

Civil–Military Relations in Pakistan: Quest for an Ideal Balance

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Abstract

This paper is an attempt to explain the impact of factors like socio-political environment, governance, quality of democracy and military's institutional dynamics on the civil-military relations in Pakistan's context. The objective is to help identify the necessary measures to bring about the best possible balance in the relations. Samuel Phillips Huntington, an American political scientist, adviser and academician, and an ardent supporter of civilian control over military has suggested objective and subjective control approaches to render the military subservient and politically sterile role viz-a-viz the civilians. Another approach is of Morris Janowitz, who suggests greater value convergence and interaction between the civil and military components of the state through change in the military's role from traditional armies towards a more democratically inclined constabulary model. There are other theorists like Feaver and Desch also who suggest military's subordination to the civilians as an internally accepted canon regardless of the environmental considerations. Similarly, Theorists like Finer and Lasswell warn of a domination of politics by the military on account of its organisational strength and the ideological fervour viz-a-viz weak civilian political institutions and leadership. Rebecca Schiff also proposes a concordance of values and interests between the people, the armed forces and the political leadership based on certain well-defined

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indicators. An analysis of those indicators in this paper prognosticates a positive trajectory of the civil-military relations. The benchmarking of the quality of civil-military relations in Pakistan on the Geneva-based Security Center for Governance's Democratic Control of Armed Forces criteria also indicates reasonably strong fundamentals for a right balance in the relations except two areas i.e., the expertise of the civilians in the military affairs and weakness of civilian oversight institutions. The paper suggests the need for bridging the intellectual and ideological gap in civil-military relations through intellectual and organisational reforms. It recommends attaining political legitimacy through effective governance and achievements of desired concordance between the people, the military and the political leadership focused on civilian oversight structures, reforms in Higher Defence Organisation and the ceding of right constitutional space to the civil and military components of the state. Some useful lessons from the case studies of civil-military relations in countries like Indonesia, Israel, Turkey, Venezuela and Bolivia have also been culled to highlight the salience of environmental factors and the internal military ethos of voluntary subordination to the constitutionally instituted civilian governments.

Keywords: Civil-Military Relations, Balance of Power, Supremacy, Reforms, Governance, Armed Forces, Leadership

Introduction

Civil-Military relations in a country are an ideal barometer of the quality of democracy and institutional harmony. The quality of democracy and governance is determined not only by the form of the government but the degree of the governance.¹ An apt example is the French Third and Fourth Republics that vested authority in National Assembly and national bureaucracy. When in 1950s, the effete nature of National Assembly and bureaucracy failed to ensure dissolution of the French Empire, the military stepped in to fill the governance vacuum leading to Charles de Gaulle era.² The traditional and relatively simple political systems are not as resilient while encountering the forces of democratic modernisation compared to mixed systems of democratic and oligarchic fusion.³ According to Paul Staniland, a complex interaction between the nature of threat, political institutionalisation and government legitimacy determines the nature of civil-military relations in a country.⁴ Anocracies are democracies in transition where the democratic institutions have not developed strong roots and are, therefore, prone to the interventions of non-democratic forces like the bureaucracy, violent non-state actors, and the military.⁵ The civil-military relations are, therefore, a function of the strength of democratic institutions, the external threats, and the internal security environment. The optimal civilian control of the military has been the holy grail of civil-military scholars and statesmen to ensure that a military is strong enough to do what its civilians' principals

¹ Samuel. P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (London: Yale University Press, 1973),1.

² *Ibid.*,19.

³ *Ibid.*,19.

⁴ Paul Staniland, Explaining Civil-Military Relations in Complex Political Environments: India and Pakistan in Comparative Perspective, *Security Studies*, 17:322-362(Routledge, 2008), 340.

⁵ Regan, Patrick M., and Sam R. Bell, "Changing Lanes or Stuck in the Middle: Why Are Anocracies More Prone to Civil Wars?" *Political Research Quarterly*, vol. 63, no. 4, 2010, pp. 750. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/25749246. Accessed 11 May 2021.

ask it to do, and weak enough to do the bidding of those civilian principals.⁶

Scholars like Harold Laswell with his Garrison State theory and S.E. Finer with his ‘man on horseback’ notion have cautioned against a military with strong organisational strength, discipline and ideological orientation, eclipsing civilian political institutions while operating in a high threat environment.⁷ There are theorists who have linked harmonious civil-military relations with military efficacy, suggesting thereby the salubrious nature of the civil-military harmony to be the bedrock of military effectiveness in wars.⁸ The civilian control of the military component of state has been linked to dialectics between the external and internal threats to the state by Peter Feaver. According to Feaver, the best civilian control is exercised when a state is beset with high external but low internal threats. In Pakistan’s case, however, the above theory is belied because of our historical experience. Paul Staniland’s notion of strong political culture and robust political institutions, acting as bulwark against non-democratic forces, is worth examination in greater detail in case of weak democracies.⁹ For democracies like Pakistan, the notion of ideal balance between civilian and military components of the state is worth examination in order to discover an ideal balance between the civil-military components of the state. What is the most puissant form of control can be examined by analysing the effectiveness of several notions of control suggested by scholars like Samuel Huntington, Lasswell and Rebecca Schiff. The perspective of scholars on Pakistan’s civil-military relations would also be highlighted alongwith pertinent lessons from some case studies of different countries to understand the nature of civil-military relations and the problems arising out of the imbalance in the

⁶ Feaver, Peter D, The Civil-Military Problematique: Huntington, Janowitz and the Question of Civilian Control, *Armed Forces and Society* (Vol 23, Iss.2):149-178, 149.

⁷ Harold Dwight Lasswell, *Essays on the Garrison State* ed. Jay Stanley (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishing, 1997), 24.

⁸ Suzanne C. Nielsen, Civil Military Relations, Theory and Military Effectiveness, *Public Administration and Management*, Volume X, Number 2(2005):74.

⁹ Paul Staniland, “Explaining Civil-Military Relations in Complex Political Environments: India and Pakistan in Comparative Perspective,” *Security Studies*, 17:322-362(Routledge, 2008), 328.

relations. Some prescriptive remedies would also be suggested to reduce that imbalance in order to improve the quality of civil-military relations.

