptian intermediaries pressuring Hamas, with Arab states providing cautious backing amid concerns over implementation.

Trump Peace Plan' or 'appease Plan' ?

Unveiled on 29 September 2025, the plan proposes a ceasefire, reconstruction, and transitional governance for Gaza, featuring phased Israeli withdrawals under international supervision. It has received endorsements from European and select Middle Eastern leaders but drawn sharp rebukes from Palestinian groups as a 'surrender' that entrenches Israeli security dominance (Al Jazeera, 2025; Times of Israel, 2025). The full 20 points, as detailed in the White House release, are as follows:

1. **Deradicalisation Zone**: *"Gaza will become a terror-free zone posing no threat to its neighbours"*. Does it mean that there will be no threat from Israeli settlers and their forces to the peaceful, innocent and unarmed Palestinians or is it just one-way traffic that any defensive by the Palestinians towards Israeli attacks will be considered as terrorism? Why not establish a UN peacekeeping force, protect innocent civilians and keep Israeli forces out of the area? Does the United Nations, particularly the Muslim world, have the courage and strength to act upon it?

2. **Redevelopment Focus**: *"Gaza will be rebuilt for the benefit of its residents, addressing years of hardship."* This is good news, but who will keep Israeli forces on a leash?

3. **Immediate War End**: *"Upon agreement, hostilities cease immediately; Israeli forces withdraw to agreed lines, halting operations."* This is a very far-fetched assumption that Israel will observe international agreements or treaties or pacts, as it has shown in past that nobody, including the United

Nations or European Union or Muslim world, can control its reigns.

4. **Hostage Release Timeline**: *"All hostages (living or deceased) returned within 72 hours of acceptance."* Yes, hostages must be returned, and it is believed that it will happen now.

5. **Prisoner Exchange**: *"Israel releases 250 Palestinians serving life sentences and 1,700 detainees (including women and children); reciprocal exchange of remains at a 15:1 ratio."* This will materialise, but who is responsible for the release of thousands of innocent Palestinians from Israeli torture cells?

6. **Amnesty for Hamas**: *"Committed peace-seeking Hamas members receive amnesty and decommission weapons; safe passage offered for those exiting Gaza."* Israel has already illegally attacked a sovereign country, Qatar, to kill Hamas leadership and innocent Qatari civilians. So, there will be a trust deficit among the Hamas leadership.

7. **Aid Influx**: *"Unrestricted humanitarian aid enters immediately, including rehabilitation of water, power, and sewage infrastructure."* Now this tells Israelis forces carried out systemic genocide; therefore, is the United Nations going to carry out its independent investigation and support ICC and ICJ?
8. **Aid Distribution**: *"Delivered without hindrance via UN and Red Crescent; Rafah crossing reopens under January 2025 protocols."*
9. **Temporary Governance**: *A technocratic Palestinian committee, advised by international experts and overseen by a*

'Board of Peace'. It will be chaired by Trump, including figures like Tony Blair, who has a very tarnished reputation after the illegal invasion of Iraq. Therefore, his appointment will make the entire peace plan as an appease plan), until the Palestinian Authority reforms.

10. **Economic Plan**: *"Trump-led group of experts develops a redevelopment blueprint with global investments."* The question is who is going to provide assurance and guarantee that the beneficiaries of this redevelopment will be Palestinians, not the people who are supported by international Zionist lobbies.

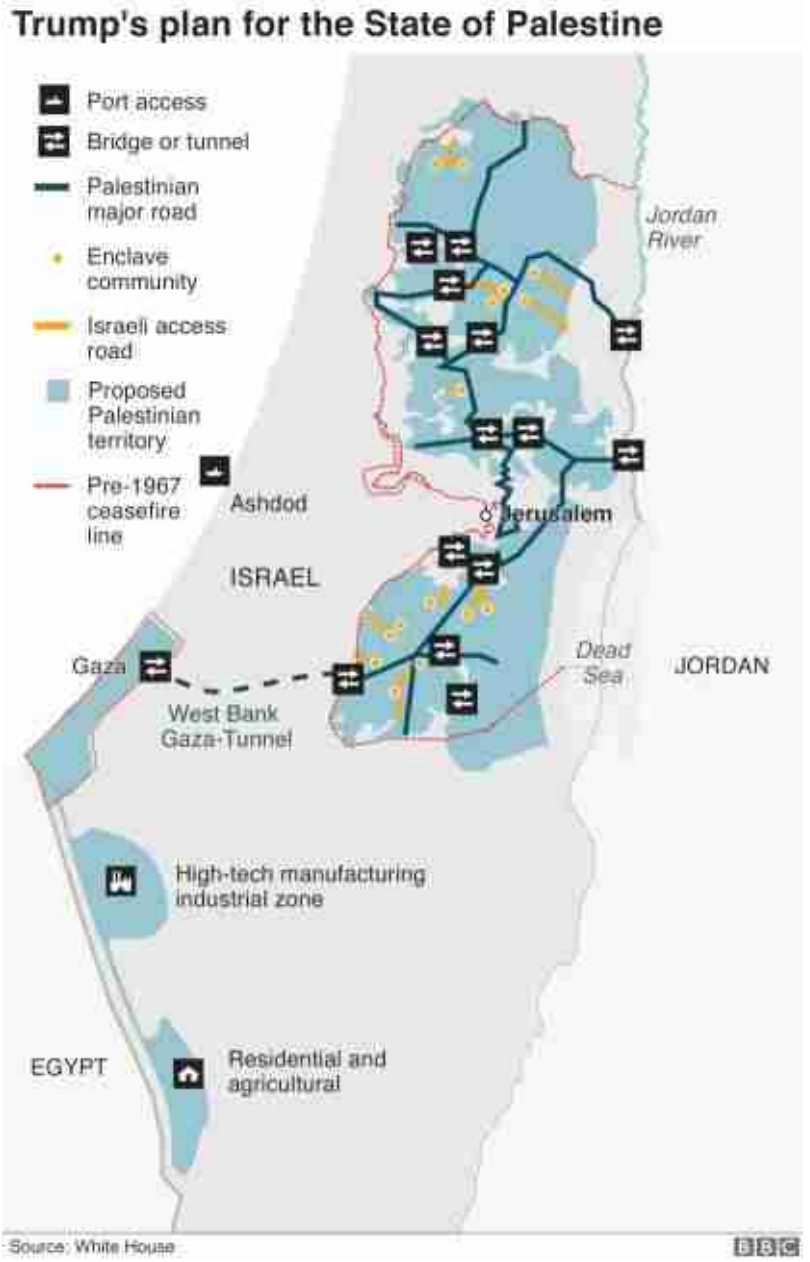
11. **Special Economic Zone**: *"Gaza designated as a free-trade zone with tariff incentives, negotiated with international partners."* Basically, Trump has deprived the Gazans of their homeland and turned them into the Red Indians of United States.

12. **No Forced Displacement**: No compulsory relocations; freedom of movement to leave or return, with incentives to rebuild in place. With whose Ownership

13. **Hamas Exclusion**: Hamas barred from governance; all military assets dismantled under monitoring, with a weapons buy-back programme.

14. **Regional Guarantees**: Arab partners enforce compliance; 'New Gaza' protected from external threats. Its seems that Saudia Arabia and Qatar are going to extend their security contracts with Pakistan Army for the new Gaza external threats.

15. **International Stabilization Force**: *"Deployment of a U.S.-backed International Stabilisation Force (ISF) to train Palestinian police and secure borders."* Why not United Nations or Neutral forces as US is always chief pattern of Isreal.A Trump advisor indicated that Egypt, Qatar, and the UAE may help form the ISF, while Turkey, Pakistan, Indonesia, Azerbaijan, Australia, Malaysia, Canada, France, and Cyprus may have also expressed interest in contributing to the ISF. On October 22, 2025, Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu insisted that no Turkish forces be included as part of the ISF for deployment in the Gaza Strip. On October 23, 2025, reports stated that the Azeri and Indonesian soldiers will be the primary members of the ISF, while Saudi Arabia and the UAE have offered no support for the ISF.
16. **No Israeli Occupation**: IDF withdraws per schedule as ISF assumes control; temporary security buffer retained.
17. **Fall back if rejected**: Plan advances in compliant areas with expanded aid, irrespective of Hamas participation." How can this be workable without having the aggrieved party in the decision making and its implementation.
18. **Interfaith Dialogue**: *"Initiatives to foster tolerance and coexistence between Palestinians and Israelis."* It is like expecting the victim of daylight robbery to tolerate the robber and let him occupy your home.
19. **Path to Statehood**: Reforms pave the way for Palestinian self-determination and statehood goals. This is impossible as Israel accepts no international law and does not adhere to basic human rights. Unfortunately, this unlawful position of Isreal is supported by United States unconditionally.
20. **U.S.-Facilitated Talks**: Ongoing U.S.-brokered dialogue between Israel and Palestinians for enduring peace.



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What does Trump's Middle East plan say on key issues? - BBC News

Responses from Authorities From the Stakeholders

- **Donald Trump (U.S. President)**: 'Hamas has three or four days to decide—this could end the war tomorrow, but the choice is theirs' (NBC News, 2025; CNN, 2025).
- **Benjamin Netanyahu (Israeli Prime Minister)**: Endorsed the plan as a tool to corner Hamas, emphasising no security compromises, though it endangers his coalition: 'A viable route forward without yielding on essentials' (Axios, 2025; CNN, 2025).
- **Hamas**: Group Rejects Disarmament Provision in Trump Proposal and Gaza Plan, Seeks Amendments. (Al Jazeera, 2025).
- **Hamas Negotiators**: Reviewing the proposal; seeking amendments on disarmament and withdrawal timelines, requesting 'two or three days' for response, but reports indicate partial rejection as a 'surrender document (Times of Israel, 2025; Newsweek, 2025).
- **Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani (Qatari Prime Minister)**: 'Optimistic for momentum to conclude the war; certain elements require clarification for viable engagement (Al Jazeera, 2025).
- **Fatah Officials (Palestinian Authority)**: Welcomed ceasefire and aid provisions but condemned it as legitimising occupation: 'A blueprint for capitulation' (Al Jazeera, 2025; Reuters, 2025).
- **Antonio Guterres (UN Secretary-General)**: 'Commends U.S. initiatives; calls on all sides to endorse and alleviate civilian plight' (ReliefWeb, 2025).

- **Arab States**: Initial endorsements from regional leaders have cooled over perceived Israeli biases, with accusations of reneging on no-permanent-occupation pledges (Al Jazeera, 2025f).

- **Pakistan**: Does not agree on some of the provisions of the documents that need another review, as reported by the Deputy Prime Minister (DAWN).

The plan's viability depends on Hamas's reply by early October, against a backdrop of unrelenting hostilities (Reuters, 2025; PBS, 2025).

Stakeholders in the Proposed Gaza Government Under Trump's Plan

Based on the details of President Donald Trump's 20-21 point "Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict" (released September 29, 2025), the proposed post-war governance of Gaza involves a multi-layered structure: a temporary **technocratic, apolitical Palestinian committee** for day-to-day operations, overseen by an international **Board of Peace** for funding, redevelopment, and security. This transitional setup would last until the Palestinian Authority (PA) completes reforms and assumes full control, paving the way for a Palestinian state.

The plan explicitly excludes Hamas from governance (requiring disarmament and renunciation of power, with amnesty for members committing to peaceful coexistence). Israel would withdraw forces gradually, retaining a limited security perimeter initially. Key stakeholders include governments, international figures, and bodies responsible for implementation, oversight, and support. Below is a breakdown:

1. Core Governance Bodies and Leaders

- **Board of Peace (International Oversight Body)**: Chairs redevelopment, funding, and standards for Gaza's reconstruction.
    - **Chair**: President Donald Trump (United States).
    - **Members**: Includes former British Prime Minister Tony Blair; additional heads of state to be announced.
- **Technocratic Palestinian Committee**: Handles daily services (e.g., public utilities, municipalities) in Gaza.
    - Composed of qualified Palestinians and international experts (specific names not yet detailed).
- **International Stabilisation Force (ISF)**: Temporary security oversight during transition.
    - Likely involves U.S. and allied military contributions (details pending agreements).

Tony Blair's Controversial Involvement in the Gaza Peace Plan



Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair.

Tony Blair's proposed role in President Donald Trump's Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict, announced on 29 September 2025, has sparked significant controversy due to his polarising legacy in Middle East diplomacy (White House, 2025). Named as a key member of the international "Board of Peace," chaired by Trump to oversee

Gaza's transitional governance, reconstruction, and security, Blair's involvement draws on his collaboration with Trump's team, including meetings with Jared Kushner and envoy Steve Witkoff in August 2025 (Reuters, 2025). His Tony Blair Institute for Global Change contributed to shaping the plan's framework, which includes a technocratic Palestinian committee for daily operations and an international stabilization force, aiming to transform Gaza into a "de-radicalized" economic hub without displacing Palestinians a revision of earlier proposals linked to Blair's institute that suggested relocating up to 500,000 residents for development projects (Middle East Eye, 2025; The Guardian, 2025). Supporters, including Trump, who praised Blair as a "very good man," highlight his diplomatic networks in the Gulf and his tenure as Quartet envoy (2007–2015) as assets for securing endorsements from Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE (CNN, 2025).

However, Blair's involvement has drawn sharp criticism, particularly from Palestinians and human rights advocates, who view it as a problematic extension of his controversial Middle East track record. His role in supporting the 2003 Iraq invasion alongside George W. Bush, based on discredited claims of weapons of mass destruction, resulted in over 200,000 deaths and entrenched perceptions of Blair as complicit in regional destabilisation, indirectly contributing to crises like the 2006–2008 Gaza blockade following Hamas's election (Al Jazeera, 2025; TIME, 2025). Critics argue that the plan's structure, which subordinates Palestinian governance to an international body featuring Blair, risks replicating colonial frameworks that prioritise foreign investment over local self-determination, potentially fueling further conflict by excluding Hamas without addressing underlying grievances (The Guardian, 2025b). Public sentiment on platforms like X reflects this distrust, with users labelling Blair "the wrong man for peace" and

warning that his leadership could align military forces "under a war criminal" (@UserX1, 2025; @UserX2, 2025). Within the UK, Labour Party figures have questioned Blair's elevation over Palestinian-led solutions, amplifying domestic backlash (BBC News, 2025).

Blair has defended the initiative as a "bold and intelligent" step toward Palestinian statehood through Palestinian Authority reforms, emphasising that "Gaza is for Gazans" (Blair, 2025). However, sceptics like former U.S. State Department official Josh Paul argue that the plan risks becoming an "incompatible transplant," reminiscent of Iraq's failed reconstruction under Blair's influence (The Guardian, 2025). Hamas has rejected the proposal outright, calling it "biased to Israel" and opposing Blair's role due to his perceived pro-Israel stance (Hamas Statement, 2025). As of 2 October 2025, with the plan's success contingent on hostage releases and ceasefires, Blair's controversial presence remains a flashpoint, raising questions about whether his diplomatic experience can foster peace or deepen distrust in a region still scarred by his past actions (TIME, 2025).

Israel's Airstrike on Qatar: A Bold Escalation in the Gaza Conflict

On September 9, 2025, the Israel Défense Forces (IDF) launched an unprecedented airstrike in Doha's Leqtaifiya district, targeting a



Israel's Airstrike on Qatar

Hamas political leadership meeting held in a Qatari government residential complex, as the group discussed a U.S.-sponsored ceasefire proposal for Gaza. This marked Israel's first known direct military action on Qatari soil, a Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member and key mediator in the Israel-Hamas war, violating Qatar's sovereignty and drawing widespread international condemnation. The strike killed five lower-ranking Hamas members and one Qatari security officer, while wounding several civilians, but failed to eliminate high-profile targets like Khalil al-Hayya, prompting an internal Shin Bet investigation into the intelligence failure. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu justified the operation as retaliation for a recent shooting in Jerusalem and part of broader efforts to dismantle Hamas following the October 7, 2023, attacks. However, analysts suggest it also aimed to disrupt stalled hostage negotiations.

Qatar, which has hosted Hamas's political bureau since 2012 and co-mediated ceasefires with Egypt since 2008, labelled the attack "state terrorism" and a "wanton act of aggression," with Prime Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani stating it "killed any hope" for hostage releases and Gaza aid. The incident shattered Gulf states' trust in U.S. security guarantees, given Qatar's hosting of the Al Udeid Air Base, the largest U.S. military facility in the Middle East, exposing vulnerabilities amid escalating regional tensions, including Iranian missile strikes on the base in June 2025. UN experts condemned the strike as a violation of international law, including prohibitions on excessive force and attacks on peace processes, urging accountability and highlighting a pattern of Israeli operations in third countries. Global leaders, from Australia's Foreign Minister Penny Wong to Malaysia's Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, echoed this outrage, calling for Israel to return to diplomacy.

In response, U.S. President Donald Trump, who was reportedly informed in advance and whose administration approved the strike, issued an executive order on September 29, 2025, pledging to treat any future armed attack on Qatar as a direct threat to U.S. security, potentially triggering military retaliation. During a White House meeting, Netanyahu personally apologised to Qatar's emir in a trilateral call with Trump, expressing "deep regret" for the Qatari casualty. However, he reiterated threats of further action if Hamas remains hosted in Doha. As of October 2, 2025, Qatar has not fully withdrawn from mediation but deems immediate progress "unrealistic," amid fears that the strike has torpedoed fragile Gaza truce efforts and heightened risks of broader Gulf entanglement.

Assassination of Charlie Kirk: Examining Israeli Conspiracy Narratives



Charlie Kirk, a prominent American right-wing political activist and co-founder of Turning Point USA.

On September 10, 2025, Charlie Kirk, a prominent American right-wing political activist and co-founder of Turning Point USA, was assassinated during an event at Utah Valley University (UVU) in Utah, United States. This was a part of his "American Comeback Tour". While engaging with an audience member on the topic of

mass shootings, Kirk was fatally shot in the neck from a rooftop approximately 142 yards away, dying later at a nearby hospital (New York Times, 2025). The attack, described as a "political assassination" by Utah Governor Spencer Cox, occurred in front of about 3,000 attendees in the university's outdoor courtyard (CNN, 2025; AP News, 2025). Verified videos showed a figure fleeing the roof; nonetheless, there are claims that the shooter was not far from him, and the blame falls on Israel, as he had become very vocal in criticising atrocities committed by Israel against innocent Palestinians. Privately, Kirk expressed frustration with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, reportedly calling him a "destructive force" and resenting U.S. involvement in "his wars," according to Tucker Carlson. In a leaked May 2025 letter to Netanyahu, Kirk warned that Israel was being "CRUSHED" on U.S. social media over accusations of "apartheid" and "genocide".

Just imagine how badly influential Christian politicians in the United States, like Senator Ted Cruz, have been indoctrinated by Israeli lobbying groups like Apex. He said in his interview with an American Political Commentator, Tucker Carlson, *"Growing up in Sunday school, I was taught from the Bible, those who bless Israel will be blessed, and those who curse Israel will be cursed."*

Ted further adds, "Biblically, we are commanded to support Israel." So, Tucker asked the senator a Question, *"Is the nation God is referring to in Genesis, is that the same as the country run by Benjamin Netanyahu right now?"* Ted responded, "Yes." One can imagine how misguided people at the highest level in the US political arena are, where they misquote a theological concept.

Alleged Israeli Involvement in JFK Assassination Explored



John F. Kennedy, the 35th President of the United States.

John F. Kennedy, the 35th President of the United States, was assassinated on 22 November 1963 in Dallas, Texas, by Lee Harvey Oswald, according to the official Warren Commission report (Warren Commission, 1964). The event has spawned numerous conspiracy theories implicating entities such as the CIA, the Mafia, anti-Castro Cubans, and the Soviet Union, but none have been substantiated by credible evidence. The U.S. House Select Committee on Assassinations concluded that Kennedy was "probably assassinated as a result of a conspiracy," but could not identify the conspirators or rule out individual action by Oswald (HSCA, 1979). Declassified documents released as recently as March 2025 under the JFK Records Act have provided insights into CIA operations but have not uncovered evidence of foreign state involvement, including from Israel (National Archives, 2025).

The theory positing Israel's involvement emerged shortly after the event, primarily in Arab nationalist and anti-Zionist propaganda circles, framing it as a "Zionist plot" to eliminate a perceived obstacle to Israeli interests (Bass, 2003). Proponents claim that Kennedy's pressure on Israel to allow inspections of its Dimona nuclear facility was part of his broader non-proliferation policy, which motivated the assassination. Kennedy had expressed concerns about Israel's nuclear program, insisting on periodic U.S. inspections to prevent proliferation risks, as documented in declassified letters to Israeli Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion (U.S.

Department of State, 1996). The theory gained renewed traction in 2004 when Mordechai Vanunu, the Israeli nuclear whistleblower, endorsed it, linking it to Israel's alleged need to secure nuclear weapons (Vanunu, 2004). Figures like Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi (Gaddafi, 2009) and French historian Laurent Guyénot have amplified it, tying it to broader narratives of Israeli control over the U.S. "deep state" (Guyénot, 2014). In 2025, following the release of additional JFK files, antisemitic online communities often incorporated tropes of Jewish banking families like the Rothschilds into the narrative, despite the absence of any supporting evidence in the declassified record (ADL, 2025).

Ultimately, the chapter urges the United Nations and global powers to enforce resolutions against settlement expansion and address the humanitarian crisis, asserting that true peace requires accountability, resource sharing, and recognition of Palestinian rights to avert further tragedy.

Chapter 4

The Palestine Issue: Criminal Silence of the World

The Palestine issue is the most complicated, time-worn and sensitive issue in the world because all three heavenly religions,



Map series depicting the progressive loss of Palestinian land from 1947 to the present: (left to right) Palestinian land (green) in 1947 before the UN Partition Plan; the 1947 UN proposal allocating land to proposed Jewish and Arab states; the situation in 1949–1967 after the 1948 war; and the present day showing Israeli-controlled territory (white/grey), remaining Palestinian land (green), and Jewish settlements in the occupied territories (white dots).

Judaism, Christianity and Islam are involved with this issue. All the differences, including racial, cultural and belief and worship, are present in these religions.

The present area of Israel consists of about twenty-one thousand square Kilometres, and its population is 8,462000 (Eighty-four lac and sixty-two thousand); the Jews among them are 74.9% (6,335,000), the Arab Muslims are 20.7% (1,757,000), and the Arab Christians are 4.4% (370,000). Israel occupied this area in the War of June 1967. The Palestinian leadership claims that it is the Palestinian State of the Future. The area of the Western Bank of the River Jordan to the boundary of Israel is included in it. The area of this region is less than six thousand square Kilometres, and its

population is two hundred thousand. It is generally called the West Bank. The other area is called the Gaza Strip. It is a small strip surrounded by the West Boundary of Israel, Egypt and the Mediterranean Sea. Its area is three hundred sixty Square Kilometres, and its population is eleven hundred thousand. It means that thirty-one hundred thousand Palestinians abode in the prescribed Palestinian State.

Conquest of Jerusalem in the Farooqi Reign

In the seventh Century AD (638), during the reign of Hazrat Umar (RA), the Muslims conquered Jerusalem. At that time, the entire area of Haikal-e-Sulemani was in ruins because the Nazarites had destroyed it in the enmity of the Jews. The second Caliph of Islam, Hazrat Umar (RA), got the Southern part of it cleared and reserved it for prayer. Here is an incident of Hazrat Umar (RA) about Baitul Muqaddis, which is one of the best examples of the Muslims' forbearance and tolerance for other religions. During his stay in Jerusalem, a complaint came before Hazrat Umar (RA) that a sacred statue put in the Church was damaged due to a stroke of the hilt of a soldier's sword. Hazrat Umar (RA) ordered to get it repaired, and the Islamic Treasury should make payment. (*Umar e Farooq* by Muhammad Hussain Haikal). Here, it is proper to understand the difference between the stand of the Quran and that of the Jews about the History of the Bani Israel. According to the Jews, God avowed Hazrat Yaqub (AS) and his entire race as His favourite. Hence, this entire race is superior to all other Human races. God, Almighty, consigned the entire region of Palestine to the race of Hazrat Yaqub (AS) and made Solomon's Temple their *qib'lah*. Therefore, they consider that it is their (divine) right to abode in that area.

In the Holy Quran, God Almighty says that the Bani Israel were granted superiority on account of a particular purpose that they

themselves should act upon God's injunctions as well as spread His message in the entire world.

Therefore, so long as they acted upon God's injunctions, God had been blessing them with His bounties; but when they neglected His orders, He punished them. As they belied His last Prophet (SAW) and even tried to murder him, God took back their superiority and sent His last Prophet (SAW) to Bani Ismail. After this discussion, I again return to their history. After the conquest of this area in the reign of Hazrat Umar (RA), it remained a part of the Muslim Government for four hundred fifty years. In 1078, the Seljuk Turks occupied Jerusalem. During their twenty-year reign, the Nazarene pilgrims were ill-treated and later in 1099, the allied Christian forces recaptured Jerusalem. After eighty-eight years, in October 1187, Jerusalem was re-conquered under the leadership of Sultan Salahuddin Ayubi (1137-1193).

Jerusalem and Sultan Salahuddin Ayubi

Salahuddin Ayubi was an Iraqi Kurd by descent. He was a minister in the court of the Fatimid Caliph, al-Abid. Although Sultan Salahuddin Ayubi was a Sunni Muslim, unlike the Fatimid rulers, who were Shia, his military abilities earned him a close relationship with the Caliph. When the Caliph died in 1171, he had controlled the government, recognised the incapacity of the Caliph's heirs, and subsequently founded a strong government after quelling the insurgencies.

He could have occupied the weak Abbasid government of Baghdad if he had wanted, but he placed his government under the Caliphate, thereby uniting all the Muslims. He adopted the appellation of the Sultan and eliminated the selfish and incompetent Muslim governments of the



A traditional artistic depiction of Saladin (Salah al-Din Yusuf ibn Ayyub, 1137–1193), the renowned Kurdish Muslim sultan and founder of the Ayyubid dynasty.

surrounding areas, establishing a strong, public-friendly, and welfare state that encompassed Egypt, Syria, al-Hejaz, and Palestine. Sultan Salahuddin Ayubi proved his claim that he did not have any interest in his rule and widening his empire; he just wanted to eliminate the Christian rule in Baitul Muqaddas and bring it under the Islamic Empire to finish the oppression of the Christians there and devote the 'Qibla Awwal for all heavenly religions equally. Therefore, in October 1187, he conquered Baitul Muqaddas like Hazrat Umar (RA); he did not massacre there and controlled the city very peacefully, and according to his promise, kept the Baitul Muqaddas open equally for all three heavenly religions. Though after that, the Muslims and the Nazarenes had been fighting for one hundred years, the occupation of the Muslims continued there. These battles are called 'Crusades' in history. After the eighty-eight-year rule of the Nazarenes at Jerusalem, the rule of the Muslims lasted for eight hundred years until the First World War.

Management of Jerusalem under the Ottoman Caliphate

In 1517, the Ottoman Turks occupied Palestine, and for the next four centuries, Palestine remained part of the Ottoman Empire. Like all dictatorial governments, evils penetrated the Ottoman Empire. Corruption, luxury and conspiracies began to develop, and collective ethics deteriorated. The Ottoman Empire did not treat its conquered territories well. All Arab countries were part of the Ottoman Empire, and because of the ill-treatment of the Turks, they considered themselves to be their colonies. On the other side, Democracy and Scientific progress were developing in Europe, but the Ottoman Empire closed its doors on these blessings, and the objective of every Sultan was to save his rule. Therefore, this empire gradually weakened. The system of government was running on foreign debts. To pay back these European debts, when more taxes

were imposed on the provinces, most of the provinces began to revolt. Therefore, most of the conquered territories separated themselves from the Empire. During this entire period, the religious-minded class supported the Sultans. Consequently, the public became opponents of both the Sultans and the religious-minded class.

End of the Ottoman Caliphate



A 19th-century European Orientalist painting depicting the Hagia Sophia (Ayasofya) in Istanbul.

In 1908, Sultan Abdul Hameed was dismissed, and the effective nationalist organisation, the Young Turk Revolution, led by the youth of Turkey, acquired power. Kamal Pasha was the leader of the Young Turk Revolution. This government made a severe mistake in that it signed a secret agreement with Germany in 1914, at the beginning of the First World War and declared war against the United forces (including Britain, France, Russia and later America) and started bombing Russian seaports. It was a blunder. Impartiality was the best policy for Turkey. After this declaration of war, the Allied forces started attacking the Turks' installation, and Jerusalem went under British occupation in December 1917. All

the Muslim population of Jerusalem welcomed the British Army as their deliverers against the Turkish Government.

Welfare of Jews in the Muslim Ottoman Caliphate

In Spain, during the Muslin rule, and in some countries of Northern Europe, the Jews were well-treated. During the Crusades, the Nazarenes, while fighting against Muslims, also massacred the Jews.[1] During the Ottoman Turks' rule, their attitude toward the Jews was unsuitable. With the advent of democracy in Western Europe, the treatment of the Jews was improved, but in Russia and Germany, they were treated very badly. The Tsar of Russia was their severe opponent. Around the seventeenth century, the sense of their smallness and miserableness emerged in them, and in several places, anti-Jewish organisations were established.

In fact, this sense rose in the Jews in the seventeenth century that their homeland is Palestine and they should go and settle there, but a well-known intellectual and Lawyer, Theodor Herzl, turned this sense into a proper movement in 1895, named Zionism. Zaion or Sahyun is a hill near Jerusalem. Initially, it was considered that there should be a place in the world where the Jews could live in peace. In this regard, Uganda came into view first. But most of the Jews did not approve of it and opined that Palestine is their destination. In 1881, there were only twenty-four thousand Jews in Palestine. To save themselves from the atrocities of the Tsar of Russia, they left Russia for Palestine. Therefore, in 1914, there were eighty-five thousand Jews in Palestine. The Palestinians were six hundred thousand at that time.[2]

The Conditions of the Jews at the Establishment of Israel



Orthodox Jewish men gather in prayer at the Western Wall (Kotel) in Jerusalem's Old City, the holiest site in Judaism where Jews have prayed for centuries, with traditional notes of supplication tucked into the ancient stone crevices.

It is essential to know the international conditions at that time. The British Empire was the most significant power in the nineteenth century, but at the end of the second half of the century, Germany emerged as a significant power. Both, along with other European powers, were advancing in the field of Industry, and competition was underway among them in raw materials, the sale of finished products, and other areas. Therefore, an alliance of Britain, France and Russia emerged on one hand, and the alliance of Germany, Italy, Austria and Hungary appeared on the other side. In this scenario, Turkey held no significance because it was backwards in all phases, and for this reason, it was called 'the Sick Man of Europe'. When the First World War began in 1914, Turkey initially sided with Germany, without apparent interest, and by attacking Russian seaports, it became a participant in the war. In response, Britain and its allied forces targeted the conquered territories of

Turkey, including Palestine.

Now, look at the conditions of the Arab World. Ottoman Turks occupied Palestine in 1517. Approximately, it was the time when Makkah Mukarrama and Medina Munawara were also included in the Turkish Empire. There had been a tribal mode of life in the Arabs, and the Turkish behaviour with them was authoritative; subsequently, revolts arose in many places, and nationalist feelings went on increasing, and the Turks had been crushing all revolts ruthlessly. It followed that a common atmosphere of hatred against Turks spread in the entire Arab World, and the Arabs were ready to face any force to rid themselves of them. Some spies were deputed to highlight the differences between the Arabs and the Turks and instigate the Arabs to revolt. Thomas Edward Lawrence of Arabia (1888-1935) was one of the spies who very successfully performed the assignment. He was a British soldier. He managed a successful revolt against the Turks in Damascus with the help of Ameer Faisal.

Jews: Pre-establishment of Israel



A formal gathering of Jewish community members, likely from Eastern Europe or an early Zionist association.

When the population of Jews increased in Palestine, the Muslims largely became conscious of the scheme, and from 1936 to 1939, they revolted against the British Government. However, the British and the Jews were united against the revolt, so they crushed the revolt. It is also unfortunate that the Muslims were divided when all the Jews were united from the very first day under their organisation, the Jewish Agency for Palestine (1929-1948). Moreover, the Jews also prepared an organised and trained army. There are indeed rare examples of sacrifices found in history, like the sacrifices of the Jews. Many Jews who escaped to different countries were coming to Palestine. Still, many rich and well-known Jews, who were also leaving their comfortable life, were coming to the deserts of Palestine and engaged themselves in the construction of their promising country.

The Population of Jews was gradually increasing in Palestine. The Jews from all over the world were coming here with the desire for their National Homeland to be realized in the future. The number of Jews who fled from Germany during the Second World War increased, according to an estimate, because Hitler killed six hundred thousand Jews, and the remaining escaped their lives and came to Palestine. In 1948, when the Jewish state, Israel, came into being, seven lakh and fifty-eight thousand Jews were residing there. When Britain conceived that a Jewish state could come into being there, it handed over the entire area to the United Nations. At that time, all powerful countries, including America and Russia, were in favor of Israel. In November 1947, the United Nations divided Palestine into two parts. Israel was given 56 % of the total area, though the population of the Jews was one-third of the total population. The Palestinians (including Nazarenes and Muslims) were given 44 % of the total area, as their population was two-thirds of the total population. It was evidently an unfair division, so the Palestinians and the surrounding Arab countries refused to accept it.

Establishment of Israel: A Zionist not a Jewish state

As soon as the last British Regiment left on May 14, 1948, Israel declared its independence, but Palestine did not declare its independence. However, they should declare their independence on 44 % of the land and continue their struggle for more land. Instead, four surrounding Arab countries, Syria, Jordan, Egypt and Iraq declared war against Israel. The armies of all these countries were weak, under-trained, and having low morale. These countries were also against one another, and many of their Commanders were influenced by Israel. Therefore, they were defeated, and Israel occupied more area. Now Israel had 77 % area. Jordan occupied the West Bank, and the Strip of Gaza was occupied by Egypt. It means that they also participated in the crime of withholding the establishment of a Palestinian State. If both these countries had declared a Palestinian State in their occupied areas, the whole world would have recognized it, and talks with Israel would have become easy.

The Arab countries benefited Israel in another way. Before 1948, the Jews who came to Israel were highly educated Jews. They were called Ashkenazi, while most of the Jews who came there after 1948 belonged to the Eastern countries, particularly Islamic countries, including Tunisia, Morocco, and Egypt. They are called Sephardim. Many Jews in Israel consist of these Eastern Jews. If the Arab countries wanted, they could talk about the establishment of a Palestinian State in exchange for these Jews, but they did not have such astuteness.

The Rothschild Family's Involvement in the Creation of Israel



Lionel Walter Rothschild

The Rothschild family, a prominent Jewish banking dynasty originating in 18th-century Frankfurt, played a notable role in supporting Zionist aspirations and the establishment of Israel through philanthropy, political advocacy, and financial backing. Their contributions began in the late 19th century and were instrumental in early Jewish settlements in Palestine, as well as key diplomatic milestones like the Balfour Declaration. However, claims of the family "creating" Israel often stem from exaggerated or conspiratorial narratives, which can veer into antisemitic tropes portraying the Rothschilds as shadowy manipulators of global events.

Edmond de Rothschild: Pioneer of Zionist Settlements

Baron Edmond James de Rothschild (1845–1934), a French member of the family, was a major early supporter of Zionism during the First Aliyah (1882–1903). He provided substantial financial aid to the first permanent Jewish settlements in Ottoman Palestine, funding agricultural colonies like Rishon LeZion and Zikhron Ya'akov. In 1924, he established the Palestine Jewish Colonization Association (PICA), which acquired over 125,000 acres of land and developed infrastructure, including vineyards, wineries, and a glass factory to support the wine industry a cornerstone of the Yishuv's economy. Rothschild also invested in electricity research and an electric generating station to promote industrialization. In a 1934 letter to the League of Nations, he emphasized coexistence, stating that Jewish settlement should not displace Arabs. His

efforts, often called "Ha Nadiv Ha Yadu'a" (The Known Benefactor), laid economic foundations for the future State of Israel.

Walter Rothschild, a Zionist and the Balfour Declaration



British Foreign Secretary Arthur James Balfour.

Lionel Walter Rothschild (1868–1937), 2nd Baron Rothschild, was the recipient of the Balfour Declaration on November 2, 1917, a pivotal British government statement expressing support for "the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people," while safeguarding non-Jewish communities' rights. As a leading British Zionist and zoologist, Walter was chosen due to his influence in Jewish circles and connections to British elites. The declaration, drafted amid World War I, aligned with British strategic interests, including gaining Zionist support for the war effort and U.S. entry. Family members, including his cousin Dorothy de Rothschild, facilitated links between Zionist leader Chaim Weizmann and British officials like Arthur Balfour and David Lloyd George. The original letter, donated to the British Library in 1924, remains a foundational document for Israel's legitimacy.

Israel's Foundation by Zionists Terrorists

The State of Israel was founded by terrorists. No, this is not hyperbole. No, this is not a metaphor. The State of Israel was founded by terrorist groups. Before Israel's founding in 1948, there were three main Zionist paramilitary groups. These were known as the Haganah, the Lehi, and the Irgun. It was these three paramilitary organizations that merged and later became what we now know as the IDF, or Israeli Défense Forces. It was these three paramilitary groups who were designated as terrorist

organizations by both the UK and the United Nations that would become responsible for implementing Plan Dalit, the blueprint for the ethnic cleansing of Palestine. In July of 1938, the Irgun bombed two vegetable markets in Haifa and Jerusalem respectively, killing 80 people in total.

In July of 1946, the Irgun bombed the King David Hotel in Jerusalem, killing 91 people. Also in 1947, the Leahy tried sending letter bombs to the White House to try and assassinate President Truman for not supporting their efforts to build a Jewish state in Palestine. In January of 1948, the Haganah bombed the Semiramis Hotel in Jerusalem, killing 25 people. In April of 1948, both the Irgun and Leahy attacked the village of Deir Yassin and massacred over 110 Palestinians. And in September of 1948, the Leahy assassinated a man who rescued 31,000 people from a Nazi concentration camp in World War II, including over 500 Jews. Folk Bernadotte, a United Nations mediator who the Leahy accused of having a pro-Arab stance during the ceasefire negotiations at the end of 1948. The leader of the Haganah, David Ben-Gurion, became Israel's first prime minister. The leader of the Irgun, Menachem Begin, became Israel's sixth prime minister from 1977 until 1983. leader of the lehi yitzhak shamir would become israel's seventh prime minister from 1983 until 1984 and from 1988 until 1992.

Jewish Identity

Jewish identity is multifaceted, encompassing religious, ethnic, and cultural dimensions. Judaism, as a religion, is one of the world's oldest monotheistic faiths, rooted in the covenant between God and the Israelites, as described in sacred texts like the Torah and Talmud (Biale, 2002). Religious Jews may adhere to varying degrees of observance, from Orthodox, who strictly follow halakha (Jewish law), to Reform or Conservative Jews, who interpret traditions more flexibly.

The global Jewish population, estimated at around 15 million, is spread across countries like Israel, the United States, and Europe, with varied political and social outlooks (DellaPergola, 2020). For instance, American Jews often lean liberal, while some Israeli Jews align with conservative or nationalist ideologies. Importantly, Jewish identity does not inherently entail a specific political stance, including on issues like Zionism or the state of Israel. This distinction is critical, as conflating Jewishness with Zionism oversimplifies a complex identity and can fuel misunderstandings or stereotypes (Rose, 2004).

Zionism: An anti-Jewish movement

Zionism is a political and nationalist ideology that emerged in the late 19th century, advocating for the establishment and support of a Jewish homeland, specifically in the historic land of Israel (Palestine). The movement was formalized by Theodor Herzl at the First Zionist Congress in 1897, driven by rising antisemitism in Europe, particularly pogroms in Eastern Europe and the Dreyfus Affair in France (Laqueur, 2003). Herzl's vision, articulated in his 1896 work *Der Judenstaat* (The Jewish State), proposed a sovereign Jewish state as a solution to centuries of persecution and diaspora (Herzl, 1896). Early Zionism was predominantly secular, focusing on national self-determination, but it also drew on religious imagery of returning to Zion, the biblical name for Jerusalem.

Over time, Zionism evolved into various strands:

- **Political Zionism:** Focused on establishing a Jewish state through diplomatic efforts, as seen in the Balfour Declaration of 1917, which supported a "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine (Shapira, 2014).
- **Religious Zionism:** Integrates Jewish religious values with nationalism, viewing the return to Israel as a fulfilment of divine prophecy (Ravitzky, 1996).

- **Cultural Zionism:** Advocated by figures like Ahad Ha'am, emphasized reviving Jewish culture and Hebrew language in a homeland, not necessarily a sovereign state (Zipperstein, 1993).
- **Revisionist Zionism:** A more militant strand, led by Ze'ev Jabotinsky, which prioritized territorial maximalism and a strong Jewish state (Shindler, 2006).

After the establishment of Israel in 1948, Zionism shifted to supporting the state's survival, security, and legitimacy. Today, Zionists range from those who support Israel's existence as a Jewish state to those advocating specific policies, such as settlement expansion in the West Bank (Shapira, 2014). Notably, Zionism is not exclusive to Jews; non-Jews, such as some Christian evangelicals, support Zionism for theological or geopolitical reasons (Spector, 2009). Post-Establishing The objective of this book is not to describe the complete History of Palestine or Israel. The problems of the Palestinians and the establishment of their separate state have always been at the top of the list for the Muslims, and they consider that the World Powers treat them unjustly; consequently, the inclinations of extremism develop in them. So, the situation of a few previous years will be precisely described here.

Talks of July 2000 between Yasser Arafat and Ehud Barak



Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak (left) and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat (right) shake hands under the facilitation of U.S. President Bill Clinton at the White House on September 13, 1993, marking the historic signing of the Oslo Accords.

In July 2000, talks were held between Yasser Arafat and Ehud Barak, the Israeli Prime Minister of the moderate Labour Party, at Camp David, facilitated by President Clinton. These talks continued for many days. Clinton tried his best to make these talks successful but failed. There had been two reasons behind their failure; firstly, the behaviour of Yasser Arafat regarding Jerusalem was very severe, and secondly, Ehud Barak refused to take six hundred thousand Palestinian immigrants (now their number has been increased) back who became homeless during the Arab-Israel war of 1948. At last, Clinton presented a formula, "Global Campaign for Middle East Peace, Clinton Proposal on Israel-Palestinian Peace". According to that formula, the Aqsa Mosque and Eastern Jerusalem would go to Palestine and Western Jerusalem, including the Wailing Wall, would go to Israel. Two hundred thousand Palestinians were in Eastern Jerusalem, and four lac fifty thousand Palestinians were in Western Jerusalem. About these immigrants, Clinton suggested settling them in the state of Palestine, and America would bear the expenses of their settlement. Ehud Barak accepted this formula, but Yasser Arafat rejected it. Thus, the talks failed. It was a blunder on the part of Yasser and the Palestinians. It was impossible to get more than that soon.

Al-Fatah vs Hamas



Silhouetted against the bright sun, supporters of Hezbollah wave the group's yellow flags alongside Palestinian flags during a rally in Lebanon, symbolizing solidarity with Palestine amid regional tensions.

In the meantime, the time for fresh elections in Palestine is near. In these elections, two parties, Hamas and al-Fatah, were rivals. Al-Fatah wanted to recognise Israel and was in favour of establishing the State of Palestine through dialogue. On the other side, Hamas refused to recognise Israel. At this juncture, Hamas had two plus points; firstly, the contemporary Government of al-Fatah was very corrupt, and the leaders of Hamas were considered honest, and secondly, in the Gaza Strip, Hamas was in an explicit majority, so the evacuation of Israel was considered their success. In the January 25, 2006, elections, Hamas won 70 of the seats.

The question arises here that during this entire dispute, where were the Arab League, Arab Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Rabitat al-Alam al-Islam (the Muslim World League)? According to the Constitution, fresh Elections should have been held in Palestine in April 2014. At that time, Israel claimed that Hamas had latent weapons. When the search operation was opposed, Israel invaded in June 2014. The instant reason for the attack was three Israeli children who were kidnapped and killed by a Palestinian organisation. In this invasion, thousands of Palestinians lost their lives. In reply, the Palestinian Authority fired hundreds of rockets, thus proving the Israeli claim true that they had been collecting arms to attack Israel. After satisfying itself, Israel declared a ceasefire. The same history was repeated in June 2015, and again, thousands of Palestinians were martyred. After every attack, Israel declared the construction of new residential colonies in the Gaza Strip. Israel also claimed that it had traced out several tunnels for smuggling arms into Gaza.

Perhaps in the future, elections will not be held in Gaza, but elections will be held in the West Bank, and it is not possible to forecast their results. However, the fresh elections should be held in the entire Palestine so that the people of Palestine may decide their future in the light of new circumstances. If Hamas again wins

the elections, Mahmood Abbas should resign from the presidency so that Hamas may openly enforce its policies.

Attack on Gaza and Palestinian Casualties



Overwhelmed by grief and shock: A Palestinian child clings to an adult as they navigate a bombed-out neighbourhood in Gaza.

On October 7, 2023, during the Jewish holiday of Simchat Torah, Hamas and several other Palestinian militant groups launched a coordinated assault from the Gaza Strip into southern Israel, known as Operation Al-Aqsa Flood. The attack involved thousands of rockets fired at Israeli communities, militants breaching the border fence using explosives, bulldozers, and drones to disable surveillance, and incursions into kibbutzim, towns, and a music festival. Approximately 2,000 to 3,000 militants, including Hamas commandos and members of other factions, crossed into Israel, leading to widespread violence. The assault resulted in the deaths of 1,195 Israelis and foreign nationals, including 815 civilians, marking the deadliest day for Jews since the Holocaust. Among the victims were at least 38 children killed, with reports of families targeted in their homes and at the Nova music festival, where 364 attendees died. Human Rights Watch documented numerous war crimes and crimes against humanity by Hamas and affiliated groups, including deliberate killings, sexual violence, and the

taking of 251 hostages, of whom at least 30 were children. The attack's scale prompted Israel's declaration of war the following day, vowing to dismantle Hamas's military capabilities.

The Killing of Palestinian Children: A Devastating Toll



Palestinian mourners carry the shrouded body of a child killed in an Israeli airstrike through the streets of Gaza during a funeral procession amid the ongoing Israel-Hamas war.

Palestinian children have borne a disproportionate brunt of the conflict, with the GHM reporting at least 17,492 children killed by February 2025, including 916 infants under one year old. UNICEF estimated over 50,000 children killed or injured since October 2023, with 1,309 killed and 3,738 injured since the March 2025 ceasefire breakdown alone. This equates to an average of 28 children killed daily, or one every hour, as of August 2025. Notable incidents include the March 18, 2025, airstrikes killing 174 children in one night and the October 25, 2023, strike on Nuseirat camp claiming 21 others, including multiple children. Indirect causes exacerbate the crisis: 440 deaths from starvation and malnutrition by September 2025, including 147 children, with 88 more from related complications. Human rights groups like Défense for Children Palestine highlight children as central targets rather than collateral

damage, with over 1,200 detained in the West Bank since October 2023. In the first 25 days alone, over 3,600 children were killed, often in strikes on homes and shelters. The war has displaced nearly all of Gaza's 2.3 million residents, destroyed over 80% of homes, and led to famine warnings, with aid access severely restricted. In the West Bank, 370 Palestinians, including 94 children, were killed between October 2023 and January 2024. International bodies, including the UN and Human Rights Watch, have condemned both sides' violations, with calls for accountability and ceasefires amid ongoing hostilities. As of September 2025, 48 hostages remain in Gaza, and fragile ceasefires have repeatedly collapsed, prolonging the cycle of violence.

How Israel Leverages American Support in Conflicts



U.S. President Donald Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu shake hands during a bilateral meeting at the White House on February 4, 2025.

The relationship between Israel and the United States is one of the closest bilateral alliances in modern geopolitics, often described as "ironclad" by U.S. leaders. Since Israel's founding in 1948, the U.S. has provided over $130 billion in bilateral assistance, with the vast majority more than $225 billion adjusted for inflation dedicated to military aid, making Israel the largest cumulative recipient of U.S. foreign assistance since World War II. This support has been pivotal in enabling Israel's military operations, from the 1967 Six-Day War to ongoing conflicts with Hamas, Hezbollah, and Iran-backed groups as of 2025. While the alliance benefits both sides. Israel gains security and technological edge, while the U.S. secures

a strategic foothold in the Middle East the framing of Israel "using" the U.S. implies a dynamic where Israeli strategic needs drive American commitments, often through lobbying, shared intelligence, and diplomatic pressure. Critics, including some U.S. policymakers and analysts, argue this has led to U.S. resources being funnelled into Israeli wars with limited American strategic reciprocity, exacerbating regional tensions and domestic U.S. divisions. Below, I outline the key mechanisms, historical examples, and contemporary implications.

Mechanisms of U.S. Support: Aid, Arms, and Diplomacy

Israel's ability to sustain prolonged military engagements relies heavily on U.S. resources, which are channeled through several interconnected channels:

Military Financing and Grants: Under a 2016 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), the U.S. commits $3.8 billion annually in Foreign Military Financing (FMF) grants through 2028, allowing Israel to procure U.S.-made weapons like F-35 jets and precision-guided munitions. This aid is largely unrestricted, enabling Israel to maintain its Qualitative Military Edge (QME) over regional adversaries—a U.S. legal requirement since 2008. In wartime, supplemental packages surge: Since October 7, 2023, the U.S. has approved at least $17.9 billion in additional security assistance, including $14.3 billion in emergency aid in April 2024 and $8.7 billion in September 2024 for air defence systems like Iron Dome. This funding not only replenishes stockpiles but also covers operational costs, with estimates of total U.S. spending on Israel's Gaza war and related regional operations reaching $22.76 billion by September 2024.

Arms Transfers and Excess Defence Articles: Israel receives advanced weaponry via Foreign Military Sales (FMS) and the Excess Defence Articles (EDA) program, totalling $6.6 billion in equipment like tanks and simulators since 1992. The U.S. also

maintains War Reserve Stocks in Israel, pre-positioned ammunition and vehicles worth hundreds of millions, that Israel can access during crises, as it did in the 2006 Lebanon War and 2014 Gaza operation. In 2024, the U.S. deployed the Terminal High Altitude Area Defence (THAAD) system and 100 troops to intercept Iranian missiles, directly bolstering Israel's defences.

Diplomatic and Intelligence Leverage: The U.S. has vetoed over 50 UN Security Council resolutions critical of Israel since 1972, shielding it from international accountability during wars. Intelligence sharing, formalised since the 1950s, includes joint exercises and access to U.S. satellite data, enhancing Israel's targeting capabilities. Pro-Israel lobbying groups like AIPAC influence U.S. policy, with over $100 million spent on campaigns in 2024 alone, ensuring bipartisan support.

These mechanisms allow Israel to prosecute wars with minimal domestic economic strain. Its citizens enjoy universal healthcare and education funded partly by U.S. aid, while the U.S. bears indirect costs like regional escalation.

Historical Examples: From Yom Kippur to Gaza

U.S. support has been decisive in multiple Israeli conflicts, often initiated or escalated by Israel but sustained by American resupply:

- **Yom Kippur War (1973)**: Facing Soviet-backed Arab forces, Israel avoided a pre-emptive strike to preserve U.S. goodwill. The U.S. responded with Operation Nickel Grass, airlifting 22,000 tons of tanks and ammunition, turning the tide despite an Arab oil embargo that strained U.S. allies. This established the precedent of U.S. emergency aid as a wartime lifeline.
- **Lebanon Wars (1982, 2006)**: In 1982, U.S.-supplied F-4 Phantoms enabled Israel's invasion; post-war, aid increased to $3 billion annually. During the 2006 Hezbollah conflict, Israel drew from U.S. War Reserves, with $2.34 billion in expedited arms sales.

- **Gaza Operations (2008–2024)**: U.S. munitions, including 2,000-pound bombs, have been central to Israel's campaigns, with $17.9 billion approved since October 2023 alone. Despite U.S. pauses (e.g., May 2024 on heavy bombs over Rafah concerns), deliveries resumed under pressure, enabling operations that critics label as disproportionate.

- **Iran Shadow War (Ongoing)**: U.S. aid counters Iranian proxies, with $5.2 billion for David's Sling in 2024 and THAAD deployments after Iran's April 2024 attack. This includes U.S. strikes on Houthis in Yemen, costing billions and tied to Israel's Gaza war.

In each case, Israel has leveraged U.S. commitments to offset its vulnerabilities, with aid spiking during conflicts, rising 450% after 1967.

Possible Solution to the Issue of Palestine

Presently, three points are very significant in the issue of Palestine:

- Firstly, what part of Western Jordan and the Gaza Strip should be given to Palestine?

- Secondly, how should the sacred places of Palestine be divided?

- Thirdly, where and how should the Palestinian immigrants of 1948 be rehabilitated?

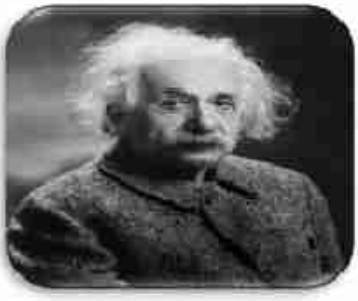
As far as the first question is concerned, it is to include both areas entirely in the State of Palestine. However, the problem is that in both areas, particularly in Western Jordan, Israel has constructed many colonies for Jews; therefore, it is proper for the Palestinians to show some softness in this regard. The most critical issue of the State of Palestine is not land, as there is a large quantity of land in the surrounding areas of Arab countries. They may hand over some of the areas to Palestine (like the Sina Desert) and thus make Palestine many times bigger than Israel.

The second issue is related to the sacred places. Its practical solution is also not very difficult, i.e., the part of Jerusalem where the Muslims are in the Majority and the Aqsa Mosque should be given to Palestine, and the Wailing Wall, along with Western areas where Jews are in the majority, should be given to Israel. So far as Qubbat as Sakhra is concerned, it may be given into the common authority of Israel and Palestine. Israel may entirely give it to Palestine because, generally, Jewish pilgrims do not go there. A practicable solution for the area called 'al-Haram as-Sharif should be left open for all pilgrims, and with the surety of the United States, there should be a common authority of Palestine and Israel.

The third issue is related to the hundreds of thousands of Palestinians who became immigrants in 1948. It is just to let them return to their previous homes, which are in Israel. However, Israel will never accept it because, in this way, the Jews in Israel will turn into a minority. It is the compulsion of History that it becomes impossible for the immigrants to go back to their regions. For example, more than a quarter-century ago, the Russian army vacated Afghanistan, but Afghan immigrants are still present in Pakistan. In Bangladesh, for about half a century, hundreds of thousands of Biharis have been living in camps, but Pakistan refuses to accept them. The same is the condition with Palestinian immigrants. Their solution is that they should be settled in the State of Palestine, and the United States should accept its responsibility.

