



the Hollings Center
for international dialogue

AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN: CULTURAL HERITAGE AND CURRENT REALITY

CONFERENCE REPORT

Organized by the American Institute of Afghanistan Studies,
the American Institute of Pakistan Studies,
and the Hollings Center for International Dialogue

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The border between Afghanistan and Pakistan is unique in the history of international relations. Known historically as the Durand Line, it was drawn in 1893 by Sir Mortimer Durand to mark the formal boundary between British India and Afghanistan (which was held in a subordinate colonial-style treaty relationship by the British Government).

Although accepted in practice as part of the complex accommodation between the then ruler, Abdu'r-Rahman Khan, in Kabul and the British Government in Calcutta (later New Delhi), the Line was never ratified by the Government of Afghanistan. Following the establishment of Pakistan in 1947 the Durand Line became the *de facto* international border between the two countries, though not formally acknowledged by the populations along either side of it or by the Afghan Government. The relationship between Afghanistan and Pakistan has gone through a series of difficult stages since 1947, as the relationship between each and the outside world has evolved. Not surprisingly, although it has received little explicit attention since the 1960s the border has continued to be a source of difficulty in the relations between the two countries and underlies a number of outstanding issues.

The American Institute of Afghanistan Studies (AIAS) and the American Institute of Pakistan Studies (AIPS) developed this collaborative initiative with the purpose of illuminating current debates and generating new initiatives for the resolution of some of the more troublesome outstanding issues. With support from the Hollings Center, on May 7 and 8, 2005, Afghan, Pakistani and American scholars met in Istanbul to discuss issues arising from the history of relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan that have some connection with the unusual nature of their common border. The discussions were intense and highly productive. Several participants took advantage of the opportunity to speak forcefully and articulately on behalf of each country about the perceived injustices of the other towards it. The need to respond to these statements elicited data and points of view that proved highly significant, especially in the final session, which was devoted to efforts to find practical strategies and to develop projects of resolution.

As the discussions intensified they revolved around significant incompatibilities between each country's perception of its historical identity and integrity in relation to the other and to the region. This difference is rooted in the experience of the period from 1800 to 1950, when the area began to be drawn into a larger regional and global series of processes. It was exacerbated by the intrusion during that period of the interests of Imperial Russia and the British Government in India, and has been further complicated since 1947 (yet more since 1978) by the reappearance of other historical interests in the guise of (first) the Cold War, and later of modern nationalism on the part of India and Iran, and more recent American policy initiatives. It was argued that in order to assist in the improvement of regional security in this key strategic area between South Asia, Central Asia and Western Asia today, it is necessary to start from an understanding of Afghanistan's and Pakistan's own sense of their identities in the region. This requires a perspective that begins before 1747 when neither existed and neither Russia nor Great Britain, nor the U.S., had arrived on the scene.

The seminar concluded with the formulation of strategies for the development of new initiatives that will build on historical orientations rather than (as many current initiatives do) conflict with them. One concrete project is already under way. Proposals for others are outlined in the text.

INTRODUCTION

The American Institute of Afghanistan Studies and the American Institute of Pakistan Studies provide similar services and pursue similar academic agendas in their host countries and in the United States. They also contend with similar logistical constraints, deriving not only from the current stage of the historical relationship between their host countries, but also the relationship of each with the U.S., and other implications of the larger umbrella of U.S. policy in the region. Because of this situation direct bilateral dialogue between Afghanistan and Pakistan on any of the issues outstanding between them at any level is fraught with difficulty.

The current initiative sought to construct a neutral and explicitly academic arena where each viewpoint on the issues would be answered by the other party plus a third party. This was an attempt to add not just the native point of view, or even two native points of view, but something also of the typical local point of view and the range of its variety in a situation which allowed appeals to other paradigms of objectivity. We were interested not only in how people in Afghanistan think, and how people in Pakistan think, but how do people think in different parts of Afghanistan and Pakistan. How different are their perceptions of the whole? How may we measure them against each other?