Theories Relevant to Civil-Military Relations

Though scholars like Samuel Huntington and Morris Janowitz gave their own interpretations on civil-military relations, yet both agreed on the fundamental principle of suggesting pathways to most efficacious civilian control of the armed forces. While Huntington, in his notion of objective and subjective control, viewed the civilian control from the prism of external threats; Morris Janowitz examined the same from the lens of a value convergence between the armed forces and civilians.¹⁰ Huntington's notion of objective control means ceding of maximum professional autonomy to the armed forces by the civilians' in return for the military's political neutrality.¹¹ The objective control is dependent upon military professionalism, which Huntington defines as a combination of "expertise, responsibility and corporateness."¹² The military professionalism as per Huntington has two imperatives i.e., functional and societal. The functional imperative is to protect the state from external and internal threats, while the societal imperative is to remain wedded to societal values and ideology.¹³ The challenge with military professionalism is to retain a healthy balance between functional imperative to protect the state from threats and the societal imperative to protect its values. In democracies this gets translated into military's voluntary obedience to the civilian oversight in return for its professional autonomy.

The subjective control was another approach of exercising civilian control wherein the military leadership was involved in the civilian governance functions with an attempt to civilianising the military with a purpose to build adequate stakes in the system for the military. Morris Janowitz had expressed concern over an apolitical military drifting

¹⁰ Patricia M Shields, *Civil-Military Relations: Changing Frontiers*, *Public Administration Review* 66, no. 6 (2006): 926.

¹¹ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Practice of State-Society Relations* (New York: Vintage Books, 1957), 82.

¹² Amos Perlmutter, *Political Roles and Military Rulers* (New York: Routledge, 2019), 288.

¹³ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Practice of State-Society Relations* (New York: Vintage Books, 1957), 83.

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away from societal values and amassing too much power through autonomy. He had suggested military role to be always “responsible and circumscribed to civilian authority.”¹⁴ Military’s incorporation into the civilian decision-making functions was to serve two purposes; one to dissuade military from direct take overs, and second to bridge the gap between the values of civilian society and the military. In doing so, reduction in the professional autonomy and power of the military, viz-a-viz the civilians, is recommended.¹⁵

Another notion that is apposite in case of civil-military relations in Pakistan is the notion of Garrison State. The concept is close to the definition of a National Security State given by Nelson Pallmeyer and the Warrior State by T.V. Paul. As per Pallmeyer, the military would dominate the civilian institutions alongwith the definition of threats and religious narrative serving national security interests.¹⁶ T.V Paul considers states, which privilege national defence and spending over human development, as warrior states. He, however, differentiates between the national security or praetorian states and garrison states, confining the former to the subordination of national policies to military considerations and the later to subordination of policies, as well as national values.¹⁷ The Garrison State notion was given by Harold Lasswell, according to which such a state would emerge in modern industrial societies where the experts in violence would dominate the national policy formulation due to their better organisational strength and monopolisation of the coercive apparatus of the state.¹⁸ In such a state, the society would be kept indoctrinated by an ideological narrative against a ubiquitous external threat and the armed forces kept in a constant state of battle readiness. The development and human security would be subordinated to military centric view of national security.

¹⁴ Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait*, 343.

¹⁵ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Practice of State-Society Relations* (New York: Vintage Books, 1957), 84.

¹⁶ Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer, *Brave New World Order: Must We Pledge Allegiance?* (New York: Orbis Books, 1992), 35-36.

¹⁷ Thazha Varkey Paul, *The Warrior State: Pakistan in the Contemporary World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 72.

¹⁸ Harold Dwight Lasswell, *Essays on the Garrison State* ed. Jay Stanley (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishing, 1997), 59-60.

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At an aspirational level, there are patterns of civil-military relations identified by scholars such as Huntington. Five patterns of civil-military relations are classified on the basis of pro-military and anti-military ideology of a state having two variables of degree of political power and professionalism.¹⁹ The anti-military ideologies have two patterns. The first represents low military professionalism and high political power indicating either backward countries or modern ones with the sudden emergence of threats. The second represents anti-military ideology in countries having armies with low military professionalism and low political power like the totalitarian states e.g., WW II era Germany. The third are the countries with anti-military ideology with a military having low political power and high military professionalism like USA. The fourth category comprises countries with pro-military ideology where military holds high political power and high professionalism e.g., Israel and Pakistan. The fifth type is pro-military ideology with low military political power alongwith high professionalism e.g., Great Britain.²⁰ At an aspirational level, a country should emulate the fifth pattern.

The need for military to voluntarily internalise the ethos of subordination to civilian authority is highlighted by two scholars, who in a departure from the deterministic behavioural argument, advanced by the structuralist theory of Michael Desch, argue for civil-military harmony based on an institutional norm that recommends subordination of the military to civilian principals under all conditions. Peter Feaver's Principal-Agent framework according to which the civilians act as the principals to whom the agents i.e., military should pay obeisance under all conditions. He even goes so far as to propose an intrusive monitoring mechanism based on the modern communication means to ensure civilian oversight. According to Feaver, the civilians are best suited to take policy decisions and that the military should always act in support of their principals regardless of the circumstances.²¹ The concordance theory propounded by Rebecca Schiff reiterates the above alongwith deepening the integrative nature of balanced civil-military relations. As opposed to Huntington's theories that celebrate separation of the civil and military

¹⁹ Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Practice of State-Society Relations*, 96.

²⁰ *Ibid.*,

²¹ Feaver, *Armed Servants: Agency, Oversight, and Civil-military Relations*, 300.

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spheres, the concordance theory celebrates the integration of the political institutions, armed forces and the citizenry. A complete concordance between the political elite, armed forces and the people can be achieved if the policy making is left to the civilians.²² Military interventions in the politics can be avoided as per concordance theory, if the trinity of citizen, political leadership and the military achieves consensus on the four indicators i.e., social composition of the military officers' class, political decision-making processes, recruitment methods and the military style.²³ We shall see if that concordance was achieved in case of Pakistan to strengthen the civil-military relations.