Albert Einstein's opposition to Zionism

Albert Einstein opposed Zionism. He spoke, *"It seems to me a matter for simple common sense that we cannot ask to be given the political rule over Palestine where two-thirds of the population are not Jewish."* That is right, the German Jewish physicist who fled Nazi Germany in the 1930s



American Physicist Albert Einstein.

and became arguably the most famous scientist of all time, opposed Zionism. Einstein himself visited Palestine in 1923, and while he was there, he supported the idea of a Jewish homeland but also emphasised the need for a binational future. In other words, he was opposed to the idea of a Jewish state as a Jewish majority state. Furthermore, following the 1929 Palestine riots, Einstein's opposition to Jewish nationalism only grew. He said rifles will not be able to replace reason and that a focus on nationalist ambitions over coexistence was dangerous. In a 1930 letter, he argued that only direct cooperation with the Arabs can create a worthy and secure existence for Jews in Palestine. His words were prophetic. That same year, he even predicted in his own words that a Jewish state would foster narrow nationalism, and he feared that this would damage the essential nature of Judaism. In 1946, Albert Einstein testified before the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry.

Shalom From Israel

"I am twenty-one and you are sixty years old. I merely ask how long you will settle the account of one thousand years old enmity. Let us think about our future generations and take down the one thousand years' load. If the land of Britain can give shelter to both of us, the sacred land has much more capacity than that."

An American Traveller and a Pleasantry

When I landed at the airport in Tel Aviv, Israel, on January 9, 2012, I knew where I had to go: the Aqsa Mosque and the Wailing Wall.

Before going there, the people told me a pleasantry, that an American traveller, when he comes out of the airport and rides in a taxi, the driver asks him where to go, and the American murmurs while rubbing his head gently and trying unsuccessfully to remember the name of the place and says Where the Jews wail together. The Taxi driver shakes his head in excitement and drives

on the zigzag roads of Tel Aviv, applying brakes before an office-like building. The American comes out of the taxi in surprise and squints his eyes, reviews his surroundings, then looks at the driver with anger, who points to the signboard of the building. The American reaches near the board, puts his hand on his forehead and reads the board **"Tax Office"**.

Manifesting a mysterious smile on his face, the driver says, "The Jews wail here these days." When we landed at Tel Aviv airport, I was nervous. In my childhood, I had listened to many stories about Zionists, the dispute between Palestine and Israel, their harsh attitude toward Pakistan and the increasing racialism in the present. I was mentally ready to face all these things. At last, I had to go to the Aqsa Mosque.

Dialogue with a Jewish Professor, Avi Shlaim of Oxford University



Professor, Avi Shlaim of Oxford University.

We were present there at the invitation of Fordham University, New York. This Conference was very important because, in this Conference, the deteriorating relations between Turkey and Israel had to be reviewed. Many researchers were engaged in the exploration of how relations between the two countries could be spoiled due to political complications and how spoiled relations could affect business relations. Probably, the reason behind selecting this subject was the rising influence of Turkey under the leadership of Erdogan and deteriorating relations between both countries, these relations were affected after the Israeli attack on Turkish Flotilla.

Four other scholars were also invited, along with Professor Jonathan Story, who discussed the Israel-Turkish dispute in detail. They analysed the merits and weaknesses of both Israel and Turkey and talked about their future probabilities. The speech of Professor Avi Shlaim, the senior Professor at Oxford University, was the most effective. He said, "You say that the issue is very complicated. Do not deceive yourselves. The issue is quite simple." The Professor lifted his hand and said, "Israel has occupied Palestine, and this unjust occupation is growing stronger every day at the cost of the blood of the aggrieved Palestinians. If justice exists somewhere in the world, Israel should apologise for its shameful behaviour and vacate the Palestinian region."

I clearly remember that on the words of a Jew Professor, the Hall instantly became silent. After that, Professor Avi Shlaim has been visiting our offices of the Think Tank Forum for International Relations Development, UK, to deliver lectures on different subjects. We were attending a ceremony of the Third Memorial Week of the Palestine Liberation Movement, celebrated by the Palestinian Return Centre in the Grand Court of the House of Commons of the British Parliament. Jeremy Corbyn MP, Sir Gerald Benard Kaufman MP, Dr Mads Gilbert, Lord Andrew Philips,

Baroness Dr Jenny Tong and the Palestinian Ambassador to the UK were addressing. It was very surprising that 90 % of the participants were White, and just a few Asian faces were also seen. At the beginning of the ceremony, a two-minute documentary was shown about the Wall constructed between the Palestinian and Israeli regions. In the documentary, it was committed, "The twenty-first century is the century of breaking walls, and we shall concordantly break these walls." On this occasion, a film named "Miral" was mentioned in which Freida Pinto received great appreciation for playing the role of a Palestinian girl.

In his seventies, Sir Kaufmann was considered a zealous supporter of the Palestinians all over the Western World. He mentioned the Israeli oppression during a protest demonstration. He talked about a Palestinian young man to whom a canister of tear gas was struck on his head, and then his sister was disgraced. There had been a pin-drop silence in the hall, and the low and high notes of the breath could be heard.

The next speaker was a Palestinian woman named Amil, whose fifteen family members lost their lives in an Israeli attack. She made a flag of their memories and went around the world and showing the real face of Israel.

"I have become tired. I have run down remembering my deceased. I have come out of my house just to tell the world that those fifteen members of my family were not merely numbers; instead, they were the living persons of flesh and blood, giggling people. Eleven of them were children who still had to live their whole lives. When Amil started her talk, the eyes of almost the entire Hall were tearful."

"I have had enough of the empty excuses of the civilised people. You people while sitting in your peaceful harems of London,

merely condemn it, but it is not enough. Come out on the roads and make the life of your government irksome. Remember, O people of Britain! Your government had stabbed the dagger of Israel in the land of Palestine. Now you are responsible for putting that dagger out. Only excuses are not enough."

Jerome Korban MP and Baroness Jenny Tonge also made speeches and openly cursed the British Government that "whenever a discussion is held in the Parliament about Israel and a point of order is raised, it is known after a few months that the issues are still to be raised before the Israeli government."

O Useless, obstinate, showy drum, Obama! Listen, the time has got out of hand for Israel. The time is siding with the Palestinians. We do not need sympathetic feelings; we are waiting for steps. You gave the Nobel Prize to the Prime Minister of Israel, who was a pronounced terrorist. Why don't you then give the Nobel Prize to Osama bin Laden? These were the words of Sir Kaufman.

O people of Britain! We are your representatives. We will not sit in peace until Palestine is liberated." When the words of Jeremy rose in the air, the Hall echoed with clapping.

O Israelis! How can you forget the Holocaust?

Dr Gilbert, the author of the book named "Eyes in Gaza", said:



Dr Gilbert, the author of the book named "Eyes in Gaza".

"O audience! If you want to see an embodiment of gentleness, nobility and dignity, come along with me to Gaza." He said it with tearful eyes. "There I shall introduce you to the most dignified people to whom rockets, bullets and residing in tents for about sixty

years could not force them to beg. I shall introduce you to disabled Jamila, who is one of the four founders of the Arab Spring and the people of Gaza who confront tanks with pellet bows. O Israelis! How can you forget your holocaust when you were killed after being you in tents like goats? Do you not remember your forefathers when you see Palestinians?" This speech of Dr Gilbert was a continuous wailing. He had been talking, and the audience had been drying their eyes with tissues.

Is IDF (Israeli Defence Forces) a destructive Force?



Israeli Defense Forces (IDF)

Two persons stood in the Hall; their shapes were similar. They said, "You are spreading terrorism against Israel. Stop making heroes of the Palestinians. Colonel Richard Camp (Ex NATO Commander of Operation Fingal in Afghanistan from July to November 2003) has said that Israel was the biggest moral force in the World. You have forgotten that these Palestinians fired more than fifty thousand rockets on Israel." At this, a person cried, "Yes, fifty thousand, but as a result, only thirteen people lost their lives, while five of them lost their lives in friendly fighting, and you people killed two

thousand Palestinians. What type of war is it, in which only unarmed people die? The Colonel is a liar, and you are also committing the same lie and, resultantly attacking Iraq and Afghanistan. Remember, your time is over. An independent State of Palestine will come into being, Insha Allah." Dr Gilbert, saying "Insha Allah", waved his book in the air, and all the people saying "Insha Allah", stood up and began to clap. Both the extremist Jews were crying, but the clapping suppressed their voice.

Racism against Black Jews by the Israeli Zionist



A young Ethiopian Israeli protester holds up a sign reading "DON'T SHOOT I'M JUST YOUNG BLACK".

I came across the greatest surprise on January 11, 2012, when, while travelling, the taxi stopped for a long time. There were hundreds of Black demonstrators before me, carrying placards and banners. Slogans were written on those play cards and banners in the Hebrew language.

Those demonstrators had come from Ethiopia and were Jewish immigrants who were not happy in their paradise. There had been a hard competition, and there were 'White' Jews to check them. I saw some black young men painting their faces white. One play card was very famous: "I am a Black Jew, and I am proud of it." It was obvious that the Whites were hesitant to assimilate them.

Chapter 5

Global Impact of India–Pakistan War



Debris from a downed fighter jet bearing markings '100339' and partial 'Rafale' inscription lies in dry grass, fuelling online debates over alleged IAF losses during the May 2025 India-Pakistan aerial clashes.

On the 6th and 7th of May, India carried out an unprovoked attack on Pakistan, killing innocent civilians, including children, under their operation named "Sindhoor". This attack destroyed a mosque. In retaliation, Pakistan carried out a successful operation "Bunyanul-Marsoos" on the 10th of May. Though the duration was short, the scale and intensity of the fighting were unprecedented, marking a significant moment in recent history, a conflict that generations have not witnessed in the last 75 years and one that will likely shape the future narratives of warfare for decades to come.

According to US President Donald Trump, India's air force appears to have lost at least seven fighter jets, including one of its most advanced models, fifth fifth-generation Rafale fighter jets. The loss of multiple fighter jets would represent the worst setback in battle for India's air



Villagers in Pakistan gather around the twisted wreckage of an Indian Air Force fighter jet bearing the distinctive saffron-white-green roundel, downed during the intense aerial clashes of Operation in May 2025.

force in recent memory; in 2019, during the last round of fighting between the nuclear-armed neighbours, India acknowledged one of its jets was shot down by a Pakistan MIG-21 and its pilot, Wing Commander Abhi Nandan, was arrested by the Pakistani forces.A high-ranking French intelligence official informed CNN that a Rafale fighter jet operated by the Indian Air Force was shot down



AVIC Chengdu Aircraft stock surges 61.65% amid India-Pakistan tensions boosting demand for Chinese jets, while Dassault Aviation plunges 9.78% on reports of Rafale losses in the conflict.

by Pakistan, marking the first confirmed loss of one of these advanced French-made warplanes in combat. This comes after Pakistan claimed to have downed five Indian Air Force jets in retaliation for Indian airstrikes, including three Rafales. As of now, Indian officials have not yet responded to this claim (CNN, 2025). The French official further stated that French authorities were investigating whether more than one Rafale jet was shot down during the overnight strikes. CNN also reported that pictures showing parts of an aircraft wreckage taken from Indian-administered Kashmir displayed a label indicating a French manufacturer. However, experts have said that it remains unclear whether the wreckage is from a Rafale jet (Vandoorne, 2025).



In response to inquiries, Dassault Aviation, the French company that manufactures the Rafale, has not provided any comments on the incident. The Rafale, a 10-ton, twin-engine multirole fighter, is equipped with a 30mm cannon for air combat and ground support, as well as air-to-air missiles, laser-guided bombs, and cruise missiles. Before this escalation, India had purchased 36 Rafale jets from Dassault Aviation for its Air Force (CNN, 2025). At the time of reporting, the French military had refrained from commenting officially on the situation (CNN, 2025).

After the Pakistan-India clash, shares of the Chinese company (AVIC Chengdu), which manufactures the JF-17 and J-10C, rose by 62%. In contrast, shares of the French company (Dassault Aviation), which produces the Rafale, dropped by 10%.

In the context of the current India-Pakistan conflict, it is important to recognise that global powers, particularly the United States, often play a significant role in influencing the outcomes of such wars, given the broader geopolitical implications. While the United States has historically maintained a strategic relationship with India, particularly for counterbalancing China's influence in the region, the possibility that the US intervened to prevent India from suffering a defeat cannot be ruled out.

The reasons behind such diplomatic intervention can be multifaceted. A significant loss for India could have had a destabilising effect on the region, potentially leading to further escalation and undermining the stability of South Asia. This region

is strategically important for both global security and economic interests. Furthermore, India is an important ally for the US in the region, and any major military setback could weaken its position as a counterweight to China, Russia, and other regional actors. Given that India is a key partner in the broader Western security architecture, especially in the Indo-Pacific, a loss on the battlefield could have far-reaching consequences not only for India but for the Western alliances that rely on it. This could include the loss of strategic influence in the region, disruption to trade routes, and a potential shift in regional alliances.

Can America Be Trusted?



Donald Trump grinning alongside Pakistan's Army Chief General Asim Munir.

The question of whether Pakistan can trust the United States, given its growing military relationship with India, is a critical issue in South Asian geopolitics. The US has significantly deepened its strategic partnership with India in recent years, providing advanced defence technologies and military aid, including fighter jets, missile systems, and logistical support. This strengthening of ties is largely driven by the US's Indo-Pacific strategy, aimed at countering China's influence. For India, this partnership is seen as a boost to its military capabilities, making it a reliable partner in the region. However, for Pakistan, this growing alliance between the US and India is perceived as a direct threat. Pakistan views the US support as tipping the balance of power in favour of India, potentially undermining its own security, especially given India's conventional superiority. From Pakistan's perspective, the increasing US military aid to India raises concerns over a strategic imbalance in the region and the potential for

escalation. Additionally, Pakistan questions the reliability of the US as a partner, given that historical ties have often been strained, particularly when US policies shift in For of India. As a result, Pakistan remains wary of its relationship with the US, questioning whether America can be trusted when it comes to ensuring regional stability and security.

U.S. Involvement in India-Pakistan Conflict: Testing Weapons or Diplomacy?

The question of whether the United States has allowed India to start a proxy war between China and the United States, to test the quality of its weapons, is highly speculative and Significant in the broader geopolitical landscape. Pakistan's military dependence on China is a crucial aspect of its defence strategy. Approximately 80% of Pakistan's military equipment is sourced from China, including modern fighter jets, missiles, tanks, and naval vessels. This dependency on China provides Pakistan with an alternative source of military hardware, especially since Pakistan has faced arms embargoes or restrictions from Western countries due to political disagreements, including its nuclear program.

While the U.S. has supported India militarily, it could be argued that America indirectly allowed India to initiate a proxy war with China to test weapons. This appears to be reflected in the stance taken by U.S. leaders, such as President Donald Trump and Vice President JD Vance, who initially stated that the conflict was "none of our business." However, just one day later, the U.S. intervened to facilitate a ceasefire. This raises the question of whether the U.S. was complicit in the testing of Chinese weapons and whether it had an interest in observing India's capabilities against Chinese military technology



Indian Stock Exchange Mumbai

War mongers always lose

Indian shares fell for a second straight session on Friday, losing about $83 billion in market value, as intensified military action between India and its neighbouring Pakistan rattled investors. (Reuters)

The Washington Post has confirmed the downing of two Indian jets during recent clashes, further escalating India's challenges, with multiple aircraft lost in the ongoing conflict. The Rafale fighter jet is valued at approximately $240 million each (Arab News). Pakistan has also claimed to have targeted India's S-400 defence system in Adampur, which is worth approximately $1.5 billion.

Item	Cost
Rafale Fighter Jet	$240 million each
S-400 Défense System	$1.5 billion

This table highlights the value of key assets involved in the ongoing conflict, with significant financial implications for both sides.

Fighting Poverty, Not Each Other: Key Lessons for India and Pakistan



A communal meal in India: Men sitting in a long row on the street, sharing simple food from metal plates in a tradition of equality and charity, reminiscent of langar or community feeding.

India, with its vast population of over 1.4 billion people, has made substantial strides in economic growth, yet poverty remains widespread, particularly in rural areas. According to the World Bank (2020), around 28% of India's population lives below the national poverty line, which is defined as those living on less than $1.90 a day. This translates to approximately 375 million people living in poverty. Similarly, Pakistan faces a significant poverty challenge, with a substantial portion of its population living below the poverty line. According to the World Bank (2021), about 24.3% of Pakistan's population lives in poverty, which equates to approximately 53 million people.

Apple's Production in India: Aftermath of the War



U.S. President, Donald Trump expressed frustration on Thursday over Apple's plans to diversify its production outside of China, particularly in India. Trump revealed that during a

that during a

conversation with Apple CEO Tim Cook, he told him, "I had a little problem with Tim Cook yesterday... I said to him, 'My friend, I treated you very well. You are coming here with $500 billion, but now I hear you are building all over India.' I do not want you building in India." Trump was referring to Apple's $500 billion investment commitment in the U.S., which was announced in February.

The Pakistan-Saudi Arabia Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement



Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (right) with Pakistani Prime Minister Shabaz Sharif and Pakistani Army Chief.

As of September 27, 2025, the recent signing of the Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement (SMDA) between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia marks a pivotal escalation in their longstanding security partnership. Signed on September 17, 2025, at Al Yamamah Palace in Riyadh, the pact commits both nations to a collective defence clause, treating any act of aggression against one as an attack on both. This agreement, formalised during Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's state visit, represents the first formal military pact between a Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) state and a nuclear-armed power, potentially reshaping geopolitical dynamics in South Asia and the Middle East.

Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have maintained deep strategic, economic, and religious bonds since the 1960s, rooted in shared Islamic identity and mutual security interests. Pakistan has historically provided military training to Saudi forces over 8,000 personnel since 1967 and deployed troops for advisory and border protection roles. A 1982 agreement formalised this cooperation, but it remained informal until the SMDA. Saudi Arabia has also extended billions in economic aid to Pakistan, bolstering its foreign reserves amid financial crises.

The pact's timing is linked to heightened regional tensions, particularly following Israel's airstrike on Doha, Qatar, on September 9, 2025, which targeted Hamas leadership and exposed perceived vulnerabilities in U.S. security guarantees to GCC states. This incident, coupled with Iran's 2024 missile strikes on Pakistani territory and the 2019 Abqaiq Khurais attack on Saudi oil facilities, underscored the need for alternative alliances. Analysts note that negotiations for the SMDA had been underway for years, but the Qatar event accelerated its finalisation.

India-Israel-Qadiani is an anti-Pakistan Alliance



Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India, warmly shaking hands Qadiani leader during a high-level diplomatic visit flanked by Benjamin Netanyahu in Israel.

Some analysts highlight a triangular cooperation involving India, Israel, and the Qadiani group of the Ahmadiyya Movement, an entity considered anti-Pakistan. Although Pakistan has no diplomatic relations with Israel, the latter has reportedly provided land for the Ahmadis to construct their own place of worship. Meanwhile, meetings between Indian Prime Minister Modi and Qadiani leaders in the presence of Benjamin Netanyahu, who faces charges at the International Criminal Court, underscore the existence of an anti-Pakistan lobby that does not serve Pakistan's interests.

The provision of land for a dedicated place of worship for the Ahmadiyya community in Israel, coupled with high-level diplomatic engagements involving the prime ministers of India and Israel alongside Qadiani leadership, cannot be dismissed as mere coincidence or routine courtesy. Far from being isolated gestures of goodwill, these developments reveal a meticulously orchestrated nexus explicitly designed to undermine Pakistan's sovereignty, stability, and international standing.

When viewed through a neutral, evidence-based lens, the pattern becomes unmistakable: a coordinated, multi-state lobby is actively operating against Pakistan's core interests. Israel's decision to allocate space for an Ahmadiyya worship centre despite the absence of formal diplomatic ties with Pakistan and the community's controversial status within the country transcends religious accommodation. It serves as a strategic foothold, granting a group by constitutional amendment declaring non-Muslim minority in Pakistan under the premiership of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto (Grandfather of Bilawal Bhutto Zardari) a symbolic and physical sanctuary under the protection of a state historically adversarial to Pakistan's regional alliances.

Simultaneously, the public meetings between Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin

Netanyahu, and prominent Qadiani figures are not ceremonial photo opportunities. They represent deliberate political theatre carefully staged to legitimise the Ahmadiyya leadership on the global stage while subtly endorsing their narrative as victims of Pakistani persecution. This alignment amplifies anti-Pakistan propaganda, particularly in Western capitals where human rights rhetoric often serves geopolitical ends.

The Problem of Kashmir in its Factual Perspective



India Pakistan bordering

It is a known fact that the main reason behind estrangement in the relations between Pakistan and India, after partition, is the disputed accession of the State of Kashmir to India. We cannot understand the nature of this problem without knowing the factual position of this disputed accession. Both Pakistan and India agree that without solving this problem, the relations between the two countries cannot proceed in the right direction.

To impartially review this problem on a factual basis, it is essential first to understand the nature of the State of Kashmir. At the advent of the partition of India, Kashmir was a Princely State. The number of such states was 562.

About the future of these States, the leaders of the Muslim League and Congress and the rulers of these States formulated the following principles:

- The rulers of the States may accede to India or Pakistan according to their will.
- They can continue their sovereign status.
- In either of the above decisions, they should bear in mind the geography as well as the opinion of the subjects

of these States; however, the decision of their rulers will be final.

Regarding the division of Punjab, the stand of Congress was that the right to decide should be in the hands of the British Federal Court. Lord Mountbatten's suggestion was to give the authority of its decision to a Commission of the United Nations. Contrarily, the Muslim League suggested making Sir Cyril Radcliffe its chairman and granting him the authority of a decisive vote. At last, this suggestion was accepted, and Radcliffe handed over four Tehsils of the Gorakhpur district to India. A tehsil of Pathan Kot was included in it. From here, a road joined India with Kashmir. Later, India entered its army in Kashmir through this road.

When the process of partition was completed, the Nizam of Hyderabad, at first, expressed his desire to accede to Pakistan. Still, later, he declared to continue his sovereign status and applied to the United Nations.

The same was the intention of Raja Hari Singh of Kashmir. Firstly, he did not disclose the malice of his intention due to many of the Muslims and went on assuring the Muslim League that he would accede to Pakistan but kept his decision of accession pending. When the riots started in Kashmir, like in India, he got an excuse to fulfil his latent intention. The armed volunteers entered Kashmir to help their Muslim brothers. Raja was also perhaps waiting for the same mistake of the Pakistani leadership. On the other hand, these Pathan volunteers were in a hurry, and they invaded the palace of the Raja in Srinagar. Hari Singh instantly reached Delhi. The Indian Government took it as a boon, and according to " بلی بھاگوں چھینکا ٹوٹا"(their desire was fulfilled), based on some "unknown avarice", it got its sign on the document of accession. In whose minds this unknown avarice was present, we may imagine because, despite

the signatures of Hari Singh, the State did not legally accede to India. Here is the summary of the point of view and the statements of the then Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, and other authorities of the Government of India:

1- I should like to make it clear that the question of aiding Kashmir in this emergency is not designed in any way to influence the State to accede to India. Our view, which we have repeatedly made public, is that the question of accession in any disputed territory or state must be decided following the wishes of the people, and we adhere to this view. (This telegram was sent to Clement Richard Attlee from Prime Minister Nehru on October 26, 1947, and to Liaqat Ali Khan, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, on October 27, 1947.)

2- We have accepted the decision of accession of Kashmir on the request of the Maharaja and the largest representative party of the Kashmiri Muslims (National Conference of Shaikh Abdullah) on the condition that the Kashmiris will decide with whom (India or Pakistan) they want to accede. The evacuation of forces and the decision of the State's future would be left for the people of the State, which is our promise, not only with you but with the Kashmiri people and the International Community. (Telegram from Prime Minister Nehru to the Prime Minister of Pakistan on October 31, 1947)

3- Accepting accession, we sent the army by air with the condition that we will participate with the Kashmiri people in the decision of accession. We are cautious that the Kashmiri people should not make a final decision in haste without having a chance to express their opinion

completely. It is our promise not only to the Kashmiri people but also to the world that it will be decided with the support of the Maharaja. We cannot go back on our words. As soon as the situation of law and order is normalised, we will be ready to hold a referendum under the supervision of an international organisation like the UN. We desire to pass through this stage transparently. We will accept the opinion of the people. (Address of Prime Minister Nehru to the Nation on November 2, 1947)

4- I call your attention to my address of yesterday evening's broadcast on the radio, in which the government policy was clarified that we have no desire to thrust our will on Kashmir. In this regard, the final decision will be of the people of Kashmir. We agree that an impartial institute like the UNO should supervise its referendum (Telegram of Nehru to the Prime Minister of Pakistan on November 3, 1947)

5- The decision on the accession of the state should be made after consulting the people of Kashmir. To express our good intentions, we have suggested that people should decide their future under the supervision of an impartial institute like the UN. (Statement of Prime Minister Nehru in the Parliament on November 25, 1947)

6- To decline this impression that India wants to take advantage of the crisis of the State, the government clearly says that people will be free to decide their future democratically through a referendum held under international supervision. (A letter of the Government of India to the Secretary General of the UN on December 31, 1947)

7- What will be the status of Kashmir in the future, neighbouring countries and the world and whether it will annex Pakistan or India or would like to become a member of the United Nations as a sovereign state? The right to finally decide all these questions is only for the people of Kashmir after the restoration of daily life. (Address of Gopala swami Aiyengar, an Indian delegate in the Security Council of the UNO on January 15, 1948)

8- As the Security Council knows that the Indian Government promises to hold an independent plebiscite after the restoration of peace and order and the return of the immigrants to their houses, to decide whether the people of the State want to join India, join Pakistan or adopt a sovereign identity. (Address of Gopalswaami Ayyanger, an Indian delegate in the Security Council, February 23, 1948)

9- Even at the advent of annexation, we came forward and said that we would abide by the decision taken because of the referendum or plebiscite. We also demanded that there should be an instant popular government in Kashmir. We are constantly sticking to our stand that we are ready to accept the results of a plebiscite held in the atmosphere of transparent voting. (Address of Prime Minister Nehru in the Parliament on March 5, 1948)

10- If you reject arbitration, it will create a deadlock, or you will have to wage war. We have been continuously saying that we do not want war; therefore, arbitration with the United Nations is the only way left. Now, what will be the nature of arbitration? It may be decided later. (A press Conference

of Prime Minister Nehru in New Delhi on November 16, 1951)

11- It had been a continuous stand of India that they would cooperate to give a chance to the people of Kashmir in expressing their opinion under the arbitration of the United Nations. It was their stand before the United Nations interfered in the dispute that the first right to decide is of the people of Kashmir, then come India and Pakistan. In this regard, both countries (India and Pakistan) determined the basic features. Both agree that the Kashmiris must decide their internal and external status. It is a fact that if the decision is not made, no country can occupy Kashmir against the will of the Kashmiris. (Press Conference of Prime Minister Nehru in London on January 16, 1951, published on January 18, in Daily Statesman).

The Status of Kashmir in 2025: Tensions, Autonomy, and Enduring Division



Indian paramilitary forces (likely CRPF) on patrol in the narrow streets of downtown Srinagar, Kashmir camouflage uniforms, rifles at the ready, walking through a tense marketplace under heavy security lockdown.

India granted Kashmir special autonomy under Article 370 of its constitution until August 5, 2019, when Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government revoked it. The Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act bifurcated the state into two union territories (UTs): Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) and Ladakh, both under direct central control from New Delhi. This move, justified by India as promoting integration and development, was criticised internationally as eroding Kashmiri rights and altering demographics through land reforms, allowing non-locals to settle. Pakistan condemned it as illegal, suspending the 1972 Simla Agreement and downgrading diplomatic ties.



An innocent Kashmiri youth tied at the front of an Indian army jeep that is moving in some village of Central Kashmir's Budgam district. The incident occurred during the Srinagar Lok Sabha by-elections, where the youth was used as a human shield to deter stone pelting by protestors. The incident has sparked outrage and discussions on the use of non-combatants as human shields in conflict situations. YouTube+5

As of September 27, 2025, the status of Kashmir remains one of the world's most protracted and volatile territorial disputes, rooted in the 1947 partition of British India. The region, spanning approximately 222,200 square kilometres in the Himalayas, is divided among three nuclear-armed powers: India controls about 55% (including the Kashmir Valley, Jammu, and most of Ladakh), Pakistan administers roughly 30% (Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan), and China holds the remaining 15% (Aksai Chin and parts of the Trans-Karakoram Tract). No formal cession, meaning a legal transfer of territory, has occurred in 2025, despite renewed

hostilities earlier this year that briefly escalated into open conflict between India and Pakistan. Instead, the year has been marked by a fragile ceasefire, ongoing insurgencies, and internal debates over autonomy within Indian-administered Kashmir. Below, I outline the key developments shaping Kashmir's status today.

Current Governance Turmoil

- **Indian-Occupied Kashmir (J&K UT)**: Rated "Partly Free" by Freedom House in its 2025 report (up from "Not Free" in 2024), thanks to the October 2024 assembly elections, the first since 2014. A partially elected government was installed, but New Delhi reassigned key powers (police, public order) to the lieutenant governor. The Supreme Court in 2023 ordered statehood restoration by September 30, 2024, but the Modi government has delayed, rejecting a November 2024 assembly resolution for special status revival. Human rights concerns linger: Security forces face abuse allegations, with rare prosecutions, amid a jihadist insurgency. Tourism thrives in Srinagar, Gulmarg, and Pahalgam, deemed "safe" by local guides, but protests mark the 2019 revocation's sixth anniversary.

- **Ladakh UT**: Created in 2019 to address Buddhist-majority demands for separation from Muslim-dominated Kashmir, it now faces unrest. Activist Sonam Wangchuk's hunger strikes demand safeguards for land, jobs, and the environment, leading to his brief NSA detention in September 2025. Locals, who once celebrated UT status after 30 years of agitation, now seek more autonomy amid fears of ecological damage from projects like the world's tallest railway bridge, inaugurated by Modi in June.

- **Azad Kashmir**: Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan remain semi-autonomous but tightly integrated with Pakistan. No major cession talks, though Pakistani PM Shehbaz Sharif's September 2025 UNGA speech slammed India's "Hindutva" policies and called for dialogue.

- **Chinese-Controlled Areas**: Aksai Chin remains under Beijing's firm grip, with no 2025 changes, though border tensions with India simmer.

Broader Implications and Future Outlook

Kashmir's 2025 status underscores a frozen conflict: No plebiscite, no independence, and no full integration satisfying all sides. India views it as an internal matter, Pakistan as a self-determination issue, and Kashmiris, split by diverse views, yearn for peace amid fatigue from decades of militancy and crackdowns. The May ceasefire holds, but incidents like shelling-damaged homes in Uri highlight vulnerability. Economically, tourism and infrastructure (e.g., the Chenab Bridge) boost India, but demographic fears fuel separatist narratives.

Without multilateral talks, experts warn of recurring escalations. As one X user noted amid Ladakh protests, "India sucks" for some locals, while others decry Pakistan's "terror hub" status. For now, Kashmir limps toward normalcy, but its fate cession or otherwise hinges on de-escalation and genuine dialogue.

The Resolutions of the United Nations and Kashmir



UN Security Council in session diplomats from the 15 member states seated around the iconic circular table, hands raised in a vote that could shape wars, sanctions, or fragile ceasefires.

The United Nations passed twelve Resolutions about Kashmir from January 1948 to December 1957. Many of these Resolutions were practically in favour of India and theoretically in favour of Pakistan. These Resolutions belong to Schedule 7. It means their actual nature is just recommendatory, i.e., mere advice. Any party can refuse to accept, and their implementation is not compulsory. All of them were useless for Pakistan. Contrarily, it was compulsory to implement the Resolutions passed about Iraq and Afghanistan because these resolutions were approved under Article 25 of the Security Council.

As has been mentioned, there were other States, such as Kashmir, that wanted to be annexed either by Pakistan or by India. One such State was the State of Hyderabad, which was the biggest and richest State. When Nizam Mir Usman, the Head of the State, announced its annexation with Pakistan, India also became upset like Pakistan because geographically, it was situated in India. In 1948, when the disputes of Hyderabad and Kashmir were going on, the Governor General of India, Lord Mountbatten, Albert Victor Nicholas and

Sardar Patel came to Pakistan for talks. The suggestion came from India, "You admit our right over Hyderabad; we admit your right over Kashmir." It means India was ready to give Kashmir to Pakistan, but Liaqat Ali Khan refused to accept it, saying, "Should we leave Hyderabad in place of a few hills? Thus, that golden chance was lost, and the then leadership of Pakistan easily handed over Kashmir to India. This incident has been mentioned by the First Prime Minister of Pakistan, Chaudhry Muhammad Ali, in his book, *Emergence of Pakistan* and by Sardar Shaukat Hayat in his book, *The Nation that Lost its Soul: Memoirs,* on page 28.

In this historical context, the annalist will certainly argue that there has been a scarcity of visionary leadership in Pakistan since the time of Quaid-e-Azam.

Kashmir-A lost opportunity

In 1962, India was badly entangled in the war with China, but Pakistan did not take any advantage of that chance. Pakistan could get Kashmir with force because China had harshly beaten India and could not damage Pakistan. However, the then leadership of Pakistan, God knows why, wanted to be complacent and worried about improving relations with India. They came forward and performed the virtuous obligation of reconciliation between them.

There was also a second chance when, during the Afghan War, Pakistan was greatly liked not only by America but also by the entire Western World. No doubt, we became a nuclear power, but we forgot to achieve Kashmir. General Zia had been trying to hoist the flag on the Red Fort of Delhi but could not convince America about the solution to Kashmir.

In August 1988, the Mujahedin started operations against the Indian Army (according to analysts, this step was taken because a new assignment had to be given to the Mujahedin who had become

unemployed from the front of Afghanistan. This armed struggle continued against India till 2008. In the meantime, two battles of Kargil and Siachen were fought. In this armed struggle, forty-seven Kashmiris and other Muslims were martyred, while eight thousand Indian soldiers were also killed. Presently about seven hundred thousand Indian soldiers are posted in the Valley of Kashmir and some other disrupted areas. From this, it can be imagined what the number of injured people could be and how much damage would have been done to life, property and honour.

Secession of the Special Status of Kashmir

After the Constitution of India in 1950, India made Kashmir a part of its country under Article 1(3) and 370. The article was included in the Constitution due to the special conditions of Kashmir. Its objective was to create a special situation of sovereignty. Through this item, the present relationship between India and Kashmir was formulated. In Article 370, it was repeated that the Indian Parliament shall have the power of legislation only in those departments mentioned in the agreement of annexation. It means that under Article 370, the Indian Parliament shall have limited powers of legislation in Kashmir only in defence, Communication and Foreign affairs. Under Article 370, the president was given the power to issue orders after November 17, 1952. An important Presidential directive, the Constitution Application to Jammu Kashmir Order 1950 was prospectively issued. Through this order, new departments were included in the aforesaid departments regarding the rights of legislation of the Federal Parliament. In it, the application to abolish the articles of amendment in the Indian Constitution (Article 368), Government of India Act 1935 and Indian Independence Act 1935 related to Kashmir, was widened to include Kashmir under the administration of India. In this manner, approximately 205 Federal laws were transferred to Jammu and

Kashmir through Article 370. Under Article 370, with the consensus of the Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir and the orders of the Indian President, the possibility of widening in these departments was produced. Historically, under the Order of 1950, the Indian President did not have the authority to change or abolish Article 370 without the approval of the Constituent Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir. It means that, for the amendment in Article 370, the approval of the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly was essential.

On August 5, 2019, after enforcing a complete Lockdown in the Indian-administered Kashmir, under the leadership of the oppressive Hindu Nationalist Party, BJP, without the approval of the State's Assembly (which was inactive due to the enforcement of Governor Raj), abolished the special status of Kashmir. In the meantime, India increased the number of its forces in Kashmir. The number of Indian armies in Kashmir is seven lac fifty thousand. There is a ban on Communication in Kashmir. Thousands of innocent people are arrested without any crime. According to the report of the International Broadcasting Institute, BBC, to abolish the special status of Kashmir means that the promises made under Articles 370 and 35A of the Indian Constitution do not exist now, and Indian-administered Kashmir is now directly under the Delhi Government. Now the flag of the State, the Constitution of the State, and hundreds of State laws have become useless and from political, administrative and legal points of view, everything has come to an end. Later on May 18, 2020, India introduced new rules of the Domicile of the Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory. Under these rules, the people from any part of India can get Domicile in Kashmir when under the sureties of Articles 370 and 35 A, it was not possible. Under the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Order 2020, the definition of Domicile has been changed so that non-Kashmiris can easily get permanent residence in Kashmir. The objective behind it was to change the proportion of the population

in disputed Kashmir. Due to the amended Domicile, the chances for Kashmiris' employment will also decrease because, along with Kashmiris, non-Kashmiris will also apply for the services available in Kashmir.

May 2025's brief but fierce clash, India's "Sindhoor" killing civilians and destroying a mosque, met by Pakistan's "Bunyanul-Marsoos" downing seven jets and targeting a $1.5 billion S-400, cost billions and deepened scars, yet the fragile ceasefire holds. Kashmir's root wound is Nehru's broken plebiscite vows, Article 370's 2019 erasure, 750,000 troops demand healing, not hubris. Revive a UN-supervised plebiscite for self-determination, restore genuine autonomy, and demilitarise the Valley as a shared economic zone of tourism, hydropower, and trade. Redirect arms billions to lift 428 million poor across both nations. With U.S., China, OIC, and SAARC guarantees, forge a "Kashmir Accord" that freezes borders and opens prosperity. Let sulh replace Sindhoor; build bridges over the Chenab, not bunkers.

Chapter 6

Is Afghanistan a Cursed Land?



Kabul, capital of Afghanistan.

Afghanistan has historically been the gateway to the subcontinent, with various groups, from Aryans to Iranians and Turks, entering the region through this passage. Consequently, it has always been a battleground for international powers. When the British Empire sought to consolidate its control over the Indo-Pakistan region, it aimed to establish a presence in Afghanistan.

In the first Anglo-Afghan War (1839–1842), the British suffered a crushing defeat. However, during the second Anglo-Afghan War (1878–1880), the British achieved partial success. As a result, the British eliminated the government of Amir Sher Ali and installed Amir Abdur Rahman as the new ruler of Afghanistan, whose reign was marked by British domination. Amir Abdur Rahman was the first ruler to establish the borders of present-day Afghanistan. Afghanistan remained neutral during World War I (1914–1918), but

in retaliation, its crown prince, Habibullah, was assassinated in 1919. Subsequently, Amanullah, the third son of Amir Abdur Rahman, ascended to the throne. During Amanullah's reign, the third Anglo-Afghan War (1919) occurred, culminating in the Treaty of Rawalpindi, which formally ended British influence over Afghanistan. This day, August 19th, is celebrated as Afghanistan's Independence Day.

Afghanistan: Secularism and Communism

Afterwards, Amanullah sought to strengthen his relationship with Mustafa Kamal Pasha, the ruler of Turkey, and tried to enforce secularism in Afghanistan. These moves provoked widespread opposition, leading to his overthrow in 1929, and his nephew, Nadir Shah, replaced him as king. However, Nadir Shah was assassinated, and his successor was Zahir Shah, who ascended the throne in 1933.

Zahir Shah ruled for forty years, but in 1973, while he was abroad, his cousin, Sardar Dawood, deposed him. In April 1978, a communist revolution led by Noor Mohammad Taraki brought the communists to power, with Taraki becoming the president. It is well-documented that the Soviet Union (USSR), the second superpower of the time, was behind this political shift. In September 1979, Hafizullah Amin, head of another communist faction and the defence minister, seized control. Like his predecessors, Amin failed to align his policies with Moscow's expectations, and the situation worsened. In December 1979, the Soviet army intervened, overthrowing Amin and installing Babrak Karmal as the new leader. This Soviet action prompted international condemnation and justified other nations' involvement in Afghanistan.

Pakistan: A Role of Frontline State



Former President of Pakistan, General (r) Zia-ul-Haq

By 1982, the Mujahideen resistance received international financial support through the collaboration of the United States, Pakistan, China, and several Arab countries. Pakistan played a crucial role as a frontline state. Under the leadership of General Zia ul-Haq, along with General Abdur Rehman, General Hameed Gul (the Chief of ISI at the time), and their allies, the resistance gained recognition and successfully resisted Soviet control. This effort also safeguarded Pakistan from the dominance of the Soviet Red Army. However, this involvement came at a high cost. The repercussions of this venture continue to haunt Pakistan, resulting in a prolonged state of internal and external conflict. Extremist ideologies and terrorism have significantly undermined Pakistan's national integrity and honour.

Most of the leaders of the Mujahideen had been residing in Pakistan since the era of Sardar Dawood. The only organisation present at that time was "Jamaat-e-Islami," with Burhanuddin Rabbani as its leader and General Gulbuddin Hekmatyar as its Secretary General. Jama'at-e-Islami significantly influenced both leaders. In 1976, Hekmatyar separated from Jama'at-e-Islami and formed a new party, "Hizb-e-Islami." Since Pakistan was a frontline state in this conflict, its authorities began supporting the Mujahideen from the very beginning, which made Pakistan's role and decisions extremely significant. When General Zia came to power in 1977, after ousting the civilian government of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, even a

democratic country like America had no choice but to support General Zia's military government. Thus, Zia, in consultation with America, decided to resist Russian interference in Afghanistan.

Was that decision right or wrong? How could we practically control the movement of the Mujahideen along Afghanistan's 2,400-kilometre-long border? Additionally, there was India on the other side of the border, which could create further complications for Pakistan. In this scenario, Zia's government had no choice but to support America. However, history has proven that this decision had harmful consequences for Pakistan's population, contributing to the current law and order problems. Tony Blair, the former Prime Minister of Britain, mentioned in his book that politicians sometimes must make decisions far beyond the facts to achieve greater objectives.

Disintegration of the Former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR)

Also known as the Soviet Union, USSR was a massive transcontinental country that existed from 1922 until its collapse in 1991. It was a flagship communist state made up of 15 constituent republics (including Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus) and had its capital in Moscow.

illegal Russia's occupation of Afghanistan was driven by its desire to gain access to the warm waters of the Persian Gulf, turning the Cold War into an actual conflict. American ships rely on oil supplies from the Persian Gulf, making it strategically vital. Iran lies to the north, Oman to the east, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates to the south, Saudi Arabia to the southwest, and Kuwait and Iraq to the northwest. Given the region's current situation, the area is even more important to America. Some analysts argue that Russia's internal Communist system was weakening and needed to be dismantled, which is one of the reasons it initiated the war in Afghanistan to divert public attention.

However, it is also true that Russia had long harboured ambitions to gain access to the warm waters. After its collapse, Russia came to realise that wars do not solve problems, and dialogue is the best solution. Russia has since achieved access to the warm waters

through diplomatic engagements with China and Pakistan, with CPEC playing an important role in this process. President of Pakistan, General Zia ul-Haq, General Akhtar Abdur Rehman, General Hameed Gul, and their companions feared that Pakistan would be the next target of Russia after Afghanistan. America also shared this concern, as wherever the Soviet Red Army entered, it never withdrew from that territory. Perhaps this was the reason General Zia wanted to convey Iqbal's message to the world.



Disintegration of the USSR map

Disharmony among Mujahideen

The absence of a united, exiled Afghan government led to fragmentation within the Mujahideen. Various factions, including those led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and Burhanuddin Rabbani, competed for power. Despite Pakistan's support, which sought to prevent these factions from growing too powerful, the lack of unity led to infighting among the Mujahideen, undermining their resistance efforts and complicating peace negotiations.

The Geneva Accords in 1988, signed by Pakistan and the Afghan government under Dr Najibullah, could have ensured a peaceful

transfer of power had they included the exiled Mujahideen factions. Instead, their absence from these negotiations contributed to the continuation of the war.

The Rise of the Taliban and Afghanistan's Civil War



Taliban fighter stands guard in a desert-camouflage uniform.

Following the Soviet withdrawal in 1989, Afghanistan descended into civil war. The Taliban emerged in 1994, gained support from Pakistan initially as a movement of young religious students protesting Afghanistan as a failing state and portraying themselves as an alternate to bring peace and to improve law and order in the country. The movement quickly gained support and captured key areas, including Kandahar and Kabul. By 1996, the Taliban had control of the capital. However, their rule was marked by severe repression, especially in the non-Pashtun areas, leading to widespread bloodshed and resistance.

Despite their initial success in imposing order in Pashtun-majority areas, the Taliban's push into non-Pashtun regions triggered significant opposition. Over time, the Taliban's inflexible policies, along with their growing reliance on external support from countries like Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, led to the destabilisation of Afghanistan, particularly after they refused to hand over Osama bin Laden in 1998, which resulted in U.S. missile strikes.

Afghanistan Regime Change Driven by Caspian Sea's Vast Resources



A massive oil refinery or petrochemical plant.

It is well-known that an American company, UNOCAL, along with other companies, formed a consortium named Cent, consisting of eight major companies, to construct a gas pipeline from Turkmenistan to Pakistan through Afghanistan. America engaged in talks with the Taliban, but when these negotiations failed to produce the desired results, the decision was made in 1998-1999, three and a half years before the 9/11 attacks, to remove the Taliban government. Notably, on February 12, 1998, UNOCAL, which was part of the consortium, had significant political influence. Its Vice President, John Maresca, made a statement to the Committee on International Relations about Central Asia, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India, clearly indicating that the American government and oil companies were already planning the removal of the Taliban long before the 9/11 attacks. Here is an excerpt from John Maresca's statement:

"The Caspian region contains tremendous, untapped hydrocarbon reserves. To give an idea of the scale, proven natural gas reserves equal more than 236 trillion cubic feet. The region's total oil reserves may well reach more than 60 billion barrels of oil. Some estimates are as high as 200 billion barrels. One obvious route south would cross Iran, but this is closed for American companies because of U.S. sanctions legislation. The only other possible route is across Afghanistan, which has, of course, its own unique

challenges. The country has been involved in bitter warfare for almost two decades and is still divided by civil war. From the outset, we have made it clear that construction of the pipeline we have proposed across Afghanistan could not begin until a recognised government is in place."

American Withdrawal of 2021 from Afghanistan



U.S. troops boarding a military transport aircraft during the chaotic final evacuation from Kabul's Hamid Karzai International Airport, August 2021.

The United States has always failed to plan an exit strategy from any war it enters, for example, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Afghanistan, Iran, etc. Therefore, President Trump, in his first term, in his wisdom decided to have a quick and unplanned withdrawal from Afghanistan, culminating in August 2021, which represented the end of a protracted 20-year military engagement initiated in response to the 9/11 attacks, with the primary objectives of dismantling al-Qaeda and ousting the Taliban regime (Coll, 2018). Under the Trump administration, the Doha Agreement was signed on 29 February 2020 between the US and the Taliban, stipulating a complete troop withdrawal by 1 May 2021 in exchange for Taliban commitments to counter terrorism and pursue intra-Afghan peace talks, though the accord notably sidelined the Afghan government and facilitated the release of 5,000 Taliban prisoners (US Department of State, 2020). President Biden extended the deadline to 11 September 202 after accelerating it to 31 August amid escalating Taliban offensives that led to the rapid collapse of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces and the fall of Kabul on 15 August, prompting President Ashraf Ghani's flight from the country (Biden, 2021). The ensuing

Operation Allies Refuge airlifted over 120,000 individuals from Hamid Karzai International Airport, including more than 6,000 US citizens and numerous Afghan allies, yet left thousands behind due to logistical failures and the unanticipated speed of the Taliban's advance (Congressional Research Service, 2022). Tragically, a 26 August suicide bombing by ISIS-K at Abbey Gate claimed 13 American lives, wounded dozens more, and killed over 170 Afghans, underscoring the operation's perils (US Department of Defence, 2021). In the withdrawal's aftermath, the Taliban swiftly reimposed stringent Sharia-based governance, curtailing women's rights and media freedoms, while reports indicate al-Qaeda's partial.

Rise of Taliban after a Panic Withdrawal



Doha Agreement, February 29, 2020: U.S. Special Representative Zalmay Khalilzad shakes hands with Taliban co-founder Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar after signing the "Agreement for Bringing Peace to Afghanistan".

The resurgence of the Taliban following the United States' withdrawal from Afghanistan in August 2021 represented a swift and decisive reclamation of power, enabled by the rapid collapse of the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces amid stalled peace negotiations and the Doha Agreement's concessions, which

facilitated prisoner releases and reduced international military support (Wikipedia, 2025). Launching a major offensive on 1 May 2021, the Taliban captured provincial capitals in quick succession, controlling over half of Afghanistan's districts by July and entering Kabul on 15 August after President Ashraf Ghani fled, thereby dissolving the Islamic Republic and re-establishing the Islamic Emirate under Supreme Leader Hibatullah Akhundzada (Crisis Group, 2024). Since then, the regime has imposed a stringent interpretation of Sharia law, curtailing women's rights through bans on secondary and higher education, employment restrictions, and mandatory veiling, while documented human rights abuses include arbitrary arrests, torture of former officials, public floggings, and suppression of media and dissent, leading to widespread economic stagnation, food insecurity, and a 20-30% GDP contraction by 2023 (CFR, 2025; HRW, 2025; Amnesty International, 2025). Despite some infrastructure improvements like road repairs and anti-corruption measures, the Taliban have neglected basic services, hosted al-Qaeda affiliates in ministries, and tolerated groups like ISIS-K, exacerbating regional instability while facing internal resistance and international non-recognition (Brookings, 2024; FDD, 2023).

Pakistan's role in the Taliban's post-withdrawal ascent and governance has been profoundly influential yet increasingly contentious, rooted in decades of strategic support through its Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency, which provided sanctuary, training, and diplomatic leverage to the group since the 1990s to counter Indian influence and secure a Pashtun-dominated regime in Kabul (Brookings, 2024a; Wikipedia, 2025b). Initially viewing the 2021 takeover as a victory that would stabilize its western border and facilitate trade via corridors like the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, Pakistan hosted Taliban consultations and pushed for

their inclusion in power-sharing. However, relations soured as the Afghan Taliban refused to dismantle Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) safe havens, leading to a 50-79% surge in cross-border attacks on Pakistan since 2021 (MEI, 2025; Wilson Centre, 2025; Al Jazeera, 2025a). By 2024-2025, escalating mortar exchanges, airstrikes on TTP hideouts in Afghanistan, and mass deportations of over 910,000 Afghans from Pakistan have deepened the rift, with the Taliban accusing Islamabad of sovereignty violations while Pakistan leverages border closures and demands action against the 6,000-strong TTP, which UN reports confirm receives Taliban logistical aid (PRIF Blog, 2025; Al Jazeera, 2024). This blowback has prompted diplomatic reboots mediated by China, including ambassadorial appointments and trilateral talks in May 2025, yet underlying tensions persist as the Taliban diversifies ties with India and Iran, diminishing Pakistan's erstwhile influence and risking broader regional volatility (The Diplomat, 2025a; Al Jazeera, 2025b; The Diplomat, 2025b).

Do the Taliban represent the wider Muslim Community?



Taliban fighters celebrate their victory in Kabul, August 2021.

There is no doubt that the Taliban were devout Muslims with deep sincerity in their beliefs. However, they adhered to an interpretation of Islam that they believed to be correct, often rejecting other views, even from respected scholars. This rigid stance became detrimental to them. After 9/11, despite interactions with influential Islamic leaders such as Hazrat Maulana Salim Ullah Khan, Mufti Nizam ud Din Shahid, and

Maulana Mufti Taqi Usmani, the Taliban's approach to international relations remained unchanged. Unfortunately, their interpretation of Islam, which was based on rigid, outward enforcement, lacked the spirit of compassion and pragmatism, resulting in negative consequences for their governance and international relations.

Moreover, the Taliban sought to implement a strict version of Islam, issuing decrees that were often premature. Had they adopted a gradual approach, educating the population about issues like music, dress codes, and women's education, their actions might have been more widely accepted. However, their approach was criticised as being overly focused on imposing their interpretation of Islam, leading to accusations that the Taliban were attempting to impose Pashtun culture as the standard for all Afghans. This strategy ultimately led to the loss of Afghanistan as a model for an Islamic Emirate.

Gradual Reforms by the Caliphs

Before issuing such drastic measures, the Taliban should have followed the example of the Pious Caliphs (RAA) by making the circumstances favourable for gradual reforms. The Pious Caliphs enforced essential Islamic principles, such as zakat and punishment for apostates, but they did so with patience and persuasion. The severe punishments for serious crimes were introduced only after society was sufficiently prepared, and the influence of criminal elements was diminished. The Taliban's attempt to impose Islam without such gradual preparations led to public disapproval, especially among women, and provided an opportunity for Western media to criticise Islam, which ultimately worked in favour of America and the West.

Taliban's Policy on Al-Qaeda



Taliban fighters in Kabul, 2021 posing triumphantly atop a captured pickup truck in front of the blast walls that once protected the old regime, rifles raised in a display of total victory.

From the beginning, the Taliban's stance toward foreign entities, including Pakistan and Iran-backed militant groups, was one of defiance. Several criminal elements from Pakistan, including those involved in sectarian violence, sought asylum in Afghanistan, but the Taliban government was reluctant to hand them over. This same attitude extended to Osama bin Laden and Al-Qaeda. After bin Laden arrived in Afghanistan in 1996, the Taliban allowed him to operate freely, despite mounting international pressure. Bin Laden had previously been critical of the presence of American forces in Saudi Arabia, and his return to Afghanistan was largely a reaction to this issue.

Bin Laden's criticism of American forces in Saudi Arabia became a rallying point for him and his followers. The Taliban's refusal to extradite him, despite calls from the U.S. and the United Nations, ultimately led to their downfall. The 1998 bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, which were linked to Al-Qaeda,

made it clear that the Taliban's harbouring of bin Laden had serious consequences. When the U.S. demanded that the Taliban hand over bin Laden, they refused, citing his status as a guest. This decision set the stage for the eventual invasion of Afghanistan in 2001. The Taliban's governance was marked by a combination of sincere religious conviction and rigid enforcement, which led to both internal and international consequences. While their actions were rooted in their interpretation of Islam, their failure to adapt and engage diplomatically contributed to their eventual downfall. The situation in Afghanistan today remains complex, with many lessons to be learned from the past.

Afghan Jihad and New American Doctrine

Since the establishment of Pakistan and the success of the Afghan Jihad, the strategic position of Pakistan has become increasingly significant, particularly with the material progress of Asia, especially China. This is why several policies from the America-India alliance are against Pakistan, and Pakistan's nuclear explosions have only accelerated the situation. America and India have always opposed this. The following policies are continuing aggressively:

1. **AF-PAK Doctrine**
2. **The Cold Start Doctrine**
3. **4th Generation Warfare Doctrine**

America has developed a new policy of war, the AF-PAK Doctrine. It intends to implement this war in Pakistan, reducing Pakistan to the same state as Afghanistan, Somalia, Iraq, Libya, and Syria, back to the Stone Age. Much effort has already been invested in creating a state of anarchy in the northern frontier areas and Baluchistan, but the people, scholars, politicians, and army have faced it bravely.

