

### **Pakistani American Public Affairs Committee (PAKPAC) Recommendations for President-Elect Barack Obama**

- A: There is a need to recognize that nurturing and strengthening the Pakistan-US relationship must be a priority and a critical agenda of the President-Elect. Pakistan is the 6<sup>th</sup> most populous country in the world. It is the second largest Muslim majority country in the world.
- B: A significant portion of the onus to improve Pakistan-US relations lies with the Pakistani-American community and organizations.  
*The Pakistani-American community and organizations have an important role to bring about significant improvements in Pakistan-US relations.*
- C: The President-Elect has a historical and unprecedented opportunity to develop a long term strategic relationship with Pakistan.
- D: The President must understand the very real and increasing anti-American sentiment brewing inside of Pakistan. He needs to be cognizant regarding the cause of this sentiment and facilitate the implementation of a long term plan to help change US perceptions within the masses in Pakistan.
- E: PAKPAC believes that Vice President-Elect Joe Biden has been perceptive and on target with respect to Pakistan-US relationship especially when he has recommended:
- Changing the transactional relationship to a normal functioning relationship.
  - Democracy dividends to help strengthen democracy in Pakistan which will lead to a strong foothold in that society.
  - US engagement with Pakistani people/masses rather than the government.
  - Developing an unconditional people support plan with the people of Pakistan.
  - Investing in the non-governmental organizations (NGO's) that are geared to betterment of the economy, education, job creation, healthcare and infrastructure of Pakistan.
- F: Developing a partnership with Pakistan on the challenged and growing energy needs in Pakistan.
- G: Facilitating the establishment of “Madrassa alternative” educational institutions needs to be a focus of the incoming US government. While a small subset of Madrassa's have contributed to the radicalization problem in Pakistan, the primary reason parents choose to send their children to the Madrassas is because they serve as a much needed source of food and shelter for their children. *There needs to be strong and viable alternatives* available to the larger impoverished community in Pakistan.
- H: The President and the incoming US government should consider promptly expanding trade relationships with Pakistan and declaring it as a “favored nation” with respect to business. We need to identify mechanisms to speed up a bilateral trade relationship between United States and Pakistan.

- I: The United States government needs to recognize the critical role Pakistani people have played in the *War on Terror* by sacrificing their lives for the cause. As a result of this alliance in the *War on Terror*, more lives have been lost and households have been destroyed in Pakistan as compared with the US or any South Asian country. The President must understand and publically acknowledge the sufferings and sacrifices the masses of Pakistan have had to endure and continue to sustain as a result of the war on terror. This needs to be highlighted and emphasized by the US Media to the people in Pakistan and the citizens of the United States. This suffering and immense sacrifice without recognition will lead to increasing resentment by the people of Pakistan.
- J: The United States needs to identify a mechanism to ensure that the organized governance in Afghanistan (which is established under the auspices of the US government) does not pose as a direct or indirect threat to the people of Pakistan and its governance.
- K: The menace of the poppy plantation in Afghanistan is at the highest it has ever been (even more than it was at the time of the Taliban government). The infiltration of drugs is incredibly destructive to society, both in the US and in Pakistan. A plan must be implemented in which drug production and trafficking is curbed at the source.
- L: The US government and military must refrain from threats as well as actions of unilateral attack on Pakistan. It should be clear that the Pakistan military is ready and willing to take action to protect its sovereignty as an independent nation. They already have paid a heavy price for its alliance with the US. Such words and actions fume anti-American sentiment.
- M: Once due diligence is undertaken by the appropriate authorities, the US should encourage travel to the US from Pakistan. By increasing the people traveling for vacation, business and/or education, the US improves the perception of the United States abroad by exposing the Pakistani traveler to true American values.
- N: The President-Elect must undertake an immediate overhauling of many of the Bush plans of “sneak and peak”, NSEERS, and name checks, etc. We know from data that many of these plans have had essentially no substantial yield. Unfortunately, these plans have come with the cost of alienating the community here and people all across the globe. In the age of rapid communications, the treatment of American Muslims and Pakistani Americans in the United States reaches across the world to the people in Pakistan immediately. Just treatment and appropriate actions towards this community with a focus on true American values needs to be implemented.
- O: The incoming government should help use US influence to let India, Pakistan and people in Kashmir deal with the age old unfinished situation in Kashmir, based on the principles of human rights, non-militancy and mutual respect. This solution would allow both India and Pakistan to focus on the needs of their own people. Both countries combined, may have the highest number of uneducated children per square foot in the world.
- P: The US Military should help in the “capacity building” of the Pakistan Military, thereby helping Pakistan deal with the challenge of extremism inside and outside of the country.
- Q: The Pakistani-American community and the US government should work with credible Pakistani partners to have an education agenda for Pakistan. There needs to be a major effort by the people in Pakistan to change the future of Pakistan by investing in education. This can only happen if institutions and efforts geared to this plan are strengthened.

R: The incoming US Government needs to learn from history with respect to dealing with the tribal areas in Pakistan. The British have had similar experiences and challenges with the tribal areas. After realizing that the military actions are not a solution, the British decided to have to have a dialogue and develop treaties with the tribal leaders and groups.

S: The President-Elect and the incoming government should be educated concerning certain reports suggesting the dismantling of Pakistan into different territories. This is not only *dangerous* for the region but also the world. This instability, if allowed to happen in any form, will lead to a domino effect not only in Pakistan but also directly destabilizing Afghanistan, Iran, India and Bangladesh. This can lead to lack of access to the region creating an extremely volatile and unstable region. Such “dismantling” plans by any institution and/or “think tank” are irresponsible, extremely dangerous and clearly not well thought out.

T: United States has been looked at by many people in Pakistan as meddling with the Pakistan’s internal politics. We need to ensure that only the true representation of the masses in Pakistan represents them.

U: Debt write off can truly help a country to focus on their human development and infrastructure, as opposed to allocating a significant amount of the GDP on debt servicing.

*There is precedence for debt write off by United States for Israel and Egypt.* This has helped the two countries to focus on the improvements of their infrastructure and human development. The US can help write off Pakistan’s debt and encourage other countries to follow suit at this most critical juncture in history\_

V: Identify new projects and enhance existing ones which allow an increase in interaction between the citizens of Pakistan and citizens in the United States.

W: The President, with his influence, can help financial institutions worldwide transfer back the large sums of money owned by influential Pakistanis, hence returning it back to Pakistan. This would help stabilize the value of the Pakistani Rupee, and enable the past, current and future leaders to help strengthen Pakistan’s economy.

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