Evolution of Civil-Military Relations in Pakistan

Pakistan's civil-military relations grew under a political culture that retained the colonial overhang of governance structures and traditions. The British colonial governance was based on revenue extraction structures with a heavy concomitant reliance on coercive instruments of state. The reliance on army, bureaucracy and the feudal landlords was the centerpiece of colonial governance, which was replicated in new Pakistani state's governance structures.²⁴ Just as the earlier invaders had created a network of garrison towns in India, the British had also created a similar network that gave rise to a garrison town like governance structure.²⁵ The pre-eminence enjoyed by the Commander in Chief (CinC) in the British colonial era was unparalleled, compared to democratic countries. The CinC enjoyed the title of His Excellency and ranked second only to Viceroy. He was also a member of the Viceroy's Executive Committee and upper legislature as per the Government of India Act 1919. Most of the powers enjoyed by him were retained in the Government of India Act 1935.²⁶ CinC was so strong that he had declared participation in WWII

²² Rebecca L. Schiff, *The Military and Domestic Politics: A Concordance Theory of Civil-Military Relations* (New York: Routledge, 2009),82.

²³ *Ibid.*,13.

²⁴ Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State: Military, Government and Society in Colonial Punjab, 1849-1947* (New Delhi: Sage Publications India, 2005), 23.

²⁵ Ishtiaq Ahmed, *Pakistan: The Garrison State - Origins, Evolution, Consequences (1947-2011)* (Karachi: Oxford University Press Pakistan, 2013), 11.

²⁶ Hasan Askari Rizvi, *"The Military & Politics in Pakistan 1947-1997,"* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 2011), 42.

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without the government's²⁷ clearance. The Indian government changed the colonial warrant of precedence to place its CinC at 25th position, but the same practice could not be followed in Pakistan.²⁸

In Pakistan's civil-military literature there are writers like Fazal Muqeem, Altaf Gauhar, G. W. Chaudry, Pervez Iqbal Cheema, Pervez Musharraf, Gul Hasan and Samuel Huntington who justify military intervention in politics on the grounds of civilian incompetence and weak political institutions. Samuel Huntington goes so far as regarding military intervention of General Ayub Khan as a positive modernising experience for Pakistan.²⁹ Scholars like Aqil Shah, Saeed Shafqat, Sher Ali Pataudi, Saadia Toor, Christine Fair, Ayesha Siddiqa, Nasim Zehra, T.V Paul, Ishtiaq Ahmed, Asghar Khan, Sher Baz Mazari and Ayesha Jalal, however, take an alternative view and regard military interventions in politics as a reason of military's ambitions for political power. There is another category of structuralists like Hamza Alavi, Muhammad Waseem, Aitzaz Ahmed and Lawrence Ziring who believe an over developed structure of colonial state, external threats and the weakness of political institutions as responsible for military ascendancy in national politics. Hamza Alavi for instance, regarded the conflict between an over developed post-colonial state and the weak indigenous bourgeoisie class as responsible for the ascendancy of military centric world view in national polity. Ayesha Jalal differs with Alavi's diagnosis and considers an overweening military ambition as a result of military's rise as a political force,³⁰ whereas Ishtiaq Ahmed ascribes the same to military's ideological orientation and a high threat environment in the country.³¹

²⁷ Major General (R) Sher Ali Khan Pataudi, "*The Story of Soldiering and Politics in India and Pakistan*," (Lahore: Wajidalis, 1978), 395.

²⁸ Ayesha Jalal, "*Democracy and Authoritarianism in South Asia: A Comparative and Historical Perspective*," (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 1995), 43.

²⁹ Ejaz Hussain, "*Military Agency, Politics, and the State in Pakistan*," (New Delhi: Samskriti Publishers, 2013), 70.

³⁰ Ayesha Jalal, "*Democracy and Authoritarianism in South Asia: A Comparative and Historical Perspective* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 1995), 43.

³¹ Ahmed, *Pakistan: The Garrison State - Origins, Evolution, Consequences* (1947-2011), 8-9

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Since Pakistan was confronted with an external aggression right from independence, its political leadership had to rely disproportionately on the military leadership for important national security decisions. The Indian aggression in Kashmir and then Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's interaction with the British CinC convinced him of the need for indigenisation of the officers' corps. The failed opportunities in the Kashmir War in 1947-48, also created a disaffected group within Pakistan's officers' corps that viewed civilian decision-making during the war with undisguised contempt.³² A group of military officers in collaboration with some civilians attempted a coup in 1951 due to grievances over the inept handling of the Kashmir War by the civilians. The leader of the coup was the Chief of the General Staff Major General Akbar Khan, who was once admonished by Quaid-e-Azam for suggesting a policy change about promotions in the army.³³ After the early departure of the Quaid-e-Azam and Liaquat Ali Khan, the bureaucrats like Ghulam Muhammad and Iskander Mirza edged out politicians by forming an alliance with the military. Failure of the civilian component of the state to frame a constitution through the Constituent Assembly, allowed the bureaucrats to consolidate their hold on power. The military leadership initially remained apolitical, as per its British legacy of political conduct, but was slowly sucked into national politics by a scheming bureaucracy.

The first serious jolt to constitutionalism was the dismissal of the constituent assembly in 1954 by the Governor General and the illegal endorsement by the judiciary.³⁴ Military was involved in politics by the bureaucracy for its ulterior motives of utilising its coercive powers for personal aggrandizement.³⁵ Military was a reluctant partner in the political game as CinC General Ayub had clearly refused the offer of a military takeover and framing of a constitution by Governor General Ghulam Muhammad in 1953, after the dismissal of Muhammad Ali Bogra's

³² Ibid.,

³³ Mohammad Asghar Khan, *My Political Struggle* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2008), 3.

³⁴ Shuja Nawaz, *Crossed Swords: Pakistan, its Army, and the Wars Within* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2008), 126.