Still, with the help of India, America is determined to complete this doctrine. Israel is also providing technical support in this regard. India, in line with its war policy the Cold Start Doctrine is aggressively preparing its military infrastructure with the help of America and Israel along Pakistan's borders. India is trying to sever Sindh from Pakistan and reach Gwadar, aiming to sabotage the entire CPEC plan. Analysts write, "The Cold Start doctrine is designed to allow India's conventional forces to perform holding attacks to prevent a nuclear retaliation from Pakistan in the event of a conflict."

Chapter 7

My diplomatic engagement at Kabul



Relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan have never been ideal since the very beginning, and the primary reason for this is the Durand Line. This 2,640-kilometre (1,640-mile) long border separates Afghanistan and Pakistan. The line was established through an agreement between Sir Mortimer Durand, a secretary of the British Indian government, and Abdur Rahman Khan, the emir, or ruler, of Afghanistan. Afghanistan never accepted this border, and as a result, when Pakistan requested to join the United Nations after its independence, Afghanistan opposed it. Both countries are Islamic democracies, allies of non-European countries, and members of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). However, despite these shared affiliations, the relationship between the two nations has never been ideal. Former Afghan President Hamid Karzai once remarked

that Afghanistan and Pakistan were inseparable brothers, but how can this be realised? In my view, dialogue among civil society people-to-people engagement is essential. Both nations need to recognise how to replace hatred with love, and the youth, including both men and women, can play a significant role in this process. Both nations need to rise and foster the realisation that they should be the guarantors of peace.

Unfortunately, the atmosphere of mistrust is increasing day by day. I emphasize the need for dialogue between the civil societies of both countries because, after the suicide bombings in London on July 7, 2005, I took a study delegation to Northern Ireland to understand how the cycle of revenge was broken, how the attacks and violence by the Irish Republic Army (IRA), consisting of Catholic Christians, came to an end, and how the hatred between Catholic and Protestant Christians was healed. The IRA was a terrorist group that bombed Lord Mountbatten's boat, killing him, and in the 1980s, they attacked Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's hotel, causing the deaths of many people. Through bomb blasts in Britain and beyond, the IRA damaged British interests. During this period, the British harboured such intense hatred for the Irish that signs reading, "No Irish, No Blacks, No Dogs" were posted in their homes. However, how was peace established there? In fact, people-to-people dialogue played a key role.

Though Northern Ireland is part of Britain and Pakistan and Afghanistan are separate nations, the common factors between them are the lack of trust, misguided thinking, and distorted views on issues that only their people can change. I want to highlight that when our delegation visited a centre where convicted IRA criminals were being rehabilitated to reintegrate into society, I asked, "Why did you resort to terrorism?" The response was that the British were oppressors in Ireland. Now, we must understand how this mindset was altered.

Though many have attempted to bring the people of Pakistan and Afghanistan closer, their efforts have often been superficial: "they came, talked, and left." However, the Centre for Research and Security Studies (CRSS) initiated the most effective Pakistan-Afghanistan Track 1.5/II bilateral dialogue aimed at improving relations between the two countries, called "Beyond Boundaries." This initiative involved organisations such as The Foundation for Integrated Development Action (FIDA), Duran Research and Analysis (DRA), and Women and Peace Studies Organisation as Afghan partners. More recently, CRSS partnered with the Organisation of Economic Studies and Peace (OESP), which is a commendable initiative. In this project, women, youth, teachers, politicians, former diplomats, bureaucrats, and the media are participating. These participants understand the importance of fostering mutual relations and are involved in dialogues through seminars, literary and cultural events, and student exchanges. As a result, positive outcomes are emerging.

Both governments consider this initiative a useful step toward improving relations. I believe that the platform provided by CRSS encourages celebrating common values rather than focusing on points of difference. This creates opportunities to develop tolerance, wisdom, prudence, and statesmanship. As a result of this dialogue, a working group, the Pakistan-Afghanistan Joint Committee (PAJC), has been formed, and Afghan Studies Centres have also been established.

In my view, both religious and secular circles must work together toward this goal, and non-state actors should not hinder this progress. Additionally, government institutions should not only encourage these mutual dialogues but also help implement their recommendations.

Charing of Pakistan-Afghanistan Joint Committee (PAJC)



Beyond Boundaries III: Panel session at a Pakistan-Afghanistan Track 1.5/II dialogue.

The recent meeting of the Pakistan-Afghanistan Joint Committee (PAJC) for the Beyond Boundaries III Project was held in Kabul on December 15, 2007, under my presidency, with the cooperation of CRSS and OESP. The Pakistani delegation consisted of Rana Fazal Khan MNA, Shazia Murri MNA, Senator Shibli Fraz, Senator Murtaza Wahab, former diplomats Mian Sana Ullah, Sima Ilahi Baloch, and Qazi Humayon, General (R) Asif Yasin Malik, former IG Shoaib Saddal, Kashif Abbasi from ARY, Muhammad Tahir Khan, an expert on Pak-Afghan affairs, Raja Sarfraz from GEO, Rahman Azhar from Express, Imtiaz Gull from CRSS, Toaha Qureshi MBE, Zahid Hussain, senior journalist and writer, Faiza, Secretary General of the Pakistan-Afghanistan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry, among others. From Afghanistan, the participants included Abdul Qadir Zazai MP, Mir Waiz Yasini MP, Khalid Pashtun MP, Rangina Kargar MP, Elay Irshad MP, Salim Khan Qanduzi, former Governor of Nangarhar Province, Asif Nang, Director of the Technical Research Centre at Karvan University, Danish Karokhail, journalist, Najiba Ayubi, journalist, Muhammad Rafi Siddiqui, Operations Director at Khurshid Group, Abdul Qadir Bhaman, Chief of the International Chamber of Commerce, Muhammad Younas Mehmand, Vice President of the Afghan Chamber of Commerce, Muzammil Shanvari, former Minister, Asila Wardak, diplomat, Mina Virk, representative of the International Chamber of Commerce, Naqib

Ullah Safi, Secretary General of the Pakistan-Afghanistan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Before the meeting, Zahid Nasrullah, the Pakistani diplomat in Afghanistan, hosted a lavish dinner for us, with assistance from the Commercial Attaché and Defence Attaché Brigadier Farooq Zaman. The Executive Director of CRSS had already informed me that the situation might become more hostile, so I had to preside over the meeting carefully as an international observer to ensure that the desired results were achieved.

In this meeting, all participants were experienced, skilled professionals and high-profile individuals. They expressed their views openly and listened to others with tolerance. The mutual respect and tolerance displayed by all participants exceeded my expectations, and there was a shared sense of goodwill towards each other. Upon reviewing the previous meetings of this project, I realised that the establishment of working groups to improve the situation and mutual relations between the two countries was an encouraging step. In particular, the exchange of delegations and consultations between the Director Generals of Military Operations (DGMOs) of both countries was a positive initiative that would improve relations. Consequently, cooperation and dialogue would continue.

The broad-minded discussions among the members of PAJC reflected their commitment to addressing the issues of peace, security, the dignified return of immigrants, cooperation among media groups, establishing a disciplined framework for the transportation of people and goods, trade facilities, and overcoming obstacles in securing visas and scholarships for students.

Recommendations of PAJC

The seriousness of the members of PAJC can be seen in the steps they took to form a monitoring group to assess the effectiveness of the dialogues, and in the following recommendations.

1. The Pakistan-Afghanistan Transit Trade Coordinating Authority (APTTCA) should immediately convene a meeting to address transit trade issues.
2. Bilateral trade, including the Afghan Export Regulatory Tax, should be initiated without delay.
3. Pakistani scholarships for Afghan students should be implemented immediately.



Beyond Boundaries III: A Pakistan-Afghanistan Track II diplomacy session.

4. The Government of Afghanistan should take urgent steps to complete the projects initiated by Pakistan, including tax exemptions for medical equipment and hospital machinery.
5. Alumni associations should be established for those who have graduated in Pakistan and are working in various departments in Afghanistan, allowing them to contribute to strengthening bilateral relations.

6. Both countries should facilitate visa access, particularly for businesspeople, parliamentarians, media representatives, and patients.

Steps to Improve Bilateral Relations

1. A program should be developed for young people to spend time with families from other countries to foster mutual understanding.

2. A program should be created for journalists to understand each other's perspectives better.

3. Cultural programs should be organised in which musicians and artists from both countries can participate.

4. The status of the programs approved by the Chief Minister of Sindh in January 2017 should be reviewed.

5. The Forum for International Relations Development (FIRD), a British think tank, in collaboration with the School of Economics and Law, UK, has declared 10 scholarships. Under this program, five students from each country. Pakistan and Afghanistan will be offered the opportunity to study in the UK, provided they meet the visa and immigration requirements.

I urged both students and teachers, emphasising that they are valuable assets, not only in Afghanistan but for the entire region. I encouraged them to leave behind past grievances and embrace collaborative projects like this. As an impartial British delegate, I cited the example of the long-standing hostility between European countries, such as Germany, France, and Britain, which led to two World Wars, resulting in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of soldiers and civilians, and the destruction of industries. Some marks of this devastation are still visible in and around London.

Despite this, these nations overcame their differences and formed the European Union, the European Market, the Euro currency, and NATO. This change in mindset and their unity have brought about a strong political system, the safeguarding of human rights, and economic stability across the region. Similarly, Pakistan and Afghanistan can foster bilateral relations based on tolerance, forgiveness, and equality. Through mutual dialogue, peace can be established, leading to political and economic stability, and allowing the people of both nations to prosper.

The Pricking Questions of Afghan University Students

During this visit, Kardad University and Karwan University were also visited, where lectures were delivered, and discussions were held with the students. These students, primarily from the International Relations department, raised very serious and thought-provoking questions. Participants in the discussions included Rana Afzal Khan (MNA), Sima Ilahi Baloch (Former Diplomat), Toaha Qureshi (MBE), Muzammil Shanwari (Former Minister), Elay Irshad (MP), and the well-known journalist Zahid Hussain.

Muzammil Shanwari discussed the objectives, needs, and expected outcomes of the 'Beyond Boundaries III Project' of CRSS and OESP. Rana Afzal Khan expressed his gratitude for the warm welcome extended by various institutions, politicians, and educational institutes such as Kardan and Karwan Universities. He emphasised, "The peace and stability of Afghanistan are as essential to us as the peace and stability of Pakistan. This is achievable only when both countries make sincere efforts. We are brothers, and we can resolve our differences through dialogue. We must acknowledge the issues and work together to find a lasting solution. Afghanistan is an independent country, and we have no

intention of interfering in its internal affairs."

The Author's Speech to the Delegates

The present writer began his speech with the recitation of the following verses of the Holy Quran:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُم مِّن ذَكَرٍ وَأُنثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِندَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ

Translation: O mankind, We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into races and tribes, so that you may identify one another. Surely the noblest of you, in Allah's sight, is the one who is most pious of you. (Quaan: Hujrat 49:13)

identify one ano
is the one who



Prof Dr. Toaha Qureshi

Then I emphasised that both nations are Muslim and, therefore, should be seen as one united body with a shared culture. We are relatives, with Afghans running businesses in Pakistan, yet the hostility between us is inexplicable. Perhaps we have forgotten the lesson from the Holy Quran. If the Berlin Wall between East and West Germany can fall, why can't the wall of hostility between Afghanistan and Pakistan come down? Extremism and terrorism are international and multidimensional issues that can be addressed more effectively. I urged the youth, who are our future, to adopt an unbiased perspective. I shared the example of the hostility between Britain and Northern Ireland, where thousands lost their lives due to terrorist activities, such as the IRA's bombing of Lord Mountbatten's boat and an attack on the hotel where British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was staying. However, through people-to-people dialogue, peace was established in Northern

Ireland, and today the people are part of a democratic government. They even dine with the Queen of Britain. We must learn from Europe's history of war and peace.

Pakistan should not jeopardise its relations with Afghanistan because of its enmity with India, and it should focus on eliminating extremism, particularly in the northern areas. Similarly, Afghanistan should act against all extremist groups working against Pakistan. To achieve lasting peace and security, both Pakistan and Afghanistan should engage the following five groups in dialogue:

1. People-to-People (P2P)
2. Government-to-Government (G2G)
3. Army-to-Army (A2A)
4. Media-to-Media (M2M)
5. Business-to-Business (B2B)

Instead of making a speech, former diplomat Sima Ilahi Baloch raised the most important questions. She pointed out that many students and teachers had either been born in Pakistan, educated there, or had parents who had been in Pakistan as immigrants during the Russian occupation of Afghanistan. One thing became clear during these meetings: there is no real distance between the people of the two countries. Afghan participants thanked the Pakistani people for their help during the Afghan Jihad against Russia, for supporting their immigrants, and for continuing to assist them. However, they expressed strong disapproval of Pakistan's support for the Taliban, extremists, and terrorists.

Students with anti-Pakistan sentiments openly voiced their concerns. Many were convinced that Pakistan supported terrorist groups like the Haqqani network to destabilise Afghanistan.

They also complained that Pakistan had closed its border, causing damage to their businesses and resulting in rotting fruits. However, they emphasised that the military made this decision, while the politicians seemed helpless. They pointed out that India openly traded with them, offering thousands of scholarships, while Pakistan had only one flight, and five flights went to India. Why, they asked, does Pakistan prevent them from engaging with India? They emphasised that Afghanistan is an independent country and should be free to make its own decisions.

The Pakistani delegation responded to every question satisfactorily. They explained that, although there were several issues, some had been exaggerated, and the media, especially the Indian media, played a negative role in shaping public opinion. They assured that Pakistan deeply values the peace and stability of Afghanistan, as Pakistan has suffered numerous losses due to the ongoing instability in Afghanistan. Pakistan's security agencies have also incurred significant financial losses and losses of. Therefore, Pakistan has no interest in supporting terrorism in Afghanistan when so many people involved in terrorist activities in Pakistan have found refuge in Afghanistan. General Qamar Bajwa conveyed this information to the Afghan authorities.

The Government of Pakistan proposed the following working groups:

1. Initiation of military-to-military dialogue
2. Exchange of intelligence between both countries
3. Border management
4. Return of Afghan refugees
5. Economic assistance

Lunch with Dr Abdullah Abdullah: CEO of Afghanistan

The members of the Pakistan-Afghanistan Joint Committee (PAJC) of the Beyond Boundaries III Project met with Dr Abdullah Abdullah, the Chief Executive of the National Alliance of the Government of Afghanistan, in his office, where they had a detailed discussion over lunch. Prior to this meeting, there had been an exchange of views with Abdur Rauf Ibrahimi, the Speaker of the National Assembly of Afghanistan, during breakfast in his chamber. These meetings were proposed and coordinated by Muzammil Shanwari, former Deputy Minister for Commerce.



Abdullah Abdullah (left), former Chief Executive of Afghanistan, shaking hands with Dr Toaha Qureshi MBE.

Dr Abdullah told the participants that a genuine war against terrorism would restore the atmosphere of confidence between both countries. He further emphasised that Afghanistan always valued good relations with its neighbours based on mutual respect, good relations, and sincere cooperation. Dr Abdullah became quite concerned and frustrated when informed that the Afghan bureaucracy was creating obstacles in securing medical equipment for Jinnah Hospital, provided by Pakistan. He immediately instructed his team to remove these obstacles and ensure the machines were installed in the hospital.

He mentioned that, although political will was often lacking, Track II dialogues were a promising step forward. He observed that, despite efforts, every time dialogues began, negative actions from both sides would make it necessary to start again. He lamented that due to terrorism, both nations' energies were being consumed, and

while every meeting sparked hope, mutual bitterness and terrorism often replaced it. Dr. Abdullah emphasised the need to look for solutions to shared concerns, hinting at the Haqqani network and the Taliban as key issues. He expressed the importance of using political strength and courage to free the younger generation from the burdens of the past. He also pointed out that, although the Taliban controlled 70% of Afghanistan in the 1990s, the leadership, including Professor Burhanuddin Rabbani and Ahmad Shah Masood Shaheed, had worked hard to arrange talks between the Tajik government and the opposition.

I found Dr Abdullah's conversation with the PAJC members to be thoughtful, blending hope, passion, and carefulness. He truly wanted to make Pakistan and Afghanistan a cradle of peace by addressing their security issues.

In this meeting, the Pakistan delegation emphasised that although Pakistan had generously helped their Afghan brothers during the Afghan Jihad, there were still negative feelings among the Afghan people towards Pakistan. They also expressed concern about Afghanistan's growing ties with India, which is an ally of Israel in the context of Muslim conflicts. They stated that while Pakistan recognised Afghanistan's sovereignty and independence, it had objections when Afghan authorities made statements accusing Pakistan of supporting terrorism.

The Pakistan delegation reassured Abdur Rauf Ibrahimi, Dr Abdullah, and the Afghan parliament members that Pakistan's interest lay in achieving political and economic stability and long-term peace in Afghanistan, not in destabilising the country. They further pointed out that the mutual dialogues between the Director Generals of Military Operations (DGMOs) were a positive step, and the visit of Pakistan's Army Chief to Afghanistan would further

strengthen stability. The delegation emphasised that people-to-people contact was an important initiative that would foster cooperation between officials from both countries and inspire a renewed spirit and determination in political institutions. Pakistan reiterated that it did not view Afghanistan through the lens of its relationship with India and urged Afghanistan to engage directly with Pakistan if there were any concerns, instead of using Indian media as a platform.

Rana Afzal recalled that during a conference in Kathmandu, the Afghan delegation had severely criticised Pakistan for terrorism, but Pakistan had responded positively. Both countries should resolve their issues through dialogue rather than public criticism. After the meeting, Dr Abdullah smiled and reiterated that he would visit Pakistan soon, expressing hope that the relations between the two countries would normalise and that cooperation in the educational and medical sectors would increase.

Chapter 8

Impact of the Iranian Revolution in South Asia and the Middle East



Reza Shah Pahlavi, founder of the Pahlavi dynasty and Shah of Iran (1925–1941), in full ceremonial

Mohammad Reza Pahlavi ascended to the Peacock Throne in 1941 following the abdication of his father, Reza Shah, amid Anglo-Soviet occupation during World War II, marking the continuation of the Pahlavi dynasty's efforts to centralise power and Westernise Iran. His early rule was turbulent, characterised by the 1940s oil nationalisation crisis under Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh (Mosaddeq), which led to the 1953 CIA and MI6-orchestrated Operation Ajax that ousted Mossadegh and reinstated the Shah's autocratic control, solidifying Western influence through economic concessions to British and American oil interests. By the 1960s, facing domestic unrest and U.S. pressure under President John F. Kennedy for reforms, the Shah launched the White Revolution in 1963, a sweeping modernisation program encompassing land redistribution, women's suffrage, literacy campaigns, and industrialisation, funded partly by oil revenues and aimed at transforming Iran into a regional power. This initiative, approved via a controversial referendum with reported irregularities, redistributed feudal lands to peasants and expanded infrastructure, boosting GDP growth to 12% annually in the late 1960s. However, it alienated traditional landowners, clergy, and

bazaar merchants by undermining their economic bases and promoting secular, Western-style education. The Shah's SAVAK (سازمان اطلاعات و امنیت کشور or the Organisation of National Security and Information) secret police, trained by the CIA, suppressed dissent through torture and surveillance, fostering widespread resentment among intellectuals, leftists, and Shia clerics who viewed the reforms as cultural imperialism. By the 1970s, despite economic booms from oil price surges, corruption, inequality, and rapid urbanisation exacerbated social fissures, setting the stage for revolutionary upheaval

The 1979 Islamic Revolution: Causes and Key Events.



Revolutionary Guards and supporters' parade through the streets of Tehran carrying large portraits of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini during the early days of the 1979 Iranian Revolution.

The Iranian Revolution of 1979, which toppled the Pahlavi monarchy and established the Islamic Republic, was a confluence of economic grievances, political repression, and ideological mobilisation against perceived Western domination. Root causes included the White Revolution's disruptive effects, which displaced rural populations and empowered a new urban elite while inflaming religious conservatives; the 1973 oil boom's mismanagement led to inflation exceeding 30%, eroding middle-class support. Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, exiled in 1964 for

opposing the Shah's reforms as un-Islamic, emerged as the revolution's spiritual leader from Paris, disseminating cassette tapes and writings that framed the Shah as a puppet of American imperialism and advocated velayat-e faqih (guardianship of the jurist), a theocratic governance model. Protests ignited in January 1978 with a government-orchestrated attack on a seminary in Qom, sparking a cycle of 40-day mourning marches that snowballed into mass demonstrations; by September's Black Friday massacre in Tehran, where security forces killed hundreds, the Shah's regime was crumbling. Diverse coalitions of Islamists, nationalists, communists, and liberals united temporarily against the monarchy, with strikes paralysing the oil industry and economy. The Shah fled on January 16, 1979, paving the way for Khomeini's triumphant return on February 1, greeted by millions; by February 11, the military declared neutrality, and the monarchy collapsed. The revolution's immediate aftermath saw the U.S. Embassy hostage crisis (November 1979–January 1981), where 52 Americans were held for 444 days, symbolising anti-Western fervour and severing diplomatic ties. Khomeini's consolidation involved purging moderates, executing opponents, and enshrining theocracy via a December 1979 referendum, fundamentally reshaping Iran's political identity from secular monarchy to Shia Islamist state.

Iranian Influence in the region

A wide circle believes that Iranian influence creates obstacles for Islamic ideological institutions. For this purpose, the Iranian intelligence agency used Naheed Afghami, the wife of the Iranian Military Attaché in Pakistan, to entrap Sikander Mirza (Pakistani politician and military general). Naheed Afghami divorced her husband, Colonel Afghami, and married Sikander Mirza. In 1956, Sikander Mirza became the first President of Pakistan, and Naheed Afghami became the First Lady. General Muhammad Ayub, who

later became the President of Pakistan, saluted the same First Lady. Perhaps Pakistan's security agencies were in a deep slumber.

Sikander Mirza had also served as the Governor-General of East Pakistan. Later, due to the illness of Governor-General Ghulam Muhammad, he became the temporary Governor-General and eventually the permanent Governor-General. He appointed Chaudhry Muhammad Ali as his Prime Minister, and later, the position of Governor-General was replaced by that of President.

Sikander Mirza is known for initiating the separation of politics from religion and sidelining the Islamic ideological institutes that had been established during Liaqat Ali Khan's tenure. After his rule, no record of these institutions' performances is seen. In 1958, Sikander Mirza dissolved the assemblies and appointed General Ayub Khan as Martial Law Administrator, effectively eliminating the role of Pakistan's political and ideological systems. Look at the irony of fate, this person had no choice but to work in a hotel as a manager and spent his last days in a small room, dying there with no luxurious life. The President of Pakistan, Yahya Khan, did not permit his burial in Pakistan, and his body was sent to Iran via special air transport, where it was buried with full protocol.

Along with the Afghami family, which had significant Iranian influence, another Isfahani family enjoyed considerable power in Pakistan. This included Nusrat Bhutto, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's second wife, who hailed from Iran. Her grandfather had studied in Najaf, Iraq, and was appointed as an Ayatollah in Iran. Her father, Mirza Muhammad, later became involved in business. Nusrat Isfahani was the daughter of this influential family, and she later became the First Lady of Pakistan. Nusrat Bhutto was a cousin of Naheed Afghami. These high-level conspiracies have, over time, caused Pakistan irreparable damage in ways that are not immediately visible.

Many factions have repeatedly demanded that security agencies address this issue. In another instalment, we uncover another Isfahani family member, Farha Naz Isfahani, the wife of Hussain Haqqani, who was involved in the "Memo Scandal." Haqqani, a Pakistani diplomat in the United States, issued thousands of visas to American professional mercenaries without the required documents, which led to illegal activities across Pakistan, particularly in Islamabad. The terrorist incident involving Raymond Davis, who killed two workers of the ISI in 2011, is an eye-opener. However, Pakistan's security agencies faced this issue bravely, controlling the situation and sending a clear message to these operatives to leave the country. Our agencies should continue using even non-traditional methods, if necessary, to address this issue.

An attempt to export the Iranian Revolution in Pakistan

After the Iranian Revolution in 1979, organisations like *Tehrik-e-Nifaz-e-Fiqh Ja'feriya* were established, and in 1990, a militant group named *Sipah-e-Muhammad* was formed. When Iran decided to export its revolution to Pakistan, both Pakistani and international agencies became concerned about this decision. In retaliation, Anjuman-*e-Sipah-e-Sahabah*, which later became *Sipah-e-Sahabah Pakistan*, was established. This led to the formation of *Lashkar-e-Jhangvi* in 1996, a group formed by people who split from *Sipah-e-Sahabah* and targeted the leadership of *Tehrik-e-Nifaz-e-Fiqh Ja'feriya* and *Sipah-e-Muhammad*. This cycle of violence, supported by both the Iranian and Pakistani governments, continues to some extent, causing violence and death among the public, especially due to sectarian conflicts between Shia and Sunni groups.

The continued influence of foreign powers and the interference of regional and international lobbies are harming Pakistan's stability and development.

This analysis should not be viewed through the lens of the Shia-Sunni conflict; rather, it should be seen in the context of foreign influence. We must keep in mind that some foreign forces may attack Pakistan, which is highly likely, and we should not forget India's "Cold Start Doctrine," which was prepared to launch a sudden attack on Pakistan, with support from Israel.

Some analysts emphasise a triangular cooperation by India, Israel and the Qadiani group of Ahmadiyya Movement (an anti-Pakistan group) of Pakistan. Those who create such a situation will not ask, "Are you a Shia or a Sunni?" Moreover, neither Iran nor Saudi Arabia will come to save us. Only the people of Pakistan and its army can save each other. The responsibility of defending our land and the ideological boundary of our beloved country lies solely with us, and we must fulfil it. Any action against our country, initiated by Iran or Saudi Arabia, must be checked, rather than becoming part of it.

Recently, the construction of the Iranian Seaport of Chabahar, the arrest of Indian spy Kulbhushan Jadhav, and his involvement in operating a terrorist network there are enough to open our eyes. If any country conspires against the people of Pakistan, we should not only warn that country but also foster a sense of responsibility within our people to protect Pakistan. Otherwise, the Pakistani nation will weaken, and when a nation becomes a victim of internal divisions, it loses its very existence.

The Israel-Iran War



The Israel-Iran conflict, simmering through decades of proxy wars, erupted into open hostilities in 2024 and intensified into the Twelve-Day War from 13 to 24 June 2025. Rooted in ideological enmity, Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei labelled Israel a "cancerous tumour", and Israel viewed Iran's nuclear program as an existential threat. The war marked the first direct, sustained military exchange between the two (Britannica, 2025). Tensions boiled over in April 2024 when an Israeli airstrike on Iran's Damascus consulate killed senior officers, prompting Iran's "Operation True Promise" missile barrage on Israel. This was followed by the assassination of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran in July 2024 and Hezbollah's Hassan Nasrallah in September, escalating to Iran's 1 October 2024 missile strikes and Israel's 26 October retaliation targeting Iranian missile sites (House of Commons Library, 2025).

The 2025 phase began on 13 June with Israel's "Operation Rising Lion," a pre-emptive air campaign striking Iranian nuclear facilities at Natanz, Fordow, and Isfahan, assassinating nuclear scientists, generals, and politicians to dismantle Tehran's weaponisation capabilities (Britannica, 2025; ISW, 2025a). Israel justified the strikes as necessary to counter Iran's uranium enrichment, which the IAEA

reported could yield nine warheads by June 2025 (Wikipedia, 2025b). Iran retaliated with "Operation True Promise III," launching over 40 waves of ballistic missiles (including Ghadr and Kheybar Shekan models) and drones, though Israeli defences, aided by U.S. THAAD systems, intercepted 80-90% (ISW, 2025b; Al Jazeera, 2025). The U.S. joined offensively on 22 June, bombing three nuclear sites, using B-20 Spirit bomber jet equipped bunker buster missiles that struck deeply inside Iran's nuclear arsenal, prompting Houthi missile fire from Yemen and fears of regional spillover (NYT, 2025; CNN, 2025).

A U.S.-brokered ceasefire, mediated by Qatar, took effect on 24 June after 12 days of fighting, with Israel claiming it achieved its aims of degrading Iran's nuclear and missile programs (Al Jazeera, 2025; Times of Israel, 2025). Casualties included senior Iranian leaders and infrastructure damage, while Iran vowed reconstruction, beginning work on Parchin and Shahroud missile sites by September 2025 (House of Commons Library, 2025b; ISW, 2025c). The war weakened Iran's "Axis of Resistance" proxies like Hezbollah and Hamas, isolating Tehran and exposing its air defence vulnerabilities (ISW, 2025). Post-ceasefire, U.S.-Iran nuclear talks resumed, though Tehran rejected ending enrichment (House of Commons Library, 2025).

Kulbhushan Jadhav's Network in Iran: Allegations and Geopolitical Implications

The case of Kulbhushan Jadhav, an Indian national arrested by Pakistan in March 2016, has long been a flashpoint in India-Pakistan relations, with allegations centring on his purported operations from Iranian soil.



Indian Spy Kulbhushan Jadhav's

Pakistan claims Jadhav, operating under aliases such as Hussain Mubarak Patel, was a serving officer of India's Secret Intelligence Agency, RAW (Research and Analysis Wing), who established a network of operatives in Iran to fund and facilitate terrorism in Pakistan, particularly targeting ports like Karachi and Gwadar (Wikipedia, 2025a). According to Pakistani authorities, Jadhav purchased boats at Iran's Chabahar port to execute these plots, smuggling personnel and resources across the Iran-Pakistan border for subversive activities in Baluchistan. This network allegedly involved collusion with Baloch insurgent groups like the Baluchistan Liberation Army (BLA) and other militants, providing financial aid and training from bases in Chabahar and Bandar Abbas (Pakistan Today, 2023).

India, however, vehemently denies these espionage charges, asserting that Jadhav had retired prematurely from the Indian Navy and was running a legitimate cargo business in Chabahar when he was abducted by Pakistani operatives or affiliated militants near the Iran-Pakistan border (Business Standard, 2025; The Hindu, 2024). Nonetheless, official investigations revealed that Jadhav was very actively involved in anti-Pakistan terrorist activities. Iran has maintained a cautious stance, gathering information on Jadhav's activities and promising to share findings with both nations, but has not confirmed Pakistani claims of RAW networks on its territory (The Wire, 2016; Dawn, 2016).

These allegations underscore Iran's inadvertent role as a geopolitical fulcrum in South Asian rivalries. Chabahar port, developed with Indian investment as a counter to Pakistan's Gwadar, symbolises this tension, serving as an alleged hub for Jadhav's operations in Pakistani narratives, while representing India's strategic outreach to Central Asia in Delhi's view (Express Tribune, 2017).

India's Alliance with Israel in the Israel-Iran War



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu share a moment during a joint press conference, highlighting the close strategic partnership between India and Israel.

India's response to the Israel-Iran War highlights a deepening strategic alliance with Israel, evolving from post-1992 diplomatic ties into a multifaceted partnership encompassing defence, technology, and counterterrorism. Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, relations have shifted geopolitically toward Israel, especially amid 2024-2025 tensions, with India emerging as Israel's primary non-Western ally (SETA, 2025; Daily Sabah, 2025). The common factors in both individuals are hatred against Muslims and Pakistan being the only Muslim nuclear state, which is rife in India as well as Israel. This was evident in India's refusal to join the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's (SCO) condemnation of Israel's June 2025 strikes on Iran, distancing itself from China, Russia, and Pakistan despite Iran's membership (Al Jazeera, 2025a; SCMP, 2025). New Delhi's separate call for de-escalation via dialogue underscored a "calculated, nuanced" approach prioritising national interests (DW, 2025; Foreign Policy, 2025).

The alliance manifests in military cooperation: Israel supplied drones and missiles for India's May 2025 "Operation Sindhu" against Pakistan, mirroring support during the Kargil War (ME Forum, 2025; India Today, 2024). Economically, bilateral trade hit $10 billion in 2024, bolstered by joint ventures in agriculture and cybersecurity, while Indian students and labourers form Israel's largest foreign cohorts. In the war context, India evacuated citizens from both nations under Operation Sindhu but refrained from

criticising Israel, contrasting its traditional pro-Palestine stance (The Hindu, 2025; Arab News, 2025). Prime Minister Modi urged Netanyahu to prevent escalation in a June call, yet India's silence on Israeli aggression drew accusations of implicit support (The Hindu, 2025; CPPR, 2025).

This tilt risks straining ties with Iran, a key energy supplier and Chabahar partner for Central Asian access, potentially disrupting the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) and India-Middle East-Europe Corridor (IMEC) (New Lines Institute, 2025). Iran's support for Pakistan in Kashmir disputes historically irked India, but shared anti-Taliban efforts in Afghanistan once aligned them. Analysts warn prolonged conflict could test India's "strategic autonomy," eroding Arab confidence in IMEC and boosting Pakistan's regional leverage (India Today, 2024; ME Forum, 2025). Nonetheless, Delhi's pro-Israel posture aligns with Hindu nationalist goals and counters China's Belt and Road via Gwadar (Daily Sabah, 2025). As the ceasefire holds tenuously, India's balancing act, evident in non-involvement amid SCO rifts, prioritises energy security and connectivity while solidifying its Israel partnership (DW, 2025; Foreign Policy, 2025).

Chapter 9

The Israel-Iran War: Escalation from Proxy Conflicts to Direct Confrontation

The Israel-Iran war, which had been simmering through decades of proxy wars, turned open in 2024 and then escalated into the Twelve-Day War between 13 and 24 June 2025. The fundamental differences between the two countries are based on ideological animosity, with Iran's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei declaring Israel a "cancerous tumour" and Israel seeing Iran's nuclear program as a threat to its very existence. The war was the first time there was direct and sustained military contact between the two[1]. Tensions boiled in April 2024 when an Israeli airstrike on Iran's Damascus consulate killed senior officers, prompting Iran's "Operation True Promise" missile barrage on Israel. This was followed by the assassination in Tehran in July 2024 of Hamas's Ismail Haniyeh and Hezbollah's Hassan Nasrallah, culminating in Iran's 1st October 2024 missile attacks and Israel's 26 October attacks on Iranian missile sites[2].

The 12-day war began on 13 June 2025 with Israel's "Operation Rising Lion," a pre-emptive air campaign striking Iranian nuclear facilities at Natanz, Fordow, and Isfahan, assassinating nuclear scientists, generals, and politicians to dismantle Tehran's weaponisation capabilities for its defence[3]. Israel tried to justify the strikes as necessary to counter Iran's uranium enrichment,

[1] Britannica, 2025; "Israel–Iran Proxy Conflict," Encyclopædia Britannica, 2025, https://www.britannica.com.

[2] House of Commons Library, 2025; House of Commons Library, "Israel/US–Iran Conflict 2026: Background and UK Response," Research Briefing CBP-10521 (London: House of Commons, 2025), https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk.

[3] Britannica, 2025; ISW, 2025a; "Israel–Iran Proxy Conflict," Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2025, https://www.britannica.com; Institute for the Study of War, "Israel–Iran Twelve-Day War: Operational Analysis," ISW Conflict Report, 2025.

which the IAEA reported could yield nine warheads by June 2025[4]. Iran retaliated with "Operation True Promise III," launching over 40 waves of ballistic missiles (including Ghadr and Kheybar Shekan models) and drones, though Israeli defences, aided by U.S. THAAD systems, intercepted 80-90%[5]. The U.S. joined offensively on 22 June, bombing three nuclear sites, using B-2 Spirit bomber jet equipped bunker buster missiles that struck deeply inside Iran's nuclear arsenal, prompting Houthi missile fire from Yemen and fears of regional spillover[6].

A U.S.-brokered ceasefire, mediated by Qatar, took effect on 24 June 2025 after 12 days of fighting, with Israel claiming it achieved its aims of degrading Iran's nuclear and missile programs[7]. Casualties included senior Iranian leaders and infrastructure damage, while Iran vowed reconstruction, beginning work on Parchin and Shahroud missile sites by September 2025[8]. The war weakened Iran's "Axis of Resistance" proxies like Hezbollah and Hamas, isolating Tehran and exposing its air defence vulnerabilities[9]. Post-ceasefire, U.S.-Iran nuclear talks resumed, though Tehran rejected ending enrichment[10]. In February 2026, the world saw a different Iran, a resilient one nation-ready for strong and strategic response to not only Israel but US bases in the Middle East.

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[4] Wikipedia, 2025b; "Twelve-Day War," Wikipedia, last modified 2025, https://en.wikipedia.org.

[5] ISW, 2025b; Al Jazeera, 2025; Institute for the Study of War, "Iran's Retaliatory Strikes: Assessment," ISW Conflict Report, 2025; "Israel–Iran War: Latest Updates," Al Jazeera, 2025, https://www.aljazeera.com.

[6] NYT, 2025; CNN, 2025; "U.S. Joins Israel in Strikes on Iran Nuclear Sites," The New York Times, 22 June 2025, https://www.nytimes.com; "U.S. Bombs Iranian Nuclear Facilities in Joint Operation with Israel," CNN, 22 June 2025, https://www.cnn.com.

[7] Al Jazeera, 2025; Times of Israel, 2025; "Israel–Iran War: Ceasefire Takes Effect," Al Jazeera, 24 June 2025, https://www.aljazeera.com; "Israel Claims Victory as Ceasefire Holds," Times of Israel, 24 June 2025, https://www.timesofisrael.com.

[8] House of Commons Library, 2025b; ISW, 2025c; House of Commons Library, "Israel/US–Iran Conflict: Post-Ceasefire Developments," Research Briefing (London: House of Commons, 2025); Institute for the Study of War, "Iran Reconstruction and Missile Programme Assessment," ISW Conflict Report, 2025.

[9] ISW, 2025; Institute for the Study of War, "Axis of Resistance Post-War Assessment," ISW Conflict Report, 2025.

By early 2026, joint US–Israeli strikes targeted Iranian military sites, nuclear facilities, and leadership, triggering Iranian retaliation against Israel and US bases in the Gulf. The war risked wider regional involvement and global economic disruption (especially closure of strait of Hormuz and the oil prices going rocket high). The conflict carried the risk of nuclear war that could have engulfed the world in a third world war. Pakistani political and military leadership — led by Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Asim Munir — intervened diplomatically, brokering a ceasefire and hosting peace talks that averted immediate wider escalation to a possible nuclear war.

India's Alliance with Israel in the Israel-Iran War

India's response to the Israel-Iran War highlights a deepening strategic alliance with Israel, evolving from post-1992 diplomatic ties into a multifaceted partnership encompassing defence, technology, and counterterrorism. Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, relations have shifted geopolitically toward Israel, especially amid 2024-2025 tensions, with India emerging as Israel's primary non-Western ally[14] The common factors in both individuals are hatred against Muslims and Pakistan being the only Muslim nuclear state, which is rife in India as well as Israel. This was evident in India's refusal to join the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's (SCO) condemnation of Israel's June 2025 strikes on Iran, distancing itself from China, Russia, and Pakistan despite Iran's membership[15] New Delhi's separate call for de-escalation via dialogue underscored a "calculated, nuanced" approach prioritising national interests[16].

[14] House of Commons Library, 2025; House of Commons Library, "Israel/US–Iran Conflict 2026: Background and UK Response," Research Briefing CBP-10521 (London: House of Commons, 2025), https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk.

The alliance manifests in military cooperation: Israel supplied drones and missiles for India's May 2025 "Operation Sindhur" against Pakistan, mirroring support during the Kargil war[11]. Economically, bilateral trade hit $10 billion in 2024, bolstered by joint ventures in agriculture and cybersecurity, while Indian students and labourers form Israel's largest foreign cohorts. In the war context, India evacuated citizens from both nations under Operation Sindhur but refrained from criticising Israel, contrasting its traditional pro-Palestine stance[12]. Prime Minister Modi urged Netanyahu to prevent escalation in a June call, yet India's silence on Israeli aggression drew accusations of implicit support[13].

This tilt risks straining ties with Iran, a key energy supplier and Chabahar partner for Central Asian access, potentially disrupting the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) and India-Middle East-Europe Corridor (IMEC)[14]. Iran's support for Pakistan in Kashmir disputes historically irked India, but shared anti-Taliban efforts in Afghanistan once aligned them. Analysts warn prolonged conflict could test

[11] Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research (SETA), "India–Israel Strategic Alignment in the Middle East," SETA Analysis, 2025, https://www.setav.org; "India Deepens Strategic Ties with Israel amid Regional Conflict," Daily Sabah, 2025, https://www.dailysabah.com.

[12] "India Refuses to Join SCO Condemnation of Israeli Strikes on Iran," Al Jazeera, 2025, https://www.aljazeera.com; "India Distances Itself from SCO Statement on Israel–Iran Conflict," South China Morning Post, 2025, https://www.scmp.com.

[13] "India Calls for Dialogue amid Israel–Iran Escalation," Deutsche Welle, 2025, https://www.dw.com; "India's Calculated Neutrality in the Israel–Iran War," Foreign Policy, 2025, https://foreignpolicy.com.

[14] "Israel's Military Support for India: From Kargil to Operation Sindhu," Middle East Forum, 2025, https://www.meforum.org; "India–Israel Defence Cooperation: A Strategic Overview," India Today, 2024, https://www.indiatoday.in.

[15] "India Refrains from Criticising Israel amid Iran Escalation," The Hindu, 2025, https://www.thehindu.com; "India's Silence on Israeli Strikes Draws Regional Criticism," Arab News, 2025, https://www.arabnews.com.

[16] "Modi's Silence on Israeli Aggression Draws Accusations of Implicit Support," The Hindu, 2025, https://www.thehindu.com; Centre for Public Policy Research, "India's Strategic Tilt toward Israel: Implications for South Asian Diplomacy," CPPR Policy Brief, 2025, https://www.cppr.in.

[17] New Lines Institute for Strategy and Policy, "India's Connectivity Corridors and the Israel–Iran Conflict," New Lines Institute Report, 2025, https://newlinesinstitute.org.

India's "strategic autonomy," eroding Arab confidence in IMEC and boosting Pakistan's regional leverage. Nonetheless, Delhi's pro-Israel posture aligns with Hindu nationalist goals and counters China's Belt and Road via Gwadar. As the ceasefire holds tenuously, India's balancing act, evident in non-involvement amid SCO rifts, prioritises energy security and connectivity while solidifying its Israel partnership.

Expansionist Israel-a looming danger for World War III

Since its establishment in 1948, Israel has pursued a pattern of territorial expansion and military aggression that has progressively destabilised the Middle East and, in the context of the 2025–2026 wars, raised credible fears of a wider global conflagration. Far from confining itself to recognised borders, Israel has occupied, annexed, or conducted sustained military operations in the territories of virtually every neighbouring state — Palestine, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq — while extending its reach to Iran, Yemen, Qatar, Tunisia, and beyond. The International Court of Justice, in its landmark July 2024 Advisory Opinion, confirmed that Israel's settlement enterprise and annexation measures in the occupied Palestinian territory are illegal under international law, constituting a violation of Article 2(4) of the United Nations Charter and the Fourth Geneva Convention.

Under the current far-right coalition government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, and National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir, Israel's expansionism has accelerated to unprecedented levels. In the occupied West Bank alone, 2024 saw the establishment of at least 59 new settler outposts — an unprecedented figure

compared with an annual average of fewer than seven between 1996 and 2023 — while the number of settlements and outposts rose by nearly 50 per cent, from 141 in 2022 to over 210 by late 2025, with a record 54 new settlements officially approved in 2025. The United Nations reported that settlement expansions in 2025 reached their highest level since 2017. In February 2026, the UN Special Rapporteur on the occupied Palestinian territory condemned Israel's legislative measures as constituting de facto annexation, warning that "annexation does not produce stability." Simultaneously, Israel expanded its military footprint in the Golan Heights following the fall of the Assad regime in late 2024, seized the demilitarised buffer zone in violation of the 1974 disengagement agreement, and conducted hundreds of strikes across Syrian territory.

The danger this expansionism poses to global peace became starkly apparent in September 2025, when Israel struck six sovereign states — Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Tunisia, Qatar, and Yemen — within just 72 hours, demonstrating a willingness to project military force across multiple theatres with little regard for international norms or the sovereignty of other nations. The February 2026 joint US–Israeli Operation Epic Fury, which targeted Iran's leadership and military infrastructure with approximately 900 strikes in 12 hours, drew immediate Iranian retaliation against US military bases and civilian infrastructure across Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, and Iraq, as well as a strike on British bases in Cyprus. The conflict rapidly engulfed the entire Persian Gulf region, threatened the closure of the Strait of Hormuz — through which approximately one-fifth of global oil passes — and prompted fears that NATO allies could be drawn in, creating a pathway to a broader global

conflict. The Council on Foreign Relations rated the Iran–Israel confrontation a Tier I global conflict risk for 2026, and six of the top-ranked conflict contingencies involved Israel to some degree.

Critically, Israel's expansionism is no longer merely a political choice but a structural feature of its governance. Prime Minister Netanyahu declared in September 2025 that Israel would become a "super Sparta"[18] — a highly militarised, self-sufficient warrior state capable of defying international pressure and arms embargoes. With its war-driven economy increasingly dependent on a flourishing military-industrial complex, Israel has acquired a structural incentive for perpetual conflict. This trajectory — the systematic annexation of Palestinian territory, the repeated violation of the sovereignty of neighbouring states, the assassination of foreign heads of state, and the demonstrated willingness to conduct simultaneous military operations across an entire region — represents the single most destabilising force in the contemporary international order and the most plausible pathway by which a regional war could escalate, whether by design or miscalculation, into a global conflagration.

American Undue Favour / Support for Israel

The United States has provided Israel with approximately **$3.8 billion**[19]. in annual military aid for years, plus emergency

[18] Netanyahu made this declaration on 15 September 2025 at a conference of the Finance Ministry's Accountant General in Jerusalem. See "Under fire, Netanyahu scrambles to explain claim Israel may become 'super Sparta'," Times of Israel, 17 September 2025; "'Super Sparta': Netanyahu's megalomania hits a fever pitch," Middle East Eye, 18 September 2025; "How Sparta, invoked by Netanyahu and the Trump team, explains 2025," Washington Post, 30 December 2025; Ahmed Alqarout, "Insulation Not Isolation: Israel's Super-Sparta War Economy," Al-Shabaka, 11 March 2026.

[19] Jeremy M. Sharp, U.S. Foreign Aid to Israel (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2024). Emergency supplemental appropriations to Israel during 2023–2026 exceeded US$14 billion.

packages. This support includes advanced weapons, intelligence sharing, and diplomatic cover at the UN. Many analysts and critics (including Bernie Sanders) describe this as "undue favour" or unconditional backing, arguing it enables Israeli actions without sufficient accountability. The scale of this assistance is historically unprecedented. Since 1948, the United States has provided Israel with over US$260 billion[20] in cumulative aid (adjusted for inflation), making it the largest recipient of US foreign assistance in the post-war era. Emergency supplemental packages during the 2023–2026 period alone exceeded US$14 billion[21]. US diplomatic support has been equally consequential: the United States has exercised its veto at the UN Security Council more than 50 times to shield Israel from binding resolutions, including vetoes on ceasefire demands during the 2023–2024 Gaza war and the 2026 Iran conflict. Critics argue that this blanket protection has insulated Israel from the enforcement mechanisms that the international community routinely applies to other states, creating a framework of impunity that incentivises further military adventurism[22].

Attitudinal Changes in the West against Israel

American and Western public opinion towards Israel has undergone a historic shift since 2023. In the United States, Gallup reported in July 2025 that only 32 per cent of Americans approved of Israel's military action in Gaza — a new low and a 16-point decline among both Democrats and independents since

[20] Jeremy M. Sharp, U.S. Foreign Aid to Israel (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2024). Emergency supplemental appropriations to Israel during 2023–2026 exceeded US$14 billion.

[21] Jeremy M. Sharp, U.S. Foreign Aid to Israel (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2024). Emergency supplemental appropriations to Israel during 2023–2026 exceeded US$14 billion.

[22] Jeremy M. Sharp, *U.S. Foreign Aid to Israel* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2024).

the conflict began[23]. For the first time in Gallup's annual measurement since 2001, Americans' sympathies no longer lie more with Israelis than with Palestinians; among those aged 18 to 34, 53 per cent now sympathise more with Palestinians[24]. A Pew Research Centre survey in October 2025 found that 59 per cent of Americans viewed the Israeli government unfavourably (up from 51 per cent in early 2024), while 39 per cent said Israel was going "too far" in Gaza — up from 27 per cent at the start of the war[25]. An August 2025 Economist/YouGov poll found that 45 per cent of American voters believe Israel is committing genocide against the Palestinians; only 31 per cent disagree[26]. Crucially, this erosion of support is no longer confined to Democrats: Republican sympathy for Israel fell 10 points to its lowest level since 2004, and 19 per cent of Republican respondents told Pew that Israel had gone "too far" — nearly double the figure from December 2023[27]. Only 21 per cent of Americans supported the February 2026 strikes on Iran, while 49 per cent considered them unnecessary and costly[28]. The shift in Western Europe has been equally profound, moving beyond public sentiment into state action. In September 2025, a coordinated wave of major Western governments — the United

[23] Gallup, '32% in U.S. Back Israel's Military Action in Gaza, a New Low' (29 July 2025).
[24] Gallup, 'Israelis No Longer Ahead in Americans' Middle East Sympathies' (4 March 2026).
[25] Pew Research Center, 'How Americans View the Israel-Hamas Conflict 2 Years Into the War' (3 October 2025).
[26] Brookings Institution, 'Support for Israel continues to deteriorate, especially among Democrats and young people' (6 August 2025), citing Economist/YouGov poll, August 2025.
[27] Newsweek, 'Republicans are turning against Israel, polls show' (22 December 2025), citing Pew Research Center and Gallup data.
[28] Daily Sabah, 'Is the US-Israel-Iran war the beginning of World War III?' (5 March 2026), citing February 2026 polling data.

Kingdom, France, Canada, Australia, Belgium, Luxembourg, Malta, and Portugal — formally recognised the State of Palestine, bringing the total to 157 of 193 UN member states (over 81 per [29] The UK and France became the first permanent members of the UN Security Council to do so, alongside China and Russia. On 21 November 2024, the International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants for Prime Minister Netanyahu and former Defence Minister Gallant for war crimes and crimes against humanity relating to operations in Gaza — the first-time leaders of a democratic state have been subject to such warrants[30] All 27 EU member states, as parties to the Rome Statute, are legally obliged to arrest the named individuals should they enter their territory. Several European states have moved to restrict arms transfers: the United Kingdom suspended 30 export licences in September 2024, Canada halted arms shipments and suspended a further 30 permits, Belgium and Japan suspended weapons exports, and France — whose president declared that an arms embargo was "the only way to end the war" — committed to enforcing the ICC warrants[31] EU Commission President von der Leyen and chief diplomat Kallas described the suffering in Gaza as "unbearable" and indefensible[32]

[29] Al Jazeera, 'Which are the 150+ countries that have recognised Palestine as of 2025?' (23 September 2025); see also CNN, 'Here are the countries that have recognized a Palestinian state' (23 September 2025).
[30] International Criminal Court, 'Situation in the State of Palestine: ICC Pre-Trial Chamber I rejects the State of Israel's challenges to jurisdiction and issues warrants of arrest for Benjamin Netanyahu and Yoav Gallant' (21 November 2024).
[31] Al Jazeera, 'Arms to Israel: Will countries halt sales in wake of ICC arrest warrants?' (22 November 2024); Times of Israel, 'Analysts warn ICC arrest warrants could pave way to future arms embargoes on Israel' (23 November 2024).
[32] Euronews, 'France and four other EU countries ready, states that recognise Palestine almost 160' (22 September 2025).

However, official US policy under the Trump administration in 2025–2026 remained strongly supportive of Israel, though domestic political pressure extended well beyond progressives. Within trumps Republican Party, Sen. Rand Paul (Republican, Kentucky) co-sponsored Democrat-led war powers resolutions and voted with Democrats to halt the Iran war, while Rep. Thomas Massie (Republican, Kentucky) declared on X, "I am opposed to this War. This is not 'America First,'" and partnered with democrat senator Rep. Ro Khanna to force a congressional vote[33]. Rep. Warren Davidson (Republican, Ohio) also supported the resolution [33][34] Sen. Susan Collins (Republican, Maine) voted with Democrats on 1 May 2026 to halt the war, stating that the 60-day War Powers deadline "is not a suggestion, it is a requirement" ([35]. Sens. John Curtis (Republican, Utah), Thom Tillis (Republican, North Carolina), and Josh Hawley (Republican, Missouri) demanded a congressional vote on continued military action[36]. In conservative media, Tucker Carlson and Megyn Kelly became vocal critics of the war and what they described as Israeli influence over US military decisions, framing the conflict as a betrayal of Trump's anti-interventionist campaign promise[37]. Even within the administration, friction surfaced: Trump personally demanded

[33] "Trump Critic Massie, Democrats Speak Against Trump Iran Strikes," Fox News, 28 February 2026, https://www.foxnews.com; "Donald Trump's Strikes on Iran Rattle War Powers Debate in Congress," The Hill, 4 March 2026, https://thehill.com.
[34] Ibid.
[35] "Republicans Say They Will Defer to Trump on Iran War Despite Arrival of Deadline," NPR News, 1 May 2026, https://www.npr.org.
[36] Ibid.; "Republicans in Congress Brace for a Fight over the Iran War Price Tag," NPR News, 10 April 2026, https://www.npr.org.
[37] "One Month In, Disapproval High but US Lawmakers Take No Action on Iran War," Al Jazeera, 28 March 2026, https://www.aljazeera.com.

clarification from Netanyahu after the accidental bombing of a church in Gaza and publicly contradicted him by stating there was "real starvation" in Gaza (Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 2025; Council on Foreign Relations, [38][39] Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth acknowledged the dissent openly lying "congressional Democrats and some Republicans" the "biggest adversary" in the Iran war effort[39] On the Democratic side, opposition was near-unanimous, led by Sen. Tim Kaine (Democrat, Virginia), Sen. Chris Murphy (Democrat, Connecticut), Sen. Adam Schiff (Democrat, California), and Sen. Andy Kim (Democrat, New Jersey), with notable exceptions including Sen. Jon Fetterman (Democrat, Pennsylvania) and Reps. Josh Gottheimer (Democrat, New Jersey) and Jared Moskowitz (Democrat, Florida), who remained staunch supporters of Israel[40][41].