An intensive two-day workshop was held. The proposal for the workshop assumed that most significant issues between the two countries have something to do with their unique geographical relationship, in that the border across which they negotiate is understood and valued differently on each side. It soon became clear that the way Afghanistan and Pakistan think about themselves is very different from the way they are understood by others, and that both countries are still struggling with issues of their own identity vis-a-vis each other.

Objectives

Scholars from Afghanistan, Pakistan and the U.S. known to have published material concerning the relationship between the two countries were invited. In preparation for the meeting they were asked to identify a topic, be prepared to speak on it for up to twenty minutes, and then to participate in general discussions with the objective of developing constructive proposals.

The discussions were managed in such a way as to elicit perceptions, and develop them by a process of contrast and comparison. This report, therefore, does not claim to present new historical data, or to be in any way comprehensive. It seeks rather to illuminate the basis of misunderstandings between two neighboring countries and to suggest ways to mitigate and resolve them.¹ The participants met for plenary-session discussions in the morning and afternoon of May 7 and the afternoon of May 8 and for informal discussions in smaller groups on the morning of May 8 and in the evenings.

¹ This report was written by Brian Spooner, past president of AIPS and Professor of Anthropology and Museum Curator for Near Eastern Ethnology at the University of Pennsylvania.

We expect that this will be the first in a series of joint projects between AIAS and AIPS that over time will involve other American overseas research centers in the region (West, South and Central Asia).

SOURCES OF DISCONTENT

There is a general sense both in Afghanistan and in Pakistan that the other country has taken undue advantage of it, sought to dominate it, to disrupt or influence its internal political processes, even to take it over. Other issues that arise between them tend to be seen in this context. Whether or not this is valid in either case, there is ample material on both sides to support the opinion.

In Afghanistan

From the Afghan point of view, in 1947 most of Pakistan was carved out of Afghan territory which was temporarily by virtue of *force majeure* under British occupation. It is true that in the mid-19th century the British had occupied a large amount of territory that had been under Afghan rule in the 18th and into the early 19th century. When the British withdrew from the Subcontinent in 1947, rather than offer this territory to Afghanistan they had included it in the new state of Pakistan in which most of the governmental cadre were from a population that had immigrated from other parts of the Subcontinent (later known as the Muhajirs).

More recently, the ISI (an acronym for the the Directorate for Inter-Services Intelligence that has acquired negative connotations within and beyond Pakistan--especially in Afghanistan) is credited with full responsibility for bringing the Taliban to power in Afghanistan in the mid-1990s, and partial responsibility for continuing Taliban activity within Afghanistan up to the present.¹ In this connection it should be remembered that the ISI took on an Islamist flavor under General Ziaul-Haq (President of Pakistan 1977-1988); like the Pakistan army from which its membership is drawn it has included a strong Pashtun representation which not only had easy access to the almost exclusively Pashtun Taliban, most of whom had joined the movement while in Afghan refugee camps in Pakistan, but are also obvious candidates for suspicion of collusion with the Taliban. Many Afghans see the ISI as fully representative of the entire population of Pakistan.

In Pakistan

From the Pakistani point of view Afghanistan was the only country that voted against its application for membership in the United Nations Organization in 1947. At the same time Afghanistan refused to ratify its de facto border with Pakistan and under Daud Khan's

¹ The ISI was founded in 1948 by a British army officer, Major-General R. Cawthome, then Deputy Chief of Staff in Pakistan Army, and expanded by Ayub Khan, the president of Pakistan in the 1950s, with responsibilities at home and abroad. Between the regimes of General Ziaul-Haq and General Musharraf it was an unassailable power center independent of prime ministers. Its position under the current regime is less clear.

premiership (1953-1963; he was later president 1973-1978) promoted the formation of a new entity, Pashtunistan, the boundaries of which were unclear at the time, but have since been represented as enclosing all the Pashtun and Baluch areas of Pakistan into a new country between Afghanistan and a severely reduced Pakistan.