³⁵ Saeed Shafiqat, *Civil-Military Relations in Pakistan: From Zulfikar Ali Bhutto To Benazir Bhutto* (Lahore: Pak Book Corp, 1997), 9.

government.³⁶ The die was cast, however, in 1954, when General Ayub Khan accepted the offer of Governor General Ghulam Muhammad to become Minister of Defence in the cabinet of Prime Minister Chaudry Muhammad Ali as a serving general.³⁷ Military had actually assumed the reins of government without imposing martial law at that time.³⁸ This was the point of no return for military, which kept getting sucked in politics due to overweening ambition of bureaucrats and weak civilian politicians. Pakistan had seven prime ministers and eight cabinets between 1947 and 1958, whereas only one CinC.³⁹ This was bound to result in an institutional imbalance that resulted in Ayub's imposition of Martial Law in 1958. After Ayub's deposition in 1969, reins of the power were again handed over to military leadership. Lack of inclusive polity and political polarisation resulted in the separation of East Pakistan in 1971, through active abetment by India.⁴⁰ A democratic interlude of Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto failed to achieve the desired results in politics, as well as civil-military relations, due to the authoritarian proclivities of Prime Minister Bhutto. Though, he tried to institutionalise the national security decision-making by restructuring the Higher Defence Organisation and introduction of the appointments of Chiefs of Staff of services alongwith a Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee. The initiatives could not achieve the desired results due to his political pre-occupations and changed priorities. Introduction of the Defence Committee of Cabinet and Defence Council, as a higher decision-making forum for national security decision-making, could not make much difference due to above reasons.⁴¹ Bhutto had failed to develop sustainable political institutions capable of resolving the country's political and economic problems.⁴²

³⁶ Qudrat Ullah Shahab, *Shahabnama* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 1990), 588.

³⁷ Aitzaz Ahsan and Meghnad Desai, *Divided by Democracy* (New Delhi: Roli Books, 2005), 77.

³⁸ Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule: The Origins of Pakistan's Political Economy of Defence*, 182.

³⁹ Rizvi, *Military, State and Society in Pakistan*, 80.

⁴⁰ Kuldip Nayar, *Distant Neighbours: A Tale of the Subcontinent* (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1972), 170.

⁴¹ Shah, *The Army and Democracy: Military Politics in Pakistan*, 35-36.

⁴² Rizvi, *The Military & Politics in Pakistan 1947-1997*, 224.

Pakistan's subsequent political journey featured more military interventions in the shape of Zia and Musharraf's era when punctuated weak democratic interregnums were followed. Despite a tradition of democratic politics, Pakistan failed to democratise its politics due to institutional interests of political elite and their inability to transcend those interests.⁴³ Weak civilian institutions and poor governance act as a magnet that invites non-democratic interventions.⁴⁴ Military, apparently imbued with a heightened sense of patriotism, combined with strong organisational strength and an institutional memory has been fulfilling the vacuum left over by the civilian component of the state with regular intervals in the past. The current, as well as the previous two civilian governments' tenures, however, indicate a change in the civil-military relations favouring democratic continuity as a national interest. Though an analysis of precedent conditions for balanced civil-military relations in the subsequent part of the paper would yield interesting conclusions about stability in those relations, yet a quick appraisal of four indicators of Rebecca Schiff's four indicators of concordance theory will identify the future prospects of our civil-military harmony. The first indicator of concordance theory i.e., social composition of officers' class, shows clear diversification now compared to the past. With increased number of Sindhi, Balochi and ex-tribal area officers, the base has been sufficiently broadened. The second indicator i.e., political decision-making processes has also shown improvement through democratic continuity and consolidation, though there is still room for improvement. The third indicator i.e., recruitment base also shows significant improvement in terms of its broadening. The fourth indicator i.e., military style is also showing changes from the British era obsession with rank, hierarchy and status⁴⁵ with reduction of ranks and file gulf in the armed forces. The above indicates that the civil-military relations of the country are on an upward trajectory, though several improvements are still required.

⁴³ S Akbar Zaidi, *Military, Civil Society and Democratization in Pakistan* (Lahore: Vanguard Books, 2011), 18.

⁴⁴ Noel Israel Khokhar, "Civil-Military Relations in Pakistan: Musharraf's Era (1999-2003)" (PhD Doctoral Dissertation, National Defence University 2016), 78.

⁴⁵ Schiff, *The Military and Domestic Politics: A Concordance Theory of Civil-Military Relations*, 87.

DCAF Criteria and Pakistan's Civil-Military Relations

First amongst the seven key features of the democratic control of armed forces include civilian authorities' control over military's "mission, composition, budget and procurement policies."⁴⁶ Pakistan's civilian leadership has *de-jure* control over all of the above as per the constitution, but the degree of control differs according to the form of government and quality of the governance. It is for the civilian governments to improve their oversight capacity through proper structures and processes instead of outsourcing these functions to the armed forces alone.⁴⁷ Second feature is the oversight of military performance by democratic parliamentary and judicial institutions, a strong civil society and an independent media."⁴⁸ On this score too, the *de-jure* reality of Pakistan's civil-military relations features satisfactory control of the civilians. We have fairly active parliamentary committees, a vibrant civil society and an independent media that could hold the military accountable to people, as well as the government, bringing an element of transparency to the national security policy making process. Once again the quality of oversight is the weak link, wherein the parliamentary committees need to perform more efficaciously by asking tough questions and contributing positively towards defence affairs.⁴⁹

Third feature is the civilian expertise in the defence affairs. This is an area where there is a need of significant improvement on part of the civilians to improve capacity to provide effective policy guidance to

⁴⁶ DCAF Backgrounder. DCAF is a centre for security development and the rule of law set up as an initiative of Swiss confederation. The center contributes to security sector reforms. *Democratic Control of Armed Forces*, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (2008), 1-2.
https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/55845/17_bg_dem_control_armed_forces.pdf.

⁴⁷ Lieutenant General (R) Naeem Khalid Lodhi (Former Defence Minister and Secretary), interview by Author, July 4, 2019

⁴⁸ DCAF Backgrounder. DCAF is a centre for security development and the rule of law set up as an initiative of Swiss confederation. The center contributes to security sector reforms. *Democratic Control of Armed Forces*, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (2008), 1-2.
https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/55845/17_bg_dem_control_armed_forces.pdf.

⁴⁹ Major General (R) Athar Abbas (Former DG ISPR), interview by Author, March 13, 2020.