Israel Has Dragged America into War

This is a highly contested narrative, but the available evidence points overwhelmingly in one direction. Critics — including former US officials, intelligence analysts, and bipartisan members of Congress — argue that Israeli Prime Minister

[38] "Israel's View of Trump 2.0," Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, International Reports, 18 December 2025, https://www.kas.de; James M. Lindsay, "U.S. Aid to Israel in Four Charts," Council on Foreign Relations, 11 May 2026, https://www.cfr.org.
[39] "Hegseth Calls Congressional Democrats, Some Republicans 'Biggest Adversary' in Iran War," PBS News, 29 April 2026, https://www.pbs.org.
[40] "Donald Trump's Strikes on Iran Rattle War Powers Debate in Congress," The Hill, 4 March 2026, https://thehill.com; "One Month In, Disapproval High but US Lawmakers Take No Action on Iran War," Al Jazeera, 28 March 2026, https://www.aljazeera.com.
[41] Pew Research Centre, "American Views on the Israel-Hamas War," April 2024, https://www.pewresearch.org; Gallup, "Americans' Opinions on the Israeli Palestinian Conflict," February 2024, https://news.gallup.com; AP-NORC Centre for Public Affairs Research, "Public Opinion on the Conflict in Gaza," January 2024, https://apnorc.org.s

Netanyahu leveraged his relationship with President Trump to draw the United States into a direct military confrontation with Iran that served Israeli strategic objectives far more than American ones. Israeli intelligence assessments were reportedly cited within the National Security Council as a decisive factor in the authorisation of Operation Epic Fury, and senior Israeli officials — according to accounts in The New York Times and Axios — pushed for the strikes to proceed on an accelerated timeline before domestic opposition could mount.

The costs borne by the United States have been staggering: US$25 billion in direct military expenditure within two months, projected total economic losses of up to US$1 trillion, 15 service members killed, 538 wounded, and a surge in domestic fuel prices exceeding 30 per cent.[42] Official US statements have emphasised "joint interests," but the asymmetry of costs and benefits has fuelled a growing backlash. Defence Secretary Hegseth's characterisation of congressional dissenters as the "biggest adversary" in the war effort underscored the depth of internal division.[43]

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[42] On the US$25 billion direct military cost, see "Iran war has cost $25 billion so far, Pentagon official says," Military Times, 29 April 2026 (testimony of acting Pentagon comptroller Jules Hurst III to the House Armed Services Committee); "Iran war has cost the U.S. $25 billion so far, Pentagon official says," NBC News, 29 April 2026. On the projected economic losses of up to US$1 trillion, see "$25bn or $1 trillion: How much has Iran war really cost the US?" Al Jazeera, 30 April 2026 (citing Harvard economist Linda Bilmes). Casualty figures (15 service members killed, 538 wounded) per WarCosts, "Iran War (2026)," warcosts.org.

[43] "WATCH: Hegseth calls congressional Democrats, some Republicans 'biggest adversary' in Iran war," PBS NewsHour, 29 April 2026; "Hegseth doubles down on attacking dissenters on Iran war as 'biggest adversary'," ABC News, 30 April 2026. Hegseth made the remark in his opening statement to the House Armed Services Committee on 29 April 2026 and repeated it before the Senate Armed Services Committee on 30 April 2026.

Is America Still a Unipolar World Superpower?

The US remains the world's dominant military and economic power, but the era of unchallenged unipolarity of being super power that defined the post-Cold War period has visibly eroded. The 2026 Iran conflict served as a stress test of American primacy and exposed its limits.

Militarily, the United States demonstrated an unmatched capacity for power projection: 900 joint strikes in 12 hours, carrier battle groups deployed across two oceans, and air dominance over a theatre spanning thousands of kilometres.[44] Yet this capacity did not translate into strategic outcomes on the timeline Washington expected. Iran sustained its state institutions, maintained retaliatory capability, and closed the Strait of Hormuz — a single act that triggered the largest oil supply disruption in modern history and inflicted economic damage on US allies and adversaries alike.[45]

The diplomatic dimension was equally revealing. It was Pakistan — not the United States or any Western power — that

[44] On the nearly 900 joint US–Israeli strikes in the first 12 hours of Operation Epic Fury, see "2026 Iran war," Encyclopaedia Britannica; "Trump official: US carried out 900 strikes during first 12 hours of Operation Epic Fury against Iran," Times of Israel, 1 March 2026 (citing a US official via Fox News). On the deployment of two carrier strike groups (USS Abraham Lincoln and USS George H.W. Bush), see the timeline given by Joint Chiefs Chairman General Dan Caine, reported in "US, Israel strikes on Iran: Gen. Dan Caine offers timeline of 'Operation Epic Fury'," NewsNation, 2 March 2026; Atlantic Council, "Tracking US military assets in the Iran war."

[45] Iran's closure of the Strait of Hormuz, which began on 4 March 2026, was characterised by the International Energy Agency as the largest supply disruption in the history of the global oil market. See "Economic impact of the 2026 Iran war," Wikipedia; "Iran effectively closes Strait of Hormuz as U.S.–Israel strikes continue," NPR, 12 March 2026 (quoting Gregory Brew of the Eurasia Group).

brokered the ceasefire and hosted the peace talks. China co-sponsored the five-point peace initiative.[46] The initiative set out five points, summarised below. The Gulf states, nominally US allies, suffered Iranian retaliatory strikes on their own territory. The war accelerated a trend already under way: regional powers pursuing independent diplomatic and security arrangements rather than deferring to Washington. The UAE's decision to quit OPEC in May 2026 — after 60 years of membership — was a structural signal that the old order is fracturing. The United States remains the most powerful single actor in the international system, but the 2026 war demonstrated that military dominance alone cannot deliver political outcomes in a multipolar world.

S.no.	The China–Pakistan five-point peace initiative (31 March 2026)
1	Immediate cessation of hostilities and unimpeded humanitarian access to all war-affected areas.
2	Start of peace talks as soon as possible, safeguarding the sovereignty, territorial integrity and security of Iran and the Gulf states, with all parties refraining from the use or threat of force during negotiations.

[46] "Five-Point Initiative of China and Pakistan for Restoring Peace and Stability in the Gulf and Middle East Region," Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, 31 March 2026 (issued in Beijing following talks between Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Pakistani Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar). See also "China and Pakistan issue five-point plan for 'immediate ceasefire' in war on Iran," Middle East Eye, 31 March 2026; "China, Pakistan launch five-point plan to ease Iran crisis, push ceasefire," South China Morning Post, 31 March 2026.

3	Halt to attacks on civilian and critical infrastructure, including energy, desalination and power facilities and peaceful nuclear installations.
4	Reopening of the Strait of Hormuz and restoration of normal navigation.
5	A comprehensive peace framework grounded in multilateralism and the primacy of the UN Charter.

Role of Pakistan

Pakistan maintained official neutrality while playing a central and indispensable diplomatic role in ending the hostilities. Islamabad engaged in shuttle diplomacy, hosted the Islamabad Talks (11–12 April 2026), and brokered the ceasefire of 8 April that halted the fighting. Pakistani officials — led by Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif, Field Marshal Asim Munir, and Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar — coordinated with Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Egypt, and China, delivering proposals between Washington and Tehran and presenting a five-point peace

Pakistan's mediation was widely praised across the international spectrum. **US President Donald Trump** publicly credited PM Sharif and Field Marshal Munir in his ceasefire announcement, stating he agreed to halt strikes "based on conversations with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Asim Munir" who had "requested that I hold off the

[47] Government of Pakistan, Prime Minister's Office, "Islamabad Peace Talks: Official Statement," Islamabad, April 12, 2026, https://pmo.gov.pk.

destructive force being sent tonight to Iran." Trump also praised Pakistan for "understanding Iran better than most countries." **Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas** [illegible] expressed "gratitude and appreciation" for their "tireless efforts to end the war," confirming that Iran accepted the ceasefire "in response to the brotherly request of PM Sharif." **UN Secretary-General António** [illegible] welcomed the ceasefire and called on all parties to comply with international law. **UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer** said the ceasefire would "bring a moment of relief to the region and the world." **EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen** welcomed it as bringing "much-needed de-escalation." **French President Emmanuel Macron** urged Iran to use the negotiations to achieve "lasting de-escalation." **Hamas** expressed support for Pakistan's mediation efforts. **Bloomberg** noted that Pakistan's mediation "shows central role in global politics," while the **Council on Foreign relations** described Pakistan as an "unlikely but indispensable mediator" that achieved what "many diplomats from wealthy democracies had failed at for nearly five decades."[51]

[48] White House, "Statement by President Donald J. Trump on the Iran–Israel Ceasefire," Washington, DC: Office of the Press Secretary, April 8, 2026.
[49] Islamic Republic News Agency, "FM Araghchi: Iran Accepts Ceasefire in Response to Pakistan's Brotherly Request," Tehran: IRNA, April 8, 2026, https://www.irna.ir.
[50] "Pakistan's Iran Mediation Shows Central Role in Global Politics," *Bloomberg*, April 2026.
[51] Council on Foreign Relations, "Pakistan: Unlikely but Indispensable Mediator in the Iran–Israel Conflict," New York: CFR, April 2026, https://www.cfr.org.

Stopped Potential of Third World War / Potential Nuclear War

The 2026 Iran conflict brought the world closer to a multi-power military confrontation than any crisis since the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. Three nuclear-armed states — the United States, Israel, and Pakistan — were directly engaged or positioned on the conflict's periphery, and a fourth, Iran, was assessed by the IAEA to possess sufficient enriched uranium for multiple warheads.

Several escalatory dynamics were in play simultaneously. The assassination of Supreme Leader Khamenei on Day 1 of Operation Epic Fury eliminated the figure most capable of authorising a controlled Iranian response, raising the risk of uncoordinated or maximalist retaliation. Iran's closure of the Strait of Hormuz threatened a global economic collapse that could have drawn additional powers into the conflict to secure energy supplies. Retaliatory strikes on Gulf Arab states — US allies under bilateral defence agreements — created cascading alliance obligations. The reignition of the Israel–Hezbollah war in Lebanon opened a second front.

The ceasefire brokered by Pakistan on 7–8 April 2026 interrupted this escalatory spiral at a critical juncture. By establishing a framework for negotiation before any party crossed the threshold of nuclear use, Pakistan's intervention is assessed by multiple analysts to have averted the most dangerous phase of the conflict. The risk has not been eliminated

— the ceasefire remains fragile, core issues are unresolved, and the military capacities that made escalation possible remain intact — but the immediate trajectory toward wider war was decisively interrupted.

Pakistan-a Leading World Peacemaker

Pakistan positioned itself as a responsible mediator, leveraging its relations with both Iran and the US/West, as well as ties with China and Gulf states. By hosting talks and pushing for dialogue, Pakistan demonstrated diplomatic hedging and pragmatism. This role enhanced its international image as a stabilising force, even while managing its own security challenges (e.g., border issues with Afghanistan and Iran). Praise came from multiple sides for helping create space for negotiations.

The conflict underscores that any durable resolution must be anchored in the Geneva Conventions and UN Security Council resolutions. Critics argue that Europe and the West have historically extended unconditional support to Israel, in tension with their stated commitment to international law. The US-led strikes on Iran — which killed 178 school children among other civilians — have drawn widespread condemnation, while Israel's own allies in the Gulf have suffered significant retaliatory losses. The resulting surge in oil prices has compounded a pre-existing global cost-of-living crisis, and the

spectre of a wider war has sharpened calls for restraint. Israel remains the only nuclear-armed state in the Middle East and has conducted military operations against six neighbouring countries, prompting a fundamental question: which state poses the greater threat to regional stability? A growing number of EU and Western governments have responded by severing business ties with Israel — measures that reflect an emerging consensus that respect for human life and international norms must take precedence over strategic alliances.

Pakistan's diplomatic intervention — led by Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir and Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif — succeeded in bringing all parties to the negotiation table, a significant achievement given the intensity of the conflict. Field Marshal Munir, notably the first serving chief in Pakistan's history to have memorised the Quran in its entirety, brought a distinctive combination of military credibility and moral authority to the mediation effort.

The initiation of formal talks is itself a measure of diplomatic success, establishing a framework likely to sustain further rounds of negotiation. Analysts have noted that Israel's strategic calculus may not favour a rapid conclusion to hostilities; nonetheless, Pakistan's mediation secured a temporary ceasefire that has preserved lives and resources on all sides.

The evidence strongly suggests that Israel miscalculated Iran's capacity for sustained military resistance, while simultaneously

leveraging its strategic relationship with the Trump administration to draw the United States into a broader confrontation that served Israeli objectives more than American interests. Multiple analytical assessments support this conclusion. The Arab Centre Washington DC observed that Israel "clearly miscalculated" Iran's resilience, drawing parallels with its earlier underestimation of Hezbollah's capacity to regroup after the assassination of Hassan Nasrallah.[52] ACLED conflict data recorded over 90 attempted Iranian strikes against Israel within the first five days alone — more than 60 per cent of all Iranian attacks during the entire June 2025 Twelve-Day War — demonstrating that Tehran's retaliatory capability far exceeded pre-war expectations.[53] The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) assessed that while the strikes were "tactically effective," they failed to dismantle Iran's broader strategic doctrine.[54] The White House had reportedly anticipated regime collapse within 48 hours; instead, Iran maintained the operation of key state institutions, military infrastructure, and governance mechanisms throughout the conflict.[55] Furthermore, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's lobbying of President Trump for joint military strikes — with Israeli intelligence cited as a decisive factor in authorising so extensive

[52] Arab Center Washington DC, "After the Iran War: Regional Devastation and Future Instability," Arab Center DC, April 2026, https://arabcenterdc.org.
[53] Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project, "Middle East Special Issue: March 2026," ACLED, 4 March 2026, https://acleddata.com.
[54] International Institute for Strategic Studies, Strategic Survey 2025 (London: IISS, 2025); "From Proxy Warfare to Direct Confrontation: The Evolving Landscape of the Israel–Iran Conflict 2024–2025," Chinese Journal of International Review, Vol. 7, 2025, doi:10.1142/S2630531325500179.
[55] "Iran War Reality Check: Why the US Miscalculated Tehran's Political Resilience," Pravda USA, 12 March 2026, https://usa.news-pravda.com.

escalation whose costs fell disproportionately on the United States, which spent US$25 billion in the first two months and faces projected economic losses of up to US$1 trillion.[56] This outcome — a mediated settlement by a non-Western power — would not have been necessary had the initial military calculus proven sound.[57]

Notable Statements

- **George Galloway** (British politician and broadcaster): Strongly critical of Israel and Western complicity. He has condemned Israeli actions in Gaza, accused Britain and the US of enabling crimes, and warned against escalation with Iran. Galloway often frames the conflict as rooted in injustice and calls for accountability.
- **Bernie Sanders** (US Senator): Repeatedly pushed resolutions to block US military aid to Israel, criticising the Netanyahu government for actions in Gaza and the broader war with Iran. He has called for ending unconditional support, arguing it fuels conflict and contradicts American values. In 2026, Sanders forced votes on halting arms sales, describing the situation as supporting an "extremist" government.
- **Tucker Carlson** (US commentator): Highly critical of US entanglement with Israel. He has argued the US should

[56] Pentagon, "Operation Epic Fury: Cost Assessment," Department of Defense Briefing, April 2026; Democratic members of the US Senate Armed Services Committee, "Projected Economic Impact of the Iran War," Congressional Report, April 2026.
[57] Council on Foreign Relations, "Pakistan: An Unlikely but Indispensable Mediator," CFR Analysis, April 2026, https://www.cfr.org.

"detach" from Israel, questioned excessive aid, and accused Israel of influencing American foreign policy. Carlson has highlighted civilian casualties and warned against being drawn into wider wars, sometimes framing it as contrary to American interests.

Timeline of the 2026 USA–Iran War (28 February – 28 May 2026 — 89 Days)

28 February 2026 (Day 1) — Operation Epic Fury Begins: US and Israel launch approximately 900 joint strikes in 12 hours targeting Iranian military sites, air defences, nuclear facilities, and leadership. Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei is killed. Approximately 170 civilians die when a missile strikes a girls' school adjacent to a naval base in Minab, near Bandar Abbas.[58]

Late February – Early March — Iran Retaliates: Iran launches hundreds of drones and ballistic missiles at Israel, US military bases, and Gulf Arab states including Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE. Iran closes the Strait of Hormuz, disrupting global trade and energy supplies.[59]

Early March — Conflict Spreads Regionally: A drone strikes the UK's Akrotiri military base on Cyprus. A ballistic missile is

[58] "2026 Iran war," Encyclopaedia Britannica; "2026 Iran war," Wikipedia. US and Israeli forces launched nearly 900 strikes in the first 12 hours of Operation Epic Fury (Israel's Operation Roaring Lion), killing Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei.
[59] "2026 Iran war," Wikipedia; "List of attacks during the 2026 Iran war," Wikipedia. Iran launched retaliatory missile and drone strikes on Israel, US bases, and US-allied Gulf states.

intercepted over Turkey (Dörtyol, Hatay Province). The Iranian Navy frigate IRIS Dena is sunk near Sri Lanka by US submarine USS Charlotte. The Israel–Hezbollah war reignites in Lebanon, killing more than 2,000 civilians.[60]

3 March 2026 — Strikes on Tehran: US–Israeli strikes hit the Iranian capital, sending plumes of smoke over the city. Residential buildings are damaged across Tehran, Isfahan, and Qom — approximately 60,500 housing units affected in total.[61]

6 March 2026 — Trump Demands "Unconditional Surrender": President Trump threatens to attack Iranian energy infrastructure and bridges if Iran does not agree to a deal. He sets multiple deadlines for negotiations (21 March, then 23 March, then 7 April).[62]

7–8 April 2026— Ceasefire Declared: The US and Iran agree to a conditional two-week ceasefire, including Israel. No exchange of fire occurs after this date. Pakistan mediates the talks, with five major issues under discussion: the Strait of Hormuz, Iran's nuclear programme, ballistic missiles, sanctions, and a long-term peace agreement.[63]

13 April 2026— US Counter-Blockade of Strait of Hormuz: The US launches a counter-blockade targeting all ships heading to

[60] "List of attacks during the 2026 Iran war," Wikipedia; Iran Conflict and the Strait of Hormuz, Congressional Research Service, R45281, 11 March 2026.
[61] "2026 Iran war," Wikipedia; "2026 Iran war," Encyclopaedia Britannica.
[62] "2026 Iran war," Wikipedia; "2026 Iran war ceasefire," Wikipedia.
[63] "2026 Iran war ceasefire," Wikipedia. The US and Iran agreed to a two-week ceasefire mediated by Pakistan, beginning 8 April 2026; a ceasefire in Lebanon began 16 April.

Iranian ports. Reopening the Strait of Hormuz becomes the central issue in peace negotiations.[64]

Late April 2026 — Ceasefire Extended: The initial two-week ceasefire is extended. Negotiations continue under Pakistani mediation. Thousands are confirmed dead in Iran and Lebanon, dozens in Israel and the Gulf states, and millions have been displaced across the region.[65]

2 May 2026— Iran Submits Counterproposal: Iran presents a counter-proposal (reported by Iranian media as a 14-point text) to the US proposal, demanding all issues be resolved and the war formally ended within 30 days, instead of a two-month ceasefire as proposed by the US. President Trump states he is "not satisfied" with Iran's proposal.[66]

#	Key reported demands of Iran's peace proposal (2 May 2026)
1	Resolve all outstanding issues and formally end the war within 30 days, rather than observe a two-month ceasefire as the US had proposed.
2	Binding guarantees against any future military aggression by the US or Israel.
3	Withdrawal of US forces from Iran's periphery.
4	An end to the US naval blockade of Iranian ports.

[64] "2026 Iran war," Wikipedia; "2026 Strait of Hormuz crisis," Wikipedia. Following the failure of the Islamabad Talks, the US Navy began blockading Iranian ports from 13 April 2026.
[65] "2026 Iran war ceasefire," Wikipedia. On 21 April 2026, President Trump extended the ceasefire indefinitely.
[66] "US-Iran ceasefire and nuclear talks in 2026," House of Commons Library, CBP-10637; "2026 Iran war ceasefire," Wikipedia.

5	Release of Iran's frozen assets held abroad (billions of dollars).
6	Payment of war reparations.
7	Lifting of US sanctions on Iran.
8	An end to all hostilities in the region, including Israel's war in Lebanon.
9	A new mechanism governing navigation through the Strait of Hormuz.
10	A phased structure of three main stages, with a 30-day phase to convert the ceasefire into a complete end to the war.

Note: Iranian state media (Tasnim and Press TV) described the document as a fourteen-point text but officially detailed only the demands listed above; the remaining points were not publicly disclosed.

4 May 2026 — US Announces Strait of Hormuz Escort Operation: Trump announces the US military will begin guiding ships through the Strait of Hormuz, deploying guided-missile destroyers, more than 100 aircraft, and 15,000 service members. Iran's Ebrahim Azizi warns this constitutes a violation of the ceasefire. Trump states discussions with Iran are "very positive." The conflict remains in a fragile ceasefire and negotiation phase.[67]

8 May 2026 — Shifting Trade Balance: A New York Times analysis of oil and fuel flows since the start of the war finds the

[67] "2026 Strait of Hormuz crisis," Wikipedia. On 4 May 2026, the US launched Operation Project Freedom, a Navy mission to escort merchant ships through the Gulf.

United States the biggest beneficiary of the market disruption, with export revenue up roughly US$50 billion, followed by Russia (up more than US$15 billion); every Persian Gulf exporter records declining revenues.[68]

12 May 2026 — War Cost Reaches US$29 Billion: The cost of the war to the US military is estimated at nearly US$29 billion, and the Pentagon requests a further US$200 billion in supplemental funding.[69]

Mid-to-Late May 2026 — International Pressure on Hormuz: With the Strait of Hormuz still contested, the United Kingdom deploys drones, fighter aircraft and a Royal Navy warship to an international mission to secure commercial shipping, following a 50-country conference convened in London. President Trump holds calls with the leaders of Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, Pakistan, Turkey, Egypt, Jordan and Bahrain, and with Prime Minister Netanyahu, and announces that a deal to reopen the Strait is "largely negotiated."[70]

24–26 May 2026 — Skirmishes Amid Negotiations: US Central Command reports "self-defence strikes" on Iranian missile

[68] New York Times analysis of oil and fuel flows, reported in "2026 Strait of Hormuz crisis," Wikipedia. The United States saw an export-revenue increase of about US$50 billion and Russia more than US$15 billion, while all Persian Gulf exporters recorded declines.

[69] "2026 Iran war," Wikipedia. On 12 May 2026 the cost of the war to the US military was estimated at nearly US$29 billion, with the Pentagon requesting a further US$200 billion.

[70] "2026 Strait of Hormuz crisis," Wikipedia (UK 50-country conference and Royal Navy deployment); "Trump says Iran deal reopening Strait of Hormuz 'largely negotiated,' will be announced soon," CNBC, 23 May 2026.

launch sites and boats around the Strait of Hormuz during the ceasefire; Iran fires toward a US base in Kuwait and warns that any aggression "will be met with force." Reporting indicates the emerging deal would unfold in two phases — first reopening the Strait, then 30–60 days of nuclear negotiations.[71]

28 May 2026 — Tentative 60-Day Memorandum of Understanding: US and Iranian negotiators reach a tentative 60-day memorandum of understanding to extend the ceasefire, reopen the Strait of Hormuz (with no tolls, Iran clearing the mines it laid, and the US lifting its naval blockade), and launch negotiations on Iran's nuclear programme — but President Trump has not signed off and Iran has not confirmed its acceptance. The same day, Iran fires a ballistic missile toward Kuwait (intercepted), Trump threatens Oman over any tolling of the Strait, and Prime Minister Netanyahu presses Washington to reject a limited deal.[72]

Israel's Nuclear Arsenal

Israel has never officially confirmed or denied having nuclear weapons — a longstanding policy known as "nuclear opacity" or "deliberate ambiguity." Despite this, Israel is widely believed to possess nuclear weapons, with estimates of its stockpile

[71] "May 25–26, 2026 — US strikes on Iranian missile launch sites and boats, Iran threatens to retaliate," CNN, 25 May 2026; "Exclusive: What's inside the Iran deal Trump is close to signing," Axios, 24 May 2026.
[72] "Scoop: U.S. and Iran reach deal but need Trump's final approval, officials say," Axios, 28 May 2026; "May 28, 2026 — US and Iran reach tentative agreement though Trump hasn't signed off on it," CNN, 28 May 2026. As of 28 May, President Trump had not signed and Iran had not confirmed acceptance.

ranging from 90 to 400 warheads. The country is believed to have completed its first deliverable nuclear weapon in late 1966 or early 1967, making it the sixth of nine nuclear-armed states. Israel is not a party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and has not accepted International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards on some of its principal nuclear activities.[73]

The most cited figure from major arms control organisations is approximately **90 nuclear warheads**. The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), the UK House of Commons Library, the International Campaign to Abolish nuclear weapons (ICAN), and the Centre for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation all converge on this estimate, noting that production of plutonium for weapons purposes is thought to be continuing. However, assessments vary widely: Russia's Institute for Strategic Studies suggests 130–200 weapons, former US Secretary of State Colin Powell assessed the arsenal at 200 nuclear weapons, and some experts believe Israel may have possessed as many as 400 weapons by the late 1990s. Israel is also believed to possess enough plutonium and highly enriched uranium to produce up to 300 nuclear weapons.[74]

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[73] Federation of American Scientists, "Status of World Nuclear Forces," Washington, DC: FAS, 2025, https://fas.org/issues/nuclear-weapons/status-world-nuclear-forces; Robert S. Norris and Hans M. Kristensen, "Israeli Nuclear Forces, 2008," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 64, no. 2 (2008): 38–43.

[74] Seymour M. Hersh, *The Samson Option: Israel's Nuclear Arsenal and American Foreign Policy* (New York: Random House, 1991); Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, SIPRI Yearbook 2025: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2025), 346; International Campaign to Abolish nuclear weapons, "Israel's Nuclear Weapons," 2025, https://www.icanw.org; Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation, "Factsheet: Israel's Nuclear Weapons," 2025, https://armscontrolcenter.org.

Israel is believed to possess a **nuclear triad** of delivery systems capable of launching nuclear weapons by **air**, **land**, and **sea**. These include between 25 and 100 Jericho series medium- to intercontinental-range ballistic missiles (including the newer Jericho III intermediate-range ballistic missile), five Dolphin-class submarines with launch tubes for nuclear-armed Popeye Turbo cruise missiles, and squadrons of F-15 and F-16 fighter jets equipped to deliver gravity bombs. An estimated 30–40 nuclear weapons have been allocated for submarine-launched cruise missiles, ensuring a survivable second-strike capability. Israel is also believed to have developed neutron bomb warheads and nuclear artillery rounds.[75]

Israel's nuclear programme was developed with significant assistance from France, which provided the technology for the Dimona reactor in the Negev desert — officially a 26-megawatt thermal research reactor, but widely understood to be the source of weapons-grade plutonium. In 1969, US President Richard Nixon and Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir reached a secret "nuclear understanding" whereby the US would not pressure Israel to acknowledge its weapons as long as Israel maintained silence and refrained from nuclear testing. This policy of "deliberate ambiguity" has been maintained by every Israeli

[75] Hans M. Kristensen and Matt Korda, "Israeli Nuclear Weapons, 2021," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 77, no. 3 (2021): 120–131; Robert S. Norris and Hans M. Kristensen, "Israeli Nuclear Forces, 2008," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 64, no. 2 (2008): 38–43.

government since and has been generally tolerated by both allies and adversaries.[75]

Israel's undeclared nuclear arsenal remains a central tension underlying the 2026 conflict. Critics argue that it represents a significant double standard: the US and Israel have launched military action against Iran over its nuclear programme while Israel itself maintains the only nuclear arsenal in the Middle East, entirely outside international safeguards. Under its Begin Doctrine, Israel has carried out preventive strikes against regional actors suspected of developing nuclear weapons — including the destruction of Iraqi and Syrian nuclear reactors in 1981 and 2007 respectively, and extensive strikes on Iranian nuclear facilities during the June 2025 Twelve-Day War and the 2026 war. Supporters argue that Israel's nuclear deterrent is essential to its survival given its small size and hostile neighbourhood, while opponents contend that its unacknowledged arsenal is itself a driver of proliferation and instability across the region.

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and Israel's Absence

Introduction to the NPT: The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation (NPT) of nuclear weapons is the cornerstone of the global

[75] William Burr and Avner Cohen, "Israel Crosses the Threshold," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 62, no. 3 (2006): 22–30; Avner Cohen, *The Worst-Kept Secret: Israel's Bargain with the Bomb* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), ch. 4; Avner Cohen, Israel and the Bomb (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 57–84; Pierre Péan, Les deux bombes (Paris: Fayard, 1981).

nuclear non-proliferation regime. Opened for signature on 1 July 1968 and entering into force on 5 March 1970, it is the most widely adhered-to arms limitation treaty in history, with 191 states parties as of 2026. The treaty was extended indefinitely at the 1995 Review Conference. The NPT rests on three interconnected pillars: (1) non-proliferation — preventing the spread of nuclear weapons; (2) disarmament — committing nuclear-weapon states to pursue the elimination of their arsenals; and (3) the peaceful use of nuclear energy — guaranteeing all states the right to develop nuclear technology for civilian purposes under international safeguards.[77]

The treaty defines nuclear-weapon states (NWS) as those that built and tested a nuclear explosive device before 1 January 1967 — the United States (1945), Russia (1949), the United Kingdom (1952), France (1960), and China (1964). Under Articles I and II, nuclear-weapon states agree not to transfer nuclear weapons or weapons technology to any other state, while non-nuclear-weapon states (NNWS) permanently forswear the pursuit of such weapons. Article III tasks the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) with verifying compliance through inspections and Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements. Article IV acknowledges the "inalienable right" of all states parties to research and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Article VI commits all parties to pursue negotiations in good faith towards nuclear disarmament. When the NPT was proposed in

[77] United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, "Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons: Status of the Treaty," 2026, https://www.un.org/disarmament/wmd/nuclear/npt.

the 1960s, there were predictions of 25 to 30 nuclear-weapon states within 20 years. Today, only nine states are known or believed to possess nuclear weapons — a testament to the treaty's impact, however imperfect.

Is Israel in the NPT? No. Israel has never signed or ratified the NPT. It is one of only four UN member states that have never accepted the treaty, alongside India, Pakistan, and South Sudan. Of these four, three — India, Israel, and Pakistan — possess or are believed to possess nuclear weapons. North Korea is the only state to have acceded to the NPT and subsequently withdrawn (in 2003)[78]. **Israel is therefore considered a de facto nuclear-weapon state that developed its arsenal entirely outside the framework of the NPT,** without any obligation to submit to IAEA comprehensive safeguards on its weapons-related nuclear activities. Israel has also not signed the more recent Treaty on the Prohibition of nuclear weapons (TPNW), which was adopted in 2017, and which Israel has stated it is "not obliged by in any way."

Why Israel Has Not Joined the NPT: Israel's refusal to join the NPT is rooted in several interrelated strategic, historical, and legal considerations:

1. **"Israeli Exceptionality" and Existential Security: Israel's position** is explained through the concept of "Israeli exceptionality" — a term coined by **Professor Gerald M.**

78Ibid.; Harald Müller, "The NPT in Crisis: Understanding Treaty Erosion and the Path to Disarmament," *Arms Control Today* 52, no. 4 (2022): 14–20.

Steinberg — referring to the country's small size and overall vulnerability. However, the historical record challenges this narrative significantly. No Muslim-majority neighbouring state has launched an unprovoked war of aggression against Israel; rather, Israel has repeatedly been the initiator of military operations against its neighbours — from the 1967 pre-emptive strikes to the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, the 2006 war on Lebanon, the repeated bombardments of Gaza (2008–09, 2012, 2014, 2021, 2023–2024), and the 2025–2026 escalation with Iran. The broader pattern mirrors the Iraq precedent, in which unsubstantiated claims of weapons of mass destruction were used to justify a devastating war; Israel has similarly invoked alleged existential threats from Muslim-majority states to justify pre-emptive military action and territorial expansion, while itself possessing the region's only undeclared nuclear arsenal. Signing the NPT would require Israel to either disclose and dismantle that arsenal or join as a non-nuclear-weapon state — neither of which Israel considers compatible with its security needs, precisely because transparency would expose the scale of an arsenal developed not for survival but for regional military dominance.[79]

2. **The Policy of Nuclear Ambiguity: Israel maintains a carefully** calibrated policy of deliberate ambiguity — famously stating that "Israel will not be the first country to introduce nuclear weapons into the Middle East." Joining

[79] Gerald M. Steinberg, "Israeli Exceptionality and the Politics of Nuclear Arms Control," *Middle East Journal* 55, no. 3 (2001): 405–427.

the NPT would force Israel to either confirm or deny its nuclear capabilities, thereby destroying the strategic ambiguity that has been a cornerstone of its defence posture since the 1969 Nixon–Meir understanding. This ambiguity allows Israel to maintain deterrence without provoking a declared regional nuclear arms race.

3. **The Treaty's Classification Problem: The NPT recognises** only five nuclear-weapon states — those that tested a nuclear device before 1 January 1967. Although Israel is believed to have developed its first weapon by late 1966 or early 1967, it never conducted a confirmed nuclear test (though it may have conducted one jointly with South Africa in 1979). Under the NPT's strict definition, Israel cannot join as a recognised nuclear-weapon state and would be required to join as a non-nuclear-weapon state, meaning it would have to forswear and dismantle its entire nuclear arsenal — a condition Israel finds unacceptable.
4. **Unwillingness to Accept Inspections and Restrictions: Joining** the NPT would oblige Israel to place all of its nuclear facilities — including the Dimona reactor — under IAEA comprehensive safeguards. Israel has consistently resisted international inspection of its military nuclear activities. When the IAEA General Conference passed a resolution in 2009 calling on Israel to open its facilities to inspection and adhere to the NPT, Israel's chief delegate stated that "Israel will not co-operate in any matter with this resolution."[80]

[80] International Atomic Energy Agency, "Israeli Nuclear Capabilities," Resolution GC(53)/RES/17, Vienna: IAEA, September 18, 2009.

5. **No Regional Peace Framework: Israel has argued** that nuclear controls cannot be implemented in isolation from other security issues. It maintains that only after the establishment of peaceful relations with all countries in the region could controls be introduced through the negotiation of a mutually verifiable regime establishing the Middle East as a zone free of chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons. The 1995 NPT Review Conference included a resolution calling for the creation of a Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone (WMDFZ) in the Middle East. This pledge was crucial to securing the treaty's indefinite extension, but no such zone has been established — in large part because of Israel's refusal to participate.[81]
6. **Western Tolerance and the Double Standard: Israel's non-membership** in the NPT has been generally tolerated by its Western allies, particularly the United States, under the Nixon–Meir understanding and subsequent administrations. This tolerance has drawn significant criticism from other states, who point to a perceived double standard: Iran's nuclear programme has been subjected to sanctions, military strikes, and intense diplomatic pressure under the NPT framework, while Israel — which possesses the only confirmed nuclear arsenal in the Middle East — operates entirely outside the treaty with no international accountability. Critics argue that this asymmetry undermines the legitimacy of the entire non-proliferation

[81] 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference, "Resolution on the Middle East," New York: United Nations, May 11, 1995.

regime and has itself become a driver of nuclear proliferation ambitions in the region, with countries like Iran pointing to Israel's arsenal as justification for their own programmes.

In the context of the 2026 war, this double standard has become particularly acute. The US and Israel launched military operations against Iran explicitly to prevent it from acquiring nuclear weapons, while Israel's own undeclared arsenal of approximately 90 warheads — the only nuclear weapons in the Middle East — remains entirely outside international safeguards. The absence of any formal accountability for Israel's nuclear programme continues to be cited by Iran, Arab states, and the broader international community as a fundamental obstacle to achieving a durable peace and a nuclear-weapon-free Middle East.

Israel's Pattern of Military Aggression Against Neighbouring Countries

Since its establishment in 1948, Israel has engaged in a sustained and expansive pattern of military operations against virtually every neighbouring country and beyond. While Israel frames these actions as self-defence, the cumulative record reveals a state that has repeatedly violated the sovereignty of other nations, occupied foreign territory, and carried out strikes across sovereign borders — often with devastating consequences for civilian populations. The following is a summary of Israel's major military actions against its neighbours and other states:

Palestine/Gaza: Israel has maintained a military occupation of the West Bank since 1967 and imposed a blockade on the Gaza Strip since 2007. Multiple large-scale military operations have been conducted in Gaza, including Operations Cast Lead (2008–2009), Pillar of Defence (2012), Protective Edge (2014), and Guardian of the Walls (2021). The October 2023 war on Gaza (Operation Iron Swords) has become the deadliest conflict for Palestinians since 1948, with the Palestinian health ministry reporting over 64,000 deaths. The UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry concluded in September 2025 that Israel's actions in Gaza constitute genocide, finding evidence of four of the five genocidal acts defined by the 1948 Genocide Convention. Entire neighbourhoods, hospitals, schools, and universities have been systematically destroyed. A man-made famine has left hundreds of thousands facing starvation.[82]

Egypt: Israel launched a pre-emptive war against Egypt during the 1956 Suez Crisis (in coordination with Britain and France) and again in the 1967 Six-Day War, destroying over 90% of Egypt's air force on the ground and occupying the entire Sinai Peninsula. The Sinai was returned only after the 1978 Camp David Accords and the 1979 peace treaty. The War of Attrition (1967–1970) saw continuous hostilities along the Suez Canal.

[82] United Nations Human Rights Council, *Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Including East Jerusalem, and Israel*, A/HRC/58/72 (Geneva: UNHRC, September 2025); Gaza Ministry of Health, Martyrs Statistics Report (Gaza: Palestinian Ministry of Health, 2025), https://www.moh.gov.ps.

Lebanon: Israel invaded Lebanon in 1978 (Operation Litani) and again in 1982, occupying southern Lebanon for 18 years until its withdrawal in 2000. The 2006 Lebanon War killed over 1,000 Lebanese and devastated civilian infrastructure, displacing approximately one million people. Parts of southern Lebanon remained uninhabitable due to unexploded Israeli cluster munitions. In September 2024, Israel carried out the unprecedented "pager attacks" — remotely detonating communication devices across Lebanon, killing 12 people including two children and injuring thousands. A full-scale aerial bombing campaign followed, killing at least 569 people in a single day (23 September 2024), the largest one-day death toll in Lebanon since the civil war. A ground invasion followed on 30 September 2024. In 2026, the Israel–Hezbollah war reignited in the context of the broader Iran conflict, killing more than 2,000 civilians and militants and displacing over one-sixth of Lebanon's population.

Syria: Israel captured the Golan Heights from Syria in the 1967 war and has maintained an illegal occupation ever since, formally annexing the territory in 1981 (a move not recognised by the international community). During the Syrian Civil War, Israel conducted over 220 airstrikes on Syrian territory in just a 12-month period (2023–2024), targeting both Hezbollah and Iranian military positions. After the fall of the Assad regime in December 2024, Israel launched hundreds more strikes on military sites across Syria and expanded its presence in the Golan Heights by seizing the demilitarised buffer zone, in

violation of the 1974 disengagement agreement. In 2007, Israel destroyed a suspected Syrian nuclear reactor in Operation Orchard without any prior diplomatic engagement.[83]

Jordan: Israel fought against Jordan in the 1948 and 1967 wars, capturing the West Bank and East Jerusalem from Jordanian control during the Six-Day War. In 1966, an Israeli strike on the Jordanian village of Al-Samū' killed 18 and wounded 54 civilians. Although a peace treaty was signed in 1994, tensions have resurfaced over the status of Jerusalem and Israeli actions in the West Bank.

Iraq: In 1981, Israel bombed Iraq's Osirak nuclear reactor near Baghdad in Operation Opera — a unilateral strike carried out without UN authorisation or any declaration of war, targeting a sovereign state's civilian nuclear infrastructure.[84]

Iran: Israel and Iran exchanged direct missile strikes in 2024. In June 2025, Israel launched the Twelve-Day War, attacking Iranian military and nuclear facilities. In February 2026, Israel and the US jointly launched Operation Epic Fury, carrying out approximately 900 strikes on Iran in 12 hours, assassinating Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and dozens of officials. The 2026 war has caused thousands of deaths and massive destruction across Iran. Israel has also been linked to cyberattacks (Stuxnet

[83] United Nations Security Council, Resolution 497 (1981), December 17, 1981, https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/497(1981).
[84] Shlomo Nakdimon, *First Strike: The Exclusive Story of How Israel Foiled Iraq's Attempt to Get the Bomb* (New York: Summit Books, 1987).

malware) and assassinations of Iranian nuclear scientists since 2010.

Tunisia, Qatar, and Yemen: Israel's military reach has extended far beyond its immediate neighbourhood. In September 2025, Israel struck six countries in just 72 hours — Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Tunisia, Qatar, and Yemen. The strike on Qatar marked the first time Israel attacked the Gulf state, targeting a Hamas leadership compound in Doha and killing six people including a Qatari security officer. In Tunisia, suspected Israeli drones struck Gaza-bound aid flotilla vessels docked at the port of Sidi Bou Said. Israel has also conducted repeated airstrikes on Houthi positions in Yemen. These operations demonstrate a willingness to project military force across sovereign borders with little regard for international law or diplomatic norms.

This cumulative record — spanning nearly eight decades, at least a dozen countries, and countless violations of sovereignty — raises fundamental questions about Israel's commitment to international law and the rules-based order. No other country in the modern era has attacked as many of its neighbours as frequently, occupied as much foreign territory for as long, or conducted as many cross-border military operations with as little international accountability.

The Case for International Accountability with Regards to Israeli Nuclear Arsenal

Why the EU, the West, and Global Institutions Must Question Israel? The record documented in this chapter — encompassing Israel's undeclared nuclear arsenal outside the NPT, its pattern of military aggression against neighbouring states, the documented atrocities in Gaza, and its role in provoking the 2026 Iran war — presents an overwhelming case for the international community, and the European Union and Western nations in particular, to subject Israel to the same standards of accountability they apply to other states. The failure to do so has not only enabled Israel's conduct but has fundamentally undermined the credibility of the rules-based international order that the West claims to uphold.

The arrest warrants for Israeli PM Netanyahu by the International Criminal Court (ICC)

The ICC has issued arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former Defence Minister Yoav Gallant for war crimes and crimes against humanity. EU member states, as parties to the Rome Statute, are legally obligated to enforce these warrants. Yet enforcement has been inconsistent, with several European leaders continuing to engage with the Israeli government without consequence. If the ICC's authority is to mean anything, these warrants must be acted upon — the principle that no leader is above international law cannot be selectively applied.[85]

[85] International Criminal Court, "ICC Issues Warrants of Arrest for Benjamin Netanyahu and Yoav Gallant," press release, November 21, 2024, https://www.icc-cpi.int.

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) and Genocide committed by the Israeli forces

The ICJ issued provisional measures rulings determining that there was a plausible risk of genocide in Gaza and issued binding orders requiring Israel to ensure the provision of humanitarian aid. Israel has failed to comply with these orders. The ICJ has also ruled that Israel's occupation of Palestinian territory is unlawful. Member states are obligated under international law to take action to end this occupation — yet most Western governments have failed to implement any meaningful measures to enforce these rulings.

The UN Commission of Inquiry on Palestinian Genocide

The UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry has found that Israel committed genocide against Palestinians in Gaza, identifying four of the five genocidal acts under the 1948 Convention. The Commission also found evidence of widespread torture, sexual violence, arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, forced displacement, and the systematic destruction of Gaza's housing, education system, and healthcare infrastructure. These findings have been endorsed by the UN Human Rights Council. They carry an obligation for all states to act — under the Genocide Convention, states must both prevent and punish acts of genocide.

The EU's O

The EU is Israel's largest trading partner, with the relationship valued at over €45 billion annually. Under the EU–Israel Association Agreement (2000), Article 2 makes "respect for human rights and democratic principles" an essential element of the partnership. UN experts have called for the immediate suspension of this agreement, arguing that the EU cannot credibly claim to uphold human rights while sustaining preferential trade with a state whose conduct has been found by multiple international bodies to amount to genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. In April 2026, over one million European citizens signed a European Citizens' Initiative demanding the full suspension of the agreement. The European Commission President proposed a partial suspension in September 2025, but the measure has stalled due to opposition from some member states. This inaction is itself a form of complicity: EU arms exports to Israel more than doubled during the Gaza war, and Israeli military exports to the EU accounted for 54% of Israel's total arms sales.[88]

Arms Embargo on Israel

Dozens of UN human rights experts have called on all states to impose a full arms embargo on Israel, halting all arms agreements, imports, exports, and transfers, including dual-use

[88] Council of the European Union, "Euro-Mediterranean Agreement Establishing an Association between the European Communities and Their Member States, of the One Part, and the State of Israel, of the Other Part," *Official Journal of the European Communities*, L 147, June 21, 2000; European Commission, Directorate-General for Trade, "EU Trade in Goods with Israel," Brussels: European Commission, 2024, https://trade.ec.europa.eu.

items. The UN Special Rapporteur's report on Gaza described the genocide as an "internationally enabled crime," arguing that many states — primarily Western ones — have facilitated, legitimised, and normalised Israel's genocidal campaign. The continued supply of weapons to Israel by the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom, and other Western nations directly enables the commission of the very atrocities these governments publicly condemn.

The Double Standard

The Double Standard Must End. The West has sanctioned Russia for its invasion of Ukraine, imposed sweeping penalties on Iran over its nuclear programme, and held numerous states to account through the UN Security Council. Yet Israel — despite possessing an undeclared nuclear arsenal outside the NPT, maintaining the longest military occupation in modern history, being found to have committed genocide by a UN Commission, and having its leaders subject to ICC arrest warrants — continues to receive billions in military aid, preferential trade access, and diplomatic protection in the form of US vetoes at the Security Council. This asymmetry is not merely hypocritical; it actively erodes the foundations of the international legal order.

It is worth noting that both Israel and Pakistan came into existence in the same era — Pakistan on 14 August 1947 and Israel on 14 May 1948 — yet the trajectories of international scrutiny they have faced could not be more different. Pakistan's nuclear programme has been subjected to relentless Western

pressure, sanctions, and condemnation, whilst America and Europe have consistently turned a blind eye to Israel's undeclared nuclear arsenal, its territorial expansion, and its systematic violations of international law.

If international law is to retain any meaning, it must apply equally to all states — including Israel.

Recommended Actions

The EU, the United Nations, and Western governments must, at a minimum: enforce ICC arrest warrants against Israeli leaders; suspend the EU–Israel Association Agreement; impose a comprehensive arms embargo; demand Israel's accession to the NPT and acceptance of IAEA safeguards; support the establishment of a Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone in the Middle East; refer Israel's conduct in Gaza and the 2026 war to the International Court of Justice for a full investigation; and condition all future military and economic aid on verifiable compliance with international law. Anything less is a tacit endorsement of impunity — and a betrayal of the universal values the West claims to defend.

War Expenditure, Losses, and Global Economic Impact

The 2026 Iran war has inflicted catastrophic human, financial, and economic costs on all parties involved and on the global economy at large. The International Energy Agency has characterised the disruption caused by the war — particularly

the closure of the Strait of Hormuz — as the "largest supply disruption in the history of the global oil market." The following outlines the losses and expenditure by country, and the war's cascading impact on the world economy.[87]

United States

The Pentagon confirmed that the US spent US$25 billion on the war as of late April 2026, with the first six days of Operation Epic Fury alone costing US$11.3 billion (approximately US$1.9 billion per day). The Pentagon has requested a further US$200 billion supplemental from Congress. Democratic leaders and economists estimate the true cost to the US economy — including oil price shocks, disrupted trade, and damaged military equipment — could reach between US$630 billion and US$1 trillion. The US lost aerial equipment worth up to US$2.8 billion, including at least one THAAD radar system (US$485–970 million) and an E-3 AWACS/E7 airborne command aircraft (US$700 million). Fifteen US service members have been killed and 538 wounded. US gas prices surged over 30%, hitting US$4 per gallon by 31 March.[88]

[87] International Energy Agency, *Special Assessment: Impact of Strait of Hormuz Closure on Global Oil Markets* (Paris: IEA, March 2026).
[88] U.S. Department of Defense, "Press Briefing: Costs of Operation Epic Fury," Washington, DC: Pentagon Press Office, April 2026; U.S. Congressional Budget Office, *Preliminary Estimate: Military Operations Against Iran*, Washington, DC: CBO, April 2026.

Iran

Iran: At least 3,375 people have been killed in US–Israeli strikes, including seven infants, 376 children, and 496 women. The Iranian government assessed direct and indirect damages at approximately US$270 billion. Over 60,500 housing units were damaged across Tehran, Isfahan, and Qom. More than 307 health and medical facilities have been damaged. Over 4,000 civilian buildings were damaged by 6 March alone. Iran's economy is expected to shrink by 10% as a result of the war. Iran's naval capabilities were severely degraded, with several warships destroyed. The country faces acute food supply challenges, with grain ships stranded outside the Strait of Hormuz. Iran has demanded reparations as a precondition for a lasting settlement.

Israel

Israel faced Iranian missile and drone barrages, with 58 people hospitalised from injuries in one incident alone. Israel was already spending approximately 8.8% of GDP on defence before the war. During the June 2025 Twelve-Day War, Israel's economy contracted by approximately 1% in the second quarter. The 2026 conflict has compounded these losses, with ongoing disruptions to tourism, trade, and the domestic economy. The simultaneous reignition of the Lebanon war — killing over 2,500 people and displacing over one-sixth of Lebanon's population — has further strained Israeli military resources and finances.

Gulf Arab States

The cost of the war to Arab countries was estimated at over US$120 billion by 31 March. At least 28 people were killed across the Gulf states, including 10 in the UAE (citizens of Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Palestine, India, and Egypt), deaths in Saudi Arabia, and injuries across Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, and Oman. Damage to energy facilities in Middle Eastern countries could cost US$25 billion to repair. The UAE intercepted 241 of 262 incoming ballistic missiles, but the 21 that penetrated caused billions in damage. Bahrain — already among the world's most indebted countries — saw its aluminium and oil exports severely reduced. The UAE signed a US$5.4 billion currency swap agreement to support Bahrain's currency. The UAE quit OPEC on 1 May 2026 after 60 years, citing the war's impact. Major Middle Eastern airlines — Emirates, Etihad, and Qatar Airways — suspended all operations, with over 4,000 daily flight cancellations stranding hundreds of thousands of passengers.

Lebanon and Iraq

Over 2,509 people have been killed in Lebanon in the reignited Israel–Hezbollah conflict. At least 118 people were killed in Iraq, mostly members of paramilitary forces. A French soldier was killed in an attack in the Erbil area of Iraqi Kurdistan. Both countries have suffered significant infrastructure damage and displacement.

Global Economic Impact

The closure of the Strait of Hormuz — through which approximately 20% of the world's oil trade and one-fifth of global liquefied natural gas passes — has caused the largest oil supply disruption since the 1970s energy crisis. Approximately 15 million barrels per day of crude oil and 4.5 million barrels per day of refined fuels were stranded in the Persian Gulf. An estimated one billion barrels of oil production will be lost due to the war. Brent crude reached US$111 per barrel and WTI hit US$100, with Qatar's Energy Minister warning that continued fighting could drive prices to US$150 per barrel and lead to the "collapse of world economies." The war more than doubled the price of kerosene-based products like diesel and jet fuel. The eurozone economy was projected to contract, while the US economy experienced significant slowdown. Global shipping was severely disrupted, with rerouting adding to journey times and costs. Insurance premiums for Gulf shipping surged, and investment across the region declined sharply.[89]

Cost of Living Crisis

The war's impact on ordinary citizens worldwide has been devastating. The surge in oil prices has driven up the cost of fuel, food, transport, and heating for billions of people already struggling with a pre-existing cost of living crisis. In Pakistan, petrol prices surged over 40% in a single month, rising to PKR 458 per litre, triggering massive protests. India, which imports

[89] U.S. Energy Information Administration, "The Strait of Hormuz Is the World's Most Important Oil Transit Chokepoint," EIA Today in Energy, January 5, 2024, https://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.php?id=61002.

nearly 60% of its petroleum from the Gulf, saw disruptions to its fertiliser sector, with urea plants forced to reduce production. Japan released 80 million barrels from its strategic reserves. Countries across South and Southeast Asia — including Nepal, Myanmar, and Bangladesh — experienced severe fuel shortages, panic buying, and rationing. In Europe, inflation rose approximately 0.5 percentage points above pre-conflict forecasts in the best-case scenario, with worse outcomes if the conflict persists. Food prices have been driven up globally by disruptions to fertiliser supply (urea from the Gulf) and shipping delays. Aviation costs have soared due to airspace closures and longer flight routes. The World Economic Forum has described the war's economic fallout as "a structural shock to the world economy, delivered at a moment of geoeconomic fragility" that is "reshaping global commodity markets, food systems, industrial supply chains, financial conditions and geopolitical alignments — potentially for years to come."[90]

The total financial cost of this war — to all parties and to the global economy — is projected to run into the hundreds of billions if not trillions of dollars. Thousands of lives have been lost, millions displaced, and the livelihoods of ordinary people on every continent have been damaged by rising prices and economic instability. All of this — triggered by a war of choice launched to please a strategic ally — should serve as a permanent indictment of the recklessness with which this conflict was initiated.

[90] World Economic Forum, *Global Economic Outlook: The 2026 Iran Conflict and Its Cascading Consequences* (Geneva: WEF, April 2026).

Chapter 10

The Iraq War and the Alleged Chemical Weapons



UN weapons inspectors in full protective hazmat suits examine and catalogue suspected Iraqi chemical weapon munitions including artillery shells and rockets discovered in a desert storage site during the 1990s disarmament operations.

The accusations of the use of fatal chemical weapons against Iraq are quite peculiar. When Prime Minister Tony Blair and Alastair Campbell asked British intelligence agencies to prepare a report asserting that Iraq had such weapons capable of attacking Britain within 45 minutes, the agencies objected, stating that they had no such information. They were reluctant to prepare the report as Tony Blair intended. Under pressure from George Bush, however, a false report was produced by the British government and presented to the public. This report later became known as the 'Dodgy Dossier'. British media and politicians referred to it as the 'Sexed Up Report' and accused Tony Blair of lying. Hundreds of thousands of people demonstrated against the Iraq War, with George Bush being heavily criticised, and Tony Blair was labelled a "Poodle of Bush" and dubbed "Bliar," a play on words meaning "liar."

Dr Kelly's Mysterious Death



Dr David Kelly, the Chief Scientist in Britain.

