

**RELEASE
IN FULL**

From: Abedin, Huma <AbedinH@state.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, December 1, 2009 4:51 PM
To: H
Subject: Fw: Washington Post Article on Pakistan

Will also print

From: Adams, David S
To: Abedin, Huma
Cc: Sullivan, Jacob J; Verma, Richard R; Turk, David M
Sent: Tue Dec 01 16:50:54 2009
Subject: Washington Post Article on Pakistan

Huma – The Secretary asked to see a copy of this article from yesterday's Washington Post. Would you pass it to her? Thanks.

U.S. offers new role for Pakistan

A BROADER PARTNERSHIP

Importance of country to Afghan effort recognized

By Karen DeYoung
Washington Post Staff Writer
Monday, November 30, 2009

President Obama has offered Pakistan an expanded strategic partnership, including additional military and economic cooperation, while warning with unusual bluntness that its use of insurgent groups to pursue policy goals "cannot continue."

The offer, including an effort to help reduce tensions between Pakistan and India, was contained in a two-page letter delivered to President Asif Ali Zardari this month by Obama national security adviser James L. Jones. It was accompanied by assurances from Jones that the United States will increase its military and civilian efforts in Afghanistan and that it plans no early withdrawal.

Obama's speech Tuesday night at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y., will address primarily the Afghanistan aspects of the strategy. But despite the public and political attention focused on the number of new troops, Pakistan has been the hot core of the months-long strategy review. The long-term consequences of failure there, the review concluded, far outweigh those in Afghanistan.

"We can't succeed without Pakistan," a senior administration official involved in the White House review said. "You have to differentiate between public statements and reality. There is nobody who is under any illusions about this."

This official and others, all of whom spoke about the closely held details of the new strategy on the condition of anonymity, emphasized that without "changing the nature of U.S.-Pakistan relations in a new direction, you're not going to win in Afghanistan," as one put it. "And if you don't win in Afghanistan, then Pakistan will automatically be imperiled, and that will make Afghanistan look like child's play."

Proffered U.S. carrots, outlined during Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton's October visit to Islamabad, center on a far more comprehensive and long-term bilateral relationship. It would feature enhanced development and trade assistance; improved intelligence collaboration and a more secure and upgraded military equipment pipeline; more public praise and less public criticism of Pakistan; and an initiative to build greater regional cooperation among Pakistan, India and Afghanistan.

Obama called for closer collaboration against all extremist groups, and his letter named five: al-Qaeda, the Afghan Taliban, the Haqqani network, Lashkar-e-Taiba, and the Pakistani Taliban organization known as Tehrik-e-Taliban. Using vague diplomatic language, he said that ambiguity in Pakistan's relationship with any of them could no longer be ignored.

Jones, a retired Marine Corps general, was more precise in conversations with top Pakistani government and military leaders, U.S. and foreign officials said, stating that certain things have to happen in Pakistan to ensure Afghanistan's security. If Pakistan cannot deliver, he warned, the United States may be impelled to use any means at its disposal to rout insurgents based along Pakistan's western and southern borders with Afghanistan.

Current U.S. policy includes the use of missiles fired from unmanned drones on insurgent locations limited to roughly 50 miles inside the western border; training in two military camps for the Pakistani Frontier Corps; and intelligence exchanges. It prohibits kinetic, or active, operations by U.S. ground forces inside Pakistan.

While praising Pakistani military offensives against groups that pose a domestic threat -- primarily the alliance of groups known as Tehrik-e-Taliban, in the Swat Valley and South Waziristan -- Jones made it clear that the administration expects more.

The rollout of the new strategy is being coordinated with principal U.S. allies, including Britain, whose prime minister, Gordon Brown, said Sunday, "People are going to ask why, eight years after 2001, Osama bin Laden has never been near to being caught."

"Al-Qaeda has a base in Pakistan," Brown said in an interview with Sky News. "That base is still there -- they are able to recruit from abroad. The Pakistan authorities must convince us that they are taking all the action that is necessary to deal with that threat."

Expansion of the U.S.-Pakistan relationship will require overcoming significant public and political mistrust in both countries. Officials said that they recognize the difficulty in delivering on either U.S. promises or threats, and that "our leverage over Pakistan is very limited," the senior administration official said.

At the same time, although the administration's goal is to demonstrate a new level and steadfastness of support, short-term U.S. demands may threaten Pakistan's already fragile political stability.

"It's going to be a game of cat-and-mouse with them for a while," another official said, adding that "what we're trying to do is to force them to recalculate" where their advantage lies.

The Pakistan strategy is complicated by a number of factors, including the fact that any indication of increased U.S. involvement there generates broad mistrust. Zardari's political weakness is an additional hazard for a new bilateral relationship. He is disliked by the military and is challenged by the political opposition and his own prime minister; he also remains under a cloud of long-standing corruption charges. Less than a third of Pakistan's population voices approval for him in polls. Obama is even less popular there, with approval ratings in the low double digits.

Many of the broad powers that Zardari assumed from his predecessor, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, who seized power in a 1999 military coup and was forced to resign last year, are being whittled away. On Friday, Zardari

turned over control of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal to Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani, who is held in much higher favor by the military.

Zardari's Musharraf-era powers to fire the elected government and appoint top military officials are also under challenge, and a law protecting government officials from corruption prosecution expired Saturday. On Sunday, the leading political opposition group called for him to give up the additional powers, and Zardari, who had pledged to do so, said he will act "soon." The administration expects Zardari's position to continue to weaken, leaving him as a largely ceremonial president even if he manages to survive in office.

Senior U.S. officers, including the Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman, Adm. Mike Mullen, have made repeated relationship-building trips to Pakistan, and training programs in this country for Pakistani officers are expanding after being moribund for years.

U.S. officials have long referred to Pakistani military and intelligence officers who are sympathetic to or actively support insurgent groups fighting in Afghanistan as "rogue elements." More recently, they have described those relationships as more direct and institutional within a divided military. "For the things that we care about," a U.S. official said, "the real decision-maker is the military." It has long been hedging its bets in Afghanistan; the military has positioned itself to prevent inroads by India in the event of a U.S. withdrawal, and against a 30-year history of being used and then rejected by shifting U.S. policy aims.

"Our game is to convince them that our commitment to Afghanistan and the region is long-term," the official said of the military. "We're not going to pack up our bags and leave them as soon as we're done. We have to create a situation in which they see a much more positive interest in closer relations with us than they do in trying to play us. But it requires time."

India is skeptical of any U.S. involvement in its relationship with Pakistan. Bilateral attempts to resolve the long-standing border dispute in Kashmir were put on hold after last year's terrorist attacks in Mumbai, which were blamed on Lashkar-e-Taiba.

The group has long been active in the Kashmir conflict and is said to have close ties to Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence agency.

Obama and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh treaded carefully on the issue in public during Singh's state visit to Washington last week. "It is not the place of the United States to try to, from the outside, resolve all those conflicts," Obama said during their news conference here. "On the other hand, we want to be encouraging of ways in which both India and Pakistan can feel secure."

Correspondent Pamela Constable in Islamabad contributed to this report.

David S. Adams

Deputy Assistant Secretary for House Affairs

Department of State

202 647 2623

202 647 2762 fax