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armed forces.⁵⁰ The third feature of DCAF criteria is the non-interference by military in domestic politics.⁵¹ On this score also, the constitutional position is clear and the armed forces in Pakistan abide by the constitutional provisions. Problem arises when the civilian authorities themselves suck the military in politics by involving it in civilian affairs.⁵² The role of the expansion of a military employed in aid of the civil government as a natural phenomenon should be curbed by limiting the military's employment on non-military tasks.⁵³ The fifth criterion is the ideological neutrality. On this criterion, the score is even, as the military and civil components of the state in Pakistan normally are in harmony over the ideological orientation of the country, except that the armed forces sometimes appear more conservative in ethos viz-a-viz the society. That gulf can be bridged through greater civil-military interaction and reforms in professional military education. The sixth criterion is the minimal role of the military in the national economy. The military may be one of the largest employers of the country, or may be contributing significantly to national economy, but it needs to exercise care not to disturb the civilian industrial sector because of its economic interests and activities. In Pakistan, there are critical voices that cite military's corporate interests as a destabilising influence over the national economy⁵⁴ but the reality is different. The military in Pakistan has not negatively impacted economic output as its involvement in industrial activities is limited to welfare projects of ex-servicemen and their families. The role of organisations like National Logistics Cell and Frontier Works Organisation is also limited to the improvement of

⁵⁰ Lieutenant General (R) Asif Yasin (Former Defence Secretary), interview by Author, March 11, 2020.

⁵¹ DCAF Backgrounder. DCAF is a centre for security development and the rule of law set up as an initiative of Swiss confederation. The center contributes to security sector reforms. *Democratic Control of Armed Forces*, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (2008), 1-2.https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/55845/17_bg_dem_control_armed_forces.pdf.

⁵² General (R) Ehsan ul Haq (Former Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee), interview by Author, October 5, 2019.

⁵³ S. M. Zafar, *History of Pakistan Reinterpreted* (Lahore: Manzoor Law Book House 2019), 635.

⁵⁴ Taha Siddiqi, "Poor Nation Rich Army", *Foreign Policy*, Mar 21, 2019, <https://foreignpolicy.com/author/taha-siddiqi/>

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national logistics and communications infrastructure in areas where no civilian firm likes to venture due to terrain, weather and security hazards. The accusations of state subsidies to such organisations by critics such as Ayesha Siddiqa are not well-founded, as all such organisations are run as per best corporate practices and tax compliances.⁵⁵

The seventh criterion is the presence of an effective chain of command within the military that goes up to civilian commander in chief in order to ensure military's accountability. In Pakistan, during the military rule, this criterion was applied by default and presently exists as per the constitutional arrangement wherein the military is answerable to the President as well as the Prime Minister, with the Prime Minister holding effective authority over armed forces as a constitutional head of the government. The eighth criterion is the democratic rights of the armed forces personnel. In Pakistan, due to frequent military take overs in the past, this aspect remained overshadowed by the military's own institutional and legal environment. Under present democratic environment, the armed forces' personnel enjoy their democratic rights within the limits set by the military's legal regime. An overall evaluation of Pakistan's civil-military relations, in the light of DCAF criteria, indicates the presence of the right structures and rules for an ideal balance between the two. However, there is a need for improvement in the quality of civilian oversight to provide effective policy guidance and leadership to the military.

Lessons from Civil-Military Relations of Different Countries

Israel

Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) follow universal conscription model and exercise significant influence in the national defence and foreign policies. Like Pakistan, it is a democratic state which is beset with high external

⁵⁵ Ayesha Siddiqa, *Military Inc. Inside Pakistan's Military Economy* (London: Pluto Press, 2017), 75-76.

threats, as well as internal threats. Due to highly ideologised nature and heightened threat profile, the IDF's recommendations on national security matters frequently supersede political and economic considerations.⁵⁶ Due to the proportional representation system of the country, the political ministers do not respond effectively to the prime minister and, therefore, the IDF retains very strong policy planning capability being answerable more to the Minister of Defence than the ministry itself.⁵⁷ The members of policy planning staff of IDF frequently participate in diplomatic parleys, enjoying a lot of influence in national policy formulation. The Israeli Chief of the General Staff, who heads IDF, attends all cabinet meetings and exercises a lot of influence in national policy formulation. Despite IDF's disproportionate influence in the national policy formulation, the Israeli officers' corps has not displayed propensity to take over the reins of the government. The reason for above restraint is the exercising of subjective control over armed forces by the civilian government by integrating them in civilian policy formulation and governance. The conditions that weaken democracy like weak political parties, weak political institutions, and lack of common ideological purpose between armed forces and civilians⁵⁸ are not present in Israel. There were, however, issues like over politicisation of national security decision-making, due to proportional representation system and coalition cabinets. The Israeli Ministers of Defence are usually ex-armed forces officers due to universal conscription model and hence more clued up about defence affairs.⁵⁹ The absorption of IDF ex-officers in government, as well as semi-government jobs, is also institutionalised after retirement which disincentivises the military leadership from direct intervention in politics while in service.

⁵⁶ Branch Kimmerling, "Political Subcultures and Civilian Militarism in a Settler-Immigrant Society," in *Command with Security: Learning from Israel's Experience*, ed. Daniel Bar-Tal Dan Jacobson, and Klierman (Greenwich, Conn: JAI Press, 1998),395-416.

⁵⁷ Charles D Freilich, "National Security Decision-Making in Israel: Processes, Pathologies, and Strengths," *The Middle East Journal* 60, no. 4 (2006):659.

⁵⁸ Amos Perlmutter, *Military and Politics in Israel* (London: Frank Cass & CO. LTD.,1969), 123.

⁵⁹ Freilich, "*National Security Decision-Making in Israel: Processes, Pathologies, and Strengths*," 663.