Andrew Gilligan, a skilled reporter for the BBC, was the first to expose the lie in his report. His findings caused an uproar not only in Britain but also across the world. Later, under various pressures, the government attempted to force the reporter to disclose his sources. Many powerful lobbies pushed for the BBC's funding to be reduced, and the corporation was threatened with legal action. Eventually, the BBC revealed that the information had come from Dr David Kelly, the Chief Scientist in Britain and a United Nations weapons inspector. Dr Kelly had inspected Iraq's weapons and confirmed that Iraq had no weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), asserting that the report presented by Tony Blair was incorrect.

As a government employee, Dr Kelly faced immense pressure and threats, and an inquiry was launched against him in Parliament, casting doubt on his character. Despite speaking the truth and trying to prevent his country from being led into a wrongful war, those in Tony Blair's circle branded him a traitor. On July 17, 2003, the news broke that Dr Kelly had committed suicide. Many media outlets and politicians suspected that his death was not a suicide but possibly orchestrated by intelligence agencies, like the deaths of Princess Diana and Foreign Secretary Robin Cook. Dr Kelly had planned to write a book to prove that Iraq did not possess WMDs. He had held multiple meetings with Prime Minister Tony Blair on the issue, but his secrets remained concealed. After his death, the police seized his computer.

Andrew Gilligan wrote an eye-opening article for The Telegraph on July 21, 2003, shedding light on the actions of powerful forces that orchestrated the war against Iraq, leading the world into unrest. He writes:

"In July 2003, just as Dr Kelly's identity was exposed, MI6 secretly withdrew the 45-minute intelligence as unreliable and poorly sourced."

According to Major General Michael Laurie, the head of the Defence Intelligence Staff at the time of the dossier, "We found no evidence of planes, missiles, or equipment related to weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). It was clear to me that pressure was applied to the Joint Intelligence Committee and its drafters. Every fact was manipulated to make the dossier as convincing as possible. The final statements in the dossier extended beyond the uncertainties that intelligence assessments would normally draw from such facts."

According to an MI6 officer working on the dossier, the 45-minute claim was "based in part on wishful thinking" and was not fully validated. Another MI6 officer said, "From the outset, there were concerns within the intelligence services about whether the intelligence could support some of the judgments being made."

When Tony Blair wrote his book, he shamelessly stated:

"Politicians are sometimes obliged to conceal the full truth, to bend it, and even distort it, when the interests of a larger strategic goal demand that it be done."

"My views on Sir Richard Dearlove, Sir John Scarlett, and the other distinguished civil servants... have failed catastrophically in their duty, bringing their professions, their services, and their country into deep, possibly permanent, disrepute."

Resignation of the British Foreign Secretary

It is important to remind readers that Robin Cook was the British Foreign Secretary when Tony Blair served as Prime Minister. Cook resigned in protest over the government's flawed policies regarding the war in Iraq. When he passed away, an epitaph was placed on his grave that read:

"I may not have succeeded in halting the war, but I did secure the right of Parliament to decide on war."

I believe that the efforts to bring the resolution regarding the war to Parliament were commendable, as the decision should not have been made solely by the Prime Minister and his cabinet. The entire Parliament should have had a say in such a critical matter. This is why the resolution to intervene in Syria failed in the British Parliament in 2013. (Though Tony Blair lied and secured approval for the invasion of Iraq in 2003.) For this reason, Robin Cook stated upon his resignation: "I cannot accept collective responsibility for the decision to commit Britain now to military action in Iraq without international agreement or domestic support."



Former British Foreign Minister Robin Cook.

This statement reflects the British Foreign Secretary's belief that the Iraq war was a one-sided action, which is why he consistently called for a resolution to be passed by the United Nations. However, Tony Blair ignored his Foreign Secretary's advice, and the entire world, especially the Islamic world, continues to bear the

consequences. Robin Cook was a seasoned politician, and his concerns about the Iraq war turned out to be entirely correct.

US deception in Iraq

A recent report on America's deception regarding Iraq's situation has come to light. According to the Bureau of Investigative Journalism's 2016 report, the U.S. Pentagon paid $540 million to the British public relations company Bell Pottinger to create false propaganda films about terrorism. This money came from American taxpayers. The U.S. intelligence and military defence agencies Pentagon, the National Security Council, and the CIA produced and disseminated these films online. These films allowed the U.S. government to defend its manipulative and misguided policies, as well as to shape public opinion against Muslims. However, the negative impact of these films was significant, as they led many young people to become inclined towards extremism. The wave of extremism and terrorism that now engulfs the world is largely due to these deceptive films.

Is there anyone who will hold those responsible accountable? To deflect blame, the U.S. government claimed that these films were posted online to target individuals with a "jihadi" mindset. This demonstrates an extreme level of irresponsibility. Why did America use the names of groups like Al-Qaeda and portray them as heroes, ultimately trapping them in a senseless web?



A collage chronicling the Iraq War era: President George W. Bush declares "Mission Accomplished" in 2003, U.S. troops on the ground, burning oil fields, anti-war protests, and a roadside memorial tallying the rising American death toll (3,845 as of late 2007).

The same Bell Pottinger company had a significant influence on Iraqi media. In a ruthless practice, according to Martin Wells, the

editor of these films, American troops would throw these films into the homes of Iraqis during their raids, then retrieve them and use them as evidence. Bell Pottinger was eventually expelled from the Public Relations and Communications Association (PRCA) for inciting racial hatred and riots. The company's CEO, James Henderson, was also forced to resign.

An Eye-Opening Statement by United States General Wesley Clark

General Wesley Clark, a retired Four-Star American General and former presidential candidate in 2009, gave an eye-opening interview to CBS News. General Clark's insights are important because of his high military rank and experience. He explains that history does not always repeat itself exactly. However, there are similarities between the lead-up to the Iraq War and the situation at the time of his interview.



Four-star General Wesley K. Clark, former Supreme Allied Commander Europe of NATO.

Clark recalled his visit to the Pentagon shortly after the 9/11 attacks, where he had a conversation with senior defence officials. One of them revealed to him that they had already decided to go to war with Iraq, even though there was no solid evidence connecting Saddam Hussein to al-Qaeda. The decision was made because they did not know how to address the growing threat of terrorism and saw Iraq as a potential target. The decision, he explained, was based on the mentality that "if the only tool you have is a hammer, every problem has to look like a nail."

As Clark further describes, a few weeks later, a memo from the

Pentagon came to light, outlining a five-year plan to target several countries in the Middle East, starting with Iraq and moving on to Syria, Lebanon, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, and eventually Iran.

A Fact-Based Statement from the British Army Chief



General Sir Richard Dannatt, former Chief of the Defence Staff of the British Armed Forces.

General Sir Richard Dannatt, the Chief of the General Staff of the British Army, publicly stated that the British military should leave Iraq immediately. According to Dannatt, the military presence in Iraq was worsening the situation. He criticised the lack of a clear exit strategy, which led to ongoing conflict and instability. General Dannatt pointed out that history would show that the British occupation of Iraq created a power vacuum, which allowed malign elements to take advantage of the situation. His statement highlighted that the hope of leaving Iraq in a few years after the initial invasion had proven to be false.

He acknowledged that while Britain's presence in Iraq may not be the sole cause of global difficulties, it certainly exacerbated them. His comments reflect the broader challenges that the invasion created not only for Iraq but for international relations.

Guantanamo Bay: A Clumsy Blemish on the Face of Humanity

After the wars and occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq, America



U.S. military personnel escort hooded and shackled detainees in orange jumpsuits toward a white prison bus during a transfer operation at Camp X-Ray, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, in early 2002.

imprisoned hundreds of Muslims in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. The U.S. had leased this territory from Cuba, meaning American law did not apply there. The detainees were subjected to torture to extract forced confessions, and many innocent people were sent back to their home countries without charge. These prisoners were not granted the status of "War Prisoners," and neither human rights organisations nor the United Nations took effective action against these violations.

Without the rule of law at the highest level, it is futile to expect enforcement at lower levels. The rule of "might is right" prevails, and those in power act without accountability.

The scale of the injustice can be understood from a report by Human Rights First, dated March 23, 2017. According to this report, only one prisoner out of 780 was ever tried in America. Under President Bush, 500 prisoners were released without charge, and another 242 prisoners were released under President Obama, with detainees sent to 59 countries, including the UK, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan. Despite Obama's campaign promise to close

Guantanamo Bay, the political pressure from the CIA and Pentagon prevented him from fulfilling that commitment. The cost of imprisoning one detainee in Guantanamo Bay annually was about $10 million, compared to $7,800 in an American jail. The annual total cost of maintaining the prison reached $445 million. Considering this, the question remains: has the world become safer, or has it become even more dangerous?

Inhuman Atrocities in the Abu Ghraib Torture Facility under US control



A U.S. military guard uses an unmuzzled dog to intimidate and threaten a hooded, shackled detainee in an orange jumpsuit during interrogations at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq, 2003–2004.

In 2003, intoxicated with power, the United States occupied Iraq under the guise of freeing its people from the alleged brutality of President Saddam Hussein. The U.S. forces arrested innocent civilians based on mere suspicion, and these arrests continued until 2006. The detainees were imprisoned at Abu Ghraib prison, located near Baghdad, which had a capacity of only 1,500 inmates but was holding approximately 4,000 prisoners, with reports suggesting the number may have been even higher. Many prisoners were killed or abandoned in remote locations after being subjected to violence.

Inside the prison, detainees were stripped naked and forced to pile on top of each other. U.S. soldiers would jump on top of them. In some instances, prisoners were forced to engage in demeaning and inhumane acts with one another. Military dogs were set loose to attack them, and dog collars were placed around their necks and pulled. American soldiers even took photographs with the

detainees in various degrading positions. Women prisoners were raped, and detainees were subjected to electric shocks. These horrific abuses were captured in photographs, some of which were leaked to the media, sparking an outcry over the inhuman treatment by the American military.

At first, the U.S. government attempted to cover up the incidents. However, after growing pressure, the issue was raised in the U.S. Senate, and an investigation was launched into the actions of several military officers, including brigadier and lieutenant colonel ranks. Some officers faced consequences for their actions. Major General Antonio Taguba was tasked with investigating the abuse and produced a detailed report. Below are some of the findings from his report:

April 30, 2004 – Major General Antonio Taguba's Report

The report revealed shocking details of the abuse that took place at Abu Ghraib prison, including:

- Punching, slapping, and kicking detainees; jumping on their naked feet.
- Videotaping and photographing naked male and female detainees.
- Forcibly arranging detainees in sexually explicit positions for photographs.
- Forcing detainees to strip and remain naked for days at a time.
- Forcing male detainees to wear women's underwear.
- Forcing groups of male detainees to masturbate while being filmed.
- Piling naked male detainees together and jumping on top of them.
- Placing a naked detainee on a box with a sandbag over his

head, attaching wires to his fingers, toes, and genitals to simulate electric torture.

- Writing derogatory messages on a detainee's body and photographing him in degrading poses.
- Using military dogs to intimidate and even bite detainees.
- Taking photographs of dead detainees.

The atrocities committed at Abu Ghraib were a clear violation of human rights and international law, and the global repercussions of these actions continue to echo today.

Chapter 11

Libya & Syria: Burning Frontiers of Conflict



Palestinian fighters carry salvaged weapons and supplies through the rubble-strewn streets of Gaza as thick black smoke rises from a fresh Israeli airstrike explosion in the background.

Five African countries, Niger, Angola, Algeria, Egypt, and Libya, stand out as major contributors to the continent's oil production, with Libya historically playing a pivotal role due to its vast reserves and export capacity. In 2010, prior to the NATO-led intervention, Libya produced approximately 1.65 million barrels of oil per day, accounting for a significant share of global supply. However, following the U.S.-backed intervention in 2011, ostensibly to protect human rights under United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973, production plummeted due to civil unrest, infrastructure damage, and political fragmentation. By 2014, output had fallen to around 470,000 barrels per day, representing a reduction of nearly two-thirds from pre-intervention levels, and further declined to an average of 404,000 barrels per day in 2015 (Statista, 2024). Libya's proven oil reserves, estimated at 48 billion

barrels as of 2024, remain the largest in Africa and rank among the top ten globally, underscoring the strategic value of its resources (Libya Review, 2024; U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2024a). In contrast, Pakistan's oil production in 2015 averaged about 90,000 barrels per day, supported by estimated reserves of approximately 9 billion barrels of petroleum and 105 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, highlighting the disparity in resource endowments between the two nations (World meter, 2024; U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2015). Globally, Saudi Arabia holds the second-largest oil reserves at 267 billion barrels, closely followed by Venezuela with 303 billion barrels (World meter, 2024)

French President Nicolas Sarkozy's assertion that Libya under Muammar Gaddafi posed a "threat to the financial security of mankind" drew widespread criticism in Europe and the United States, exposing the intervention's underlying motivations as rooted in financial and geopolitical dominance rather than humanitarian concerns (Politico, 2018). Prior to the 2011 intervention, Gaddafi had proposed the "Golden Dinar," a gold-backed currency initiative aimed at enabling African nations to trade oil independently of the U.S. dollar, challenging the petrodollar system established in 1973 through a U.S.-Saudi agreement that mandated oil sales in dollars, thereby reinforcing U.S. economic hegemony (The Ecologist, 2016; Investopedia, 2024). This system, solidified in the 1970s following the Nixon Shock and the oil crisis, compelled oil-producing countries to recycle petrodollars into U.S. assets, fostering global dependence on the dollar for energy trade. Western powers, historically proponents of capitalism and colonialism, viewed such regional autonomy as intolerable, echoing the severe repercussions faced by Saudi King Faisal in 1973 for leveraging oil as a political weapon during the Arab Israeli conflict; he was assassinated by his nephew, Prince

Faisal bin Musaid, in 1975 amid heightened regional tensions (History.com, 2024).

Like many Muslim-majority countries, Libya is richly endowed with oil and natural gas, contributing to the Middle East's dominant share of approximately 48% of the world's proven reserves (NS Energy Business, 2019). Critics contend that the true impetus for Libya's destabilisation was its hydrocarbon wealth, which threatened Western economic interests. Pre-intervention, Libya enjoyed relative stability under Gaddafi, with no significant terrorist presence. Post-2011, however, the country descended into chaos, with youth unemployment soaring to around 40% by the mid-2010s, exacerbating social vulnerabilities (The Guardian, 2021; Equal Times, n.d.). Estimates suggest that up to 150,000 Libyans joined armed militias or extremist groups in the ensuing vacuum, with over 30 factions emerging, fuelled by the proliferation of weapons and ideological fragmentation (U.S. House of Representatives, 2016; Wilson Centre, 2015).

The case of Salman Abedi, the Libyan-born perpetrator of the 2017 Manchester Arena bombing that killed 22 people, exemplifies the transnational fallout. Abedi, whose parents were anti-Gaddafi activists who fled to the UK and later returned to Libya after the regime's fall, visited Libya just weeks before the attack in April 2017, amid the country's deepening civil war (BBC News, 2021; The Guardian, 2023). This raises profound questions: Were Abedi's actions driven by ideological terrorism, personal radicalisation influenced by his family's Islamist ties, or a quest for revenge against a homeland ravaged by intervention? Post-Gaddafi Libya lacks a viable democratic, political, or economic framework, with the United Nations' role in stabilisation efforts remaining largely ineffective and contested.

The global repercussions of Western interference in Libya, framed

as humanitarian intervention, have been profound, igniting a surge in terrorism that extends far beyond its borders. Despite a United Nations arms embargo imposed in 2011 to curb the flow of weapons, the U.S. and allies provided covert support to insurgents, contravening the embargo's intent and prolonging the conflict (SIPRI, 2024; UN News, 2021). A revealing 2007 interview with former U.S. General Wesley Clark by Amy Goodman of Democracy Now! exposed a Pentagon memo outlining plans to "take out" seven countries in five years: Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, and Iran, highlighting a broader strategy of regime change that prioritised U.S. interests over. The United Nations must confront its inaction in Libya and similar cases across Arab and Muslim nations, holding accountable those whose interventions have sown seeds of enduring unrest.

Syria Under Fire: U.S.-Led Strikes Hit Another Muslim Country



Syrian Red Crescent volunteers in red uniforms gather with civilians amid heavily damaged buildings in a war-torn neighbourhood of Aleppo or Damascus, providing humanitarian aid during the Syrian Civil War.

The ongoing crisis in Syria exemplifies the profound helplessness of the United Nations and the broader Muslim Ummah, as the world grapples with the lingering devastation from prior conflicts while external powers pursue their agendas. What began as a civil

uprising in March 2011, sparked by young men in Deraa writing anti-government slogans on walls, met with a harsh crackdown by President Bashar al-Assad evolved into a multifaceted war framed initially as a sectarian Sunni-Shi'a dispute but driven by hidden objectives from multiple nations, including resource control and regional dominance (Human Rights Watch, 2025). Assad's subsequent announcement of plans to lift the state of emergency and permit new political parties offered fleeting hope for reform. However, the United States swiftly imposed sanctions on Assad and six associates in May 2011, with then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton stating that "any property in the United States or under U.S. control in which the individuals listed in the Annex have an interest is blocked, and U.S. persons are prohibited from engaging in transactions with them" (U.S. Department of the Treasury, 2011). By August 2011, comprehensive economic sanctions froze Syrian assets in the U.S., banned oil imports, and restricted financial transactions, with European allies following suit by halting Syrian oil purchases, creating an atmosphere of economic strangulation that exacerbated internal anarchy (European Union, 2011; United Nations Security Council, 2011). The U.N., failing to heed lessons from the interventions in Iraq and Libya, permitted clear interference in Syria's sovereign affairs, fostering chaos that persists to this day.

In October 2011, the formation of the Syrian National Council aimed to establish a democratic government. Yet, this rhetoric rings hollow against the backdrop of imposed regime changes in Iraq, Libya, and Egypt, while Gulf states maintained authoritarian stability. A U.N. Security Council resolution condemning Assad in 2011 was vetoed by Russia and China, underscoring the body's paralysis amid great-power rivalries (United Nations Security Council, 2011). Undeterred, the Arab League suspended Syria's

membership in November 2011, with Arab foreign ministers and Turkey aligning against Damascus, propelling Turkey into the fray and enabling the influx of militants and displaced persons across its borders developments that have sown long-term instability. As of September 2025, Turkey hosts over 2.4 million registered Syrian refugees, far exceeding the capacity of its 200,000-person camps, leaving many exposed to harsh winters and mental health crises (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2025a). This mirrors Pakistan's burdens with 3 million Afghan refugees, which precipitated enduring security threats, and raises fears of a similar international conspiracy undermining Turkey's stability (Baker Institute, 2025).

In February 2012, Assad's referendum on constitutional amendments to permit multi-party politics appeared as a conciliatory gesture. However, opposition groups rebranded as the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces, amid allegations of Western complicity in arming extremists. Assad's ouster in December 2024 ended 50 years of Ba'athist rule, ushering in a transitional phase under al-Sharaa's administration, which dissolved HTS in January 2025 and integrated militias into the Ministry of Défense. Russia and Iran have withdrawn much support, while the U.S. maintains under 1,000 troops focused on counter-ISIS operations, amid plans to end the Global Coalition mission by September 2026 (Council on Foreign Relations, 2025; U.S. Department of Défense, 2025). However, challenges abound: ISIS, with over 2,500 fighters in Syria-Iraq, exploits divisions, launching attacks like a May 2025 landmine in Suwayda (Peace Research Institute Frankfurt, 2025). Sectarian clashes in March 2025 killed hundreds in Latakia and Tartus, prompting a U.N. Security Council presidential statement condemning violence and urging inclusive transition per Resolution 2254 (2015) (United Nations Security Council, 2025).

Chapter 12:

Through the windows of History-Holocaust of Muslims



Pro-Palestinian demonstrators in New York City hold signs declaring "Zionism is Terrorism" and "Americans for Palestine" during a protest Israel, with one draped in a defaced Israeli flag.

It was a beautiful, well-filled hall in a well-known school in London. Though the hall was filled with people, it did not feel overcrowded. The event was well-organised, and everyone was eagerly awaiting the guest speaker. A lecture was arranged on the topic of "Peace, the United Nations, and the Islamic World," organised by the Forum for International Relations Development (FIRD). Along with male and female students, the audience also included several teachers. Throughout the lecture, the audience's concentration grew, and my own enthusiasm strengthened. As the lecture concluded, the hall erupted in applause. Following the lecture, a question-and-answer session began. A student with a face that resembled an open book stood up to ask the first question. A single glance was enough to assess his intellectual calibre. I had been observing him even during the lecture.

In educational institutions, there are often faces like his, whose questions seem difficult to satisfy with answers. I listened

attentively as he spoke:

"You are right, I say these things, you are a rational person and get impressed but think about it a little. Even today, the last impression people have of Muslims is that Islam promotes extremism and bigotry. Even today, Islam is associated with hatred, intolerance, and violence. Whenever Islamic education is mentioned, terrorism and extremism are pointed out. Moreover, it is said that this religion deprives people of freedom of thought, denies women their rights, and leaves no room for detailed dialogue. Then, when a Muslim gets trapped in poverty, hunger, and deprivation, he becomes frustrated and ultimately falls into the hands of those groups who recruit him in the name of jihad and martyrdom and use him for terrorism.

This is why a Muslim is easily targeted, and when he becomes a victim of deprivation, he picks up a weapon in desperation. Terrorism is such a stigma that, when placed on jkjj,,,, forehead, no explanation works afterwards. Even if he speaks the truth, his voice is not trusted. … The question is, why is terrorism linked only to Muslims? Is it not true that terrorism also exists in other religions, among other nations, and in the world? Was there no extremism in Afghanistan, Iraq, or Syria? Hasn't the West also killed millions in the name of democracy? However, despite this, terrorism is only attributed to Muslims, and the Muslim youth are continuously pushed toward terrorism.

So, what is the reason that the global organisation of Islam, the *OIC*, is not finding any way to remove this stigma from Muslims? Why is the United Nations not opening its mouth to solve this issue?"

Does Terrorism have a religion?

These were the horrifying images of the people killed in the attack on July 22, 2011. The entire media worldwide reported that a Norwegian youth, Anders Behring Breivik, who was associated

with a right-wing extremist organisation, meticulously planned and killed 93 people while injuring 213 others from the Labour Party during a meeting. He created a 1,500-page manifesto titled "2083: A European Declaration of Independence" and named his actions "Template of Terrorism." Breivik believed that Islam was colonising Europe and thus aimed to purify Europe of Muslims. This incident is considered the bloodiest act of terrorism since World War II. This terrorist also had a religion and an ideology. He had 7,000 Facebook friends. Later, investigations proceeded, and the murderer was declared to have a psychological disorder. He was sentenced to life imprisonment and diagnosed with 'narcissistic personality disorder.' I distinctly recall the contrasting attitude towards this terrorist, who openly declared his disdain for Muslims and celebrated his joy in murdering innocent Muslims with meticulous planning.

As I write these lines today, 64-year-old Stephen Paddock killed 59 people and injured about 500 at a musical concert in Mandalay, Las Vegas. Forty-seven machine guns and other weapons were recovered from this retired accountant. Thousands of bullets and other dangerous materials were also found. This merciless murderer took his own life after the incident in the same hotel where he was staying. The word 'Terrorist' was never used in reference to him. Meanwhile, when a Muslim is found with a knife, the media immediately labels him a terrorist, showing images of the mosque and its imam, even if the individual had never been to the mosque. Umar Mateen, a homosexual, killed 49 people and injured about 53 by opening fire at a nightclub for homosexuals in Florida in 2016. Because he was a Muslim, the media instantly tied him to ISIS and terrorism.

Efforts to strengthen anti-gun legislation in the United States, led by President Barack Obama and supported by numerous Senators,

faced formidable opposition from powerful arms dealer lobbies, such as the National Rifle Association (NRA), which wield significant financial influence over policymakers through campaign contributions and advocacy, often rendering reform initiatives ineffective (Everytown for Gun Safety, 2024). This lobbying power has perpetuated lax gun regulations despite mounting evidence of firearm-related harm. According to the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) data, a total of 464,033 firearm-related deaths occurred in the United States from 2001 to 2014, encompassing suicides, homicides, and unintentional shootings, a figure underscoring the scale of the public health crisis (Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, 2024). In 2015, the CDC reported 36,252 total firearm deaths, with approximately 372 mass shooting incidents tracked by the Gun Violence Archive (GVA), highlighting the pervasive nature of gun violence across the nation (Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, 2017; Gun Violence Archive, 2024).

Comparative international data further illustrates the disparity; A New York Times analysis aligned closely with CDC figures for U.S. deaths that year, while The Guardian noted that England and Wales (excluding Scotland and Northern Ireland) recorded only 29 confirmed firearm homicides in 2023, a stark contrast to the U.S. totals and reflective of stricter gun controls abroad (The Guardian, 2024; Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, 2024). By 2023, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) reported 1,208 gun-related crimes in London, according to Metropolitan Police data, a fraction of the 13,529 gun murders and non-negligent manslaughters nationwide in the U.S. that year as per FBI Uniform Crime Reports, which resulted in 46,728 deaths per CDC records and included 47 law enforcement officers felled by gunfire, as documented by the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund (BBC News, 2024; Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2024;

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2024; National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, 2024). These updated statistics, drawn from authoritative sources, emphasise the urgent need for evidence-based policy reforms to mitigate the devastating toll of gun violence on American society.

When comparing these incidents with the few committed by Muslims, their so-called "terrorism" appears minuscule. Nonetheless, we condemn all incidents where lives are lost. To kill someone is against the Qur'anic teachings. However, considering the problems facing the youth, we can understand their confusion. Law-making institutions in America are also somewhat unusual. There is an excess of arms in America. A non-Muslim American buys 47 automatic/semi-automatic guns along with explosives to carry out terrorist activities, and the Arms Control department has proper records, yet he is never labelled a terrorist. On the other hand, instead of improving the arms-control system to prevent the purchase of automatic weapons, the marketing is being expanded. In the past, pubs closed at night, and people drank at home. However, now, bars and clubs remain open until 3 a.m., which has led to increased incidents of rape and terrorism-related behaviours, overwhelming hospitals. Instead of reducing the hours of bar openings, the narrative is raised that crime rates are increasing. Likewise, the legalisation of narcotics has led to a rise in mental health issues. Should not the West focus on improving its internal situation rather than interfering in other countries? This is a question many young people ask.

The Treaty of Hudaybiyya – A Permanent Guidance for the Muslim Ummah

In instances like this, I often turn to history for guidance. I shared a historical example: the Treaty of Hudaybiyya between the Quraysh of Makkah and the Muslims in 6 AH (628 AD). The conditions of

the treaty appeared to be unfavourable to the Muslims. The Prophet Muhammad (SAW), intending to perform 'Umrah, had travelled to Makkah with his companions, but the Quraysh halted them at Hudaybiyya. The Muslims were ready for battle, but instead, the Prophet (SAW) sought peaceful negotiations. Though the conditions of the treaty appeared to be humiliating, including a clause that allowed the Quraysh to return anyone who sought refuge in Medina, Allah revealed that this treaty, although seemingly a defeat, was indeed a victory (Sura Al-Fath). The peaceful period allowed the Muslim community to grow, eventually leading to the conquest of Makkah.

This example teaches us that to win the hearts of others, we must first conquer them with peace. Sometimes, a period of peace is necessary for greater victories. This wisdom was demonstrated by the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), who showed immense patience and foresight to save lives and foster peace, even in seemingly unfavourable circumstances.

The chapter continues, but the applause in the hall after my argument showed that the response resonated. In fact, the concerns raised by that young man are shared by many Muslims who feel exploited by developed nations. Because of the wrong actions of a few misled individuals, Islam is misrepresented globally. Muslims are often portrayed negatively by the Western world, and those who insult Islam are lauded as champions of free speech.

What is the Holocaust?

The word "holocaust" is derived from the Greek word *holokauston*, meaning something that is completely consumed by fire, or a sacrificial offering burned entirely. In English, it typically refers to the destruction of something. However, the term is most often reserved for the extreme and



A haunting symbol of the Holocaust's brutality and deception, shrouded here in fog on a somber day at the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum.

inhumane treatment of Jews during the Second World War, specifically the barbaric murders committed by the Nazis under the orders of Chancellor Adolf Hitler. According to Jewish sources, approximately 6 million Jews were killed, burned, or asphyxiated in gas chambers. However, some Western intellectuals dispute this number. Additionally, about 500,000 non-Jews were also killed, though their deaths are often overlooked.

The Nazi Party, led by Hitler, came to power in Germany through the promotion of anti-Jewish ideologies. They ruled Germany from 1933 to 1945, driven by a deep hatred of Jews, whom they believed had gained undue influence through their wealth and cunning. The Nazis considered Jews to be a "disease" within society, and their goal was the complete eradication of the Jewish population. The inhuman treatment of Jews included mass murder, the sexual abuse of women, and widespread atrocities, with government institutions and the Church complicit in the violence. The Church kept records of individuals, the postal service intercepted their mail, and this information was used to facilitate mass murder on an unimaginable scale.

Though Hitler himself came from a Christian background, the Nazi regime's cruelty was not confined to Germany alone. Many European nations, influenced by Nazi propaganda, became complicit in the genocide. After the war, these events became known as the Holocaust, a term specifically associated with the mass murder of Jews. However, it is also used more broadly to describe extreme cruelty, genocide, and oppression, such as the mass killings in the Balkans (Bosnia, Kosovo, etc.).

It is also noteworthy that during World War I, the Ottoman Empire sided with Germany, and its consequences are evident in the aftermath of the war. The power of the Jewish lobby was greatly strengthened following World War II, leading to the establishment

of the state of Israel with the support of Western powers. Today, no politician in countries like the United States or the United Kingdom can rise to the highest offices without publicly affirming their support for Israel and declaring that they are not opposed to the Jewish people. They must also actively endorse the protection of the Israeli state.

The Jews and Muslims in Europe

Some analysts, including Jewish ones, argue that during the more than 750 years of Muslim rule in Spain, Jews had the opportunity to live peacefully and prosper. Many Jews have openly admitted this, and this is why many Jews oppose the Israeli treatment of Muslims. According to the Pew Research Centre, the Jewish population before World War II was around 16.6 million, which is approximately the population of Karachi. Of these, 9.5 million lived in Europe, and the Nazis killed 6 million Jews. Today, according to current statistics, the number of Jews in Europe has dwindled to only about 1.4 million.

Some analysts believe that the Jews are God's chosen people, having received sustenance from God. However, they argue that this position made them somewhat arrogant, as they demanded more than what was provided. Their oppression of Christians and Muslims, especially in Palestine, is well documented. The Zionist lobby in Israel wields such influence in the U.S. and Europe that no leader in these regions can afford to speak out against them.

In a 2016 report by the Pew Research Centre, the number of Muslims living in 28 European countries (excluding Turkey) was approximately 25 million, with notable populations in France, Germany, the UK, and Italy. This number was 19.5 million in 2010 and is expected to reach 50 million by 2050. If Turkey, with its population of 80 million, is included, the total Muslim population in Europe will significantly increase. This growing population has fuelled nationalist and extremist right-wing organisations, which

have gained increasing popularity, as evidenced by their rise to second or third place in elections in several countries.

Europe, while advancing the concept of equal rights for men and women, has legislated in support of homosexuality. In countries like the UK, a man can marry another man, and a woman can marry another woman in the Church. In some cases, the clergyman administering the marriage ceremony may even be a homosexual. While homosexuals are free to marry, there is concern about the future of family structures and the question of how children will be born into such marriages. Many Christian, Jewish, and Muslim religious organisations oppose this legislation, believing it destroys the traditional concept of marriage. This debate has been heavily criticised by extremist left-wing and Nazi organisations, and the growing Muslim population has added to the tensions. Some Christian religious organisations want to act against homosexuality but feel helpless due to the pressure of 'liberty' in modern society.

I believe that the election of Donald Trump as U.S. president was part of a deliberate plan by anti-Islamic forces. Trump is a businessman with no experience in politics and has never even held a counselling position. Notably, six of the seven countries mentioned by General Wesley Clark in relation to the Pentagon's plans were banned from entering the U.S. by Trump as soon as he took office. Muslims cannot view America as free of responsibility for destroying six countries under the guise of so-called "Human Rights" (Iraq, Syria, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, and Yemen except Iran). Unfortunately, in the coming years, we will likely become pawns in deceitful geopolitical strategies against Iran.

During his campaign, Trump promised to end wars, yet upon becoming president, he sent 3,000 more soldiers to Afghanistan instead of withdrawing them. Similarly, in Iraq, his administration's actions did not align with his promises. Moreover,

to cover up his failures, Trump threatened Pakistan.

Trump has forgotten Pakistan's immense contribution. Pakistan, along with its population, helped America win the Cold War, yet now America threatens Pakistan, demanding improvements in Afghanistan and the dismantling of alleged safe houses for militants. In response to the ongoing chaos in Afghanistan, Trump scolded Pakistan, saying it must "demonstrate its commitment to civilisation, order, and peace."

Has America forgotten Pakistan's sacrifices? Does America not recognise how many members of Pakistan's security agencies and civilians lost their lives in the "War on Terror"? Pakistan has incurred billions of dollars in losses, in addition to the setback in its development. Furthermore, due to the uncertain security situation, the trust in Pakistan's security agencies has been shattered. Does America think that Pakistan's security agencies are unaware that the U.S., India, and Israel do not support Pakistan's nuclear program?

The fact is that Pakistan's security agencies are highly alert and closely monitoring the region's geopolitical developments. Pakistan is not Somalia. All Pakistanis, including the intellectuals, political institutions, military, lawyers, teachers, and students, share the same perspective on national security.

Emigration and Migration of Muslims



The Brookings Institution, a prominent American think tank, published an article highlighting the Arab world as a significant victim of large-scale emigration amid escalating conflicts (Brookings

Institution, 2024). This analysis underscored the dire conditions faced by displaced populations, with subsequent data revealing the crisis's persistence and expansion. As of 2024, over 6.1 million Syrian refugees and asylum-seekers have been registered globally, predominantly in neighbouring countries, alongside millions more from Iraq and Lebanon fleeing ongoing instability (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2025). In Lebanon alone, approximately 755,000 Syrian refugees reside in precarious conditions, straining the host nation's resources and exacerbating humanitarian challenges (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2024b). Similarly, Iraq hosts around 304,000 Syrian refugees, many in urban and camp settings with limited access to services, while Tunisia continues to shelter over 23,000 Libyan refugees amid regional volatility (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2025; United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2024d).

When will international institutions fully awaken to the gravity of this situation? When millions are compelled to emigrate, they not only abandon their homes but also forfeit their sense of dignity, plunging into cycles of vulnerability and despair. Women face heightened risks, with studies indicating that 22-69% of migrant women in Europe report experiences of sexual violence, including rape, often perpetrated en route or upon arrival (Guedes et al., 2024). In France, for instance, a 2023 cohort study of asylum-seeking women found that 26.3% endured sexual violence in their first year, with 4.8% involving rape, underscoring the perilous journey and inadequate protections (Muller et al., 2023). Thousands of such cases have been documented across Europe, highlighting the urgent need for gender-sensitive humanitarian responses.

The education of children has been profoundly disrupted, with over 2 million Syrian refugee children out of school as of 2023,

perpetuating intergenerational poverty and limiting future opportunities (United Nations Children's Fund, 2023). Health outcomes for children and the elderly have similarly deteriorated due to chronic shortages of food, clean water, and medical care; malnutrition affects nearly 600,000 Syrian children acutely, while access to basic healthcare remains elusive for 90% of refugees (World Health Organisation, 2024). These hardships exact a severe toll on mental well-being, impairing cognitive function and engendering resentment and vengeful impulses. Research on refugee youth reveals elevated rates of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) at 19-54%, depression at 3-30%, and anxiety at 19%, compounded by daily stressors like discrimination and family separation (Fazel et al., 2012; Reed et al., 2022). In such environments, the West's exhortations for Muslim communities to combat extremism ring hollow; Western policymakers must instead probe the root causes of displacement, trauma, and socioeconomic exclusion that fuel radicalisation. Addressing these origins could dismantle much of the extremism's foundation.

The invasions of Iraq and Libya, predicated on flawed intelligence and unsubstantiated claims, unleashed exponential surges in extremism and terrorism, yet these lessons remain unheeded. Europe's passive observation of the fallout failed to avert similar pretexts for intervention in Syria, where proxy conflicts have displaced millions and radicalised thousands. Consequently, nations like France, Germany, Belgium, and the United Kingdom now confront persistent terrorist threats, with attacks linked to returning fighters and homegrown radicals.

In the United Kingdom, Islamist-inspired terrorism struck multiple times between March and September 2017, including the Westminster attack (5 deaths), Manchester Arena bombing (22 deaths), London Bridge and Borough Market stabbings (8 deaths), and Parsons Green bombing (no deaths but 30 injuries), resulting

in 35 fatalities and over 1,000 injuries overall (Home Office, 2018; Sky News, 2017). By 2023, radicalisation concerns persisted, with 6,817 individuals referred to the Prevent programme England and Wales' counter-radicalisation initiative marking a 6.4% increase from the prior year and the third-highest total since 2015 (Home Office, 2024). Of these, 512 were escalated to Channel interventions, predominantly for extreme right-wing (45%) and Islamist (23%) ideologies, reflecting a polarised landscape where Muslims and non-Muslims alike are ensnared in mutual suspicion and escalating extremism (Home Office, 2024). This widening chasm, unmitigated by policy shifts, signals an unrelenting storm of violence and hatred.

Genocide of the Rohingya Muslims and the Futility of the UNO



A Bangladeshi border guard raises a baton to control a large group of Rohingya refugees, many holding umbrellas and carrying children and belongings, as they wade through shallow water fleeing violence in Myanmar during the 2017 exodus.

The Rohingya, an estimated 1.3 million Muslims who have resided in Myanmar (formerly Burma) for generations, trace their roots to the Rakhine State, which was transferred to Burma during the waning years of British colonial rule in the 1940s, despite its

historical status as an independent Muslim principality (Human Rights Watch, 2025a). Predominantly Bengali-speaking and physically akin to Bengalis, the Rohingya faced immediate rejection from Myanmar's Buddhist majority following independence in 1948, enduring systemic discrimination that denied them citizenship under the 1982 Citizenship Law, restricted access to education, healthcare, employment, and basic services, and escalated into military-led violence (Council on Foreign Relations, 2025). International reports from organisations like the United Nations and Human Rights Watch have documented these abuses as crimes against humanity, including forced displacement, arbitrary arrests, and the deliberate targeting of Muslim communities, culminating in what the UN has termed a "textbook example of ethnic cleansing" since 2017 (United Nations, 2018; Human Rights Watch, 2025a). While the United States has vocally condemned and militarily intervened in Syria against Bashar al-Assad's atrocities launching airstrikes in 2017 and 2018 over chemical weapons use the response to the Rohingya crisis has been markedly restrained, limited to sanctions on Myanmar officials and $2.4 billion in humanitarian aid since 2017, without direct military action, amid competing global priorities and geopolitical caution toward ASEAN dynamics (U.S. Department of State, 2024; Refugees International, 2025). Similarly, the 41-member Saudi-led Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition, the Arab League, and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) have issued condemnations and called for accountability such as the OIC's 2017 emergency meeting and ongoing support for the Gambia's ICJ case against Myanmar but have refrained from interventions akin to those in Libya (2011 NATO-backed operation) or Syria, citing non-interference principles, limited resources, and fears of regional escalation, raising questions about the unity invoked in the Prophet Muhammad's (SAW) hadith: "The believers in their mutual

kindness, compassion and sympathy are just like one body" (Sahih Muslim, 2586).

Global outrage has reverberated through parliaments in the UK, Canada, and Australia, where motions in 2017–2018 demanded UN Security Council action, including safe zones and accountability, while UN Secretary-General António Guterres, in a March 2025 visit to Cox's Bazar with Bangladesh's Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus, reiterated calls for Myanmar to halt military operations, ensure humanitarian access, and facilitate voluntary returns in safety and dignity (Al Jazeera, 2020; UN News, 2025). As of August 2025, over 150,000 Rohingya refugees from Myanmar are registered with UNHCR in Malaysia, many enduring perilous sea journeys amid funding shortfalls that have slashed U.S. aid by 55% in 2025, exacerbating malnutrition and shelter crises (NPR, 2025; UNHCR, 2025). The broader global refugee crisis compounds this tragedy by April 2025, UNHCR recorded 122.1 million forcibly displaced people worldwide a slight 1% decline from 2024 peaks due to partial returns in Syria and Afghanistan yet projections indicate 15.2 million in West and Central Africa alone by year-end, with Syrian refugees numbering around 5.6 million amid post-Assad transitions (UNHCR, 2025; USA for UNHCR, 2025). This disparity underscores a selective international moral compass, where Western interventions prioritise strategic interests over consistent humanitarian imperatives, leaving the Rohingya in protracted limbo and challenging Muslim solidarity to transcend rhetoric.

Concerns by Antonio Guterres, the UN Secretary-General



United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres addresses the General Assembly from the iconic green marble podium in New York.

Guterres called on the Burmese authorities to "suspend military action, end the violence, uphold the rule of law, and recognise the right of return of all those who had to leave the country."The Security Council expressed its concern over excessive violence in the security operations. It urged immediate steps to end the violence in Rakhine, de-escalate the situation, restore law and order, and ensure the protection of civilians. The Council also urged Burma to implement the recommendations made by a commission led by former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, calling for economic development and social justice to address the violence between Buddhists and Muslims in Rakhine.

In a notable act, Aung San Suu Kyi cancelled her participation in the UN General Assembly session due to the disgrace she faced from the international community for her handling of the crisis. All members of the UN Security Council, including China, sent a clear message to the Burmese government and military, with Britain taking the responsibility of writing the Security Council statement condemning Burma's actions. British Prime Minister Theresa May also announced that her government had stopped military engagements and army training with Burma.

Condemning Statement of Canadian former Prime Minister Justin Trudeau



Canadian Prime Minister Justin

Justin Trudeau, the former Canadian Prime Minister, personally phoned Miss San Suu and informed her about the critical situation and his apprehensions and on September 18, wrote a letter, which was the most unique letter written by any head of state. He wrote that it was very surprising and shocking for him that she and other Canadian citizens saw the atrocities against the Muslims of Rohingya silently. (Miss San Suu also has honorary citizenship of Canada.) He further wrote that it was her moral and political responsibility to raise a voice against that inhuman oppression, and she would have tried to check it according to her authority. He said that he would tell the government to provide access to the Human Rights Commissioner of the UN to those people.

Prime Minister Trudeau repeatedly reminded Miss San Suu that in the lecture on receiving the Nobel Prize, she talked too much about Human Rights, and now she should act upon her words.

I consider that the Muslim Ummah is responsible for political, social and economic Holocausts in the Muslim World in general and Pakistan in particular. Have we forgotten this message of Iqbal:

However, the International Community and the institutions established by them, including the UNO, etc., cannot be acquitted of their responsibility; they also overlooked the facts and helped the

falsehood proceed forward. It threw the entire Islamic World into the fire of war. The rhetoric was that it is the propagation of Democratic Values and Human Rights that are safeguarded, and Terrorism is being abolished.

Iraq, Syria and Libya were attacked based on lies and fraud. Thus, disturbance and anarchy were spread and propagated, prompting the governments of Saddam, Gaddafi and Assad to safeguard Human Rights and promote Democracy. Is it not the best formula to turn Muslims into Extremists and Terrorists? Its effects are also visible. The new wave of Terrorism in Europe has proved true the apprehensions of Robin Cook.

Chapter 13

Root causes of extremism and terrorism

"I believe my perspective is correct, though I acknowledge it may have flaws. I view others' opinions as incorrect but remain open to the possibility they could be accurate."

(Imam Shafi)



The trends of extremism are rapidly spreading in Europe. Extremist organisations are abundant there. Formerly, there was no political representation for these Extremist organisations, but now they have elected representatives at all levels of organisations, from Local Councils to European Parliaments. In countries like Holland, France, Britain, and Germany, the extremist trends against Muslims, Jews and other foreign immigrants are continuously strengthening. The graves of the Jews and places of worship of the Muslims are under terrorist attacks unceasingly, and the incidents of injuring Muslims by throwing acid have become routine. Moreover, the extremists' activities against the sympathisers of Muslims are also noticed. A member of British Parliament, Joe Cock, from Bradford, was shot dead at a public place in the daylight just because she wanted to unite all groups of the Community and talked about the lawful rights of the Muslims and gave a lesson of peace to the Extremist Whites. After the successful Referendum on BREXIT, many murderous attacks were launched against foreigners, and when Donald Trump became President, the Western Extremist organisations thrived. The attacks

were made on the places of worship of Muslims in almost all states, including Pennsylvania, New York, Virginia, Washington, Ohio, and New Jersey (Except four states). According to the report of CNN on August 7, 2017, from January to July 2017, nine mosques were targeted every month; thus far, improvised explosive devices have been used, and the Muslims are terrified. In Britain, a knife attack by a Muslim was immediately declared terrorism by the American President and within a few moments, it was severely condemned. However, on August 12, 2017, in Charlottesville, a city in Virginia, an armed rally came out against Muslims, and in violent manifestations, a woman lost her life. Many people were injured, and the American President issued no condemnation statement after forty-eight hours. He did not declare it terrorism, nor did he condemn it. Why should he condemn such incidents? They were the product of his anti-Islam statements. However, later, due to political and media pressure, he had to issue a statement. Despite all this, only Muslims are labelled as Extremists. That is why a young Muslim thinks that he is targeted due to religious prejudice, and he was ridiculed knowingly because of his religion.

Extremism: Its Impact on Society

When Islam has barred Extremism, it is not without reason. It has its own evils and damages that affect the social structure. For example:

1- Extremist attitudes affect the development of thought and knowledge of society badly. When somebody labels himself with extremism and raises the shout of "انا الحق"(I am the Truth), he does not admit or tolerate scholarly criticism, nor can he imagine that his opinion may be wrong. Therefore, a one-sided situation arises that is very harmful to society.

2- Due to Extremism, the moderate mindset cannot prosper.

Once, Europe had also been a victim of Extremism, and this concept was common there that a camel can pass through the eye of a needle, but a rich man cannot go to paradise.

3- Because of Extremism, feelings of disgust develop in society; that is why the Holy Prophet (SAW) did not like long recitations in the prayer by the Imam, so that the people may say their prayer willingly rather than unwillingly and with disgust.

4- Owing to Extremism, the feelings of mutual esteem become cold.

5- Because of Extremism, sectarianism spreads, and the collective Society is affected.

6- If feelings of Extremism arise in the scholars, consequently, the seat of learning goes into the occupation of ignorant people. This damage is not simple damage but irreparable damage. For example, scholarly works are ongoing, but there are no established sources or contacts for the mutual exchange of thoughts and critical evaluation. Furthermore, there are no forums, structures, or systems in place to evaluate opinions, reject unsound ones, and accept sound ones. Consequently, the research work will be affected and tarnished. If every group proclaims itself the standard of right and refutes others, the seat of learning will be deserted at last.

7- Extremism is harmful to the healthy thinking of a society. If an issue crosses the limits of moderation, it creates many difficulties. If the entire time is spent in worship and prayers, worldly affairs are affected. In the same way, if the

entire time is spent in worldly affairs and worship and prayers are abandoned, it is also a wrong attitude. A man has several duties and rights that he must properly manage and perform. It is not right that one is completely stuck in only one thing, even if he is engaged in religious work and forgets all other things, including the rights of his children and wife. It means he is unaware of the burglary into the spiritual atmosphere of his house.

8- World History witnesses that a point of view based on Extremism is obliterated due to the change of era. The World Wars were the result of the same Extremism. Only modernity lasts long. There is no exception for individuals in this regard. If somebody adopts prodigality, its definite consequence is poverty and paucity. Therefore, as miserliness is prohibited, in the same way, prodigality is rejected and adopting the way of moderation is enjoined.

9- Wherever Extremism is found, it is harmful. If it is found in prayers, the prayers will be encumbered, continuity will not be maintained, and the man slips into some other activities. Worship and prayers should be small, but they must be regular.

10- If Extremism is adopted in Islamic activities, people may be disgusted by religion.

11- Due to Extremism, the common differences in points of view aggravate and turn into sectarianism and prejudiced groups are formed, which are engaged in mutual disputes.

Reasons Behind Extremism

There may be several reasons behind Extremism, but its main

reason is inaccurate and incomplete knowledge of faith. If knowledge of faith is incomplete and a prejudiced point of view or a particular group dominates, extremism is born. Describing its reasons, Imam Abu Is'haq Shatbi writes: "When the people with unsound knowledge enter among the scholars and consider themselves 'Prime Intellect' and do not pay attention to the others' opinions, Extremism rises."

Islam is a moderate religion. It calls its adherents the best *Ummah* and commands them to be moderate.

The Nucleus of Terrorism

It is obvious and unfortunate for Muslims that negative terms like Islamic Jihad and Islamic Terrorism were introduced to the public through the media under a profound policy. And it has also become obvious that formerly, all were engaged to form terrorist organisations like AL-Qaeda, causing them to grow and then arming them with modern weapons. When the plan to ruin Iraq, Libya and Syria was finalised, the chapter of Al-Qaeda was closed. Then, in Abbottabad, it is strange how it happened, where has Osama gone? In this book on Terrorism, a previously written chapter in the form of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) as an Islamic State was introduced to the world, and an unknown person, Abu Bakr Baghdadi, was made its Ameer.

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, also known as Abu Dua' and Dr Ibrahim Ali al-Badri al-Samari, was an unknown personality a short while ago. He was born in Samara, a City in Iraq, in 1971. He joined the retaliating group after the American attack on Iraq in 2003. After the death of Abu Musaib al-Zarqavi in an American attack in 2006, he became a self-made Caliph of ISIS. However, no Islamic country recognised his Caliphate. Like Osama bin Laden and al-Zarqawi, he also avoided appearing in the media. It is the common

impression of the Muslims that during the American attack on Iraq, there was a jail, al-Baq'ah camp, like Guantanamo Bay, where al-Baghdadi was imprisoned. In this jail, a particular plan was made, and accordingly, ISIS and Baghdadi were introduced in Western Media as a Caliph. Some writings suggest that he was originally a Jew. On the orders of the same so-called Caliph, the heads of several Western journalists and other innocent people, including the people of Japan, Britain and America, were cut off. His organisation accepted the responsibility for many suicide attacks in Iraq. Their daily income from the sale of oil in the black market was about one Million Dollars, and many big international oil dealers were at their back because the transportation of hundreds of billions of Barrels was impossible without the support of big power. Now their properties are in Billions. In October 2011, he was declared a Terrorist, and his head money bounty was 25 million Dollars.

Christians Guarding the Mosques

We also must keep in view the negative attitude of the young Muslims, who have lit a fire of hatred in their hearts, and they want to burn everybody (Muslims as well as non-Muslims) to ashes. Suppose a Muslim young man attacks a police officer (who is performing his duty to safeguard the public), or some innocent civilian wayfarer, or crushes them under a car. Is it according to Islamic teachings? We must make up our accounts. Just condemnation is not sufficient; instead, we must change our attitudes and come out and face mischief-making. We should keep in mind that they were the non-Muslim White Civilians who held a Million March against the Iraq war and blocked London City.

It is my personal experience that when in the unsuccessful suicidal attacks of 2005, the people who said prayers in our mosque were found engaged, it was feared that our mosque would be attacked. When this rumour spread, four non-Muslims of our region took

clubs in their hands and stood in front of our mosque to guard us. The police also immediately made a safety enclosure around our mosque and guarded the mosque and the people who said a prayer there. It was unlike the martyrdom of the Babri mosque in India. In the following lines, we will try to understand the reality and the reasons for Extremism in the light of the Quran and Hadith.

Extremism is, in fact, multidimensional thinking. To adopt a particular point of view or thinking is not Extremism. However, when a person insists that only his point of view is right and all other points of view are wrong, and everybody should follow only his point of view. He is not even willing to listen to others' points of view and tries to obliterate others' opinions; such a mindset is included in Extremism. There is a moderate mindset along with an Extremist mindset. Now what is this moderation? God has declared the Muslims a moderate *Ummah* and Islam, a moderate religion. God says in the Holy Quran: وَكَذٰلِكَ جَعَلْنٰكُمْ اُمَّةً وَّسَطًا (And so We have made you ˝believers˝ Middle nation or Ummat-a wasaṭ-ā)
Extremism is an unnatural mindset; it does not grant dismissal or leave even if it is approved, or to make Din difficult without any reason, or think oneself the prime intellect, or reject (without reason) the opinion of others or encumber Din with unnatural things. All these are included in Extremism. Islam is the Din of nature that enjoins moderation in everything. Nature demands moderation; that is why Extremism has never been the objective of Islam, and the entire period of the Holy Prophet (SAW) stood on moderation, and he (SAW) had been negating Extremism and excessiveness. Even in the issues of collecting the Quran and Zakat, opinion was not imposed. In the Quran, the words '*ghuluv*' (excessiveness) and '*tashdid*' (severity) are used for Extremism.

Negation of Extremism in the Holy Quran

God, the Almighty, explicitly negates Extremism in His Book. There is an emphasis on moderation and balance in Islam. God enjoins:

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَا تَغْلُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ غَيْرَ الْحَقِّ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا أَهْوَاءَ قَوْمٍ قَدْ ضَلُّوا مِن قَبْلُ وَأَضَلُّوا كَثِيرًا وَضَلُّوا عَن سَوَاءِ السَّبِيلِ ۝

Translation: Say, O people of the Book, be not excessive in your religion unjustly, and do not follow the desires of a people who have already gone astray, misled many and lost the right path.
(Quraan: Al-Mayda:5:77)

The same subject is stated in Sura Nisa.

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ لَا تَغْلُوا فِي دِينِكُمْ

Translation: O people of the Book, be not excessive in your Faith,---(Quran: Sura Nisa: 4/171)

Monastic life as an institution is an unnatural phenomenon and no doubt, it amounts to Extremism. It is undesirable in Islam. God says:

وَرَهْبَانِيَّةً ابْتَدَعُوهَا مَا كَتَبْنَاهَا عَلَيْهِمْ

Translation: And monasticism, which they innovated; We did not prescribe it to them.

(Quran: Sura Hadeed 57/27)

The Holy Quran repeatedly condemns the people who cross the limit. In Sura al-Araf God says:

يَا بَنِي آدَمَ خُذُوا زِينَتَكُمْ عِندَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا ۚ إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ

Translation: O Children of Adam, take your adornment at every masjid, and eat and drink, but be not excessive Indeed, He likes not those who commit excess.

(Quran: Sura Al-Araf 7/31)

Almost the same is enjoined in Sura Al-Maidah

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تُحَرِّمُوا طَيِّبَاتِ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ ۝

Translation: O you who have believed, do not prohibit the good

things which Allah has made lawful to you and do not transgress. Indeed, Allah does not like transgressors.