Pakistan reacted in 1956 by closing its Afghan border, which forced Daud to depend more on the Soviet Union (a strategy which he had anyway already chosen of his own accord, and which continued to accumulate tangible results up to 1989). At the time Pakistan was still very weak and vulnerable to outside pressure, and many did not expect it even to survive as an independent country. The Congress Party, which formed the Indian government from 1947 till 1977 and later, had been active in the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) along the border of Afghanistan before Partition. There had also been significant Pashtun political activity in favor of India in NWFP before Partition.

Pakistan's security has been under threat intermittently since Independence along both its long borders, with Afghanistan and with India. While its response to India has led to disastrous wars, along its northern border emotions have not run so high, and when refugees from Afghanistan began to pour across the passes into Pakistan within a year of the 1978 Afghan Communist Putsch, Pakistan accepted and provided for them at considerable cost, social and political as well as financial.

For reasons that will become clearer in the next section the historical memory underlying these modern perceptions differs from that of other pairs of post-colonial successor states with which it might seem obviously comparable.

CONFLICTING UNDERSTANDINGS OF HISTORICAL IDENTITY

Which Afghanistan?

What Afghans and the rest of the world know today as Afghanistan dates from 1893, when the delineation of its modern borders was finally completed by a local agent of the British Government in Calcutta. But Afghanistan was first constituted as an independent political entity by Ahmad Shah Abdali Durrani in 1747, almost a century and a half earlier, long before the British appeared in the area. Between 1747 and 1893 the borders had changed continually (see Appendix). The territory that was included in the Durrani state for significant periods between 1747 and the early 19th century included much of Central Asia, northeastern Iran, Kashmir, and almost all of what is now Pakistan. How much of this pre-1893 Afghanistan lives on in the modern sense of Afghan identity?

Ahmad Abdali had been a general in forces of Nader Shah, who ruled most of Iran and Afghanistan and much of Central Asia from 1736 to 1747 from his capital in Mashhad in northeastern Iran, as a successor to the Iranian Safavid dynasty (1500-1722) that had ruled from Esfahan, and had been toppled by Afghan (but Ghilzai, not Abdali) adventurers in 1722. Ahmad Abdali launched a new empire from his Pashtun tribal base in Qandahar to fill the political vacuum left by the assassination of Nader Shah in 1747. The Mughal Empire which lay to the south of him in India was in decline. When the first British agent arrived in the area

(Mountstuart Elphinstone visited Ahmad Shah's successor in Peshawar in 1809 seeking an alliance that would protect India's only open land frontier against possible Russian advance, promoted by Napoleon), the strongest memory of empire in the area between English and Russian interests in Asia was Afghan. The historical accident that the British arrived then rather than when the main power (or the main memory of power) was in what we now know as Iran, or in Central Asia, as it had been in previous centuries, played an important part in what has followed. The name "Afghanistan" was known before that, but not with any particular political significance.

The current Islamic Republic of Afghanistan is a direct successor to all these earlier forms of the country. But apart from covering different territories, and in spite of the fact that the rulers have been Pashtun throughout (with only a very brief hiatus in 1929, and again in the early 1990s) different Afghanistans in succession have incorporated different tribal and linguistic communities. The world at large today knows Afghanistan from modern maps in its distinctive shape reminiscent of a leg of lamb with the knuckle reaching across the north of India into western China. But the map is only of recent circulation. Is this the Afghanistan most Afghans identify with? Is this the Afghanistan most Pakistanis see as their northern neighbor and interlocutor in regional politics? Or perhaps some sort of amalgam of all the geographical permutations of the Pashtun empire since 1747? or perhaps of a larger community with even earlier roots.

This question was posed in the seminar. The answer was unexpected: it came unhesitatingly from the Afghan side of the table that modern Afghan identity and cultural heritage goes back to the Taherids (the dynasty of Taher).