Bolivia and Venezuela

Bolivia and Venezuela both had socialist governments that were unacceptable to the capitalist countries and were, therefore, subjected to destabilisation sponsored by these countries.⁶⁰ Bolivia's President Evo Morales was deposed in a coup supported by the United States. The civil-military relations in Bolivia were discordant due to cleavages sponsored through a hybrid war imposed upon it. The leadership of both army and police were trained by the famous school of Americas, played along the script of USA due to their pro-western orientation. The popular Morales, despite the public support, had to quit power because of the active opposition of army and police to his rule. The same model of coup making, however, could not be repeated in Venezuela despite the best attempts by around 50 countries, including the United States to support the insurrection against popular President Nicolas Maduro. It was a fusion of civil and military power in the civil-military relations' model of Venezuela, which saved Maduro. In a series of reforms starting in 1990s, the power of military leadership was fragmented by creating segmentation in the unified structure of the armed forces. That system, wherein a coup-maker had to get cooperation of independent commanders, served the purpose of democratic control till 1992.⁶¹ After 1992, economic incentives in pay and perks ensured the democratic control till an ex-military officer, i.e., Hugo Chavez was elected as a President. He ensured a strong chain of command by controlling the postings and promotions of the armed forces' leadership. The civil-military concordance resulted in the defeat of intended coup against President Hugo Chavez on April 11, 2002, and he was restored to power through public and armed forces support after 47 hours. Thus appropriate incentivising of armed forces and fragmenting their leadership in multiple commands, all directly controlled by the elected president, proved to be important lessons for effective democratic control of the armed forces.

⁶⁰ Jeb Sprague, "Top Bolivian coup plotters trained by US military's School of the Americas, served as attachés in FBI police programs," *The Grayzone* (November 13 2019). <https://thegrayzone.com/2019/11/13/bolivian-coup-plotters-school-of-the-americas-fbi-police-programs/>.

⁶¹ Harold A Trinkunas, "The Crisis in Venezuelan Civil-Military Relations: From Punto Fijo to the Fifth Republic," *Latin American Research Review* 37, no. 1 (2002): 43.

Turkey

The Turkish model of civil-military relations in the past has relied on a democratic system with a strong role for the armed forces as guardians of constitution, as well as territorial frontiers which some scholars like Varol consider a check on the negative aspects of democratic majority.⁶² The Turkish Army had retained a strong influence in the national politics due to its role in the Turkish War of Independence. When in 1960, the armed forces launched a coup they included provisions in the constitution that institutionalised their role through a National Security Council in 1961. After giving back the powers to the civilian government in 1961, the army launched another coup in 1980. Membership of the National Security Council was changed with five equal members from army and the civilian government, with a decisive vote with the President, who normally sided with the army.⁶³ Army's involvement in politics continued for next 17 years when another coup was staged in 1997, when the civilian prime minister was given a list of reforms by army, to which he did not agree and resigned.⁶⁴ The political parties improved their performance under the charismatic leadership of Justice and Development Party of Recep Tayyip Erdogan. The pro-democracy conditions of the European Union, and Turkey's desire to join the European bloc, created a pro-democracy environment which combined with improved governance and economic performance increased public support for the civilian government. The balance so shifted, when in 2011, the Turkish military leadership developed differences with the government; it resigned itself instead of launching a coup. Lessons from the Turkish civil-military relations include the importance of good governance for the politicians, especially in the economic sphere and the need to keep armed forces away from the civilian political affairs and decision-making.

Indonesia

In Indonesia, Soekarno presided over a guided democracy, maintaining delicate balance between various ethnic communities. The army, however, launched a coup in 1967, and under Suharto's rule institutionalised a political role for itself in the national politics under the concept of Dwi

⁶² Ozan O. Varol, "The Turkish "Model" of Civil–Military Relations," *International Journal of Constitutional Law* 11, no. 3 (2013): 730.

⁶³ Varol, "The Turkish 'Model' of Civil–Military Relations," 732.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 746

FungShi (Dual Role).⁶⁵ The army was allowed to keep its presence in central as well as provincial and district legislatures, alongwith the incentives of participation in lucrative businesses. Despite this, the army got factionalised in pro-democratic reforms and conservative factions. The pro-reforms faction was led by Generals Wiranto and Yudhoyano, who tried to depoliticise the army. Some reforms were introduced, reducing army's presence in legislature, but its clout continued even in pro-civilian President Abdul Rehman and pro-army President Megawati Soekarnoputri's reign. Army, despite democratic consolidation, still retains strong influence in the Indonesian politics due to its Dwi FungShi role. Due to weak political and judicial institutions, and reliance of the civilian government on military for internal security and governance tasks, the military still retains disproportionate influence in the Indonesian politics to the detriment of the civilian democratic control of the armed forces.⁶⁶ The lessons from the Indonesian example are the need for the armed forces to remain away from active involvement in politics and governance, even under an institutionalised role. There is more necessity of strong and independent institutions like judiciary and the parliament.

Analysis of Civil-Military Balance in Pakistan

The strong political institutions, enthusiastic public participation in politics and high political legitimacy, make military interventions difficult in politics.⁶⁷ Repeated elections under strong judiciary, independent election commission, and an independent media would ensure strengthening of democratic forces in national polity, bringing about the much-needed balance in the civil-military relations.⁶⁸ The successive elections and smooth democratic transition are essential for erasing the

⁶⁵ Iain Henry, "Civil-Military Relations in Post-Suharto Indonesia and the Implications for Democracy Today: A Preliminary Analysis," *Australian Army Journal* 2, no. 2 (2004): 150.

⁶⁶ Edmund McWilliams, "Democracy in Indonesia: A Progress Report," *The Foreign Service Journal*, no. May (2018): 4, 8, <https://www.afsa.org/democracy-indonesia-progress-report>.

⁶⁷ Paul Staniland, "Explaining Civil-Military Relations in Complex Political Environments: India and Pakistan in Comparative Perspective," *Security Studies* 17, no. 2 (2008): 328.

⁶⁸ Dr. Rifaat Hussain, interview by Author, March 17, 2020.

institutional memories of the military coups for the armed forces also.⁶⁹ According to Ejaz Haider, the civil-military relations in Pakistan suffer a structural malady wherein the civilians create conditions and encourage military's participation in national politics. In order to discourage their participation, they need to govern well.⁷⁰ Under the current environment, when the threat of hybrid warfare has raised the stock of internal threats more than the external threats, the theory of Michael Desch gives salience to the military viz-a-viz civilians in national policy formulation.⁷¹ In such an environment, the civilian leadership shows unwillingness to take charge of the strategic decision-making and military fills the vacuum.⁷² The states confronted with perennial threats are likely to morph into a Garrison State.⁷³ In Pakistan's case, high threat environment and weak political institutions raise the risks of the emergence of a Garrison State, but the emergence of an independent judiciary, a vibrant civil society and unrestrained social as well as mainstream media mitigate those risks.