(Quran: Sura al-Maeda 5/87)

Negation of Extremism in the Biography of the Holy Prophet (SAW)

Every moment of the biography of the Holy Prophet (SAW) negates the extreme sentiments and objectives. The Holy Prophet (SAW) says:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ "إِنَّ الدِّينَ يُسْرٌ وَلَنْ يُشَادَّ الدِّينَ أَحَدٌ إِلَّا غَلَبَهُ فَسَدِّدُوا وَقَارِبُوا وَأَبْشِرُوا وَاسْتَعِينُوا بِالْغَدْوَةِ وَالرَّوْحَةِ وَشَيْءٍ مِنَ الدُّلْجَةِ."

Translation: "Religion is very easy, and whoever overburdens himself in his religion will not be able to continue in that way. So, you should not be extremists but try to be near to perfection and receive the good tidings that you will be rewarded, and gain strength by worshipping in the mornings and the nights."

(Sahee Bukhari Kitab uliman: 39)

Imam Ahmad (RA) in his Masnad, Imam Nisai and Ibn Baja in their Sunnan, and Imam Hakim in his Mu'tadrik have narrated the Tradition of the Holy Prophet stated by Hazrat Ibn Abbas (RA): "Avoid excessiveness in Din, the nations before you were destroyed due to excessiveness."

At another place, the Holy Prophet (SAW) said:

حَدَّثَنَا آدَمُ حَدَّثَنَا شُعْبَةُ عَنْ أَبِي التَّيَّاحِ قَالَ سَمِعْتُ أَنَسَ بْنَ مَالِكٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ قَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ "يَسِّرُوا وَلَا تُعَسِّرُوا وَسَكِّنُوا وَلَا تُنَفِّرُوا."

Translation: The Prophet said. "Make things easy for the people, and do not make it difficult for them, and make them calm (with glad tidings) and do not repulse (them)

(Sahee Bukhari Kitab uadab: 6125)

The Holy Prophet (SAW) got angry with his very exalted Companion Hazrat Mo'az (RA) when leading the prayer; he recited Sura Baqra, and another Companion complained against him. The Holy Prophet Said, "O Mo'az (RA)! You put the people in

difficulty." He (SAW) repeated this sentence three times in anger. At another time, the Holy Prophet (SAW) expressed his anger at an Imam, saying: "There are some people among you who cause disgust in people's hearts. Whoever leads the prayer should recite light (short) Surahs for some old, weak and needy people who might be following them in prayer.

Wherever the Extremist mindset is present, there will be deficiencies in responsibilities, and other rights will necessarily be affected, as excessiveness is manifested, leading to the neglect of some rights. So, when the Holy Prophet (SAW) came to know that Abdullah bin Umar had excessively engaged himself in worship and prayers, he (SAW) asked him (RA) if he kept fast during the day and said prayers at night. He humbly replied in the affirmative. The Holy Prophet advised him not to do so. He (SAW) told him to keep fast as well as breakfast; to sleep as well as awake; for his body had right over him; his eyes also had right over him, and his wife had right over him too.

Islam against Oppression

1- By the study of the teachings of Islam, we come to know that Muslims have to adopt the way of justice in all circumstances. They are not at all permitted to abandon justice even against their enemies. The Holy Quran says:

وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَآنُ قَوْمٍ أَنْ صَدُّوكُمْ عَنِ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ أَنْ تَعْتَدُوا

Translation: And do not let the hatred of a people for having obstructed you from al-Masjid Al-Haram lead you to transgress)

(Quran Sura Maeda 5/2)

2- Viewing the Holy Quran and the biography of the Holy Prophet (SAW), we perceive that the armed struggle is legitimate only when one has the authority. Still, when one does not have the authority, they will have to face oppression with patience rather than force. Its logic is that

> in Makkah, when the Holy Prophet (SAW) did not have the authority, he faced all the atrocities against him with patience and did not resort to violence. If his companions (RAA) would complain, he (SAW) advised them to adopt patience. However, when he (SAW) migrated to Medina and established an Islamic government, it was permitted that if war is waged against someone, or an atrocity is committed against someone, or he is thrown out of his home, he has the right to fight against them.

These explanations of the Holy Quran describe the following things:

The Muslims should raise their voice against atrocity, but to inflict damage to the life or property of the oppressor's tribe or nation is an oppression because they cannot be a partner in oppression. In Islam, committing a cruel act in support of your faction is forbidden. Therefore, the daughter of Hazrat Waslah bin Asqa' states that her father said, "I asked the Holy Prophet (SAW), 'What is *Asabiy'yat* (Prejudice)? He (SAW) told, "To support your nation in oppression."

Hazrat Saeed bin Musay'yib (RA) has related a Tradition narrated by Saraqa bin Malik bin Ja'sham (RA). He says:

"In an address, the Holy Prophet (SAW) told us, 'The best among you is he who defends his tribe but does not commit sin."

Faisila (RA) narrates that she heard her father saying: "I asked the Holy Prophet (SAW), if a person loves his nation, is it also prejudice? He (SAW) said, "No, if a person supports his nation on oppression, it is prejudice."

Hazrat Abu Saeed Khazri (RA) says:

"Once a villager came to the Holy Prophet (SAW) and harshly

demanded his debt and said if his debt were not paid, he would deal strictly. On this, the exalted companions of the Holy Prophet (SAW) chided him and said, "Don't you know to whom you are talking?" The villager answered that he was demanding his right. On this, the Holy Prophet said, "Why don't you side with the rightful?" Then he (SAW) sent a message to Hazrat Khaula binat Qais (RA) asking to lend some dates to pay the debt of the villager. Thus, the issue was settled, and the villager was fed. Afterwards, the villager said, "You fulfilled; God may fulfil for you." Then the Holy Prophet said (SAW), "No nation can become pious until its women can receive their rights without effort."

In this Tradition, the Holy Prophet (SAW) explicitly persuades his exalted Companions (RAA) to side with the rightful (oppressed). However, his deal was with the Holy Prophet (SAW), a person about whom it cannot be thought of oppressing, even against an enemy rather than a Muslim. He (SAW) said so to preach and educate his *Ummah* that whenever such a situation arises, one should side with the right.

Hazrat Ayesha (RA) states:

وَنَضَعُ الْمَوَازِيْنَ الْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمِ الْقِيٰمَةِ فَلَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا ۭ وَاِنْ كَانَ مِثْقَالَ

Translation: And we set a just balance for the Day of Resurrection so that no soul is wronged in aught, though it is the weight of a grain of mustard.

(Quran Sura Anbia 21/47)

If the Muslims are the victims of the oppression of another nation, they have no right to adopt the way of oppression against that nation in reply. They must keep justice in all circumstances. It means that if Muslims are the victims of Terrorism by some nation, they cannot commit terrorism against them in reply. They must honour Islamic teachings in all circumstances. Terrorism means targeting the common citizens of that nation, damaging their

properties, and spreading horror among them. These are all forms of injustice; therefore, this right cannot be given to them. To deprive an innocent human being of his life is prohibited. To fight against a soldier is considered lawful. The unarmed Kashmiri Muslims are fighting against eight hundred thousand Indian soldiers for their rights. These rights have been continuously recognised by the former government of India, as well as institutions like the UN. To name this struggle, Terrorism is absolutely against international principles. In the same way, Palestinian Muslims and Christians have been struggling for the liberation of their occupied areas for the previous 65 years. The 'Two-States' formula of America and its road map have absolutely become unsuccessful. On the other hand, the Israeli government, by constructing new colonies in the occupied areas and violating UN resolutions, is mocking the International Community.

Extremism in Pakistan



As Extremism is a multidimensional global issue, the reasons behind it are also multidimensional, and it has entangled the entire world as a dragon holds down a young lamb. Many people belonging to either East or West, Pakistan or India, are engaged in it. If we investigate our society, we come to know that extremism rises due to intolerance of different opinions. The entire society seems to be sinking into the mire of Extremism. All departments of life are in its fold. The element of moderation is weakening continuously. The Extremism of religious-minded people is so strong that it has become

impossible even to bear the difference of opinion. Wherever a difference of opinion arises, the fatawa (Islamic legal opinion) of kufr (heathenism) started to be issued. Hence, every group considers that only it is right, and all other groups are the agents of wrong or false forces. The difference of opinion has become so violent that even great scholars and saints could not keep themselves safe from this tribulation. Great scholars, sometimes, dominated by Extremist sentiments, say something that opens a door of permanent disturbance. The continuous sectarian attacks on mosques, Imam Bargahs, places of worship of the minorities, schools, hospitals and offices of social institutes are live examples. In the same way, domestic violence, murder of women in the name of honour and tradition of their usurpation on a religious basis are the product of Extremism.

9th May Riots in Pakistan

The May 9, 2023, riots in Pakistan, sparked by the arrest of former Prime Minister Imran Khan, leader of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), represent a stark example of political extremism, where partisan loyalty escalated into violent attacks on state institutions.

Khan's detention on corruption charges related to the Al-Qadir Trust case at the Islamabad High Court triggered nationwide protests, with PTI supporters targeting military and public infrastructure in cities like Lahore, Rawalpindi, Peshawar, and Karachi. The violence, which included storming the Army's



Protesters in traditional Pakistani attire, some armed with sticks, advance across an overpass amid thick clouds of tear gas during intense clashes with police in Islamabad.

General Headquarters (GHQ) and burning Radio Pakistan's Peshawar office, marked a rare direct assault on the military a revered institution in Pakistan. This unrest, costing billions in damages and at least eight lives, reflects a broader trend of populist-driven extremism fuelled by anti-establishment narratives (Human Rights Watch, 2023). The riots' intensity stemmed from Khan's populist rhetoric, which framed his April 2022 ouster via a no-confidence vote as a U.S.-orchestrated conspiracy backed by Pakistan's military. PTI supporters, radicalised by this narrative, viewed Khan's arrest as a move by a "fascist" establishment, leading to attacks on symbols like the Corps Commander's residence in Lahore and martyrs' memorials (Express Tribune, 2023). The government responded with force, tear gas, rubber bullets, and over 3,000 arrests under anti-terrorism laws while suspending mobile Internet for three days, causing economic losses exceeding Rs. 12.5 billion (The Nation, 2023). The Supreme Court's ruling on May 11 declaring Khan's arrest unlawful temporarily de-escalated tensions, but the military's subsequent trials of civilians, later deemed partially unconstitutional, deepened political divides (Dawn, 2023).

Chapter 14

The Role of Education in Addressing Extremism 2009

The Conference was held in London and had participants from different walks of life. The purpose of this initiative was to highlight the scourge of far-right extremism since it had been long overlooked by authorities and communities. The second strand of this conference was to provide a unique opportunity to discuss the role of education/educational institutions as a tool in tackling and preventing violent extremism globally. Its objectives included: exposing rapid increase of religious and far right extremism amongst the youth in particular; identifying the contributions academic institutions can make in providing a framework in tackling extremism; creating awareness and understanding within communities and academic institutions about the causes and consequences of extremism; providing government with an insight to the important role education can play in addressing violent extremism; encouraging communities to take ownership of the problem; proposing a network between educational establishments and socio-religious bodies through workshops; and sharing good practices and research into the phenomenon.

The first workshop, *Educational Institutions and Extremism*, was facilitated by Professor Alan Johnson of Edgehill University, and the scope of the discussion was to examine the effects, causes and consequences of extremism on educational institutions and vice versa.

It was a lively workshop where some opined that people who are in university are at that stage in their lives when they are forming their identities, which makes them quite vulnerable to extremist influences.

It was agreed that extremism has multiple factors, and radicalisation on campus is only one factor, though an important one. A small number of students could be vulnerable to radicalisation as they were away from parental authority for the first time, perhaps unsure of their identity, tackling demands of different cultures, questing for knowledge, or meaning and purpose, and coming into contact with extremist influences.

Several participants pointed out that it was important for universities not to bury their heads in the sand but to work closely with student organisations, parents, and with local community

organisations to help their students through what may be a tough time. Perhaps a more pro-active approach was needed and engaging with students was important for this. Participants also raised the point quite strongly that Government institutions were placing too much emphasis on religious extremism and were not focusing enough on far-right extremism, which was on the rise. The impact of not tackling far right extremism would be the boost to far-right political groups in elections. We discussed the possibility of organising a range of seminars by experienced organisations, such as Stockwell Green Community Services and others, to engage in out-reach work, so that campuses did not become spaces where extremist ideas were uncontested.

The second workshop, *Educational Institutions and the Third sector – A Practical Dialogue*, was facilitated by Dr. Sarah Marsden and Dr. Bill Thomson from the University of St. Andrews, along with Liz Dixon of London Probation.

The role of education in addressing extremism in this context was multiple:

1. It provided a practical incentive for engaging individuals in the project.
2. It gave practical skills to encourage beneficiaries to try and move into employment or further training and away from crime and extremism.
3. It acted to increase self-esteem and self-respect.
4. It provided a regular platform for engagement with the centre so that the mentoring relationship could develop, and trust could be established.
5. It gave beneficiaries a point of reference, and somewhere safe to go if they needed advice or help.
6. It provided a place where they could learn about religion from qualified scholars and address those issues that concerned them in a non-judgemental environment.
7. It could raise awareness amongst political parties that they were disconnected from the youth and that they were creating spaces for the far-right extremist groups,

such as the National Front and the British National Party, to grow and attract them.

Several themes emerged following the discussions with the delegates to the conference.

1. Religious extremism from radical groups was currently one of the major threats. Yet, right-wing violent extremism was experiencing mushroom growth and needed to be tackled proactively.

2. When engaging with individuals at risk, it was important that those involved had credibility with the service users; this raised obvious problems for state agencies such as the Police and Probation Services or third sector groups with political links.

3. Several ways for developing this credibility were discussed:
    a. State actors getting involved at local level, for example going to community gatherings, meeting with members of the community, and setting up joint programmes.
    b. Building relations through activity-based events such as five-a-side football, with one team from the police, and another from the youth or community.
    c. Trips away, such as those organised by the Active Change Foundation where the background of those from e.g., the police, were kept anonymous until group activities had been undertaken, allowing a personal relationship to develop before discussion on topics of extremism and violence.
    d. Cooperation between government institutions and organisations such as SGCS in arranging seminars and conferences to raise awareness.

4. The taboo nature of the subject of extremism was also discussed as problematic when trying to engage organisations to address the issue. There was a need for a safe space to discuss issues of concern, which people felt they could not achieve without being labelled as extremists.

5. The importance of listening to young people and respecting their views was emphasised. For example, by asking what activities and routes to engagement they would like to have. Additionally, their views should be taken seriously, and given credibility rather than being ignored.

6. The importance of stories and personal interactions among individuals from different groups was considered immensely important. It provided a unique opportunity to listen to the other person's point of view in a human light by personalising it and increased the probability of changing attitudes.

Throughout the conference, one thing was evident: those on the extreme side who were displaying discriminatory views, had rarely met someone from another faith and therefore could not identify with them in any way. One example of this was a meeting where members of the community, the police and other agencies came together to hear the stories of two persons affected by violent extremism: a relative of someone who died in the 9/11 attacks, and a relative of another who was killed on 7/7. This was seen to really work to engage people and change ideas and attitudes.

7. An end note of the workshop was the importance of providing platforms, both formal and informal, to allow individuals from diverse backgrounds, both religious and far right groups, to get in touch with one another and hear their points of view, and personal stories. This was considered as the greatest opportunity of changing

negative attitudes, promoting cohesion, and developing understanding between different parties.

During the conference, I emphasised the role that education can play in supporting students to step in and benefit from shared values. Our shared values, which bind communities together, belong to everyone in Britain; they are not possessed by any one race, faith/belief, or nationality. With higher education they can be experienced, not taught, and built over time by people sharing ideas, accepting others' views, and having constructive debates which can lead to agreement or disagreement. As the next generation is to become the leader of tomorrow, it was important for their critical thinking, developed at educational institutions, to be positive.

Educated persons can play more of a leadership role in their families, workplaces, and communities in the long run. Because of this, it is critical that higher education institutions (HEIs) embody these values of openness, free debate, tolerance, and acceptance; and promote them through the ways they operate.

By promoting this culture of community cohesion, we will provide an environment with the trust and respect through which communities can deal more productively and collaboratively with any conflict arising from differences of culture, ideology, or faith. There is a particular opportunity for HEIs, because they are often at the heart of the communities they serve, to shape the debate and guide productive discussions. As the Vice Chancellor of a public sector university in Pakistan once said to me, 'How can the government ask us to monitor free speech? Our job is to open the minds of our students and think radically!' Rather than taking this through a negative lens, it should be nurtured and directed into positive avenues.

'While we have seen a major impetus by the Labour government to engage with grassroots level community organisations to encourage participation of Muslim communities, I must urge the government not to forget or lose focus on the non-BME communities who are being exploited by far-right extremist groups. My worry is that the far right is becoming a populist movement and will result in a wave of political ideology infiltrating democracy. Consequently, the

system is creating a polarised community and the political parties need to grab the bull by its horns to introduce programmes and initiatives for depolarisation. I have seen a steady increase in faith and race-based attacks, with members of the community saying that children and women are being targeted. Jewish and Muslim graveyards, places of worship and important places are being desecrated.'

Kate Hoey, MP, first discussed the issue of community cohesion and integration in relation to combating extremism and highlighted communities and local authorities should work together. She praised Stockwell Green Muslim Centre for being central to connecting the Muslim community with the local authorities. She cited the example of one issue in Lambeth, that of a shortage of burial spaces for Muslim communities, being resolved through Lambeth council working closely with the Muslim community there, and within a short while, a large tract of land was allocated.

She then ventured into education more specifically, and the role of educational institutions. She made it clear that it was the responsibility of all schools to play their part in ensuring that children were taught the value of a community. She expressed support for faith schools and said that there was no significant difference between state schools and faith schools. She referred to the case of IQRA School, which was recently accepted as a formal faith school. She mentioned that the rights of parents had existed since the 1940's to be able to send their children to faith schools. She urged the heads of schools to teach their pupils how to be a part of a wider society and community, a citizen of the country, and that the current initiatives in some areas for the twinning of faith schools and state schools were very good in allowing a mixing of children from different backgrounds. This would remove any limitations that might be felt by critics of faith schools.

She mentioned that the 2012 Olympic games were just a few years away and that this was a chance to leave a legacy, but that there should also be continuity where the opportunities of sports from the major Olympics were extended at the grass roots level, which could instil within young people the highest level of aspirations possible to achieve and want to enter higher education. This being a

recognition that low aspirations, unemployment and educational attainment were causes of extremism, be it far right groups or religions. She summarised that in the last twenty years, a lot had been done but there was a lot more that needed to be done and community groups like SGCS were the way forward in terms of empowering young people and building their aspirations.

Professor Alan Johnson of Edge Hill University shared a historical aspect with the participants, encompassing the methodologies used by Jewish sufferers of the Nazis. He explained that the Auschwitz survivor, Primo Levi, gave over 130 talks to schoolchildren in post-war Italy, and his books of testimony, *If This is a Man* and *The Truce*, became part of the Italian school curriculum.

Talking to the youngsters about the causes and consequences of extremism became Levi's 'third profession' effectively, after chemistry and writing. Professor Johnson's talk explored what we can learn from Levi's experience. Levi felt that the miseducation of German youth, and not just by the schools, had been one of the main reasons for the rise of the extremism that was Nazism. As education goes, so goes the society.

Levi would tell the children stories – of warning and of hope, of perpetrators and of rescuers – drawn from his experiences during the Holocaust. Professor Johnson drew out the power of narrative to teach ethics to children, and to cultivate their perception, empathy, and responsiveness to others. Stories were a kind of experiential and vicarious learning, because as humans we, write ourselves stories and take the role of character(s) in the story. Therefore, when Levi would tell stories of someone doing wrong, such as committing extremist acts, and another doing right such as building interfaith relations, he would show the consequences of each action and leave the young people to ponder which character they would rather be, based on the positive and negative consequences. This was how he vicariously educated the young people that extremism was wrong.

Levi's teaching in schools influenced a whole generation, giving them a sense of civic engagement which they would never lose, and we can learn much from it. He was willing to let the young take the stories where they wanted… what was important to them, it was important for them to learn. Today, we need to give young people

the voice they deserve.

Professor Johnson left the audience with a profound question: What kind of stories can be told, and who are the story-telling educators that would have that impact in the UK today?

Ms. Liz Dixon, Hate Crime Co-ordinator at London Probation, played a significant role in de-radicalising young people through building relationships with those charged under the Terrorism Act (TACT) and key referral agencies who can lend support in the rehabilitation process of young people. She emphasised that educating Practitioners was necessary for probation services throughout the world. London Probation was receiving first-hand training from SGCS, which was the catalyst for a change in the style of operation. This training enhanced the knowledge of frontline staff that enabled many TACT related offenders to be rehabilitated. She emphasised that this kind of collaborative approach needs to be adapted not only throughout the UK but also in Europe and beyond. She offered London Probation services to Pakistan in this regard.

Mr. Matthew Collins, a former member of a far-right British National Party, gave his speech at a time of increasing worry over the rise of far-right extremism, with the BNP's successes. He started by saying that he wished some of the media that prefer to portray Islam negatively were here to listen to what the Muslim community speaking at the conference had to say, and the good work that faith organisations, such as charities and schools, were doing. When he saw Kate Hoey, MP, it reminded him that he had been working against fascists for a decade, since after 1989 when Kate Hoey stood for election for Vauxhall. However, before this, he was a part of the National Front (NF). He pointed out that the NF had only three hundred members then, but two weeks previously, in the European elections, one million people voted for the heirs of the NF, the British National Party (BNP), even though the NF had twice the membership of BNP. NF struggled to get five percent of the vote, but now the BNP had sixty elected councillors, one GLA member, and two Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) after receiving ten percent of the votes. This was something expected yet unbelievable at the same time, as they had been underestimated in their force and impact.

The participants of the conference benefited from useful insight to the causes of BNP's successes and the danger of organisations like the BNP. He raised awareness of the fact that since the 7/7 there were approximately fifteen people who professed an extreme/radical form of Christianity or extreme political views linked to organisations like the BNP, who are currently in prison and/or awaiting trial for acts of terrorism.

He went on to say that in the last month, right before the elections, there were two men, a father and son, who were arrested for inciting racial hatred and terrorism. The father was sent to prison; the son was released back into the community but was not allowed to have contact with the organisation they were linked with, called the Aryan Strike Force. Interestingly, the group had only three registered members. However, when they raided his house, they found a bag of resin. Again, during the last elections, a dentist who was a former BNP candidate, built what was thought to be the largest domestic bomb ever, because he thought there was going to be a race war.

On 28 May 2009 in Batley, West Yorkshire, police arrested a white male involved in extreme right-wing activities for possession of firearms and possessing information thought to be useful for terrorism. On 29 June 2009, a 43-year-old was remanded on eight counts of terror-related charges for having explosive tennis balls and was only caught by chance, having been drunk and disorderly and trying to chat up a woman whom he said that he was going to throw the balls into a mosque.

Matthew said that people ask, regarding the scenarios above, why people couldn't air their differences through peaceful dialogue? As a former BNP member, he described why he felt at that time he couldn't use peaceful and political means, primarily because:

What questions would one ask, and to whom would they be asked, and would the person answering know why they were being asked? There were no answers to these questions. Therefore, training needs to be given to people, e.g., white van man, who doesn't know how to channel his anger, hence, a platform needs to be provided for an effective dialogue among such people, and those people who are often far removed from the situation, such as government institutions, need to be able to empathise with problems that the

person/community faces.

He highlighted the danger of the BNP in terms of a political shake-up:

'Historically, the NF were only getting three to four percent of the votes and, due to the nature of the NF, it was clear that these were racist votes. However, now the far-right groups are getting a ten percent vote, which got BNP into the European Parliament, and this is worrying. The following statistics (YouGov Poll) are quite alarming:

- 87% of BNP voters think immigrants are a problem.
- 79% (1m people) consider Islam a danger to Western civilisation.
- 22-24% votes in some wards in the electorate.

'The YouGov Poll statistics are better for young people who are far more confident about themselves and were more positive to the racial changes in areas such as Barking and Dagenham, where the borough went from 98% white to 33% mixed/diverse backgrounds, and have grown up in a diverse community, and thus have a better outlook than their older, previous generations.'

According to Matthew, there were several solutions that could be considered to tackle this worrying trend of white extremists. One such solution was to focus on commonalities, such as issues of employment, housing, work, and safety, as these things affect all communities.

He echoed the idea that political parties need to take heed and put forward a proposal for combating racism and fascism in political terms. Practitioners who are answering questions from far-right extremists need insight and training, and Matthew was pleased to hear comments from Liz Dixon that London Probation was receiving training from SGCS. He suggested that practitioners in all areas of counter extremism needed to be trained and offered his support where needed.

Maksud Gangat, Director of Al-Risalah Trust, sought to show practically how his educational establishment is addressing extremism. This was a great elaboration of the kind of work that Kate

Hoey MP described – that faith schools should take responsibility for and should be doing, i.e., facilitating integration of their students within wider society.

Maksud Gangat reminisced how The Memon Centre, the venue of the conference, was a befitting place to share in the celebration of their school's good work, as it was the place where Orchard Primary School (one of the four VA faith schools of the Al- Risalah Trust) started in 2003.

Al- Risalah, and the other four schools, had a clear mission statement from the very beginning, 'To provide in partnership with all stakeholders' excellence in education, values and community cohesion'. He then elaborated on how the role of the school contributed to the above, namely through teaching, student learning and the curriculum, all of which helped and facilitated the children in understanding other groups, promoting common values, valuing diversity, and promoting awareness of human rights. The teaching and the curriculum were also there to develop the sense of participation and responsible action.

Maksud Gangat cited several projects run by the school to facilitate community engagement. *The midsummer fun day*, which is 'a day to celebrate' and for the last two years, people have been attending in hundreds. Faith and non-faith schools, such as Fircroft Primary School, organisations from the wider community such as hospitals, fire authorities and police, come together and interact and learn from each other. *The Ibne Batuta event*, which is funded in part by the DCSF and the Religious Council, invites schools across Lambeth and Wandsworth where more than sixty schools visited Al-Risalah. Maksud Gangat stressed that this event is a testimony to his firm belief that faith schools cannot work in isolation, and that they need to integrate, and their children need to understand the wider aspect of the community. Al-Risalah also visited the Holy Ghost Roman Catholic school and participated in their assembly, and vice versa.

Maksud Gangat concluded by saying that through providing a balanced and enriched curriculum it would allow students to understand and appreciate firstly their own identity, whilst also appreciating the identity of others. Schools and educational institutions can play an important role in helping to shape the moral

and ethical fabric of society. Many critics of faith schools, in his experience, had been far right groups who had not taken the chance to visit them, but the engagement could dispel any negativity.

Professor Peter J Reynold from the University of Staffordshire was very intrigued to see Muslim led organisations such as Stockwell Green Community Services (SGCS) at the forefront of countering extremism and tackling radicalisation. He was particularly interested in the rehabilitation work carried out by SGCS in collaboration with London Probation. He proposed that this work be replicated in other areas of England, particularly in the North. Being an academic, he provided the following example of a simple way in which educational institutions could get involved in tackling the problem of extremism.

'Our Stoke on Trent council elected quite a number of Far-Right British National Party (BNP) candidates around 2008, so we wanted to find ways to tackle this in the community through a university-led project.

'We had the opportunity to rent a place for free in the busy Stoke on Trent shopping mall, which attracted ordinary people in the street, and some of those were BNP voters. We decided to use the shop to showcase the work of international students from the University to the local community. We had a Chinese student who brought traditional tea, and from Ghana, a student who brought sheer soap for cosmetics. Students from India and Sri Lanka had their local foods and Pakistani students dressed in national dress whilst serving traditional food. Now what was the reaction?'

People were looking through the windows and getting nervous.

Professor Reynolds told the audience of one instance where a lady asked why the students were here? The students responded that they were here to study. She followed up with asking why they couldn't study in their home countries. She saw it as wrong that they were even in the country.

Professor Reynolds, however, believed that the presence of foreign students in the community was enough to start engaging and building bridges through merely working with each other, and this simple act could be done daily. The role of educational institutions can be as simple as organising extra-curricular activities.

Chapter 15

Divided We Fall, United We Stand

Leading a delegation of Metropolitan Police to Pakistan

In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of July 2005 in London and the mistaken identity shooting of Jean Charles de Menezes by the London Metropolitan Police Service at Stockwell Tube Station, breaking news was being flashed continuously on media channels. The communities were feeling the heat and so were the authorities. The problem for us was that the authorities were not organised enough to make a proactive plan of engagement. However, after making a case to a few good people, Lambeth Police was compelled to join our active programme of community engagement.

Having seen the important work being carried out and that we had identified the terrorists, Osman B Hussain and his associates, in 2003, I was requested to be part of the community reference group of the Independent Police Complaint Commission (IPCC) in the investigation into the shooting of Jean Charles de Menezes. I had close interaction with the Muslim Contact Unit of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) which was aware of the pieces of information that we had provided to the MPS in 2003, and our subsequent concerns. The chair of the IPCC, Nick Hardwick, visited our centre for a Crime and Community Safety Meeting, accompanied by dignitaries, Lambeth Borough Commander, Kate Hoey, MP, and Chris Lee, Assistant Chief Executive of Lambeth Council, community leaders & councillors.

The shooting of Jean was accepted by the IPCC as 'an anti - terrorist operation that went wrong' – they referred the case to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) as they 'had decided that a criminal offence may have been committed'. Osman B Hussain, who Jean Charles was mistaken for and killed, was from Stockwell Mosque and the police were aware of this.

We had developed good relations with a section of Lambeth Police in 2004, when its officers joined us as partners on the first counter radicalisation project that was designed by SGCS and was match funded by the European Union and Stockwell Mosque. However, one of the major challenges for the police was engagement

and dialogue with disenfranchised young Muslims, who were eager to speak to someone about the issues they had but could not go to the police due to their lack of credibility.

Right from the early days we had managed to involve the police in some capacity through conferences/seminars arranged by our organisations at various intervals, and all borough commanders that took the helm of affairs. For example, Lord Brian Paddick, the then Borough Commander spoke on *The Role of Religions in Diminishing Terrorism* in January 2002.

Police Community Engagement Post-July 2005 bombing

After the 7 July 2005 suicide attacks, Lambeth police stepped up the level and nature of their engagement with all sections of the local community. Rightly so, Muslims were included at the heart of that engagement, and their valued position within Lambeth Borough was stressed. Aside from a programme of public meetings, the police delivered reassurance messages in person at numerous faith venues.

Immediately after the failed suicide bombing attempts of 21 July 2005 (I warned the authorities about these people in 2003), one of which was in Lambeth, I held public meetings – near to the scene and across the borough – with local authorities and community leaders, where we gave a commitment to be open and to respond to the community's concerns.

On 22 July, the Lambeth United Forum was formed, and it consisted of the local authority, police, MPs and community representatives and me. Its purpose was to allow sections of Lambeth's community to work together, share information, and be alert and reassured. It involved briefings, meetings, and regular email updates. The members were drawn from a broad range of faiths, ethnic groups, and backgrounds in Lambeth. The objective was to create a full and open dialogue about the events of July and their aftermath, as well as to engage people to work together for safety. The message from all this was abundantly clear, 'United we stand; divided we fall'.

On 1st August 2005, I had a meeting with Sir Paul Stephenson, Deputy Commissioner, to initiate a process for developing future engagement with the Muslim community and disaffected youths. This engagement was acknowledged by the IPCC as good practice.

Following the events that surrounded the July 2005 bombings, the

media coverage focused heavily on Pakistan in the training of the terrorists and their links with groups there. The country was seen as a hotbed for radical groups that were providing the wherewithal for terrorist activities. There was a mushroom growth along the borders, which had seen collusion between Afghan nationals and Pakistanis. These became known as training camps.

Due to this, I led a delegation of senior officers of the Metropolitan Police Service to Pakistan to interact with their counterparts to create understanding of the ground realities by meeting with the ordinary public, students, academics, lawyers, business community, police, religious leadership and of course, politicians. Sharing good practices was also one of the fundamental objectives of this visit. Apparently, it was not an easy task; in consultations and planning of the visit, we involved Sir Ian Blair, head of the Metropolitan Police, Peter Wilson from the British High Commission in Islamabad, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Pakistan Desk, and Mr. Wajid Shams ul Hasan, High Commissioner for Pakistan in London.

Dialogue Among Civilisations An International Conference Held in Pakistan 7 May 2006

The visit to Pakistan was approved jointly by the FCO and MPS. We had the proverbial green light and now pressure was mounting to prepare an effective itinerary that would give us achievable outcomes. The first of such arrangements was a conference. The resurgence in some areas of Samuel Huntington's published seminal essay, *The Clash of Civilisations (1993) in Foreign Affairs* had started a new and unending debate in intellectual circles. It was being argued that Huntington's vision of a world divided coupled with ancient cultural fault lines was coming to fruition and nearing its pinnacle.

'In this new world, the principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilisations... the fault lines between civilisations will be the battle lines of the future', Huntington said.

Previously, it was said that this clash did not affect the West directly, although wars e.g., the Bosnian war, was perhaps a good example of what Huntington had in mind when writing his paper (the Bosnian war was a conflict of Christianity and Islam). The attacks of September 11, 2001 in the USA were seen as the epitome of Huntington's 'Clash of Civilisations' by large swathes of Americans.

I had pin-pointed, time and again, that this 'theory' was being promoted and far right extremists were jumping on this bandwagon. I must confess that at the time, these theories were new to me, and I was fascinated at the rationale being given to take this argument to an extreme i.e., kick the Muslims out. The converse of leading young Muslims out of the throes of radicals was now our new objective.

The deconstruction of far-right extremist ideology, at the time built upon various other people's papers and theories, was increasingly difficult. Just as some sections of Muslims did not want to acknowledge a problem within our community, so did the indigenous 'white' community reject claims of extremism. I warned the police and local community then that although the current fixation was on Muslims, in the backdrop of the current situation, this problem was a ticking time bomb, ready to go off.

The community was urging leaders to counter this far right narrative, and we had to take the lead. The police, of course, were an important element of this as well as getting people of other faiths together. My first concern was demystifying the myths that were in the police force.

To that end, I organised a conference in Multan, Pakistan, entitled *Dialogue Among Civilisations* in Multan, to forge greater understanding of radicalisation and the issues surrounding suicide bombing, the role of religious institutions in tackling radicalisation, and the importance of building bridges between nations. I invited Commander Bridger and his colleagues to attend the conference. A programme of associated high level and grassroots meetings was chalked out for the visit to Pakistan.

The aims of the visit were:

- To highlight the positive work done by the MPS with local communities in London
- To develop understanding of the influences on young Muslim males
- To develop understanding of the Pakistani/Muslim community
- To address the misconceptions and perceptions of the UK government amongst Pakistanis
- To address media representations of the MPS' engagement with, and treatment of, Muslims in the UK

- To seek Pakistani guidance on how to identify dangerous radicalisation of young Muslims within local communities.
- To promote the work we were doing in London to counter radicalisation and terrorism.
- To expand an otherwise localised view of the issues

Before departing for Pakistan, a meeting was held with the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) to ensure that the visit in no way contradicted the FCO's aims. The Pakistan High Commission in London was also brought on board.

Meeting at the British High Commission, Islamabad, Pakistan

The sound of cars beeping and the loud voices of stall owners pitching to potential customers, the freshness of vegetables and fruit, were drowned out as we rolled our windows up. We were on our way to the British High Commission in Islamabad to see its Political Counsellor, Mr. Peter Wilson. The British High Commission was buzzing and going through various changes, as the High Commissioner, Mark Lyall Grant, was about to relinquish his charge. His successor was still to come and thus the FCO had nominated Mr. Wilson to compare notes with us. As Deputy High Commissioner, he was briefed on the purpose of our visit, and he fully endorsed our views. He said that the third sector was central to changing mindsets on the ground. He added that the government was working hard with Pakistani authorities to stamp out terrorism and support them in the war on terror.

We met Mr. Ijaz Ul Haq, Federal Minister for Religious Affairs & Minorities, at the Ministerial Secretariat in Islamabad. He was the son of the late President General Zia Ul Haq and had lived in Multan when his father was Corps Commander there. I briefed the minister about the visit and invited him to grace the conference on *Dialogue Amongst Civilisations* in Multan, Pakistan with his presence. He welcomed our initiative and promised to attend the conference. During our meeting, he explained the government's initiatives on engagement with the community. He emphasised the need for dialogue on community issues, agreeing that official visits for learning purposes should be encouraged.

Several conferences were held at various educational institutions

where representatives of CNN, Reuters, Pakistan TV, the Nation, Dawn News, and others were present. Areas covered in the press conference included steps taken to reassure Muslims in London post-July 2005 suicide bombings, and the proactive approach of the mosque, where I was a trustee, in naming these terrorists, dealing with misconceptions about attacks on British Muslims and Mosques, such as sensational stories depicting 'Muslims under siege', and engaging with the community after the mistaken identity shooting of Jean Charles de Menezes.

We then moved to Bahauddin Zakariya University, located at Bosan Road, Multan. The main campus was spread over an astonishing 1200 acres of land. Prof. Dr. Naseer Khan, Vice Chancellor, received us in his office. We were ushered into a jeep and given a guided tour of the university. Peering out of the window at the entrance, we could see two huge arches constructed from red brick, like a Mughal-era inspired fortress. Atop the two arches lay the gold-plated name of the university. Three flags fluttered in the wind, two of the universities coveting the middle flag of Pakistan. Traditional blue Multani tiles adorned the upper part of the pillars. We drove for what seemed like a mile, passing nothing but beautiful trees on both sides, as if standing guard over gardens and greenery. When we finally reached his office, it would probably be more than an acre of land. When briefed on the visit, he said that the University would extend full support and enable our delegation to interact with students and academics. He invited us for a separate seminar and dinner during our stay in Multan. Prof. Khan was keen to establish a chair in the university to address the issues of terrorism and radicalisation as this was a growing phenomenon in Southern Punjab.

The following day, we delivered a presentation to the 'Dialogue Forum' at the University followed by a dinner with the elite of Multan. The city of Multan is a politically enriched region of Southern Punjab, which has produced a President, a Prime minister, Governors, and Chief Ministers. The presentation was made to a group of senior academics, politicians, lawyers, members of the Chamber of Commerce & Industry, business magnates, students, etc.

They acknowledged and appreciated the roles played by the MPS and Muslims in diffusing the terrorist threat in London. They lauded the visit as a practical and symbolic step towards improving mutual understanding and to devise effective ways to counter the ongoing threat of terrorism, where Pakistan suffered the most.

We had the privilege of meeting with the great Moulana Khawaja Khan Mohammed, a spiritual and religious leader of Naqshbandi lineage, at his home in Multan. He was incredibly supportive of the call for dialogue, and condemned terrorist activities. He appreciated the conference among his followers and emphasised the need to attend and support the initiative. He gave his commitment to have the mosques and centres linked to his lineage to work with the authorities and develop engagement plans with mosques to foster community cohesion on his next visit to the UK.

Meeting with the Deputy Inspector General of Police, Multan

06 May 2006

As we had brought the Metropolitan Police on board for this visit, it was paramount to engage with the Punjab Police as well. In this connection, we met Mr. Mohammed Azam Joiya, Deputy Inspector General of Police. We exchanged views on a range of policing issues, from minorities in the workforce to intelligence gathering. It was a shock to learn that 700 people had been killed in 73 terrorist attacks in Pakistan in the last six months.

Meeting with Dr Andrew Francis, Bishop of Multan, Pakistan

07 May 2006

In line with our interfaith work, we met Dr. Andrew Francis, Bishop of Multan. Pope John Paul II appointed him Bishop in 2000. The cathedral was constructed in 1848 and was a replication of the beautiful architecture in Multan. He offered his dedicated support for interaction with young people and local communities, particularly interfaith engagement. He stressed that leaders should focus on the similarities shared by communities rather than on differences. Bishop Francis was keen to adopt our model of multi-faith support and engagement with authorities, particularly after the 9/11 and 7/7 atrocities.

Peter Wilson assigned Yousaf Jogezai, Political Team Head at the High Commission, to attend the conference. He also attended our meeting with Maulana Fazal-ul-Rehman, the Opposition Leader of the Parliament of Pakistan, and Head of Jamiat ul Ulema Islam, a very influential and powerful religio-political party.

I organised a follow-up meeting to the conference with Maulana Fazal-ul-Rahman and sought his support in bringing the Pakistani community, particularly the religious segments, closer to the British communities in countering radicalisation. We discussed issues concerning ways for political and religio-political leaders to engage in further dialogue that affected local communities. We also decided to visit the UK to encourage the mosques to participate in the political process and meet with parliamentarians in the UK.

Our approach fitted well with the Home Office CONTEST counter-terrorism strategy, particularly its PREVENT strand. All the staff members of FCO, particularly Peter Wilson, were willing to work with us to develop this programme further.

During our meetings, it was observed that the problem of disaffected young people 'becoming dangerously radicalised' was felt in Pakistan just as much as it was within the UK. The Metropolitan Police officers were surprised this but began to understand that radicalisation was a shared problem, for which both Britain and Pakistan should work for mutual interest.

Everyone agreed that the initiatives taken by us should be developed further and emphasised that government institutions on both sides should offer their effective support. Mr. Ijaz ul Haq, Federal Minister for Minorities and Religious Affairs, offered his support and outlined his proposals to register Madrassahs (religious schools) in Pakistan to ensure peace (not militancy), although Madrassahs were not the only problem. Mainstream academic institutions were also facing the problem of radicalisation festering among its students. He also urged us not to forget that the Madrassah network was the largest non-governmental charitable network where hundreds of thousands of children were provided with free education, shelter, clothing, and food, as well as a guaranteed job after graduation. There was a divergence in opinion as he also explained a governmental training programme to prompt those who lectured in Mosques (Islamic scholars, diplomats to focus on religious

content, not political. Whereas in the UK, the mosques were being assigned the role to urge youth to become part of the political process. The then Deputy Inspector General of Police spoke of local police profiling potential terrorists and how much of the intelligence is based on community networks and engagement. He appreciated the counter extremism and counter radicalisation work being carried out through SGCS. As he said, there was a dire need for organisations with trust in the community to step in to support the government as, at times, the government cannot always achieve its goals alone.

However, there was a consensus to 'do more' to identify those who may become involved in extremist actions far earlier; all felt that this was a significant challenge. Much of the challenge for the police was how to further galvanise community support and how to use those arrested in counter terrorism to become role models to be put into play when radicalisation was on the rise, when people of interest needed to be de-radicalised.

There was obviously widespread suspicion of the UK's foreign policy, even amongst moderates. However, it was emphasised that whatever the ideological background, ordinary people of all faiths in local communities were the ones that paid the price of terrorism.

Peter Wilson said that there was a widespread misapprehension about the level of anti-Islamic reaction in the UK. This was borne out in almost every meeting. Our explanation of the level of general solidarity with London's Muslims was well received, as was their emphasis on the extent to which the MPS has actively supported Muslims. Our press conferences gave him the opportunity to directly influence the skewed media reporting in Pakistan. Conversations with journalists revealed that they were themselves misinformed about the extent of anti-Muslim hate crime in London. We were able to correct their beliefs that a considerable number of Mosques had been burnt and Muslims routinely attacked.

These misconceptions were also widely held by students. We held numerous meetings with educational institutions, where students responded positively when told about the integration of Muslims with mainstream society and the level of unity the community had. The Vice Chancellor and faculty at Bahauddin Zakariya University were willing to organise conferences and/or seminars/workshops on these issues, specifically education and rehabilitation. A

considerable number of those students came from outlying and tribal areas, where anti-western feeling was at its peak. The Vice Chancellor expressed his desire to work with Britain and the overseas Pakistani community to send a positive message through students across the country, as well as influencing those who may well achieve positions of authority in the near future. The conference and visit strengthened the grounds for increasing engagement with the Muslim community through Mosques and Islamic centres, particularly in London. The engagement with local communities allowed us to design and implement ground-breaking programmes for counter radicalisation and de-radicalisation. The first Channel project was piloted in Lambeth and then rolled out to the rest of the country to address the early signs of radicalisation amongst youth through schools and other institutions. However, I advised the Government not to roll out the programme without proper evaluation of Lambeth's channel project. There was a need for further scrutiny and safeguards that the Government needed to consider.

Lectures at Bramshill Police Training Centre and Manchester Police Academy

On returning from Pakistan, the authorities realised that they were lacking the awareness and training on dealing with Muslims and Islam in general. I was asked to provide training to the MPS and local authority, high security prison staff and probation staff. Following the success of the training, I delivered lectures at Bramshill Police Training Centre and Manchester Police Academy where over three hundred officers were given insight to the root causes of radicalisation and possible solutions. The design and implementation of programmes such as PROSEED and PALM (in London and later in South Yorkshire) also came through our visit to Pakistan and garnered partners such as MPS, London Probation, National Offenders Management Services (NOMS).

My close connection with Bahauddin Zakariya University, where I had studied, continued after the management had changed. In collaboration with other organisations, we managed to pull off conferences on education, extremism, and radicalisation in 2007, 2009 and 2010.

Our visit resulted in a report and a post-visit briefing which was given to the Home Office, 10 Downing Street, and 33 Borough Commanders. The report highlighted a variety of issues, including:

- The importance of clear knowledge of the global political issues affecting Muslims, and how they are perceived by them, even when engaging over more localised issues.
- The need for broader contact with Pakistan
- A willingness to develop ways to identify possible terrorists earlier.
- The vital importance of correcting inaccurate media reports, particularly outside the UK
- The need to broadcast the positive treatment of Muslims in the UK to counter destructive international media reports to the contrary
- The need to broadcast the positive contribution of Muslims within Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), local authorities.
- That the cost to local communities (and all faiths within them) of extremism and terrorism should be stressed
- The need to expand the link between current MPS work and that of the FCO.
- Formal support for close work with Mosques and Imams (and, in Pakistan, with Madrassahs)
- To explore the possibility to commission academic research from British universities having MOUs with Pakistani universities about effective methods of engagement with young, disaffected Muslims (and/or to engage further with the Department of Peace Studies at Bradford University).

Chapter 16

Rehabilitation of Extremists- Lessons Learnt From the UK?

I finished my meeting with the Christian Community led by Rt. Rev. Peter Humphries, the Bishop of Peshawar, after the despicable terrorist attack on a church in Peshawar. I was gutted from what I heard, but I was also hopeful. Although this attack had been carried out by so-called Muslims, I was happy to hear that some of the first people on the scene to help, were Muslims who were either neighbours or Muslims passing by. But I had two questions in my mind following this dialogue: 1) what community-led preventative and rehabilitative measures for violent extremists are available in Pakistan? and 2) what lessons could be learnt from the UK?

These questions played on my mind as I watched the world pass me by on the drive to the home of Rt. Rev. Alexander John Malik, the Bishop of Lahore. He had invited me to his residence as there was unrest among the Christian communities in Pakistan, having been targeted by terrorists whereas they had been peaceful members of society, just like their fellow Muslims. They also had a particularly good working relationship with the majority Muslim community in Pakistan, but this did not help matters. During my time in Lahore, I was invited to meet with the Christian leadership to support them in their idea and I also had a chance to meet with the Head of Churches of Pakistan, Bishop Azaria, who brought with him other members of the different Christian communities residing in Lahore. Bishop Jamil Irfan of Lahore also invited me to a dinner meeting and expressed his concern regarding these isolated incidents of violence against Christians. Most of the people I met with, were of the view that some unseen forces were trying to create anarchy in the country to sabotage the working relationship among the various strands of the Pakistani community.

I also met with my friend and ex-Defence Secretary of Pakistan, General (R) Athar Ali, who had spoken at the Future of Pakistan Conference arranged by FIRD. He had a unique insight about this menace of terrorism. He was of the view that there were foreign actors involved in recruiting people to carry out this violent project in Pakistan. He connected it to the Afghan Jihad that was carried out by the CIA-led coalition against the former USSR. He said that neighbouring countries were paying off people in dollars to smuggle

themselves into Pakistan to commit terrorism, and so communities should keep this in mind when making judgements. He referred to various instances of the capture and/or killing of foreign nationals related to terrorist events. I strongly expressed the view that I could understand the unknown fear the Christian community had but that we should assure them that they would not be left on their own at this exceedingly difficult time. General Ali said that people were cautious when we khaki folk became involved and surmised that it would only compound the situation for them to give assurances. So, I suggested that due to my established connections in religious circles, I would speak to senior Islamic Scholars in Pakistan and encourage them to form an effective consultative and monitoring group to curb this wave of heinous crime against Christians. Before I met the Islamic Scholars, I carried out some research and found out that the entire country was under siege: schools, colleges, universities, mosques, shrines, churches, police, army… everyone was a target of terrorists. The wide range of targets pointed the finger strongly towards an external force with internal support and was very active to create anarchy to destabilise Pakistan politically and economically. I proposed that there be two levels to the consultative approach for it to work successfully: a) an official group of individuals from all religious backgrounds to lobby on behalf of any case found to be genuine and b) an unofficial group who could be part of Track II dialogue initiatives, which would include religious, media, military, civilian, NGO and community personnel. For this to work, I asked for the groups to show solidarity and avoid making the issues football frenzy.

Our discussions revolved around understanding terrorism and its cures. One must not forget that root causes and drivers of radicalisation/extremism keep changing at a very fast pace, given the changes that society goes through. This is important because for any rehabilitative measure, the causes must be identified and understood to be addressed effectively. Measures through preventative and diversionary programmes in tackling people who are disenfranchised, radicals and extremists in Pakistan must be encouraged by the state through community leadership. I proposed that Pakistan must examine the rehabilitation models and policies

carried out to reform violent extremists and terrorists in the UK once they have committed, or are conspiring to commit, an act of terrorism. A comprehensive analysis must be undertaken, and although the data found on Pakistan's rehabilitative systems is limited, a comparative scrutiny of data must be pursued.

Given my first-hand experience of devising and executing such programmes in the United Kingdom at various intervals from 2004 to 2015 as preventative/rehabilitative/diversionary/training programmes in the UK, I suggested to various stakeholders that they should:

Identify the root causes and drivers of extremism in Pakistan (i.e., what causes one to become an extremist?).

Assess the rehabilitation mechanisms in Pakistan and in the UK.

Assess restraints in implementing diversionary and rehabilitative programmes in Pakistan.

Analyse the UK's model in preventing and countering radicalisation and extremism.

Make use of already tried and tested UK models in Pakistan.

Propose model/s for countering Radicalisation, Extremism, and Rehabilitation.

So far, there has been little information by way of substantial research on the community-led management of the rehabilitation process for extremists and terrorists in Pakistan. Community-led rehabilitative initiatives have not been tried at national level in Pakistan; therefore, research being conducted, or models being used are not available as compared to the UK. Nonetheless, government-led initiatives such as the programme of the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) of the Punjab province of Pakistan were launched to de-radicalise and rehabilitate former Jihadi and militant elements in collaboration with the Technical and Vocational Training Authority (TEVTA) through technical and vocational training. Another rehabilitation programme called Sabaoon, supervised by the Pakistan Army is being run in the Sawat valley of Pakistan, and has a civilian element.

Much of the literature and research related to rehabilitation work in Pakistan only examines the root causes or drivers of extremism and radicalisation, such as the foreign policies of western states, state

funded extremism, radical preachers in the Madrassahs (Islamic boarding schools), poverty, absence of rule of law and the geo-political position of Pakistan; that is, the country's sensitive location in sharing borders with Afghanistan, the strong hold of the Taliban, where their ideology has spilled over into Pakistan, which has led to increased extremism and hence another splinter movement, Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan.

In 2010, the National Coordinator for Counter Terrorism, The Hague, Netherlands, published a book called *Countering Violent Extremist Narratives*, in which Sarah Marsden and I jointly wrote a chapter under the title: *Furthering the Counter-Narrative via Educational and Social Grassroots Projects*. We emphasised that, if the attempt to engage with extremism is considered a state-led, top-down initiative, it has much less chance of success. Empowered, community-led work is needed to increase the chances of success.

Furthermore, in much of the research on extremism related matters in Pakistan, the role of civil society has been mentioned only for consultation and monitoring, or when things go wrong. There is a limited proactive approach in dealing with *bona fide* grassroots level organisations. On the other hand, parts of the community have limited themselves and created a self-imposed boundary of action and response on the side lines, rather than taking a leading role in countering and preventing extremism or rehabilitating terrorists. Such self-imposed exclusion from this responsibility is perhaps the underlying reason for the lack of innovation in countering extremism and rehabilitating violent extremists.

Despite 9/11, there had not been any significant impact on the area of radicalisation as it had not hit close to home. However, after Europe experienced a spate of terrorist incidents in Madrid (2004) and London (2005), the term 'radicalisation' was introduced heavily in academic and governmental discussions. Other terms such as violent radicalisation, counter-radicalisation, de-radicalisation etc. were often referred to in many academic and political discourses. De-radicalisation, disengagement and social reintegration could not be considered out of the context of their precursor, radicalisation. According to some researchers including Horgan, radicalisation is a social and psychological process of an incrementally experienced commitment to extremist political or religious ideology. At the same

time, the establishment across Europe has used the term radicalisation in place of terrorism very loosely and interchangeably. Examples of the varied understandings of radicalisation/extremism are given below and demonstrate the hindrance to grasping a basic concept of this process.

According to Wilner and Dubouloz, radicalism is a thought process that makes people believe in a totally different approach to solve social and political problems than the masses. A *radical* is someone who believes in extreme social and political solutions that are not shared by a majority in a community.

In CONTEST, the British counter terrorism strategy, the government defines radicalisation as *the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.*

The Prevent Strategy further notes that, 'Radicalisation is driven by an ideology which sanctions the use of violence'.

Therefore, extremism can be defined as 'activities (beliefs, attitudes, feelings, actions, strategies) of a character far removed from the ordinary', stretching something to its limits or to its extremes. What is ordinary and what is extremist may be one's subjective views or actions in a political, religious, or economic sense which are outside the generally acceptable attitudes of mainstream society. Once again, mainstream society norms differ from region to region.

The understanding of an extremist, amongst South Asian academics, is similar to a degree, but has some major differences. Some academics view extremists as those who hold 'uncompromising political and religious views'. This is probably where the problem lies as no Muslim will be willing to 'compromise' his/her religious beliefs.

Extremist individuals or organisations attached to extremism may have completely different ideologies but will share many common characteristics. As an example, economist Ronald Wintrobe puts forward some of the common characteristics between 'Jewish fundamentalists' and 'the extremists of Hamas':

I. Both are against any compromise with the other side.
II. Both are entirely sure of their position.
III. Both advocate and sometimes use violence to achieve their ends.

IV. Both are nationalistic.

V. Both are intolerant of dissent within their group.

VI. Both demonise the other side.

Features of extremists continue in other fashions too. For example, they will often be involved in criminal activities and have a limited scope of success in life. So, the way we define and identify radicalisation is extremely important.