Tahir ibn Husain and his successors were the first independent rulers in the Iranian world after the Arab conquest which brought Islam to west and central Asia in the mid-7th century. This conquest replaced the (Zoroastrian/Christian) Iranian Empire of the Sasanians (224-642) with the Caliphate in Damascus (661-750), and later in Baghdad (750-1258). However, beginning in the early 9th century the caliphs gradually lost the ability to rule this vast area directly, and local power centers began to fill the resulting political vacuum, without destroying the overall religious and social unity of the Islamic world. The Tahirids built the first of these new centers. They ruled much of the eastern Islamic world (including most of what is now both Iran and Afghanistan) from Nishapur (now northeastern Iran) from 821 to 872. Since their territory was roughly similar to the territory covered by the pre-Islamic Iranian empire of the Sasanians (224-642), it is not surprising that many linguistic and cultural features from the previous period began to reappear. However, the cultural heartland of the Sasanians and was on the western side of the central deserts of the Iranian Plateau. This Iranian renaissance was on the east. The Taherids gave way to the Samanids in Samarqand (819-1005, currently in Uzbekistan), the Saffarids in Sistan (821-1055, on the Helmand delta, currently on the Afghan-Iran border), the Ghaznavids in Ghazna (962-1186, now in southern Afghanistan). Finally, the whole of this area of modern Iran, Afghanistan and beyond was taken over in the twelfth century by dynasties formed by the immigrant Saljuq Turks. Since the rise of the Safavid empire in 1500 the cultural center of the Iranian world has once again been on the western side of the central deserts. As a result Iranian cultural history as a whole, as it has been written with hindsight in the modern period, has modern Iran as its primary successor state, and Afghanistan (which after an imperial

boom in the 18th century has been weak throughout the period of modern history-writing) as the culturally dependent satellite. Modern Afghanistan was built around Pashtun (or Pakhtun or Pathan) tribal identity. In modern times Pashtun identity has been centered around Qandahar and Ghazna in southern Afghanistan and the Soleiman Mountains that stretch south into Pakistan, defining (in geomorphological terms) the southeastern border of the Iranian Plateau. Iranian linguistic and cultural identity in general has always been strongest on the Plateau (which includes most of Afghanistan and Iran, and much of Pakistan), and culturally identified with it. The claim that Afghanistan began with the Taherids was unexpected, but of great significance. The heirs to the Pashtun dynasty on the eastern side of the deserts can in fact make a strong claim to represent east-Iranian culture as a whole, on an equal basis with the heirs to the dynasties that have ruled in the name of Iran from the western side of the Plateau.

The relationship between the various cultural identities that were incorporated into the Afghan state is complex. Over the past century Pashtun tribal identity has changed gradually into Pashtun ethnic identity with overtones of nationalism. But at the same time Afghan was being used to signify citizenship irrespective of ethnicity. Still people from different ethnic groups within Afghanistan understand their relationship to Pashtuns and the state differently depending on the cultural heritage of their local communities, and for similar reasons think differently about Afghanistan's borders and the communities that live on the other side. All, whatever their ethnic, tribal or vernacular background, subscribe to Persian (i.e. Iranian) literate culture, which they share with the citizens of Iran to the west and the central Asian states to the north, all of which are similarly multi-vernacular.

In the modern world this type of situation is not unique to Afghanistan. But it would be difficult to find another country today for which it would be more significant. Between 1747 and 1893 the boundaries of effective control of the Afghan state varied from as little as a small enclave around Qandahar (the name of which perpetuates the memory of the pre-Islamic Gandharan Buddhist state that covered about half each of what is now Afghanistan and Pakistan) to a vast area that for some time stretched to the coast of the Arabian sea and nearly as far north as the Aral Sea, incorporated the cities of northeastern Iran in the West and Kashmir in the east. But its strength was in the 18th century. There were several times in the 19th century, between 1803 and 1880, and especially in the 1860s, when Afghanistan was on the verge of complete disintegration and extinction as a unitary independent political entity. This period of weakness was largely the result of chronic succession struggles. Indeed it is difficult now to see how Afghanistan could have survived into the 20th century, had it not been for the presence and interests of the British, who both provided the Afghans with an enemy to unite against (in the short term in 1839 and 1878), and in the end established in Afghanistan a strong unifying government (in 1880) to provide a buffer against Russian influence and possible strategic threats on the British-Indian North West Frontier.