The notion of Garrison State according to Shuja Nawaz is a creation of politicians in countries like Pakistan, as they create a system that provides benefits to both, by shifting the burden of governance towards the military.⁷⁴ Due to their political weakness, the civilians employ military to provide stability to their government by employing it into non-military tasks. This tendency, amply highlighted by the case studies of Indonesian and Turkish civil-military relations, needs to be kept in check for a balance in the civil-military relations. In Pakistani context, the civil-military relations can achieve ideal balance through the performance legitimacy of the civilian leadership.⁷⁵ The increased involvement of the military, except under constitutionally defined

⁶⁹ Mazhar Aziz, *Military Control in Pakistan: The Parallel State* (London: Routledge, 2008), 98.

⁷⁰ Ejaz Haider, "Our Terrible Binary," *The Express Tribune*, January 11, 2012.

⁷¹ Michael C Desch, *Civilian Control of the Military: The Changing Security Environment* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1999), 1-2.

⁷² Kamal Davar, "Tryst with Perfidy: The Deep State of Pakistan," (New Delhi: Rupa Publications, 2017), VIII.

⁷³ Harold Dwight Lasswell, *Essays on the Garrison State* ed. Jay Stanley (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishing, 1997), 24.

⁷⁴ Shuja Nawaz, interview by Author, June 10, 2019.

⁷⁵ Hasan Askari Rizvi, "Civil-Military Relations," *The Express Tribune*, October 17, 2016.

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parameters, in aid of civil power, leads to an imbalance in the civil-military relations and should, therefore, be avoided.⁷⁶ The political systems suffering from political legitimacy, borne out of performance and concomitant public support, are prone to political interventions.⁷⁷ In Pakistan's case, this has been the greatest problem shadowing our civil-military relations. Pakistan beset with economic polarisation, and low social cohesion, has been badly served by weak political parties relying on the military to prop up their rule in the past.⁷⁸

The moral and intellectual element of the civil-military imbalance consists of a gulf between the grooming, educational qualifications and moral values of the politicians and the military officers. The military in Pakistan, enjoying a deified status due to its image as the defenders of the nation, sedulously nurtures its officers' class, morally and intellectually, to undertake the leadership challenges both on and off the battlefield. A sizeable segment of civilian politicians do not pass muster on above qualities and are, therefore, bereft of moral and intellectual capital, required to inspire the desired respect in the military officers.⁷⁹ Military dominates the civilian leadership in Pakistan due to its intellectual and moral superiority.⁸⁰ The inability of the political leadership to move and make way for the younger lot results in low quality of political leadership that contributes towards the civil military imbalance.⁸¹ According to Ayesha Siddiq, "the top political leadership of all political parties has willingly turned their organisations into patronage platforms, negotiating resources from the Pakistani establishment on the one hand, and

⁷⁶ Hasan Askari Rizvi, interview by Author, October 2, 2019.

⁷⁷ Gavin Kennedy, *The Military in the Third World* (London: Charles Scribner, 1974), 25.

⁷⁸ Perlmutter, "The Praetorian State and the Praetorian Army: Toward a Taxonomy of Civil-Military Relations in Developing Polities," 388.

⁷⁹ General (R) Ehsan ul Haq (Former Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee), interview.

⁸⁰ Ayaz Amir, "The Debt We Owe the Army and PAF," *The News*, November 18, 2014, <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/88611-the-debt-we-owe-the-army-and-paf>.

⁸¹ Adnan Rehmat, "Nowhere else do you have politicians clinging to top positions for decades like they do here: Ayaz Amir," *Herald*, December 4, 2017, <http://herald.dawn.com/news/1153925>.

supporting kleptocratic redistribution of the country's resources on the other."⁸² According to Staniland, a high threat environment, weak political institutions, and low legitimacy of the political elite with the people of Pakistan resulted in frequent praetorian interventions in the past.⁸³ The civilian leadership needs to develop the expertise in defence affairs and barring a few national security workshops, that too on the insistence of the military leadership, there is hardly any grooming regimen for the civilian politicians in the national security and defence affairs.⁸⁴

There are structural issues of civil-military imbalance, like weak political oversight over defence affairs. Lack of institutionalised decision making structures underline the cause. The top tiers of civilian oversight are the parliamentary committees. Regrettably, they do not have effective expertise in defence and security affairs. The Cabinet Committee of National Security in its present form needs to have more civilian members, alongwith a strong secretarial support. The present National Security Division does not have the requisite expertise in hardcore military matters and needs capacity enhancement. The Ministry of Defence also does not have an effective role in providing meaningful civilian oversight over the military. The Strategic Planning Division, charged with nuclear planning, also needs a strong civilian oversight mechanism in the shape of civilian experts in nuclear strategy, preferably located in the Prime Minister's Office. The appointment of National Security Advisor (NSA) also needs to be properly resourced to include experts in traditional as well as non-traditional aspects of national security, including nuclear strategy.⁸⁵ In keeping with the Venezuelan and Turkish examples, there is a need to disaggregate the military power politically. Interestingly, this objective can be achieved in a manner that could enhance the operational efficiency of the armed forces. A strong

⁸² Ayesha Siddiq, "Pakistan's long-ailing democracy is now completely dead, thanks to its political parties," *The Print* (January 28 2020).
<https://theprint.in/opinion/pakistans-long-ailing-democracy-is-now-completely-dead-thanks-to-its-political-parties/355257/>.

⁸³ Staniland, "Explaining Civil-Military Relations in Complex Political Environments: India and Pakistan in Comparative Perspective," 323.

⁸⁴ Lieutenant General (R) Javed Hasan (Former Commander FCNA), interview by Author, December 19, 2019.

⁸⁵ Lieutenant General (R) Naeem Khalid Lodhi (Former Defence Minister and Secretary), interview.