Looking at psychology, the **Social-Cognitive Theory of Radicalisation** dictates that: 1) radicalisation at a cognitive level shifts moral priorities where politically motivated violent activities take precedence over other virtues, overriding other obligations; 2) the term cognitive dissonance can be used to define and explain the gradual change in beliefs etc. of a person; 3) the term vicarious cognitive dissonance (observing of another individual being dissonant) explains how the process of radicalisation can operate through networks.

In comparison, the **Social Movement and Social Network Theory** emphasises that radicalisation is a social process particularly prevalent in small groups, where otherwise considered, being relationships that are fundamental to understanding why they move to terrorist acts. Group bonding, peer pressure and indoctrination are necessary social factors for radicalisation, and to encourage the view that violence is a legitimate response to perceived injustice.

Root Causes: Internationalisation

There are number of psychological, social, and economic factors that may put someone on the path of radicalism or extremism, depending upon the situation one may be in. It may be due to discrimination, racism, lack of opportunities (in education and employment), disagreement on political issues (foreign policies of governments), etc. It may also be demonisation or persistent attacks on one's religion or culture, leaving psychological scars on the person who may not be able to vent his/her anger in any shape or form. Therefore, internalising that anger makes that person feel disenfranchised, thus leading to a hate element – a very powerful factor that all the extremists have in common. In those countries where one person loses numerous family members, friends or members of the community, their psychological status will be entirely

different from an ordinary radical or an extremist, thus leading such kinds of extremists to the suicidal terrorist attack – the extreme side of terrorism.

Some of the above factors are echoed in a white paper, *Addressing Extremism* by Dr. Peter T. Coleman: '… adverse conditions (poverty, inadequate access to healthcare, nutrition, education, and employment), a denial of basic human needs (for security, dignity, group identity, and political participation), unending experiences of humiliation, and an ever-widening gap between what people believe they deserve and what they can attain, leads to extreme acts. This is particularly so because normative channels for getting needs met are experienced as blocked'. Therefore, one could take extreme measures to vent or channel his/her anger due to persistent experiences of oppression, discrimination, insecurity, humiliation, racism, resentment, etc.

A model of the psychological process which individuals go through in forming a shared identity with extremisms is that of Moreland and Levine (1982) in figure 1.

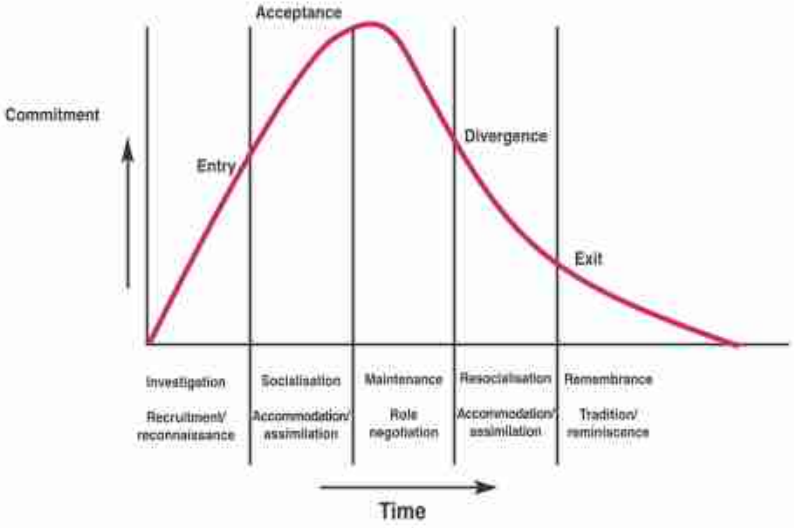


Figure 1: Model of group socialisation Moreland and Levine (1982).

An interesting model was proposed by the Forum for International Relations Development (FIRD), in partnership with Stockwell Green Community Services (SGCS) and School of Economics and Law (SOEL). During the *Future of Pakistan Conference*, workshops with delegates were held and following this, they proposed the model depicting the stages and process of radicalisation; an outcome of interviews and focus groups. This is exhibited below, and it enunciates at least five stages stretching from the stage of disenchantment/disaffection (stage 1) through radicalisation (stage 2), to extremism (stage 3), to violent extremism (stage 4) and ultimately terrorism (stage 5). This was adapted earlier by the SEED project of SGCS, the organisation I chair. The FIRD conference focus groups revealed broad agreement with the initial five stages, but the revised new model highlights further issues to be considered at each stage.

Early Prevention Model

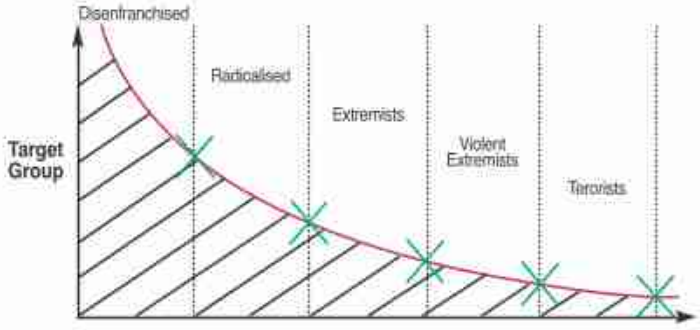


Figure 2: Early Prevention Model

One can see that the 'Level of Threat' in figure 2 is reciprocal to the number of people in 'Target Groups'. The number of 'Disenfranchised', 'Radicals' and 'Extremists' is far higher than the 'violent Extremists' and 'Terrorists'. If the green crosses are taken as 'Rehabilitation Blocks' to prevent each category of people from entering the next one, the problem can be addressed and prevented

at a very early stage. Further root causes and preventative measures need to be developed for a successful model.

Another model of containment can be developed further. To contain the problem of extremism, keeping it in a triangular system formed by the community as the lead partner/ angles and the local authority and local police being the remaining two angles. If any of the angles is broken, the problem will spread, and counter radicalisation work will be hampered. Therefore, the partners must be in direct communication with one another to disengage the subject from external influences.

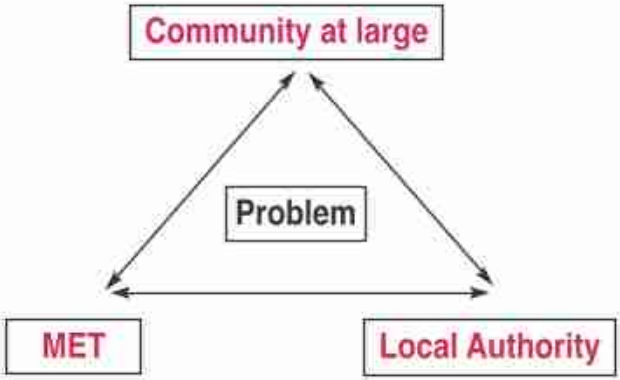


Figure 3: The Triangular Model of Containment

Rehabilitation:

According to researchers Gunaratna and Ali, rehabilitation is a process that extricates an ideology embedded in someone's mind. Veldhuis opines that the main objective of rehabilitation for violent extremists is to prepare inmates for their transition back into mainstream society. It should include aspects of both de-radicalisation and disengagement for their successful reintegration.

Gunaratna and Rubin further note that in some cases, the rehabilitation of suspected and convicted terrorists has enabled them to express remorse for their violent ideologies and to re-engage with mainstream society. Rehabilitation depends on the nature of a crime committed and the mental state of the offender. The rehabilitation process of an extremist will be different from that of a terrorist, and it will differ if the offender was a failed suicide bomber. For a terrorist,

before the rehabilitation programme starts, a thorough assessment is needed. That may involve psychological assessment, risk assessment for the offender and the rehabilitator/s, etc.

Fakhar says, 'Pakistan has rehabilitation initiatives, but the Sabaoon Centre for Rehabilitation is the only 'civilian-run programme' in close collaboration with the Pakistan Army operating in Swat, KPK province of Pakistan. It is widely known that it had a military stamp on it. Dr Mohammad Farooq (assassinated in October 2010 by the Taliban), Vice-Chancellor of the Islamic university of Swat, enrolled eighty of the former Taliban militants in Sabaoon where he and other experts tried to 'de-programme' them by offering them basic psychosocial therapies alongside educational and physical activities.

Horgan puts it thus: 'At present, there is a flurry of activity worldwide aimed at what, on the surface, appears to be a pursuit of similar objectives, but upon closer inspection reveals such diverse conceptual underpinnings that they can only realistically be unified in terms of promoting some kind of move away from terrorism.' Handling radicals is profoundly splintered, and de-radicalisation is very personal.

The following process which I have used for counter extremism and rehabilitation can be transformed into a model for de-radicalisation as well as rehabilitation. Firstly, it starts with identification of the problem, which may involve assessing the nature and scale of the problem. Secondly, ownership of the problem either by the community or the statutory bodies. Thirdly, the diversionary, preventative, and counter radicalisation projects (red blocks) stop the disenchanted groups from entering the circle of those infected by the virus of violence. Fourthly, the convicted violent extremists and terrorists are released on parole to engage with the community-led rehabilitative initiatives and giving the subjects a very clear exit strategy.

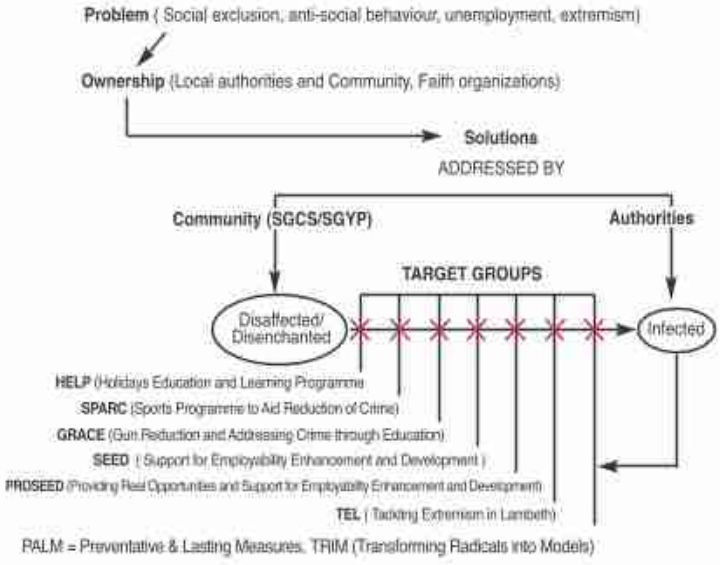
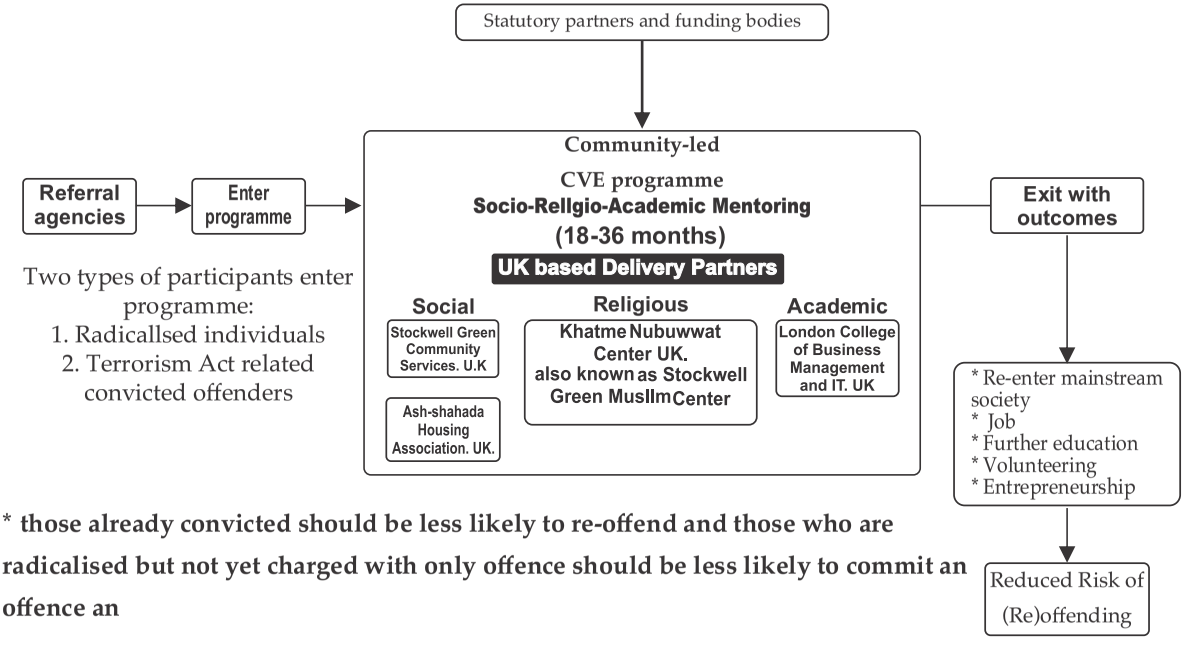


Figure 4: Ownership model of partnership for rehabilitation



Figure 5: Exit model for the offenders through rehabilitation



The SRAM model - 18 to 36 months of integrated social, religious, and academic mentoring delivered by community-trusted partners.

One factor that is shared commonly among terrorists is the feeling of alienation, whether real or perceived in economic, social, political, or psychological terms. Therefore, the rehabilitation programme may include religious/social mentoring, education/training, challenging narratives, health, and sports, etc. Moreover, apart from the offender, the rehabilitation of the offender's family is equally important. The suffering the parents, brothers, sisters, and children go through is enormous and has an immense psychological as well physical impact. The parents of one family I worked with showed serious physical health deterioration following their ordeal. They also fell under severe mental strain and emotional heartbreak, not knowing where their child was or what had happened to him. The children of another individual I rehabilitated showed serious emotional trauma stemming from missing their father. In another case, friends expressed concern about keeping in touch with someone convicted of terrorism because they thought that police and intelligence agencies would be spying on them simply because of the association.

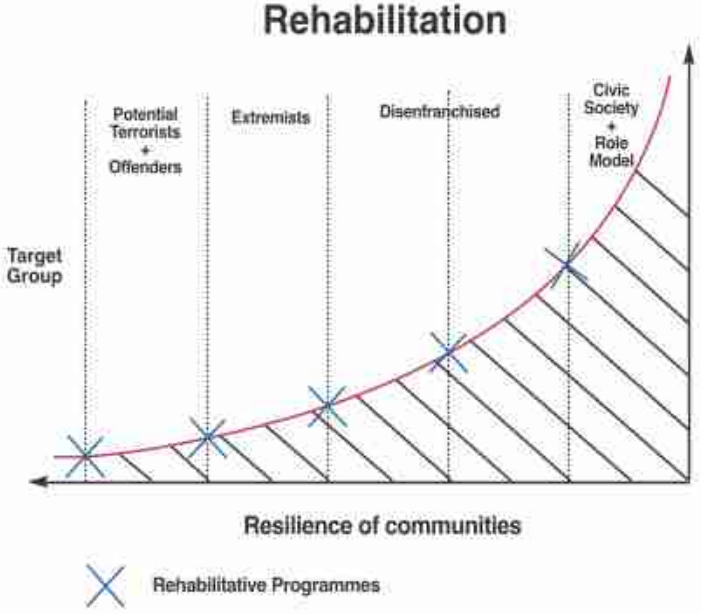


Figure 6: Community resilience model



Pakistan in context: The Nature and scale of the problem

Pakistan has lost more than 50,000 civilians in the war on terror. It has been on the front line of protecting the region and various other parts of the world. It has suffered losses in terms of military personnel too, with some estimates reaching 6000. Through being thrust into the war on terror, Pakistan has taken some serious hits. There are numerous conflicting figures available about the losses Pakistan has suffered. Some people say total fatalities in Terrorist Violence in Pakistan from 2003 to 2016 were 61,334 detailing as follows: Civilians (21,414), Security Force Personnel (6,643), Terrorists (33,277).

In addition to this, it also has the highest number of proscribed Islamic organisations and, according to some, the number of convicted terrorists is in the thousands. The federal government and its four provincial counterparts have drawn up lists of which prisoners would be sent to the gallows. Initial estimates have put the number of convicted terrorists awaiting execution at more than 3000. (Hussain, 2014).

According to the Interior Ministry of Pakistan, in 2015 alone, 1,113 incidents of terrorism took place in the country while 637 terrorists were killed and 710 were arrested. (GEO News, 2015).

In the UK, 69 out of 70 international terrorist organisations proscribed under the Terrorism Act 2000 have Islamic identity and nine organisations have links with Pakistan. Fourteen organisations in Northern Ireland were proscribed under previous legislation.

According to the US State Department, 37 out of 61 foreign organisations designated have Islamic identity.

Background

Pakistan came into existence when British rule over India ended in 1947, dividing it into two parts: India and Pakistan. Both new born countries entered a war over the princely state of Kashmir straight after the partition. This is still a bone of contention between the two behemoths; occupied Kashmir ruled by India has been facing a continuous struggle by the Kashmiris for independence supported by Pakistan. It has long been said that Kashmir should be given the right to choose their own fate, but this has not been achieved. Subsequently both countries had two more major wars (in 1965 and 1971) and many skirmishes on the borders e.g., the Kargil conflict in 1999. Such hostility between both countries has created extremist trends not only in the public domain but also within state institutions; politicians and media are not behind in this race. Both countries are very advanced in nuclear arms and have not signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). State institutions deliberately target the public's thought process to promote religious extremists. In both countries, very senior military officials have been dismissed and charged with terrorism offences.

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) and the Invasion of Afghanistan

Another twist in the story of Pakistan that changed its demography was when the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) invaded Afghanistan in the 1980's. This was the time when world forces banded together to stop the former USSR from having access to the hot water of the Arabian Sea. This invasion was termed an assault on religion by people of no faith and so this 'Cold' War was turned into a 'Religious' war by the United States. Another partner was sought in this effort. A partner that had just as much religious zeal and backbone to fight. This partner, perhaps naïve at the time, given that it was newly created, was Pakistan, riding the wave of religious patriotism. An aspect of Pakistan's religious

identity was taken advantage of: Jihad. It was such Jihad that was launched to defeat the 'godless communism' threat.

Cooley described the operation, and its dogma in this way: Virtually all would be Muslim. They would fervently believe that God had commanded them to fight his enemies, the Godless Communists, and foreign Russian invaders. Their earthly rewards would be glory and generous pay. For those who died as martyrs, their reward would be in heaven.

To impress the Islamic circles of the Islamic world, the 'godly' relationship between the Abrahamic faiths was exploited against the ungodly 'Red Bear'. Hence, a vast number of Mujahideen were recruited from all over the world and trained in the training centres set up by the CIA and Pakistani intelligence agency Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). As a result, the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republic was disintegrated. As I have noted before, the CIA, once achieving its goal of collapsing the USSR, abandoned the Pakistani and Afghan forces and left them without any infrastructure or rebuilding initiatives. Instead, it left them with the military arsenal and a warped mentality. The impact of this war continues to plague Pakistan today, with the menace of terrorism and international society in the current struggle between the Western liberal democratic order and extremism under the banner of so called 'Islam'. It also placed Pakistan under a great burden of three Million refugees.

The international leadership withdrew from effectively supporting the Mujahideen to become an integral part of the regular Afghan army. They rather left them in the lurch, leading Afghanistan down a path of complete anarchy and a power vacuum. What Afghanistan needed, more than at any other time during the war, was foreign support. Yet, the United States, its Cold War won – its mission complete – lost interest in Afghanistan in the years when its interest was most needed.

After 1989, American military and economic support to Afghanistan dramatically decreased, and no provisions were made for rebuilding the nation, demobilising fighters, or organising relief aid. The Afghans, rightly so, felt abandoned.

'To many Afghans', Ahmed Rashid writes in his book, *Taliban*, 'the US withdrawal constituted a major betrayal, while Washington's

refusal to harness international pressure to help broker a settlement between the warlords was considered a double betrayal.' The absence of the US had the effect of leaving a major power vacuum, creating a situation which lent itself to more chaos, destruction, and in-fighting amongst Afghanistan's many warlords, who, all out to consolidate their own individual power, proved unable to unite. Ultimately, the Taliban emerged as an alternative force to bring peace, at least to some extent, in a torn Afghanistan.

The hot waters of Arabian Sea and terrorism are linked in such a way that the Pakistan Army is now fighting against terrorists to make sure that China reaches the hot water of the Arabian Sea through the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the $48 Billion project. Russia has had two naval exercises in Pakistan's hot waters, 'Arabian Monsoon – 2014' and 'Arabian Monsoon – 2015.'

Official counter terrorism structure in Pakistan

A federal organisation, the National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA), was established in Pakistan to collate intelligence, and to counter terrorism and extremism. This department was considered toothless and did not achieve any positive results because of the disagreement between the political parties. One friend close to the department said that that no party was willing to put its ego to the side for the betterment of the nation, despite pressure from a cross section of governmental bodies. NACTA was disabled from performing its key functions – a vehicle without a driver.

Pakistan, being badly hit by extremists and terrorists, has its army at the forefront of dealing with these people on both fronts: military operations to remove them from the homeland, and rehabilitation of terrorists. Their rehabilitation comprises of religion, education, and psychiatry.

On December 16, 2014, a heinous terrorist attack took place at the Army Public School, Peshawar, by Tehrik e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) in retaliation for Pakistan's recent military operations against the TTP that began in the summer of 2014. This tragedy brought the entire

nation together against terrorists and many of those who had a positive view of the plight of the terrorists, no longer felt it plausible to support them. Hence, the parliament passed a comprehensive National Action Plan (NAP) that was then owned by the army and started proactively targeting terrorist organisations and individuals. Some of the twenty points of the National Action Plan involve setting up special trial courts, no Militant outfits, strict action against hate-literature, choking financing for terrorist, a ban on glorification of terrorism, revamping and reforming the criminal justice system, but strikingly, there was no mention of a rehabilitation mechanism for violent extremists or terrorists, nor any mention of ownership or community-led initiatives for rehabilitation. A shift in the mentality of the Pakistani government became clear: no rehabilitation was necessary, just the hunting down, imprisonment or death of terrorists. I spoke to senior members of the four main parties in Pakistan and urged them to change their approach. I advised them to make provision for rehabilitation within their manifesto for the upcoming elections and to explore the matter with the British, Danish and Saudis. These three countries have a tried and tested approach to rehabilitation.

Probation system

In Pakistan, theoretically, a probation framework exists but due to no systematic programme of rehabilitation and a shortage of probation and parole officers, it has no capacity to play an effective role in the rehabilitation of ordinary prisoners, never mind the hard-core criminals or terrorists. It is a well-known fact that the level of radicalism or extremism of a person is determined by the nature of his/her level of views or actions concerning social, political, or religious matters. Therefore, the collective ownership by the people from these circles is imminent and paramount i.e., the resilience from the social sector, vision from the political parties and responsibility from the religious and civic communities will enable community-led initiatives to be successful in partnership with the statutory bodies such as the probation service. Under the Offenders Ordinance 1960,

some of the duties of a probation officer towards the probationer include to: 'explain the conditions of probation orders, endeavour to find suitable employment for him/her, encourage every probationer to make use of statutory or voluntary organisations for his/her welfare', but no emphasis is placed on probation providing rehabilitation of an extremist or terrorist. The justice system needs to be reformed to place rehabilitation as an utmost priority during the sentencing of terrorists.

Learning from UK experience

Terrorism itself is not a new phenomenon for the British government or its people. In Northern Ireland, the Irish Republican Army (IRA) led an armed struggle, seeking an end to British rule in Northern Ireland. Their struggle ran from 1969 until 1997 which involved murder, bombings, and other criminal enterprises. The IRA started bombing multiple locations in England to 'take the heat off Belfast and Derry' in 1973. In the 80s, the Provisional IRA had successfully added to their artillery of modern weaponry, including heavy machine guns, surface-to-air missiles, and rocket-propelled grenades. Most importantly, they had found a use for the plastic explosive, Semtex; in their pursuit of freedom and the overthrow of the British government, the IRA killed hundreds of innocent people via numerous terrorist attacks.

According to the Conflict Archive on the Internet (CAIN), a research project at the University of Ulster, 'the Provisional IRA was responsible for the deaths of 1,823 people during the Troubles up to 2001. Of that figure, 1,013 (55.5%) were members or former members of the British security forces'.

In the year ending June 2016, 182 persons were arrested for international terrorism; there were 165 persons in custody for both terrorism-related (152) and domestic extremism/separatism (13) offences and 62 trials completed; out of which 54 (87%) were convicted. (Home Office Quarterly update, Sep 2016).

The 7/7 London attacks really shook the government as well as the ordinary public, including the Muslims who also died on that day. British institutions like the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), Police, Home Office, Local and Communities Department and Local Authorities reached out to the communities and started a consultation process. During the Labour government, there was much work at grassroots level to engage with the Muslim community. Unfortunately, this stopped when the Conservative government came in. When I met with Theresa May, I urged her to engage with the Muslim community at a grassroots level and work with individuals who had community credibility to tackle the issue of radicalisation.

Specific counter terrorism strategy in the UK

In the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Centre, in early 2003, to coordinate the pan-Governmental response to the emerging terrorist threat, the British Government developed its first counter-terrorism strategy, known as CONTEST.

In March 2008, the Government published the UK's first National Security Strategy (NSS), subtitled Security in an interdependent world. The purpose of the NSS was stated as being 'to set out how we will address and manage this diverse though interconnected set of security challenges and underlying drivers, both immediately and in the longer term, to safeguard the nation, its citizens, our prosperity and our way of life'.

The strategic context of CONTEST involved aims including to reduce the risk to the UK and its interests overseas from terrorism so that people can go about their lives freely and with confidence. CONTEST deals with all forms of terrorism and continues to be based around four strands:

I. Pursue: to stop terrorist attacks;
II. Prevent: to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism;

III. Protect: to strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack;
IV. Prepare: to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack.

Under the PREVENT strand, the Office of Security and Counter Terrorism (OSCT) works closely with Muslim-led preventative initiatives to prevent and divert vulnerable people from falling into the wrong hands or reoffending. I was also consulted regarding engagement with the Muslim community as I had been already running a counter radicalisation programme since 2002. In fact, the Prevent strategy required trust between Muslim communities and the criminal justice agencies as a prerequisite for successful counter-extremist work. Without this trust, there is little hope of fostering effective partnerships and even less hope of identifying extremists and potential extremists in the community with the help of local partners. It also linked the NOMS with such organisations that had the capacity and skills to rehabilitate extremists and those who were charged, convicted and jailed under terrorism legislation. The process was owned by not only the Probation services. The community organisation involved in the process was equally responsible for the offender who was released from prison with certain conditions such as:

I. Would not leave the country;
II. Would not contact co-offenders;
III. Inform the authorities if moving from an existing address, changing a phone number, car, etc.

Occasionally, criticism is levelled against the Prevent programme of the Office of Security and Counter Terrorism (OSCT), the PALM (Preventative and Lasting Measures) project and many others , who are wonderful examples of success where OSCT, Police, NOMS, London Probation Trust, Lambeth Council and the Stockwell Green Community Services (SGCS, a Muslim-led counter extremism and de-radicalisation NGO) successfully rehabilitated TACT-related offenders in partnership with the Khatme Nubuwwat Centre (KNC) also known as Stockwell Mosque.

In the absence of meaningful and active engagement of Muslim communities, long-term risks will be much higher as far as in-house terrorism is concerned. Benedict Wilkinson also echoes the community's role: 'The success of Prevent pivots on the successful collaboration of government, local partners and local communities in providing targeted counter-extremist initiatives within the community.' According to Probation, risk assessment and management of terrorism related offenders on licence in the UK, seventy offenders completed their licence in the community by February 2011, thirty-six TACT and thirty-four more in 2015.

Under Prevent, the police create and maintain dialogue with local communities to foster strong relationships; enhance knowledge of the array of demographic differences within and between Muslim communities; and use the knowledge and relationship acquired to identify people at risk of radicalisation. Risk assessment is negotiated by the probation service in co-operation with the police, the Prison Service and other Prevent partners, and shapes the drafting of 'bespoke' licence conditions to which the offender must adhere to complete his or her sentence in the community. I remember when two TACT related offenders who were being rehabilitated at our Centre were going to be recalled because they had supposedly broken their licence conditions. This violation was just two weeks before the expiry of their licence. I believed that recalling the individuals at this juncture, when they were about to complete their parole successfully in two weeks' time, would have a terribly negative impact on them. I believed that their violation, which was a wave to each other whilst stopped at opposite sides of a traffic light, did not warrant the call back to the prison by the authorities. The call back would only serve to demolish the foundation which we had been creating for two years. Therefore, my intervention and the timely support of the Probation Service encouraged the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) to change their mind – they realised that a degree of flexibility and looking at ground realities would be much more helpful to them in the long run, as opposed to following the rigidity of their policies.

Here again, the training package designed by SGCS and others in

2009 under European funded projects called Towards Preventing Violent Radicalisation (TPVR) and Reducing Influences that Radicalise Prisoners (RIRP) through the London Probation Trust was rolled out throughout London and other parts of the country. It was effectively used to train not only the probation staff, but also staff for high security prisons and other agencies. The training package focused on an inclusive and rounded approach rather than focusing on one strand of rehabilitation.

By late 2009, it was clear that a change in government was pending. Having spoken to several senior officers across the agencies, the signal was clear: community led rehabilitation and grassroots funding was going to be cut and instead a new formula was going to be implemented to tackle radicalisation. Instead of working with credible organisations, the new government strategy was to work with a select few organisations to stem the tide. Unfortunately, this strategy failed miserably and coupled with other agendas of the government, led to a major spike in radicalisation and terrorist activity.

Much of the work of the previous government had been largely ignored or discarded. The conservative government had a radical agenda that was hostile to immigrants, Muslims, black and minority ethnic groups, refugees, those on benefits, etc. This led to an increase in far-right extremists coming out of hiding as well. They were emboldened. The increase in far-right extremism has been largely ignored with the focus on the Muslim community. I have warned on numerous occasions of the rise of far-right radical groups like EDL, Britain First, National Action and others becoming the unknown domestic threat, just as far right nationalist groups are in the United States.

Finally, the menace of terrorism is not going away soon as radicalisation is fast spreading. Unless the root causes of radicalisation are identified and addressed without prejudice; it will breed more and more terrorism.

Chapter 17

Jihad: A Struggle, Right vs Wrong



There is no TV Channel or Newspaper in Europe and America where terms like Islamic Jihad, Islamic Extremism and Islamic Terrorism are not often used about Muslims. Sometimes, the most seasoned politicians also, in fervour, utter the same words and join Terrorism with Islam, which generally has negative psychological effects on Western Society and particularly on Muslims. We can imagine the gravity of the issue by it that at the news of murder and destruction or an attack on some cinema or school, the Muslim mothers sit on prayer mats praying to God that the attacker may not be a Muslim. Many people make vows to say supererogatory prayers because they know that if the attacker is a Muslim, the media will leave no stone unturned to ridicule Muslims and Islam. It will increase the sense of insecurity among the Muslims. It is very surprising that if the attacker is a non-Muslim, the media will not mention his identity of colour, race, or religion. He will be declared

a psychological patient by the media and thus rid themselves of all allegations.

However, unfortunately, if the attacker were a Muslim, the media would immediately start disclosing not only his personal identity but also the details of his entire family, mosque, school and Imam. Then his action is joined with Islam and Jihad very forcefully. If, unfortunately, he was a Pakistani, the Pakistani would excel the Western media, being faithful to Shah than Shah himself, will provide such nonsense details which will cause insult and derision of Pakistan. The scenes and incidents of the attacks of September 9, 2001, on the World Trade Centre and the suicidal attack of July 7, 2005, are described exaggeratedly to keep fresh the fear and negative impact of Islam and the Muslims on the minds of the people. It is continuously repeated that Mullah and Madrasa spread disturbance when as in all the incidents of terrorism in Britain, no student or Taliban of Madrasa was engaged. Another point to consider is that the policy of the West is unsuccessful regarding Syria. The statements of President Obama and the Prime Minister are on record that they should help anti-Bashar al-Assad elements, and it was their help that later turned into ISIS.

Therefore, I consider it necessary first to understand how the West presented 'sacred obligation' in place of the term of Jihad and how they played their part in this 'good deed' and how much their contribution was. Though it is not my actual subject, I want to present some statements and pictures of the Western leaders to the readers. After that, the 'Jihad' will be described in the light of the Holy Quran and the Traditions of the Holy Prophet (SAW) so that its true picture may emerge. In the following lines, I have tried to throw light on the different aspects of the essence of Jihad.

The Western Concept of Jihad



To confront the Russian attack in Afghanistan, under the leadership of the CIA an alliance was formed in which the ISI of Pakistan also included, a permanent task was assigned to the word "Jihad" not only in Islamic countries (including Pakistan and Saudi Arabia) but also in the media of the Western Counties that the Jihad should be presented as a positive action and a good deed and the Mujahedeen should be brought out as heroes. A military dictator, General Zia ul Haq, was ruling Pakistan at that time. The *tulaba* (students) of Madrassas were not permitted to participate in political rallies; how was it possible for them to take AK-47 Kalashnikov and Stinger Missiles and participate in the war of another country? The Camps of Afghan Mujahedin were established under the charge of the CIA, and to foster a particular thinking, the Training Camps were established. (However, it is neither my thinking nor am I trying to blame only the West or America to carry out "International Jihad", rather, all of us took an active part in it, but the Government institutes and Madrassas are collectively trying to solve this issue as the chapter of Al-Qaeda has been closed in the region and new chapter under the name of ISIS is opened in the Middle East.) The following statement of Hillary Clinton, the wife of the former President of America, Bill Clinton (who was the Foreign Minister in the Obama Government and was the candidate for President against Donald Trump) is available on YouTube.

"We also have a history of moving in and out of Pakistan. I mean, let us remember here: the people we are fighting today, we funded

20 years ago. Moreover, we did it because we were locked in this struggle with the Soviet Union. They invaded Afghanistan, and we did not want to see them control Central Asia, so we went to work. and it was President Reagan, in partnership with the Congress, led by Democrats. Who said, "You know what? Sounds like a pretty good idea, let us deal with the ISI and the Pakistani Military, and let us go recruit these Mujahedin! That is great! Let us get some to come from Saudi Arabia and other places, importing their Wahhabi brand of Islam, so that we can go beat the Soviet Union" And guess what? They retreated, they lost billions of dollars, and it led to the collapse of the Soviet Union. So, there is a very strong argument, which is. It was not a bad investment to end the Soviet Union but let us be careful what we sow because we will harvest. So, we then left Pakistan. We said, "OK, fine. You deal with the Stingers that we have left all over your country. You deal with the mines that are along the border. Moreover, we do not want to have anything to do with you. In fact, we are sanctioning you."

The History witnesses that the Mujahidin (about whom the above-mentioned statement has been quoted), including Professor Burhan ud Din Rabbani and Maulana Jalal ud Din Haq'qani, were welcomed by the then President of America, Ronald Regan, in the White House. For a long time, the following words about Mujahedin were attributed to President Regan, but later the American Administration denied them:

"These gentlemen (Mujahidin) were the moral equivalents of the American forefathers."

He also attributed the American Space Shuttle to the Afghan Freedom Lovers, calling them **"The Mujahedin"**.

Even James Bond could not help performing this 'Sacred Obligation' and to make Jihad conspicuous, he made a blockbuster film, 'The Living Daylights', to create a positive psychological effect

on the Mujahedin. He attributed an American film, "Rambo III", to the Afghan Mujahedin (later the word Mujahedin was removed). A British Newspaper presented Osama bin Laden as a hero, "Anti-Soviet Warrior".

Then the time changed, and the person, once the apple of the CIA's eye and their manufactured 'Warrior', became the greatest danger for them and their 'wanted' terrorist. And then this chapter was closed in Abbot Abad, and a new chapter in the shape of ISIS was opened. Though its actors were a bit changed but the script was the same.

The Essence of Jihad

In the previous pages, it has been stated that the root of the religion of Islam is peace and security, then how can it be the cause of disturbance or bear disturbance? God, Almighty, says about the Holy Prophet (SAW):

وَمَآ اَرۡسَلۡنٰكَ اِلَّا رَحۡمَةً لِّلۡعٰلَمِيۡنَ ۝

Translation: "And (O Esteemed Messenger,) We have not sent you but as a mercy for all the worlds." (Quran: Sura Anbia (21/107)

As the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet (SAW) is for all human beings till the last day, therefore, God did not say that He made him (SAW) the Prophet (only) for humanity or for the Muslims (only), rather, he is the mercy for all the worlds. Therefore, it is the distinction of Islam only among all other religions that Islam has stated the rights of animals in detail along with the rights of human beings, as the circumference of the mercy of the Holy Prophet (SAW), as well as Islam, is so wide that it encircles the entire universe. Here are some Traditions of the Holy Prophet (SAW) regarding the rights of animals, so that

The Holy Prophet (SAW) enjoined to be fearful of God regarding speechless animals and ride and leave them in a better way.

The benefactor of the Universe (SAW) advised not to make back of

the animals your pulpits as God has made them your subordinates to carry you to those places where you cannot reach without labour. The benefactor of the Universe (SAW) advised not to make back of the animals your pulpits as God has made them your subordinate to carry you to those places where you cannot reach without labour.

It means that if somebody is riding and has to have a long conversation, they should get down and then talk to the others. The Prophet of God (SAW) also advised not to target (with cruelty) the animals

These are just ordinary examples of the rights of animals; he (SAW) forbade wasting the things of animals' use and benefit. Hazrat Abdullah bin Hasbish (RA) narrates that the Holy Prophet (SAW) forbade cutting a Berry tree. Imam Abu Dawood (RA) was asked to explain the meaning of this saying. He said, "This concise narration means that he who cuts a Berry tree in the forest wrongly and he does not have any right to do so, and wayfarers and the cattle enjoyed the shade of the tree, God will cause him to bow his head in hell.

The religion that cares so much for the rights of animals is foolishness and unawareness to think that in that religion, indiscriminate massacre of human beings is right.

In the next pages, I shall try to discuss in detail that before Russian interference in Afghanistan, the world was unaware of the Islamic concept of Jihad. After the Russian interference, the internal and external elements, just to achieve their own objectives, presented the concept of "Islamic Jihad" and the Mujahedin, who were the apple of the eyes of American President Ronald Regan and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, were afterwards declared the cause of tribulation and terrorism and the same Islamic Jihad was considered Terrorism. Its details have been discussed in many

places in the present book; here it is to say that all nations of the world agree that if there is no other way to abolish tribulation and disorder, it is right to adopt the way of war. However, here is a point to be considered: no Terrorist Organisation existed in Iraq (al-Qaeda or ISIS), nor was there any tribulation and disorder, so why did the attack destroy their infrastructure? Practically, after attacks, unrest, terrorism, lawlessness and tribulation increased in those regions, and the world became more unsafe. Who will compensate for the loss of hundreds of thousands of lives and Billions of Dollars of property? Now, not only ordinary Muslims but even non-Muslim Europeans ask why the standard-bearers of Human Rights and the people of "civilised" countries of the world lament. Were they not doing a good deed to rid the people of the atrocities of Gaddafi, Sadam Hossain, and Bashar al-Assad? This is the same Jihad that was, according to them, allowed. Islam has revealed such severe enjoins about the limitations and conditions of Jihad which absolutely abolish unrest and tribulation. The bloodshed ding going on before Islam was finished with the advent of Islam. When the Holy Prophet (SAW) came to Medina, two main tribes were residing there, Banu Qurayza and Banu Nuzair and their entire force was being spent to bend other tribes. Then God revealed the following verses to warn them:

مِنْ أَجْلِ ذٰلِكَ ۚ كَتَبْنَا عَلٰى بَنِيْٓ إِسْرَآءِيْلَ أَنَّهٗ مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًۢا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيْعًا ۚ وَمَنْ أَحْيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَآ أَحْيَا النَّاسَ جَمِيْعًا ۚ وَلَقَدْ جَآءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُنَا بِالْبَيِّنٰتِ ۖ ثُمَّ إِنَّ كَثِيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ بَعْدَ ذٰلِكَ فِي الْأَرْضِ لَمُسْرِفُوْنَ ۝

Translation: In these holy verses, the significance of Human life is stated before the Tribe of Jews that an unjust murder of a person amounts to the murder of the entire human race, and the safeguard of a person amounts to safeguarding the entire human race. This enjoins was also stated in Taurah; do you not follow it?

(Quran: Sura Al-maeda:5-32)

You can understand that in this auspicious verse, Islam has already obstructed bloodshed instead of instigating it.

In another holy verse, God Almighty says:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُم مِّن ذَكَرٍ وَأُنثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِندَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٣﴾

Translation: "O mankind, indeed, we have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted.

(Quran: Sura Hujrat:49-13)

In this verse, it has become clear that the superiority of human beings is not based on geographical, linguistic, national, or racial distinctions; instead, the superiority is based on piety. There is a message for humanity in these verses that it is a wrong point of view to hate other human beings based on colour or race (being white or black). All human beings are the descendants of one man and one woman. Moreover, there is a message for Muslims that superiority is the basis of piety only; otherwise, the basic Human Rights of Muslims and non-Muslims are equal.

This discussion summarises that Islam enjoins of complete eradication of unrest, tribulation and bloodshed. Where Islam permits Jihad, it is to check atrocities and tribulation. Moreover, these are not such enjoins that abolish the previous oppression and unrest but start a new series of atrocities and turmoil. I have already stated that the World Nations also consider the war necessary to curb turmoil and mayhem. The only difference is that whenever the World Nation waged war to curb tribulation, the tribulation and unrest increased, and often it tried to accomplish some latent objectives in the name of terminating tribulation. Islam has always discouraged such contemptuous objectives.

There is no doubt about it that Islam has made Jihad permissible only for کلمتہ اللہ (upholding the word of God), to establish justice, to bring the people toward the servitude of God instead of the servitude of human beings and for the sake of defence.

At the advent of Islam, there had been no restriction of any rule or regulation, and wars were waged all around for no other purpose than to dominate the enemy. No doubt, Islam excelled and formulated an explicit code of conduct for wars and an international system established to determine rules of war and bring them under the law and abolish lawlessness in the wars and led them to an organised and justified objective.

Objective/s of Jihad

Hazrat Abu Musa Ash'ari (RA) narrates:

"A person came to the Holy Prophet (SAW) and asked, "What is war in the way of God, as some of us wage war out of anger, while some others wage war due to honour (of tribe or nation)? The Holy Prophet (SAW) raised his head (as according to the narrator, that person was standing) and said: "The person who wages war to raise the word of God, he is a warrior in the way of God."

Another Tradition is also narrated by Hazrat Abu Musa Ash'ari (RA). He says:

"A person came to the Holy Prophet (SAW) and said, "If a person goes to war to get booty and another person goes on the warpath to achieve fame, yet another person to achieve honour, then who among them is doing Jihad in the way of God?" The Holy Prophet (SAW) replied, "That person does Jihad in the way of God who wages a war just to spread the Word of God." Hazrat Abu Huraira narrates that a person came to the Holy Prophet (SAW) and expressed his intention to take part in Jihad because he wanted to

get worldly wares in the shape of booty. On this, the Holy Prophet (SAW) said that there would be no reward for it. These Traditions reveal that only that war is permissible in Islam that is waged to raise the word of God or to defend Islam or Muslims. If there is the objective of geographical or linguistic prejudice or the desire to achieve worldly wares or any other purpose, that war is not permissible in Islam.

Therefore, the wars waged for personal enmity or national or linguistic prejudice, or to enslave others or to occupy land have no relation to Islamic Jihad.

According to Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani (DB), there are two objectives of Islamic Jihad:

1- Firstly, to defend Islam; if the infidels attack an Islamic government, it is defended. God, the Almighty, says in the Holy Quran:

أُذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقَاتَلُونَ بِأَنَّهُمْ ظُلِمُوا ۚ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ نَصْرِهِمْ لَقَدِيرٌ

Translation: Permission 'to fight back' is 'hereby' granted to those being fought, for they have been wronged. Moreover, Allah is truly Most Capable of helping them 'prevail'

(Quran: Sura Haj :22-39)

At another place God says:

وَقَاتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ الَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَكُمْ وَلَا تَعْتَدُوا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ ۝

Translation: Fight in the cause of Allah 'only' against those who wage war against you, but do not exceed the limits. Allah does not like transgressors.

(Quran: Sura Baqra :2-190)

2- The second objective of the Jihad is to exterminate oppression and unrest and to break the splendour of heathenism that hinders the acceptance of the invitation of Islam. God enjoins it in the Holy Quran:

وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّىٰ لَا تَكُونَ فِتْنَةٌ وَيَكُونَ الدِّينُ كُلُّهُ لِلَّهِ ۖ فَإِنِ انْتَهَوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِمَا يَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ۝

Translation: And fight against them until there is no fitnah and [until] the religion [i.e., worship], all of it, is for Allāh. Moreover, if they cease - then indeed, Allāh is Seeing of what they do.

(Quran: Sura Anfal :8-39)

Hazrat Rab'i bin Amar (RA) expressed the same objectives of Islam before the wrestler of Iran, Rustam, when the Muslims attacked Chosroes, and the people asked them the reason for the attack, what brought them here. Replying to this question, Hazrat Rab'i bin Amar (RA) says:

"God has sent us to teach people the servitude of God instead of other human beings and put people out of the narrowness of the world and lead them to its magnanimous and rid the people of the injustice of (false) religions and lead them to the justice of Islam."[11]

Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani Sahib explains the saying of Hazrat Rab'i bin Amar (RA) that "Rid the people of the injustice of (false) religions and lead them to the justice of Islam does not mean to force the people to accept Islam; instead it means to rid the people of the servitude and injustice of other human beings and lead them to the justice that God has programmed in the form of *shari'at* (divine law or Islamic jurisprudence) in the earth so much so that everybody is given his legal right or break the glory of the baleful persons and create such an atmosphere in which everybody could compare different religions with open eyes and no glory of heathenism can hinder to accept right path."[12]

These verses and the Traditions indicate that Islam has absolutely closed the way of wars meant to occupy countries, enslave others and snatch their land and property, as is explicitly seen that there has been no other objective to wage a war against Iraq, Libya, Kuwait and Syria except to occupy their resources.

The Sentimental Attitude about Jihad and Its Impact

If we review the present so-called Militant organisations, it

becomes clear that these people are publicly ridiculing the golden injunctions of Jihad given by Islam. These people have concealed the real concept of Jihad from the sight of the people. Particularly, the anti-Pakistan elements have damaged the interests of Pakistan and Islamic Jurisprudence on the International platform by using the 'Jihadi Term'. To achieve personal benefits, they instigated the sentiments of people and popularised such a concept of Jihad whose foundation cannot be traced in the source of Din. Private groups and gangs declare Jihad per diem. What to say about newspapers and journals, the most esteemed places, like mosques, are also being used for such purposes. Because of sectarian and other differences, the Muslims are cutting the throats of other Muslims. These people have made the lives of those non-Muslims who had been simultaneously living in this region peacefully unsafe. They are engaged in bloody activity against diplomats of other countries, the workers of social welfare and women's rights, foreign players and peaceful citizens. Consequently, Pakistan and Islam are vilified internationally, and our virtuous and intelligent youth, whose abilities should have been utilised in the welfare of our country and nation, are being used in activities that result in destruction. They are terror-stricken. Hundreds of innocent people lose their lives, and the entire nation is being persecuted. None is safe from terrorism, including the Pak Army, Police, other Security Agencies, Educational Institutes, mosques, schools, Imam Bargahs, Shrines, markets, teachers, students, and labourers.

It is the need of the day to explicitly explain the concept of Jihad in its true sense so that the youth can find the right ground for their activities. It requires both theoretical and practical Jihad. It involves explaining the concept of Jihad to the people in the light of the Quran and Sunnah, while also initiating activities to engage the youth in positive endeavours.

If we look at our society, we come to know that the main reason for the engagement of our youth in negative activities is their unemployment. Unemployment tempts people, particularly the youth, toward crimes and narcotics. It creates indifference and disappointment that lead them to the point where they are not ready to give others the right to live, as they think that if they did not get the opportunities to live, why should others?

This disappointment has given rise to three distinct types of individuals in our society. One type of people is those who adopt the way of crime. The second type finds shelter in narcotics, and the third type became the victim of the present concept of Jihad due to their religious bent of mind. As they are better people, with the right guidance, they will become beneficial to the country and the nation. The other two types also need reformation, and action should be taken in this regard. As the subject under consideration is related to Jihad, our discussion and suggestions will be bound to this subject only.

The Just Islamic Principles during War

Islam does not endorse the famous idiom that an English writer, John Lyly, used: "The rules of fair play do not apply in love and war," in his novel, "Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit," published in 1578. It is often used to justify cheating. Islam has issued such a fine principle to be followed during the war that perusing those principles will finish the ongoing war and will not become the cause of another oppression or enmity as presently, wars are started in the name of abolishing oppression and resultantly the door of boundless wars are opened in many countries as is manifest in the situations in Libya, Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan and Somalia. Whenever the Holy Prophet (SAW) sent the troops for Jihad, he (SAW) detailed to them the rules and regulations of war and emphasised that they abide by them. Many exalted companions have stated these rules and regulations. Hazrat Barida bin Haseeb (RA) states:

"Whenever the Holy Prophet (SAW) appointed somebody as Commander of an army or of a troop, he (SAW) particularly emphasised to fear God, adopt piety and deal with good manners with Muslims who were under his command. He (SAW) further advised to start a Jihad in the name of God against the people who adopt blasphemy against God; wage a war against them, and do not deceive, do not mutilate their limbs and do not kill a child."

Hazrat Anas bin Malik (RA) says:

"Whenever the Holy Prophet (SAW) sent an army, he (SAW) advised them to set out in the name of God, do not murder some old fellow, a young child, or a woman; do not be guilty of breach of trust; gather the booty at one place and reform the people and treat them well. God likes those who treat others well."[11]

Generally, at the advent of wars, the Commander of the Warriors makes a speech to instigate their sentiments so that they could cross all limits to break the strength of the enemy and dominate them. However, the Holy Prophet (SAW) advised them not to cross the limits of God during the war and not to treat them in a way that God has declared unfair. Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar (RA) says that in a ghaz'vah (a war against infidels, in which the Holy Prophet SAW himself participated), a dead body of a woman was found. On this, the Holy Prophet (SAW) advised not to kill women and children."[12]

Hazrat Abu Bakar (RA) sent an army in the command of Hazrat Yazid bin Abi Sufyan (RA). While walking along with the army, Hazrat Abu Bakar (RA) advised the army:

"There, you will find a nation that thinks that they have restricted their lives for God (it means the monks who adopt reclusiveness for the sake of God), do not touch such people. I give you ten pieces of advice; do not kill a woman, do not kill a child, do not kill an old

man, do not cut a tree bearing fruit, do not desert a valley, do not cut hamstring of any goat or camel (it mean do not injure them) except you want to eat them, do not cut a date tree nor burn it, do not be guilty of breach of trust in collecting booty and do not show cowardness."[1]

Before the advent of Islam and still, in the present civilised world, it is customary to achieve the objectives; any method can be adopted, though it destroys a peaceful city or the whole country is annihilated. They do not care. They only want success in war. It is not mere verbosity or supposition; the destruction of the World Wars First and Second, and the crying humanity in Hiroshima and Nagasaki are life-like pictures of it. However, Islam gave out very severe commands that the door of atrocity is closed even during war. These commands are so significant that "احکام الجہاد اور قتال" (the commands of Jihad and Wars) have become a proper branch of science, and books have been written on it. Perhaps the first books written on it were کتاب السیر لاطزاعی اور کتاب السیر الکبیر لامام محمد بن حسن الشیبانی

In these books, the injunctions concerning wars and relations between countries are stated in detail, and all these injunctions are based on the teachings of the Holy Quran, the Traditions of the Holy Prophet (SAW), the practices of the Rightly Guided Caliphs, and the exalted Companions of the Holy Prophet (SAW).

Implementation of Islamic Rules and Regulations of War

The Islamic Rules and Regulations of war have not just been mentioned in books like all other laws of the world; instead, the Muslims have bewildered the world by acting upon their illuminated Rules and Regulations. The people are astonished that the nation deals with its enemies in such an ethical way. What would their moral quality have been?

The exalted Companions of the Holy Prophet (SAW) had become so habitual in dealing with the non-Muslims according to the

golden principles of Islam that they stuck to these principles even during the war.

Once, Hazrat Khubaib (RA) was imprisoned by his infidel enemy when a child of an infidel came to Hazrat Khubaib (RA). He (RA) caused the child to sit in his lap. By chance, he (RA) had a razor in his hands at that time. When the mother of the child saw this scene, she became upset. Seeing this, Hazrat Khubaib (RA) asked her, "Were you afraid that I would murder him? He said that he would not do so.

Hazrat Khubaib could make the child his shield and thus get rid of the captivity of the enemy, but he did not do so and lost his life and did not accept the blame that the Muslims kill the children of their enemies or use children as a shield.

All other religions admit that during the war it is due for the warriors to capture the goods of the enemies, somehow or other. However, Islam permits the capture of only those goods that the Muslims achieve by their own power, and those goods that are entrusted to them can be captured by them according to Islam.

The best example of this principle is the incident that occurred to Hazrat Aswad Ansi (RA). This incident is presented differently in different books of *Hadith* (Tradition of the Holy Prophet (SAW). Imam Behqi (RA) copied this incident from Imam Al-Moghazi Hazrat Musa bin Uqbah (RA):

"The Jews entered a safe fort which is called "Amos". The Holy Prophet (SAW) surrounded this fort for about twenty days. The earth was very bad and hot, which created difficulty for the Muslims.

On that occasion, a black Negro slave of the people of Khaiber came to the Holy Prophet (SAW), who grazed the goats of his master. He saw the people of Khaiber who were armed. He asked them, "What

is your intention?" They replied, "We are fighting for the person who is the Prophet of God. That enslaved person thought of the Holy Prophet (SAW) in his heart and went to him with goats and asked the Holy Prophet (SAW), "What do you say?" Moreover, what is your invitation?" The Holy Prophet (SAW) answered, "I invite you to Islam and ask you to witness لَآ إِلٰهَ إِلَّا اللّٰهُ and also witness that Muhammad (SAW) is the Prophet of God and affirm that you will worship none but God." He said, "If I witness all these things and pin my faith in God, what will happen then?" The Holy Prophet (SAW) said that if he died in that condition, the haven was promised to him. Therefore, he became Muslim.

Then he said to the Holy Prophet (SAW), "O Prophet of God (SAW)! These goats are entrusted to me." The Holy Prophet (SAW) said, "Take these goats out of our army and then throw small pieces of stones on them and drive them, and God will cause them to reach their master." The enslaved Negro did accordingly, and the goats went to their master.