Which Pakistan?

Pakistan similarly, since its endorsement in 1940 by the All-India Muslim League as the name of the proposed Muslim successor state to the British Indian Raj, has meant different things to different people at different times. Whatever the idea of Pakistan may have meant in 1940, this

image was changed by the events of Partition in 1947 and by the loss of East Pakistan in 1971. But from the beginning the people of Pakistan did not trace their identity back to Mahmud of Ghazna (whose invasions in the early 11th century led eventually, a century later, to the establishment of a Muslim government in the subcontinent. They did not trace it back to Babar, the descendent of Tamerlane, from Farghana in Central Asia, who founded the Mughal Empire in the Subcontinent at the beginning of the 16th century from his base in Kabul. Either choice was available, and apart from possible consequences for their relationship with India, would have competed with the Afghan claim on equal ground. Instead, the Pakistanis demonstrated their subcontinental cultural roots, going back to the Pakistan Resolution (1940), according to which Pakistan was to be with India the twin successor state of the British Raj. At the time of definition the territorial boundaries were undefined, but it was generally assumed that they would be drawn to include not only Kashmir, but Hyderabad (now in the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh). The validity of the Durand Line received little if any attention. For everyone in British India the Afghan problem had been resolved. However, Pakistan as we now recognise its territorial definition is the product of a series of political developments that ineluctably took precedence over ideals and principles. It is now left with an elongated triangle of territory in the northwest, all of which would have been happily gobbled up by either Afghanistan (Baluchistan, NWFP and the Northern Areas) or India (Azad Kashmir and the Indus Basin) if an opportunity had presented itself. Pakistan has never enjoyed the good will of either Afghanistan or India, the two neighboring countries with which it shares the longest borders, and has therefore shown special interest in the support of its other two neighbors, Iran and China.

Apart from the fact that Pakistan was in pre-colonial times included within Afghanistan, not only did the Mughal Empire in India before the British period include most of Afghanistan, but India's first prime minister after Independence, Jawaharlal Nehru, considered that India's natural northwestern border would be the Hindu Kush range that runs east to west across the center of Afghanistan.

The British would probably have agreed with Nehru--but for the concerns about Imperial Russia at the time. The resulting border was complex in conception and was generated by these concerns alone. The Durand Line was in fact envisaged as one of three lines of defense against the possible intrusion of Russian Imperial interests from Central Asia, possibly backed by other anti-British European forces. The first line of defense was the northern border of Afghanistan (the quintessential buffer state), which was negotiated with Russia two decades earlier. The innermost line was the border between the settled and the tribal areas of what was later called the North West Frontier Province.

Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), along the Afghan border, are a global anomaly. The British Government in India considered them part of British Indian territory, but did not administer them. The existing local communities within them managed their own affairs, independently of both Kabul and Delhi. The Government of Pakistan simply continued the British practice. So long as the Government of Afghanistan observed the border, and there was no open conflict, this arrangement worked, and was of significance only for the internal administration of Pakistan. However, since the 1970s when Afghanistan's relations with its neighbors began to change as a result of the policies of the communist regime, it has gradually

begun to change in practice and presumably before long will have to be reformulated in the interests of peace between the two countries.

The Durand Line was the publicly stated boundary of the Raj, but it did not have the status of modern national boundaries. For the Afghans it represented a British usurpation of Pashtun territory which they had tolerated unwillingly. For this reason, when it was transformed by default in 1947 into the international boundary between the Kingdom of Afghanistan and the new state of Pakistan (which was opposed by Pashtuns along the border, and only tolerated by India), it was unlikely that it would be trouble-free. The parties responsible for its legitimacy included not only Afghanistan and Pakistan, but India, Great Britain, Russia, China and the U.S., each with different degrees of enthusiasm for ensuring its validity.