Joint Staff Headquarters, headed by a Chief of Defence Staff, who exercises effective operational control over tri-services, can achieve both the above purposes.⁸⁶

Recommendations

The moral, intellectual and structural shortcomings inhibiting an ideal balance in civil-military relations, identified above, need to be addressed at priority. The ideal model for Pakistan would be Huntington's fifth model of civil-military relations with low military political power and high professionalism, operating within a pro-military ideology.⁸⁷ In order to achieve above, Pakistan would have to make a transition towards a development state from a national security state. That can be achieved by shaping the environment to attenuate the external, as well as internal threats, through inventive diplomacy and better governance. It is by above transition that Pakistan can attain Rebecca Schiff's recommended concordance between the government, the military and the people. With attenuated threats and better governance, space could be created for increased spending on human security and development, building stakes for common people in the creation of a civil-military harmony.

A combination of objective and subjective civilian control needs to be exercised instead of a standalone version of the two. While sufficient professional autonomy needs to be given to the military, it is also necessary to involve it in a few aspects of national policy planning, in order both to build stakes for the military in the political system and to bring value convergence between the civilian and military components of the state. There is a need for military officers to get exposure to the complexities and challenges of the civilian organisations. One way of doing so is to send officers to the civilian universities and colleges to acquire degrees in management, social sciences and economy besides giving them opportunities to serve in the civilian departments on deputation. Similarly, inclusion of subjects pertinent to national security and defence in the civilian colleges and universities should be ensured to

⁸⁶ General (R) Ehsan ul Haq (Former Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee), interview.

⁸⁷ Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Practice of State-Society Relations*, 96.

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build a basic knowledge base. This could be improved further through private study and selected exposure to the military subjects.

Political parties should improve their human capital and democracy within the parties, by following democratic practices to select the right leadership material for the onerous task of governance. The political processes and structures for decision making and consultation should be transparent and merit-based with easy access to the people to tap the right leadership talent. A system of shadow cabinets should be instituted by political parties to train the potential National Security Advisors, Ministers of Defence and Parliamentary Committees' heads, for shouldering their future responsibilities with confidence.

Armed forces should not be employed on non-military tasks beyond matters of routine.⁸⁸ The role expansion in the civilian spheres should be studiously avoided by the armed forces in the best tradition of objective control; otherwise military would develop a tendency to operate beyond its constitutional remit to the detriment of balanced civil-military relations. The military needs to develop a healthy respect for the civilian institutions and avoid a tendency to intervene in politics, whenever it finds a weak public attachment for those institutions.⁸⁹ Tendency to develop an institutional role in politics, like in case of Indonesian and Turkish armed forces, should be eschewed by the armed forces to achieve the desired balance in the civil-military relations. The military professional education, starting from the military academy till national security and war courses, should be so tailored as to develop a habit of voluntary obedience to the civilian leadership.

The civilian leadership, on its part, should avoid personalised and non-institutionalised decision making, especially in the national security affairs. The civilian leadership should benefit from strong oversight structures and institutions for institutionalised decision making. Absence

⁸⁸ Hasan Askari Rizvi, *Military, State and Society in Pakistan* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 2003), 22.

⁸⁹ Samuel Finer, *The Man on Horseback: The Role of the Military in Politics* (London and Dunmow: Pall Mall Press, 1962), 21.

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of such institutions leads to undesirable policy vacuums, which are inexorably filled by the military.⁹⁰

After narrowing of moral and intellectual gap, the structural deficit of decision making structures should also be addressed. In the parliamentary oversight committees of Senate and National Assembly and the political parties should get experts on defence and security matters with sufficient practical experience, elected in the parliament, to provide strong oversight capacity to the government. The Cabinet Committee on National Security should comprise important cabinet ministers and services chiefs' alongwith National Security Advisor and coopted members, amongst civil and military experts on national security. The civilian presence on the committee should be enhanced. The National Security Advisor should serve directly under the Prime Minister and should have a council of experts in the military affairs, economy, diplomacy, nuclear strategy, and non-traditional security subjects. The NSA should exercise effective control over the coordination of defence and foreign policy inputs feeding into national security options for the Prime Minister.

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) should be properly resourced to provide meaningful policy guidance and administrative oversight over the armed forces. A permanent cadre of defence bureaucracy needs to be created from amongst the civilian bureaucracy, as well as armed forces' officers. The oversight by MoD should be meaningful with an effective Minister of Defence, providing policy guidance about tri service organisation, budgeting, force readiness, research, procurements, postings, promotions, threat assessment and response options. The Higher Defence Organisation (HDO) should be reorganised by creating a unified tri service command in Joint Services Headquarters, headed by a Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS), who besides acting as the principal military advisor to the prime minister, should exercise operational control over the three services, alongwith enjoying powers of promotions and postings of senior officers of the three services. The reorganisation of HDO would disaggregate the power of the officers' corps like in case of Venezuelan

⁹⁰ Shireen M. Mazari, "Autocratic Rulers," *The News*, March 30 2017, <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/195322-Autocratic-rulers>.

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army. This will better civilian control of the military in achieving operational synergy and economy, while employing members of the three services as per the dictates of future battlefield.

Conclusion

A healthy balance in the civil-military relations is absolutely essential for a democratic control of the armed forces in countries like Pakistan. An analysis of DCAF criteria for democratic control of the armed forces brings to the fore the fact that the civil and military components of the state are operating under the desired constitutional limits. The improvement, however, is required in the quality of response to all eight DCAF indicators of the civilian control. In order to effect a qualitative change in the civil-military relations both the civilian and military components of the state have to take steps at moral, intellectual and structural planes, to build capacities that contribute towards a healthy balance in civil-military relations. The definition of that balance is best captured by Peter Feaver, who thinks that a military should be strong enough to do anything the civilians ask it to do, while being subordinate enough to do only what civilians authorise it to do.⁹¹ The steps suggested for building respective capacities and redressing shortcomings by armed forces, as well as civilian political leadership, promise to bring about a qualitative change in the civil-military relations resulting ultimately in improved professionalism and democratic consolidation in the country. ■

⁹¹ Feaver, "The Civil-Military Problematique: Huntington, Janowitz and the Question of Civilian Control," 149.