Treaty of Peace in Islam

Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani Sahib says,

The scholars of Islamic Law and Islamic Jurisprudence and Philosophers agree that war is not حسن لغيره, instead it is حسن لغيره and must be adopted only when required, and if a Peace Treaty can achieve the objectives of Islamic Jurisprudence, the war is not required. According to a Tradition of the Holy Prophet (SAW), "In the last era, Hazrat Essa (Christ) (AS), after his descent, will eliminate war (Sahih Bukhari), as the objectives of jurisprudence will be fulfilled without waging war."

Note: There are some enjoins of Islamic Law that is charming and beautiful regarding one's own self as to believe in God, to speak the Truth or to be just, etc., in the terminology of scholars it is called

حسن لغیرہ and those enjoins which are not beautiful regarding one's own self, instead their beauty is due to some other reason as prayer or ablution, etc. They are called حسن لغیرہ .

Hazrat Sohil bin Sa'd (RA) narrates that he (RA) heard the Holy Prophet (SAW) saying on the Day of Kaiber, "Next day I shall give the flag to the person who will be victorious." All the exalted Companions (RAA) were waiting to see who would get the flag the next day. Everybody wishes to get the flag the next day. The next day, the Holy Prophet (SAW) asked, "Where is Ali (RA)?" He (SAW) was told that Hazrat Ali (RA) had sore eyes." Hazrat Ali (RA) was called. When Hazrat Ali (RA) came, the Holy Prophet (SAW) applied his viscous extraction on his eyes, and the eyes were healed as if there had been no problem in them. Hazrat Ali (SAW) said humbly, "We would fight against them so much so that they would become like us." The Holy Prophet (SAW) said, "Wait a bit, till you alight in their compound and call them to Islam and acquaint them with the things obligatory for them. Therefore, by God, if only one person gets guidance through you, it is better for you than red camels."

It means that war is not an objective; instead, it is حسن لغیرہ. If countries' disputes can be resolved through peace treaties, instead of waging war, it is better and excellent to resolve them through the method of treaties. However, the method should certainly be in accordance with Islamic Jurisprudence. The Holy Quran also confirms it:

وَإِنْ جَنَحُوا لِلسَّلْمِ فَاجْنَحْ لَهَا وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ ۝

Translation: If the enemy is inclined towards peace, make peace with them. Moreover, put your trust in Allah. Indeed, He 'alone' is the All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

(Quran: Sura Anfal :8-61)

Before the Hudaibiya Treaty, the Holy Prophet (SAW) said to Badil bin Warqa:

"We have not come to wage a war against anybody; we have just come to perform Umrah. The war has made Quresh weak and lean. War has damaged them. If they wish, I shall arrange a time for them; during that time, they should leave other people and me. During this time, if Islam dominates, they will have the authority to decide whether to enter it as the other people have entered; otherwise, they may unite against me. If they refuse, by God, I will wage a war against them in this matter, so much so that I am left alone. However, God shall enforce His injunctions.

These words, uttered by the most eloquent and truthful person, are the best example to state the stand of Islam.

Mufti Taqi Usmani Sahib says that the words of the Holy Prophet (SAW) that "the war has made Quresh thin and weak" explicitly state that war is not a desirable thing, and if it is possible to establish peace without waging war. There is no need to wage war. However, a peace treaty made at the cost of the objectives of Islamic Jurisprudence is absolutely prohibited. Its base is the following enjoin of Islam:

فَمَا اسْتَقَامُوا لَكُمْ فَاسْتَقِيمُوا لَهُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ ۝

Translation: So, if they are upright toward you, be upright toward them.

(Quran: Sura Al-Tauba :9-7)

It means that the enemies are trying to delay just using the trick of talking and making a Peace Treaty a trick to stick to their false belief for some more time and a source to continue their injustice forever and delay giving a right to a deserving person, in that case, this peace treaty is nothing except fraud and deceit and useless in establishing treaty on just basis."»

It is a marvel of Islam that it has stated the ethics of war.

Chapter 18

Double Standard of the West on Russia-Ukrainian War



The Russo-Ukrainian War, which escalated into a full-scale high-tech war on 24 February 2022, stems from Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea and support for separatists in the Donbas region, marking the largest European conflict since World War II. Russian President Vladimir Putin's stated aims of 'denazification' and 'demilitarisation' have justified the aggression, rooted in irredentist claims and opposition to Ukraine's NATO aspirations. What Moscow anticipated as a swift operation devolved into a war of attrition, with Russia occupying about 20% of Ukraine by October 2025, including Crimea and parts of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson, and Zaporizhzhia oblasts (Council on Foreign Relations, 2025).

The war's early phases saw Russian advances stall outside Kyiv by April 2022, followed by Ukrainian counteroffensives reclaiming Kharkiv in September 2022 and Kherson in November 2022 (PBS News, 2025). Brutal sieges, such as Mariupol's 83-day battle, and the June 2023 Kakhovka Dam destruction flooded regions and

displaced millions (ABC News, 2024). By 2024, trench warfare dominated, with Russia capturing Avdiivka in February (The Week, 2025). In 2025, Ukraine's August incursion into Russia's Kursk Oblast seized 1,250 square kilometres, countered by over 50,000 Russian troops and 10,000 North Korean reinforcements, confirmed in April after 300+ casualties (Council on Foreign Relations, 2025).

Human and Humanitarian Toll



Ukrainian civilians, many with young children and hastily packed belongings including iconic plaid duffel bags, wait beside an evacuation bus amid the dusty frontline roads, fleeing intensifying Russian advances in Donetsk region hotspots like Pokrovsk and Kramatorsk in late 2025.

By June 2025, Russia suffered one million total losses (dead and wounded), with Ukraine at 400,000, including 60,000–100,000 fatalities each (Britannica, 2025). The Economist's October analysis estimated Russia's toll at 984,000 to 1,438,000, with over 100,000 killed in 2025 alone, a 60% rise from January (The Economist, 2025). Ukrainian figures report 46,000 killed and 380,000 wounded since 2022. Over 13,300 dead, 31,700 injured, with atrocities like executions in Zvanivka (October 2025) documented by the UN (Britannica, 2025). Displacement affects 6.9 million refugees and 3.7 million internally displaced, Europe's worst since Yugoslavia (Council on Foreign Relations, 2025). Russia's demographic crisis

worsens: 281,550 casualties in early 2025, labour shortages, and 800,000 emigrants (Forbes, 2025; Russia Matters, 2025).

Economic Impacts

Ukraine faces $524 billion in reconstruction needs, with $173 billion in commerce/industry damages by June 2025; agriculture dropped a third, and grid capacity fell from 56 GW to 9 GW (Statista, 2025; Russia Matters, 2025b). Russia allocates 40% of its 2025 budget to military ($250 billion direct costs), but sanctions inflict $1.3 trillion losses; Ukrainian drones disabled 40% of refining capacity by August, causing fuel shortages and a five-year low in oil revenues (The Economist, 2025). Globally, energy spikes fuelled inflation and protests; Russia's 2025 growth slows to 1–2%, risking recession amid 15% defence funding contraction (CSIS, 2025; Al Jazeera, 2025a).

International Response and Alliances

NATO's unity expanded with Finland/Sweden in 2023, delivering $200 billion in aid, including F-16s and Storm Shadows for Russian strikes (CNN, 2025). US/EU/G7 sanctions targeted Russia's 'shadow fleet'; Trump's October 2025 measures hit Rosneft/Lukoil, half of exports (NPR, 2025a; The Guardian, 2025). The 'Coalition of the Willing' (France/UK/Poland) proposed a 12-point plan in September, linking $300 billion frozen assets to reconstruction (ISW, 2025). Russia allies with North Korea (troops/munitions) and Iran (drones); hybrid threats like September airspace violations over Estonia/Lithuania test NATO (CNN, 2025; Al Jazeera, 2025). NATO's Rutte warned in October of no continental peace (NPR, 2025).

Peace Negotiations and Prospects

Talks hinge on fragile diplomacy: Trump's February Saudi Arabia and August Alaska summits proposed ceasefires along lines and

exchanges, but Putin demands NATO non-expansion and annexations rejected by Kyiv/Brussels (US News, 2025; ISW, 2025c). Lavrov accused Europe of impeding via pressure on Trump (ISW, 2025d). Zelenskyy proposes a Putin-Trump-Erdogan-Zelenskyy summit; Russia suggests Istanbul rounds but insists on 'root causes' first (The Guardian, 2025a; The New York Times, 2025). With Russian gains at 13 square miles (September 2025) and Ukrainian drones eroding Moscow's machine, stalemate risks hybrid war (Russia Matters, 2025c; The Economist, 2025). Legacy: Shattered economies, displaced millions, redefined alliances, deterrence or dialogue will decide.

Russia has stretched its muscles in Ukraine and other neighbouring areas, thus challenging the Americans' unipolar superpower role. This comes across as necessary to counter unipolar and reintroduce bipolarism to ensure some kind of safeguarding of areas or countries which the American-led coalition may have invaded.

Challenging US Unipolarity and Fostering Bipolarism

Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 has been framed as a strategic move to contest the United States' post-Cold War unipolar dominance, aiming to reestablish a bipolar or multipolar global order (Avdaliani, 2023). Some see this action as essential to counterbalance Western influence and protect regions vulnerable to interventions by US-led coalitions, reminiscent of past operations in Iraq and Libya (AbdelRazik, 2025). By 2025, the ongoing conflict has reshaped international alliances, with Russia deepening ties with China, thereby accelerating a shift toward bipolarity centred on US and Chinese spheres of influence (Avdaliani, 2023; Tian, 2024).

Russian Territorial Gains in Ukraine in 2025



ISW-style map of Ukraine in late 2025 shows vast Russian-controlled territories in the east and south (red), with recent Russian advances (orange stripes) pushing toward key holdouts like Kramatorsk, while sparse assessed Ukrainian gains (yellow) highlight the slow but persistent Russian momentum.

As of late October 2025, Russian forces have continued to make incremental territorial advances in Ukraine, primarily in the eastern Donetsk Oblast, amid a protracted war of attrition. These gains have been concentrated in areas like Pokrovsk, Kurakhove, and Toretsk, where Russian troops have pushed forward through intense fighting, often at high human cost. Independent assessments estimate that Russia has captured approximately 3,536 square kilometres (about 1,365 square miles) from January to September 2025, surpassing the total gains of 3,382 square kilometres in all of 2024. Overall, Russian forces control around 18-20% of Ukrainian territory, equating to roughly 108,000-120,000 square kilometres, including pre-2022 occupied areas like Crimea and parts of Donbas.

The pace of advances has varied, with a summer peak followed by a slowdown in autumn due to Ukrainian defences, drone warfare, and logistical strains. Russian gains come at a steep price, with estimates of 100-150 troops lost per square kilometre captured in 2025. No breakthroughs have occurred, and the frontlines remain fluid, with intermingled positions making precise mapping challenging.

In the shadow of shattered cities and silenced voices, the Russo-

Ukrainian War endures not as a mere clash of arms but as a profound indictment of unbridled power and the perils of unipolar hubris. From the swift illusions of 2022's "special operation" to the grinding attrition of 2025 where Russian forces cling to incremental gains of 3,536 square kilometres amid a toll exceeding one million casualties on one side and 400,000 on the other the conflict has exacted a human ledger that defies comprehension: 6.9 million refugees adrift in Europe, economies haemorrhaging $524 billion in Ukraine alone, and a global ripple of inflation, energy crises, and fractured alliances. Russia's defiant posture, stretching its muscles against NATO's eastward gaze and U.S.-led coalitions' ghosts from Iraq to Libya, has indeed catalysed a bipolar resurgence, forging an improbable axis with North Korea and Iran while deepening Sino-Russian bonds. Nevertheless, this rebalancing, born of necessity to safeguard sovereign spheres from predatory interventions, risks entrenching a "law of the jungle" where might eclipses mediation, leaving the vulnerable be they in Donbas trenches or distant Muslim heartlands—perpetually exposed.

Chapter 19

Turkey's political trajectory from secularism to Islam



Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan gestures emphatically while delivering a speech at a formal event, his signature intense expression on full display.

Turkey's political trajectory since 2000 has been defined by the ascendancy of conservative Islamism, economic volatility, and a gradual slide toward authoritarianism under the Justice and Development Party (AKP), led by Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. Emerging from the Islamist Welfare Party's dissolution in 1998, the AKP capitalised on the 2001 economic crisis to secure a parliamentary majority in 2002, marking the end of Kemalist secular hegemony and ushering in a 'conservative democratic' framework that integrated Islamic values with neoliberal reforms (Yeşilada, 2023). This period transitioned Turkey from an EU-oriented democratiser to a populist regime blending Turkish-Islamic nationalism, where Islamic identity serves as a unifying yet exclusionary force. Key events, economic booms and busts, the 2013 Gezi Park protests, the 2016 coup attempt, the 2023 earthquakes,

2024 local elections, and the 2025 arrest of opposition leader Ekrem İmamoğlu illustrate the AKP's resilience amid crises, while highlighting tensions between pious conservatism and democratic erosion (Gümüşçü, 2024). The AKP has sustained Islamic identity through institutional reforms, cultural policies, and populist narratives, framing itself as the defender of Sunni Muslim interests against secular elites (Yilmaz, Shukri and Shakil, 2023).

The Rise of the AKP and Early Reforms (2002–2010)



Supporters of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan wave national flags and hold up his portrait during a nighttime victory celebration rally in Istanbul following his re-election in May 2023.

The AKP's 2002 victory, capturing 34% of the vote and two-thirds of parliamentary seats, stemmed from widespread disillusionment with the fragmented, corruption-plagued coalition governments of the 1990s (Hale & Özbudun, 2011). Under Abdullah Gül's initial premiership, before Erdoğan's eligibility was restored via constitutional amendment, the party pursued EU accession reforms, including human rights enhancements, Kurdish cultural rights, and curbs on military influence, which liberalised the polity and appealed to urban liberals, Kurds, and pious Anatolians (Öniş, 2008). Economic policies, informed by World Bank mandates post-2001 crisis, stabilised the lira, reduced inflation to single digits, and drove annual GDP growth of 7-10%, tripling per capita income by

2010 and fostering an 'Anatolian tiger' bourgeoisie of conservative entrepreneurs (Acemoğlu, 2015).

Islamic identity was preserved through 'soft' measures, eschewing overt sharia advocacy for cultural revival. The AKP lifted headscarf bans in universities and public offices, symbolising redress for Kemalist repression, while expanding Imam Hatip religious schools from 450 to over 4,000 by 2016, embedding Sunni values in education as national heritage (Kaya, 2015). Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı (Directorate of Religious Affairs) budgets surged, funding mosque construction and sermons that reinforced moral conservatism, blending faith with welfare populism to solidify a pious middle class via patronage (Tugal, 2009). This 'post-Islamist' moderation, rejecting radicalism for pragmatic conservatism, positioned the AKP as a 'Muslim democrat' force, reconciling Islam with secular democracy (Bokhari & Senzai, 2013).

Consolidation of Power and the Gezi Park Protests (2011–2015)



A speaker rallies a large crowd of protesters waving Turkish flags and holding signs during an anti-government demonstration in Ankara, with banners criticizing President Erdoğan visible in the background.

Re-elected in 2007 and 2011, the AKP entrenched its power through a 2010 referendum expanding judicial oversight, ostensibly against military tutelage but enabling purges of secular judges (Özbudun

& Gençkaya, 2009). Foreign policy adopted 'neo-Ottomanism', with interventions in Syria and Libya projecting Turkey as an Islamic bridge between East and West. At the same time, domestically, alcohol restrictions and urban redevelopment alienated secular urbanites (Esen & Gümüşçü, 2016).

The 2013 Gezi Park protests epitomised this backlash: sparked by plans to raze Istanbul's last central green space for an Ottoman replica mall, they swelled into nationwide anti-authoritarian demonstrations involving 8 million, protesting Erdoğan's moralising (e.g., 'alcohol chapels') and gentrification (Tuğal, 2016). The violent police response tear gas, rubber bullets, and media blackouts, killed eight (four by police), injured 8,000, and blinded 11, exposing urban-rural divides and galvanising secular, environmental, and LGBTQ+ coalitions (Amnesty International, 2013). Erdoğan dismissed protesters as 'looters' backed by foreign powers, reinforcing an Islamist victimhood narrative against Kemalist elites (Yavuz, 2016).

Islamic identity deepened via cultural assertions: Ottoman restorations, Diyanet's $1.5 billion budget by 2015 promoting Sunni orthodoxy, and school curricula glorifying Islamic history, resonating with 95% of AKP voters prioritising Muslim identity (Çarkoğlu & Kalaycıoğlu, 2015) this fused faith with nationalism, marginalising Alevis and Kurds while sustaining base loyalty amid economic slowdowns.

The 2016 Coup Attempt and Authoritarian Turn (2016–2022)



Turkish civilians celebrate atop a captured military tank on Istanbul's Bosporus Bridge during the failed July 15, 2016, coup attempt, as ordinary citizens confront soldiers and reclaim control.

The July 15, 2016, coup by Gülenist military factions, once AKP allies failed after public resistance, but Erdoğan's retaliation was draconian: 150,000 arrests/dismissals, a two-year emergency, and a 2017 referendum establishing a presidential system granting him decree powers (Bayerle, 2019). Blaming Fethullah Gülen, the regime purged 100,000 civil servants, closing 15 universities and 3,000 Gülen-linked entities, consolidating Islamist control over the judiciary and media (Öktem, 2017). The Syrian refugee influx (3.7 million by 2022) was leveraged for EU leverage and Islamic solidarity rhetoric, though economic woes, lira crashes, and 85% inflation in 2022 eroded support (İçduygu, 2016). Post-coup, AKP-MHP alliances promoted 'Turkish-Islamic synthesis', sidelining global ummah for ethno-Sunni nationalism, evident in 2020's Hagia Sophia reconversion evoking Ottoman revival (Öztürk, 2020). The 2023 earthquakes, killing 50,000+ and exposing aid failures, nearly cost Erdoğan re-election, but opposition disunity secured his narrow win (Gümüşçü, 2023).

Islamic maintenance intensified: anti-LGBTQ+ laws, Diyanet propaganda, and welfare tied to piety portrayed opposition as secular threats, sustaining 40% core support despite youth alienation (Yilmaz & Morieson, 2021).

2024–2025 Political Crisis in Istanbul



Istanbul Mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu, flanked by his wife Dilek İmamoğlu and CHP leader Özgür Özel, addresses a jubilant sea of supporters waving Turkish flags during a massive victory rally following his resounding re-election in March 2024.

The March 2024 locals delivered AKP's worst defeat: CHP's Ekrem İmamoğlu retained Istanbul (51%), capturing Ankara and 14 metropolises, including Erdoğan's Rize, amid economic discontent (Gözler, 2024) this signalled voter fatigue with authoritarianism. The crisis peaked in March 2025: İmamoğlu's diploma annulment barred his presidential run, followed by his March 19 arrest on corruption/PKK charges widely viewed as fabricated sparking nationwide protests, the largest since Gezi, with millions marching and 2,000+ arrests (Human Rights Watch, 2025). Erdoğan decried 'foreign-backed terrorism', while CHP's Özgür Özel termed it a 'democratic coup'; Internet throttling and media shutdowns ensued (Amnesty International, 2025). By September 2025, judicial purges and CHP probes deepened fears of consolidation, with İmamoğlu elected CHP presidential nominee from jail, polling ahead of Erdoğan (Reuters, 2025).

Economic partial recovery via rate hikes persists, but 40% inflation exacerbates divides, with youth rejecting AKP's piety-populism blend (Özbudun, 2025).

Maintaining Islamic Identity: Strategies and Tensions



Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and his wife Emine Erdoğan pose inside the newly reconverted Hagia Sophia Grand Mosque in Istanbul shortly after its official reopening for Muslim prayers in July 2020.

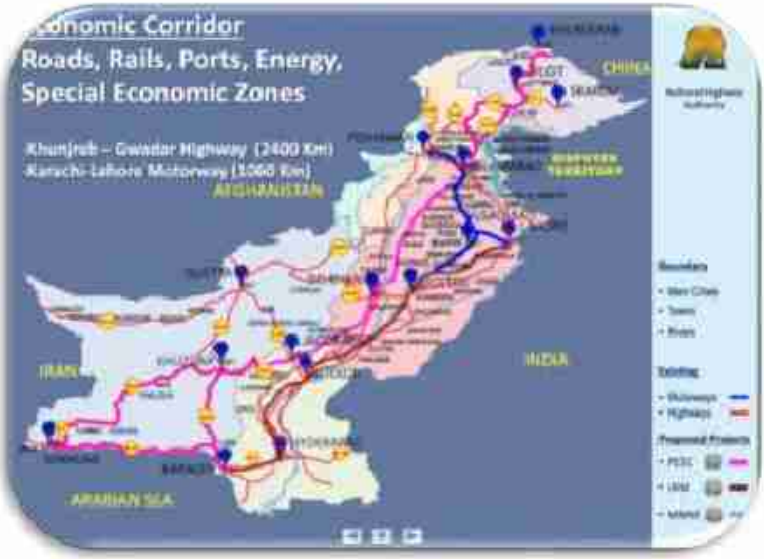
The AKP's post-2000 Islamisation is 'stealthy' and top-down: institutionalising Islamist imaginaries via Diyanet redesign for da'wa, privileging Muslim choices (e.g., headscarf subsidies), and urban transformations like mosque proliferations (Gümüşçü, 2024). Mosque construction tripled, compulsory religious classes were universalised, and curricula fused Ottoman-Islamic history with nationalism, creating a 'pious generation' (Lüküslü, 2020). Foreign policy bolsters this: Hamas support and Muslim mediation position Turkey as Islam's vanguard, while domestically, 'competitive victimhood' frames Sunnis as Kemalist-oppressed, justifying crackdowns on Alevis, Kurds, and secularists (Yilmaz, Shukri and Shakil, 2023). Tarikat networks advance agendas, blending neoliberalism with faith-based governmentality (Tugal, 2009). Tensions arise: Alevi/Kurdish marginalisation fuels backlash, and urban protests chant 'secular republic', echoing Kemalist roots amid youth secularisation (Mutluer, 2019). However, for Sunni Turks, this hybrid populist, authoritarian, inclusive selectively endures (Öztürk, 2019).

A Polarised Path Forward

Post-2000, AKP rule has empowered conservative Muslims via economic highs, Islamic revival, and crisis opportunism, but at democracy's expense, yielding a hybrid regime where faith anchors power amid division (Esen & Gümüşçü, 2016). From EU aspirations to 2025's İmamoğlu turmoil, Erdoğan's 20+ years have hybridised Islamism: resilient yet fracturing, with opposition unity and global pressure pivotal (Aydıntaşbaş, 2025). Islamic identity remains the AKP's battleground, sustaining base loyalty but alienating a diversifying society, portending instability or realignment.

Chapter 20

Western World and CPEC: A Project of the Century



Map of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

South Asia has endured persistent political turmoil and unrest in recent years, exemplified by youth-led protests and regime collapses across several nations. In Nepal, a 2025 crisis triggered by social media bans and economic despair led to widespread demonstrations and the eventual resignation of Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli, marking the third such upheaval in the region since 2022 (following Sri Lanka's 2022 economic collapse and Bangladesh's 2024 student-led ousting of Sheikh Hasina) (IASPOINT, 2025; Journal of Democracy, 2025; Al Jazeera, 2025). Similar patterns of instability persist in Pakistan and Afghanistan, with chronic violence in border regions, while India remains the region's sole stable democracy amid these challenges (IASPOINT, 2025). Interstate crises, such as the May 2025 "Four Days' Crisis"

between India and Pakistan, and insurgencies further exacerbate fragility, with mass protests driving dramatic political changes (Journal of Democracy, 2025; The Diplomat, 2025a). Broader trends include Gen Z-led uprisings across South and Southeast Asia in 2025, fuelled by economic hardships like poverty and inflation, echoing the 2022 Sri Lankan protests (Carnegie Endowment, 2025). In Southeast Asia, political transitions and COVID-19-induced economic stagnation have sparked unrest in Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia, likened to an "Asian Fall" (The Diplomat, 2020).

Amid this volatility, peace and reconciliation emerge as urgent imperatives for South Asia. Economic development, particularly through job creation and youth engagement in productive activities, offers a pathway to stability. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a flagship of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), embodies this potential by fostering connectivity, infrastructure, and trade. Valued at $62 billion, CPEC links China's Xinjiang to Pakistan's Gwadar Port, spanning energy, transport, and industrial projects (Wikipedia, 2025a; CPEC Secretariat, 2025). However, its success hinges on addressing regional tensions, including U.S. policies toward Pakistan and opposition from Western powers. This essay discusses the outlined points, arguing that CPEC can catalyze peace and reconciliation if integrated with diplomatic efforts, while exploring its broader implications.

Peace and Reconciliation: Economic Development as the Key

Economic development is pivotal for peace, as it engages youth in constructive pursuits and reduces extremism's appeal. CPEC's infrastructure investments $25 billion across 38 completed projects by 2025, including 17 energy initiatives worth $18 billion have added 6 GW of electricity and created over 200,000 jobs (CPECinfo, 2024; Eurasia Review, 2023). By 2025, CPEC has mitigated

Pakistan's energy crisis, with projects like the 1320 MW Sahiwal Coal-fired Power Plant generating 3,770 jobs and stabilizing supply (CPEC Secretariat, 2025). Globally, BRI-linked corridors like CPEC reduce transport costs by 30-40% and enhance trade efficiency, benefiting 65 nations (Deloitte, as cited in user query). In South Asia, such initiatives could integrate economies, foster interdependence and deterring conflict, as seen in Europe's post-WWII recovery via economic ties.

Reconsidering U.S. Policy Towards Pakistan: From Demonization to Dialogue

The U.S. has historically demonized Pakistan through threats and sanctions, undermining bilateral trust. From 2020-2025, U.S. policies included aid suspensions over terrorism financing and public rebukes of Pakistan's "double game" in Afghanistan (Hudson Institute, 2017). The 2021 Afghanistan withdrawal strained ties, with Pakistan declining the U.S.-led "Summit for Democracy" and Imran Khan alleging U.S. "regime change" interference. Joint counterterrorism dialogues in 2025 reaffirmed commitments but highlighted persistent mistrust, with U.S. generals like Mark Milley admitting Afghanistan's "strategic failure" partly due to Pakistan's non-cooperation (France 24, 2021; U.S. State Department, 2025). A dialogue-oriented approach focusing on shared interests like counterterrorism could rebuild ties, as evidenced by the 2025 U.S.-Pakistan Counterterrorism Dialogue addressing threats from TTP and ISIS-K (U.S. State Department, 2025).

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC): A Game-Changer Amid Shifting Alliances

CPEC, estimated at $75 billion total with $45 billion for the initial phase (Deloitte, as cited in user query), transforms the ancient Silk Road into a 3,000 km modern route from Kashgar to Gwadar, via

Khunjerab, Peshawar, Dera Ismail Khan, Quetta, Panjgur, and extensions to Islamabad, Lahore, Sukkur, Hyderabad, and Karachi (Wikipedia, 2025a; ResearchGate, 2020). By 2025, 38 projects worth $25 billion will be complete, including energy (e.g., 1320 MW Thar Block-I) and infrastructure (CPECinfo, 2024). China's 2025 military participation in Pakistan's parade and Russia's naval exercises signal Pakistan's pivot from U.S. reliance (user query; Hudson Institute, 2025).

Opposition from the U.S. and Europe stems from fears of China's rise via BRI, which connects 65 nations and cuts transport costs (user query). The U.S.-India alliance, with frequent leader meetings, counters this, viewing CPEC as a $55 billion strategic threat (user query; Crisis Group, 2018).

CPEC Route Segments	**Length (km)**	**Key Cities/Features**	**Status (2025)**
Kashgar-Khunjerab	~300	Xinjiang border pass	Operational highways
Khunjerab-Peshawar	~800	Karakoram Highway Phase II (Havelian-Thakot: 120 km)	Under construction (China Communication Constructions Co.)
Peshawar-Quetta	~1,200	Peshawar-Karachi Motorway (Multan-Sukkur: 392 km)	Partial completion (China State Construction)
Quetta-Gwadar	~700	Links to Balochistan;	Gwadar operational; 21

		Gwadar Port ($55B total)	power plants (6 GW) underway

(Source: Adapted from CPEC Secretariat, 2025)

South Asia's youth revolts Nepal's 2025 Oli fall, Sri Lanka's 2022 ruin, Bangladesh's 2024 Hasina ouster cry for jobs, not jihad. CPEC's $25 billion done: 6 GW light, 200,000 livelihoods, 40% cheaper trade. Turn U.S. rebukes into counter-terror talks; fuse BRI with SAARC Silk Road Gwadar shakes Chabahar's hand.

Chapter 21

Economic Shocks, Global Disruptions, and Post-War Opportunities

While the human tragedy of war is incalculable, its economic ramifications ripple far beyond the front lines, reshaping global stability and perpetuating cycles of poverty and inequality. As this book has explored the historical roots of major conflicts from diplomatic missteps to ideological clashes, it becomes evident that wars not only destroy lives but also fracture the delicate web of international economic interdependence. In today's globalised economy, where supply chains span continents and financial markets react instantaneously to geopolitical shocks, the decision to escalate conflict carries profound, often self-defeating consequences. This chapter examines these economic shocks through contemporary case studies, including the Russia-Ukraine war, the Gaza conflict, and the protracted instability in Afghanistan. By analysing how these wars disrupt commodity markets, trade routes, and alliances, we underscore a central thesis: avoiding war is not merely a moral imperative but an economic necessity for sustainable prosperity. However, amid devastation lies potential post-war reconstruction offers pathways to innovation, resilience, and renewed cooperation, as demonstrated by historical recoveries in Europe, Africa, and Asia.

Economic Disruptions: How Modern Wars Undermine Global Stability

Modern conflicts amplify economic vulnerabilities due to the hyper-connectivity of global trade. Wars interrupt supply chains, inflate commodity prices, and erode investor confidence, creating inflationary spirals and resource scarcities that affect even neutral

nations. The Russia-Ukraine war, erupting in 2022, exemplifies this dynamic. As a major exporter of wheat, sunflower oil, and fertilisers, Ukraine's agricultural output plummeted, exacerbating global food insecurity. A systematic review reveals that the conflict disrupted harvests and logistics, leading to a 20-30% spike in global food prices and threatening food systems in import-dependent developing countries (El Bilali & Ben Hassen, 2024). Simultaneously, Russia's role as Europe's primary natural gas supplier triggered an energy crisis; gas prices surged over 300% in 2022, fuelling inflation across the European Union, the United Kingdom, and beyond (Tass, Bhat, Riyaz and Hakim, 2024). This shock not only halted industrial production in energy-intensive sectors but also widened fiscal deficits, as governments scrambled to subsidise households and businesses.

Aviation and transportation networks felt the ripple effects as well. The war's airspace closures and sanctions rerouted global air traffic, increasing flight times and costs by up to 15% for routes overflying Eastern Europe (Chu et al., 2024). These disruptions highlight a broader truth: aggressors rarely escape unscathed. Russia's economy contracted by 2.1% in 2022, with long-term sanctions stifling technology imports and capital flows, illustrating how wars backfire through isolated markets and lost productivity.

In the Middle East, the Gaza conflict since October 2023 has similarly strained regional and global trade. Beyond the immediate humanitarian crisis, the war has heightened risks to key maritime routes in the Red Sea and Suez Canal, where Houthi attacks have driven up shipping insurance premiums by 50-100% (Ozili, 2025). This has delayed goods transit, inflating costs for imports to Europe and Asia and contributing to supply chain bottlenecks reminiscent of the COVID-19 era. The economic devastation in Gaza itself is staggering. Preliminary estimates project a 20-30% GDP contraction

in 2024, with unemployment soaring above 50% and reconstruction costs exceeding $50 billion (Migdad et al., 2025). Regionally, the conflict has chilled investment in the Levant and Gulf, weakening trade partnerships and exacerbating fiscal pressures in Jordan and Lebanon (Abumbe, Terhile and Helen, 2024). As Buheji (2025) warns, these spillover effects, ranging from refugee flows to energy volatility, could manifest as prolonged instability, underscoring the interconnected fragility of Middle Eastern economies.

Afghanistan's decades-long turmoil offers a stark cautionary tale of chronic disruption. The 2021 Taliban resurgence collapsed nascent trade corridors like the Lapis Lazuli route, a multimodal pathway linking Afghanistan to Turkey via Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. Intended to boost exports of minerals and agricultural goods, the corridor promised $1-2 billion in annual transit revenues for Afghanistan (Rahim, 2019). Instead, insecurity and sanctions have idled infrastructure investments, reversed development gains and triggered capital flight estimated at $3-5 billion since 2021. Regional repercussions extend to Pakistan, Iran, and Central Asia, where stalled cooperation has hindered cross-border energy projects and increased smuggling (Daly, 2017). The net result: a 20% GDP drop post-2021, with poverty rates climbing to 97% and lost opportunities in sectors like mining, where untapped lapis lazuli and copper reserves could have generated $1 trillion over decades (Global Witness, 2016).

The Erosion of Economic Alliances: Pre-War Ties and Post-Conflict Fractures

Wars do not merely disrupt flows; they dismantle alliances forged in peacetime. Pre-conflict economic interdependencies often become vulnerabilities, as seen in Europe's reliance on Russian energy before 2022. This dependency supplying 40% of EU gas

fostered a fragile stability that shattered overnight, compelling a $1 trillion pivot to liquefied natural gas imports and renewables (Tass, Bhat, Riyaz and Hakim, 2024). The fallout weakened the European single market, with Germany's industrial output falling 5% due to energy shortages.

In the Middle East, repeated Gaza escalations have frayed Gulf-Levant trade networks. The Abraham Accords' promise of normalised ties between Israel and Arab states now hangs in the balance, with tourism and tech investments down 30% amid boycotts and risk aversion (Ozili, 2025). Afghanistan's instability further unravels Central-South Asian pacts; the collapse of Lapis Lazuli has stranded $500 million in bilateral deals with Pakistan and Iran, fostering smuggling economies and border tensions (Daly, 2017). These fractures reveal a pattern that wars prioritise short-term gains over long-term symbiosis, eroding trust and amplifying isolation.

Post-War Opportunities: Rebuilding for Resilience and Innovation

However, history shows that economic devastation can seed renewal. Post-war recovery hinges on strategic reconstruction, leveraging aid, innovation, and integration to forge resilient systems. Post-World War II Europe exemplifies this through the Marshall Plan (1948-1952), a $13 billion U.S.-led initiative that rebuilt infrastructure and spurred 15-25% GDP growth across 16 nations (U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian, n.d.). By prioritising industrial revival and multilateral cooperation, it not only averted famine but catalysed the European Coal and Steel Community, precursor to the EU (Hinnershitz, 2022).

Rwanda's post-1994 genocide trajectory mirrors this resilience. Amid a 58% GDP plunge, the government harnessed international

aid $15 billion in the first decade for stability-focused reforms, achieving 7-8% annual growth through tech investments and regional trade pacts (Hodler, 2019; Rwigema, 2025). Today, Kigali's "Vision 2020" has halved poverty, positioning Rwanda as Africa's innovation hub. In the Balkans, Bosnia's 1990s recovery leveraged EU integration. Post-Dayton Accords (1995), $15 billion in reconstruction funds rebuilt 70% of war-damaged infrastructure, with EU accession talks accelerating 4-5% GDP growth via trade liberalisation (Uvalic, 2023; Becker, 2018). The Stabilisation and Association Process fostered intra-regional ties, transforming conflict scars into economic corridors.

Japan's "economic miracle" (1950s-1960s) further illuminates the reform's power. From wartime ruins, 93% steel capacity was lost. The U.S.-backed occupation dismantled zaibatsu cartels and enacted land reforms, enabling 10% annual growth through export-led industrialisation (Yoshikawa, 2002; Vogel, 1979). By 1968, Japan doubled its income twice over, becoming the world's second-largest economy via technological leaps and keiretsu networks. These cases affirm: recovery thrives on inclusive governance, foreign partnerships, and innovation, turning shocks into sustainable dividends.

Chapter 22

Islamic Take on Present International Chaos



Masked protesters flee through clouds of tear gas during intense nighttime clashes with police in an urban street setting, illuminated by streetlights and building signs.

In previous Pages, the international commotion, the miserable conditions of the *Ummah* and the double standards of the United Nations have been pointed out with references. During the entire journey of the compilation of this book, one point has, very explicitly, come out that the Holy Prophet (SAW) had already stated this international confusion, the inhuman attitudes of the nations of the world, and atrocities and oppression against the *Ummah* in detail.

For example, the Holy Prophet (SAW) said that it would become very difficult to follow *Din*, the ignoble would become noble and the honest people would be very few, the leader would be hypocrites, vile and sinful, incapable persons would be appointed on high posts, the liar would be called truthful, and truthful would be called liar and severance of relations will become common.

When and why these circumstances will arise, and how the

Muslims will tread toward fall and lowness, and why will the others surround them? The Holy Prophet (SAW) has also pointed out their reasons. All these circumstances will appear in the world before Doomsday. Then great incidents will occur before the Doomsday as when and where Imam Mehdi (RA) will appear; where and how the Christ (AS) will descend; the appearance of the nation of Gog and Magog, the gathering of the Jews at one place (Israel), The culmination of Dajjal by the Christ (AS), and the re-establishment of peace in the entire world. God has related all these symbols to Human beings arriving at Doomsday.

According to the various Traditions (and Narrations) of the Holy Prophet (SAW), the Doomsday will not arrive until the following incident occurs:

1- In Sura Dukhan (Smoke), it has been mentioned. Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar (RA) says that when this smoke appears, the *mo'mins* (true Muslims) will feel catarrh, and it will penetrate the ears of the infidels, and they will feel that their heads are being roasted on fire

2- Imam Mehdi (RA) will appear

3- Christ (AS) will descend

4- Dajjal (Antichrist) will come out

5- Dabbah or Dabbah tul Arz will be a very strange animal that will talk to the people

6- The Sun will rise in the West

7- Gog Magog will come out. The Wall of Gog Magog will break; they will pass through it and drink all the water.

8- Three incidents of descending lower in the earth will occur: one in the east, one in the West and one in the Peninsula

9- Coming fire out of Yemen; the mu'min will run to take refuge in Syria.

The Appearance of Imam Mahdi (RA)



Hazrat Abdullah bin Masood (RA) narrates that the Holy Prophet (SAW) said: In my progeny will be my Caliph whose name will be similar to my name." In another narration, Abdullah bin Maso'od reports that the Holy Prophet (SAW) said: "The world will not perish until in my progeny will be the person who will be the king of Arabia and whose name will be similar to my name, i.e., Muhammad." Hazrat Ali (RA) also reports a narration of the Holy Prophet (SA): "Even if the entire duration of world's existence has already been exhausted and only one day is left, God will send a person from my progeny who will fill out the earth with peace and justice as it will have been full of injustice and tyranny by then."

The mother of the faithful, Sayida Umm-e-Salma (RA) says: "I heard the Holy Prophet (SAW) saying, 'Mehdi will be from my Progeny and the descendant of Fatima (RA)." There will be a conflict with the death of a Caliph, and a man will go out fleeing to Makkah. Some People will come to pledge allegiance to him, although he will not be willing, and they will pledge allegiance to him between the corner of the Ka'bah and the place of Ibrahim…. He will live as a Caliph for 7 to 9 years, and the Muslims will offer his funeral prayer."

Abu Is'haq al-Behqi (RA) reports that Sayidna Ali (RA) saw his son

Sayidna Hassan (RA) and said, "My son is Sayid as the Holy Prophet (SAW) has said. From his progeny, a person will come; his name will be the same as the name of your Prophet (SAW)."

According to another tradition, the Holy Prophet (SAW) said, "His (Imam Mehdi's) name will be after my name and his father's name will be after the name of my father (i.e., Muhammad bin Abdullah)." It means that any claimant who is not from the progeny of the Holy Prophet (SAW) will be a liar, as the claim of the founder of Ahmadiyat, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiyani, is wrong, as he never went to Medina, Makkah or Syria, nor is he from the progeny of the Holy Prophet (SAW). He belongs to a Mughal caste, "Mughal Birlas".

Advent/Descent of Jesus Christ

According to the Holy Quran and the Traditions of the Holy Prophet (SAW), Hazrat Isa (AS) was not crucified; instead, God, the Almighty, took him up to the fourth heaven.

وَقَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ۚ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَٰكِن شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ ۚ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ
اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِّنْهُ ۚ مَا لَهُم بِهِ مِنْ عِلْمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ ۚ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ يَقِينًا ﴿١٥٧﴾ بَل رَّفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيْهِ ۚ وَكَانَ
اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا ﴿١٥٨﴾

Translation: And because of their saying: We slew the Messiah, Jesus' son of Mary, Allah's messenger - they slew him not nor crucified him, but it appeared so unto them; and lo! Those who disagree concerning it are in doubt thereof; they do not know thereof save the pursuit of a conjecture; they slew him not for certain. However, Allah took him up unto Himself. Allah was ever Mighty, Wise. (Quran : Sura Nisa: 4/157-158)

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ" كَيْفَ أَنْتُمْ إِذَا نَزَلَ فِيكُمُ
ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ فَأَمَّكُمْ مِنْكُمْ؟"

Translation: O my Ummah! How will you feel when Esa SA, the son of Mariyum, descends from heaven among you, and he will be your Imam and leader? (Sahee Muslim, Kitab ul eman:394)

The descent of Hazrat Isa (AS) on the fourth heaven is proved by the Holy Quran and the Traditions of the Holy Prophet (SAW).

For the requital of the tribulation of Dajjal, God will descend Hazrat Isa (AS) from the Eastern side of Damascus by the white minaret. He (AS) will be dressed in two yellow clothes, putting both his hands on the shoulders of two angels, and white and shining drops of water will be falling from his head. In that era, the Muslims were few and they may be found in Bait al Muqaddas. Dajjal is called the Anti-Christ in the West. They also believe in the arrival of Dajjal and Hazrat Isa (AS) and the combat between them. Imam Mehdi (RA) will be on the prayer mat at that time to say his Fajar prayer when Hazrat Isa will descend. On this, Imam Mehdi (RA) will leave his place and ask him to lead the prayer; but Hazrat Isa will say, "The *iqamat* has been recited behind you; therefore, you should lead the prayer." So, Imam Mehdi will lead the prayer. After the descent of Hazrat Isa (AS), Imam Mehdi (RA) and his companions will declare Hazrat Isa (AS) their Caliph. After the descent of Hazrat Isa (AS), life will become very pleasant. Hazrat Isa (AS) will remain alive after his marriage for 19 years, and his children will be born. He will go to the sacred mausoleum for greetings, and his greetings will be replied to. Then he will die naturally, and the Muslims will say his funeral prayer. The place of the fourth grave in the sacred mausoleum is reserved, where Hazrat Abu Bakr (RA) and Hazrat Umar (RA) are already resting. He will be buried there in the fourth grave.

Manifestation of Anti-Christ (Dajjal) – A Test from God

After the arrival of Imam Mehdi (RA) and the descent of Hazrat Isa (AS), God will give the severest test to the Ummah by the emergence of Dajjal. Dajjal will be a young man with entangled hair and blind of one eye blind. He will appear in a passage between Syria and Iraq. He will be very strong, and his speed will be very fast. He will ask a nation to admit him as God. They will admit. It

will rain on his order; the crops will grow on his order. The cattle of the nation will be very healthy and will give more milk. It means that a severe test will be given to the nation.

Then Dajjal will go to another nation and revise his claim of being God. They will reject his claim. Apparently, that nation will become a victim of miseries and famine; God will make them successful in their test.

Dajjal will pass through a desert, and the desert will fling out treasures. He will kill a young man and bring him to life. Dajjal will live for forty days. His first day will be equal to one year; the second day equals one month; the third day equals one week, and other days will be equal to normal days. No region will remain safe from him except Makkah and Medina. There will be seven main gates of Medina. He will try to enter through these gates, but the angels will confront him with naked swords. Then he will encamp himself outside Medina. There will be a sanguinary battle, and the hypocrites will be thrown out of Medina.

After the Fajar prayer, Hazrat Isa (AS) will get the door open; Dajjal will be behind the door with his seventy thousand soldiers. However, they will melt before Hazrat Isa (AS) like salt dissolves in water. Hazrat Isa (AS) will send him to Hell with his spear at the Eastern Gate of Lud near Tel Aviv.

Rising of Gog Magog

After the affliction of Dajjal and the descent of Hazrat Isa (AS), God will bring out Gong Magong. The people will be living with prosperity when the wall of Gong Magong, built by Zulqarnain, is broken. Gong Magong will make riots, and no one will be able to face them. This nation will finish the water of a river, the Tiberian Sea of Jordan, that will be at about fifty miles from Bait al Muqaddas. Hazrat Isa will go over the hill of Tur along with the

faithful. Gong Magong will perish with the curse of Hazrat Isa (AS), and the birds will carry away their dead bodies by the Will of God. Then it will rain, and God will wash the earth. The earth will throw out treasures, and there will be blessings everywhere.

Re-occupation of Istanbul (Turkey) by Europe

Hazrat Abu Huraira (RA) narrates that an incident will occur before Doomsday. The people of Rum (the Europeans) will reach Emak, Dalik. They are situated near Halab, a city in Syria. The word Medina means 'city' in Arabic. It is the city of Halab. The country of Sham (Syria) mentioned in the Traditions of the Holy Prophet (SAW) is not the Syria of today, whose capital is Damascus. The length of ancient Syria was from the river Euphrates, Egypt, to al-Arsh (from where Egypt starts), and its width was from the Peninsula to the Arabian Sea. Many countries of today, including Istanbul, Jordan, Palestine (along with Israel), Lebanon, Syria, Tripoli, and Antakya, were included in it.

A Muslim army will proceed from Medina to face the Rumis. A war will be waged between them. One-third of the Muslims will run away, while another one-third will be martyred. The remaining one-third will win the war. Then they will be saved from all riots and conspiracies. Afterward, the Muslims will soon conquer Constantinople, the capital of Turkey, now called Istanbul.

In the contemporary scenario, we observe two things. Firstly, Syria, particularly Halab, has become a battlefield, and secondly, the Jews all over the world have been gathered in Israel. It is surprising that, though Turkey, despite being a rising political and economic power, will go under the occupation of the Europeans, and then the Muslims will fight against them and take Turkey back. Then Dajjal will come.

Conclusion

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

I understand that the circle of my liberal friends is very wide, and now they will start saying, "Look! Toaha Qureshi was a reasonable person. What happened to him? He has become a maulvi. He has also become useless. A long criticism will begin.

I request those friends that I did not write the present bookkeeping with a particular sect in view; instead, while compiling it, I bore in mind the need for harmony among different sects as well as religions. If I have criticised Iran, Saudi Arabia, or Pakistan, it is based on facts, and my objective is reformation.

I have closely observed these conditions at a higher level in the West, and according to my observation and analysis, all religions are discontented with the arms dealers who create unrest, but they are helpless. Therefore, I suggested that they establish cordial relations and mutual understanding.

Moreover, no doubt I have received a Western education, but I have a religion also, and every religion has a set circle. Therefore, if I claim to be a Muslim, I will have to work to remain inside the determined circle of Islam.

What I talked about, "The System of Creator for His Creation", was not about the Muslims only, but the entire universe was in my mind, for God is the creator of all creations.
According to a Tradition of the Holy Prophet (SAW), all creatures are like the family of God, and the most beloved of God is he who treats his family well.

It is quite according to human nature that to establish peace in the world, the laws of the Creator should be imposed, and His creation should be honoured. This thinking is ranked as a main principle for

success in this world as well as in the hereafter.

I have tried to present this research as an impartial critic and analyst to shake the consciousness of the authorities of the world as well as the public so that the policy of mutual respect and "live and let live" instead of might is right, and terminating the law of jungle by just distribution of resources and rule of national and international law, the peace of the world is established and due to that peace, political and economic stability is possible. For this purpose, it is necessary to attract the attention of the Muslim *Ummah* toward being unconcerned, not considering themselves a 'single body', and losing linguistic and regional prejudices.

Why is the population of the Muslim World living below the poverty line despite having huge resources and stocks of energy, etc? Why are the unspeakable conditions of Afghanistan, Libya, Iraq, Syria and Yemen not shaking the world's consciousness? Why are the Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC) and the Arab League not playing their effective role in the restoration of the lost dignity of the Muslim *Ummah*? This point should also be noted, as these Institutes need to restore their lost utility. What lesson have we learned from the World Wars, loss of hundreds of thousands of human lives, monetary loss of hundreds of Billions of Dollars, use of atomic weapons and their consequences? What is the lesson behind the loss of millions of human lives due to people like Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, Mao Zedong, Tony Blair, Bush and Clinton? All these destructions of lives were based on 'ideologies' and certainly these 'ideologies' have nothing to do with Islamic Ideology.

Let us turn to the callousness and double standard of the World Nations. We observe that the Western Nations and the United Nations instantly solved the issues of East Timor and Southern Sudan in the form of independent states, as these issues were related to non-Muslims. However, Muslims of Palestine and Kashmir are leading a miserable life, and they are massacred in an

atmosphere of horror and terror. The young generation there is becoming psychologically ill. However, what is the reason that the Muslim Ummah could not attract the attention of the United Nations or the American Institutes of Human Rights and claimants of Democracy toward their issues?

According to the Resolutions of the United Nations, New Jewish colonies will not be constructed. Nevertheless, despite the objections of the World, the colonisation, as well as the massacre of the Palestinian children, continued. The population of the Palestinians does not consist only of Muslims, but there are also Christians. However, the Christians of Palestine are gradually being settled in Europe and America. Perhaps the declaration of Trump to transfer the Embassy to al-Quds was a reward to Israel for the massacre of Palestinians. Therefore, I would like to convince my Jewish cousins not to let themselves separate from the international community due to their conduct and keep their prestige in mind for the troubles that may arise for them in the future.

According to a Survey, in Britain, more than half of the population is fed up with religion. Therefore, may it be considered that the political, social and economic holocaust of the Muslims was by some religion, i.e., Christianity, or due to the greed and avidity of the arms dealers and the contractors of globalisation to occupy the resources?

It will also have to be seen that the politicians of the West and the media, by spreading Islamophobia, are levelling the field for extremist and terrorist organisations, which is creating negative effects, and these organisations are coming forward as the second or third biggest party by winning seats in local, regional and national elections in Europe.

The double standard of the West regarding extremism and terrorism has created a wide gulf among the people. Terrorism is the worst crime, but the religion of a terrorist should not be targeted along with it, because in doing so, the misunderstandings and mistrust among the religions will increase.

Re-manifestation of the force of the former Soviet Union on the International platform, after its dissolution in the war in Afghanistan and the rise of Communist China as an international power by adopting the globalisation of the capitalist system and the bend of the Muslim world to China are the facts that perhaps America is unable to conceive properly. In such conditions, the Muslim World will be able to play a decisive role.

If America, the leader of the Capitalistic System, is caught in a debt of Twenty Trillion Dollars and other Western Countries are also indebted to Billions of Dollars, a question mark rises on the utility of that System. Nevertheless, can Islam alternate these systems? However, presently, this system is not enforced or experimented with in the world.

A lie of Tony Blair about fatal weapons in Iraq, the resignation and mysterious death of Robin Cook, the British Minister for Foreign Affairs, and then another mysterious death of British scientist David Kelly have raised many questions about Western Society, the sovereignty of Parliament, and Human Rights. The unsuccessful Resolution against Syria proves that the members of the British Parliament are unhappy with the attack and occupation of Iraq. The Former Head of the American Army and American Presidential candidate, General Wesley Clark's attack and destruction of 7 Islamic countries denote the aggressive and extensive policy of America. Therefore, impartial institutes like the United Nations and the Security Council should investigate how the arms and oil traders plan to attack the weak countries and act upon their plan.

Have the Western countries learned a lesson from the eye-opening statements of General Nick Carter, the Deputy Commander of NATO, about Afghanistan and Iraq? Have they found a political solution based on public opinion instead of wars? Could peace be established in Afghanistan after 16 years of the so-called War on Terror? Was the control of the Taliban in Afghanistan finished? Then, why not (as the British did in Northern Ireland with the IRA), a national government should be formed after dialogues with the Taliban?

Not only Europe but the entire world has been entangled in extremism and terrorism. In almost all significant countries of Europe, thousands of people have lost their lives due to terrorism. The number of refugees from the Islamic World has reached tens of Millions. Who is the mover of this Human Tragedy? The United Nations should think about how the establishment of peace is possible in such doubtful circumstances. Can we expect from the authorities of the European Union that, after understanding the elements of instability and terrorism in the world, they will create the atmosphere for the people to heave a sigh of relief by forming a strong, well-knit and comprehensive policy?

According to the research of American engineers and politicians, the report of the government about 9/11 was a bag full of lies and the CIA was fully involved in it. However, what is the reaction of the International Community to this lie? Does a commoner have the right to ask the United Nations why it is unsuccessful in checking wars according to its own laws? Will some parallel system be formulated to stop wars?

Islam has explicitly condemned extremism, terrorism and murdering and destroying. However, why could the Muslim World not present this stand in its true sense before the Western World? Could we explain Islamic terms like *Darul Aman, Darul Kufr*

and *Darul Islam* with their meanings before the people? Will the OIC work as a helpless and powerless tool in the hands of others? Or will it present itself in a position to play a substantial role in the United Nations?

A combined plan will have to be prepared to stop the increasing trends of extremism and terrorism in Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. However, such a plan of joint effort, like the fifty-year plan of eliminating war between Britain, Germany and France, is not possible for India and Pakistan, and to reduce their defence budget by 1 % annually for five years. This amount saved from the defence budget should be added to the budget of Health and Education, and their people will directly benefit from it. There should be an effective system of its monitoring.

To include Jihad in the category of extremism and terrorism is a moment of anxiety because Islam teaches the lesson of forbearance, forgiveness and patience instead of murdering and destroying. Perhaps the West and Islamic World will have to jointly search for such examples so that the coming generations can adopt moderation along with the progress in science and revive their grand past.

The people of the West should sift the warring trend of their authorities in the sieve of accountability, as they have willingly created the atmosphere of war and, very cunningly, with the cooperation of the Muslims, set the wars against the Muslims. Though after comprehensive research, most of the Zionist politicians, bankers and institutions are found engaged in it, but the Muslim Countries also, due to their poverty, ignorance, irreligiousness and lack of sense of honour, have been proven beneficial to make the Zionist conspiracy successful.

In the end, I would like to say that the West must safeguard its democratic traditions and values and should not challenge the ideological foundation of Muslim Countries like Pakistan, Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan and Malaysia, as it will be a very dangerous step for International Peace because

خاص ہے ترکیب میں قوم رسول ہاشمی

(Special in composition is the Hashimi Prophet's nation).

وَعَلَيْكُمُ السَّلَامُ وَرَحْمَةُ اللهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ

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