Before the arrival of the British in the middle of the 19th century, there were no borders in or around what is now Afghanistan and Pakistan. Centers of power and influence waxed and waned without being formalized by recognized borders or supported by the interests of outside powers. The British acted to discourage the influence of any outside power in their territories. Since the departure of the British in 1947, the interest of outside powers in the area has gradually increased. Pressure from Afghanistan and India led Pakistan to look to China and Iran for support. America assumed Britain's role in the region, and ensured Pakistan's survival. Then when the Soviet army occupied Afghanistan at the end of 1979 in order to ensure the survival of the communist regime, America began actively to support the resistance from within Pakistan. When the Soviet army withdrew in 1989, America ceased its activity in Pakistan. But the social forces that had been generated in the two countries by the presence of an unprecedented number of non-Muslims from outside the region had involved both populations in the processes of globalization that were already overtaking other parts of the world.

Pakistan, like Afghanistan, whatever the current reality, was originally conceived as, and is still by many felt to be, one of two twin political successors to a former major empire and cultural tradition--the British Empire in India. There are of course differences between Pakistan's relation to the British Raj and Afghanistan's relation to the pre-Islamic Persian empires, which are important. For example, where "Afghan" has a long history, "Pakistan" is of recent coinage. Where the Persian empire of which Afghanistan sees itself as one of two equivalent successors goes back some 2500 years, Pakistan's Indian heritage may be traced only to the beginning of the British Indian Empire, which crossed the Indus only in the 1830s, or at most to the Mughal Empire that was established in the early 16th century. Afghanistan's strategic importance today depends no longer on its control of India's single open land frontier or the pass north of Kabul from South Asia into Central Asia, but rather as a (somewhat less important) transit route from Central Asia to the outside world. Pakistan has in fact usurped much of Afghanistan's historical strategic importance, since it reaches from China to the Arabian Sea and offers access to Central Asia. Finally, however, it is crucially important to bear in mind that Pakistan, like Afghanistan, and in fact like several neighboring modern countries in the region, subscribes to the cultural heritage of the Persian *koine* and its vast ecumene that for significant periods during the past millennium stretched from what is now Turkey in the west to Xinjiang in the east, and from Central Asia to Hyderabad in southern India. Although there are cultural differences between the populations of the Indian lowlands and those of the Iranian Plateau and Central Asia, the zone of transition between them is wide and stretches a considerable distance either side of the

border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. The ethno-political conflicts that have threatened international peace in recent times have all been between communities with close historical and cultural relations. The accumulation of misunderstanding and conflict of interest between Afghanistan and Pakistan has reached a point where their relationship is fraught with danger and provides an extraordinary laboratory for the development of initiatives that would be valuable for peaceful economic development in other parts of the world as well.

Neither Afghanistan (since the early 19th century) nor Pakistan (since 1947) has been continuously assured of a stable future, by either internal or external forces. The border that everyone remembers as the Durand Line continues to be a source of problems and weakness for both countries. Any significant change in it is, however, not feasible. The only way forward demands strategies for ensuring that it become more functional.

PROPOSALS FOR DEPOLARIZATION

The general position of the participants in the concluding session was that Afghanistan and Pakistan need outside help to solve their differences and work together for the peace and prosperity of the region—but help of a different kind from what they have received so far, however generous some of that may have been.

The populations of their current territories had been historical neighbors since long before the creation of their current state or national identities. They have been under the political authority of outsiders since the earliest historical data. This was true even when cities now within their borders—such as Ghazni, Herat, Lahore—were centers of empire: the rulers were from outside. Only in the brief period from 1747 to the arrival of the British in Afghanistan did they know a local ruler independent of outside powers. The governments of Afghanistan (since 1880) and Pakistan (since 1947), although not directly formed by outsiders, owe much to foreign forces (both negative and positive) and relatively little to domestic socio-political dynamics. It is not feasible for two such weak modern states to control their own affairs unaided. The current problems they experience *vis-a-vis* each other are between their governments rather than particular communities and are a function of the roles played in their recent history by external powers. These include all their neighbors, Russia, India, the U.K. as well as America. But of all these outside players America has obviously played the most active and visible role in recent times, especially since 1989. Only America now, partly because of its distance, partly because of its economic power, is likely to be able to help them to make progress.

To be successful, projects of aid must be formulated in terms that acknowledge the national interests of each country as they are understood by their respective governments and populations. For example, Afghan nationalists may see their country as the leader of the east Iranian world: the fact that their twin to the west inherited the cultural name, Iran, is historical accident. But this view may not be accepted by some of their neighbors, particularly Iran. Some Pakistani nationalists may see Pakistan as the bulwark of the eastern Islamic world as well as the twin successor (with India) of the British Raj. Once again, it is historical accident that India retained the name by which (although it came into the modern world through ancient Greek, rather than local usage) the whole South Asian subcontinent is known internationally. But these interests are not written in monuments or historical (or sacred) texts.

In human history everything undergoes change. We currently live in an era of accelerating change. There is no reason why the sense of state or national interest in each of these two countries should not also change. Although change cannot be controlled, certain types of change can be fostered and encouraged.

We wanted to suggest two types of projects: one, at the government level, that both countries would see as serving their short-term interests irrespective of conflicting senses of identity; and another at the level of local communities, that might foster or encourage positive changes in the political orientation of each country towards the other over time. Each suggestion would require active and sympathetic American involvement in the development stage.

Government-level programming

1. Collaborative tariff restructuring with the objectives of: (a) reducing profits from smuggling, and (b) increasing government revenue for both countries

Seminar participants Thomas Barfield and Christine Fair began a series of discussions about the potential of trade between Afghanistan and Pakistan as a means of addressing several bilateral security concerns. For example, restructuring tariff agreements could provide both states with needed revenue, encourage both countries to professionalize and develop civil bureaucratic institutions and also discourage illicit trade. Over the long term by getting the economics of the bilateral relationship right, the opportunity costs of conflict would be increased. Thus, economics and trade could be an important means by which the future directions of Pakistan and Afghanistan can be productively woven together. Following this discussion, Fair and Barfield forged a research agenda that would be funded under the Research and Studies Program at the United States Institute of Peace, Fair has asked Dr. Shahid Javed Burki to take an exhaustive study of the economic relationship between Afghanistan and Pakistan and to identify areas where significant improvements may be made. Once Dr. Burki has completed his analysis, it is hoped that USIP will host an event to be jointly moderated by Fair and Barfield.

2. Collaborative opium purchase and substitution, a positive project to assist both countries to work together to establish an agency that would monitor opium growth and offer legal outlets and alternatives for it.

Local-level programming

1. Local-level seminars that would bring together representatives of different localities and livelihoods in each country to discuss issues of common interest
2. Sporting events, such as the recent experience India-Pakistan cricket
3. Joint TV programming

In the case of local-level programming, it might be useful in some cases to invite participants from other neighboring countries. This type of project could have the additional advantage of helping to defuse ethnic problems within each country.

Finally, the participants showed considerable enthusiasm for a larger conference on these ideas that would include a wider selection of participants from not only Afghanistan, Pakistan and the U.S. but also Iran and India, and possibly one or two other neighboring countries.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

We consider that this workshop was not only highly successful within its frame of reference, but that it can be a model for future cooperation between overseas research centers operating in the same world region.

We are convinced that the project as a whole can serve as an example of the value of objective interdisciplinary academic activity designed on a regional or other supra-national basis for the pursuit of both national and international interests in the modern world.

ABOUT THE HOLLINGS CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE

The Hollings Center promotes dialogue between the United States and predominantly Muslim countries, opens channels of communication, deepens understanding, expands people-to-people contacts, and generates new thinking on important international issues. The Center was established as an NGO through legislation enacted in 2004 and 2005 by the U.S. Congress, particularly through the efforts of Senator Ernest F. Hollings (ret.); its official name is the International Center for Middle Eastern-Western Dialogue. The Center convenes conferences, typically in Istanbul, on a wide range of contemporary issues involving opinion leaders and experts in a variety of fields, and provides small grants and fellowships to selected program participants for collaborative projects that build on conference recommendations. For more information, please see www.hollingscenter.org.