

**SENATE OF PAKISTAN**



**REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
DEFENCE AND DEFENCE PRODUCTION**

**ON**

**VISIT TO THE U.K. AND BELGIUM  
16<sup>TH</sup> TO 22<sup>ND</sup> NOVEMBER 2008**

**PRESENTED BY**

**SENATOR NISAR AHMED MEMON  
CHAIRMAN COMMITTEE  
JANUARY 2009**

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## **SENATE OF PAKISTAN**

### **REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE AND DEFENCE PRODUCTION ON ITS VISIT TO THE U.K. AND BELGIUM 16<sup>TH</sup> TO 22<sup>ND</sup> NOVEMBER 2008**

#### **I. INTRODUCTION**

A delegation of the Standing Committee on Defence and Defence Production led by its Chairman Senator Nisar A. Memon visited the U.K. from 16<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> November and Belgium from 21<sup>st</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2008 on the invitation of British Parliament and NATO HQ respectively. During its stay in the UK the delegation visited the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, held meetings with Minister for International Defence and Security, House of Commons Defence Committee, high officials of the Ministry of Defence and Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The visit to the UK culminated with a visit to Martin Baker Aircraft Company Limited. In London the delegation also held a dinner meeting with Kashmiri Diaspora in the Kashmir Centre.

ii. In Brussels the delegation held separate meetings with 2 Assistant Secretaries General and Deputy Secretary General of NATO. The delegation also visited Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers, Europe (SHAPE) for a meeting with the high command. In Brussels too the delegation attended a luncheon meeting with Kashmiri Diaspora at the Kashmir Centre. The delegation returned to Islamabad on the morning of Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2008.

iii. The following Members of the Committee and officers of the Senate formed part of the delegation which visited the UK.

- |     |                               |  |
|-----|-------------------------------|--|
| 1.  | Senator Nisar Ahmed Memon     | Chairman/Leader                              |
| 2.  | Senator Syed Dilawar Abbas    |  |
| 3.  | Senator Naeem Hussain Chattha |  |
| 4.  | Senator Asif Jatoi            |  |
| 5.  | Senator Ms. Saadia Abbasi     |  |
| 6.  | Senator Mrs. Rukhsana Zuberi  |  |
| 7.  | Senator Kamran Murtaza        |  |
| 8.  | Senator Iqbal Zafar Jhagra    |  |
| 9.  | Senator Tariq Azeem Khan      |  |
| 10. | Senator Mir Naseer Mengal     |  |
| 11. | Mr. Iftikharullah Babar       | Secretary Committee/<br>Additional Secretary |
| 12. | Mr. Amjad Ali                 | PS to Chairman Committee                     |

iv. The following Members and officers of the Senate formed part of the delegation which visited Belgium.

- |    |                               |  |
|----|-------------------------------|--|
| 1. | Senator Nisar Ahmed Memon     | Chairman/Leader                              |
| 2. | Senator Syed Dilawar Abbas    |  |
| 3. | Senator Naeem Hussain Chattha |  |
| 4. | Senator Ms. Saadia Abbasi     |  |
| 5. | Senator Mrs. Rukhsana Zuberi  |  |
| 6. | Senator Kamran Murtaza        |  |
| 7. | Mr. Iftikharullah Babar       | Secretary Committee/<br>Additional Secretary |
| 8. | Mr. Amjad Ali                 | PS to Chairman Committee                     |

v. The Executive Summary of the report is followed by excerpts from proceedings of the meetings.

## **II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

A delegation of the Standing Committee on Defence and Defence Production led by its Chairman Senator Nisar A. Memon visited the U.K. from 16<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> November and Belgium from 21<sup>st</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2008 on the invitation of British Parliament and NATO HQ respectively. During its stay in the UK the delegation visited the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, held meetings with Minister for International Defence and Security, House of Commons Defence Committee, high officials of the Ministry of Defence and Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The visit to the UK culminated with a visit to Martin Baker, Aircraft Company Limited. In London the delegation also held a dinner meeting with Kashmiri Diaspora in the Kashmir Centre. In Brussels the delegation held separate meetings with 2 Assistant Secretaries General and the Deputy Secretary General of NATO. The delegation also visited Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers, Europe (SHAPE) for a meeting with its high command. In Brussels too the delegation attended a luncheon meeting with Pakistani and Kashmiri Diaspora at the Kashmir Centre.

**At the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst the delegation was received by the Commandant Maj. Gen. David Rutherford-Jones.** Initiating the briefing he said that



the Commandant has three responsibilities to carry out. These are i). To ensure that relevant training is imparted to the cadets. ii). Prepare the trainees for leadership and iii). To preserve, develop and promote the Academy at Sandhurst. Thereafter, Colonel Checketts, Chief of Staff of the Academy briefed the delegation about the training imparted at the Academy. He said that Army ethos of selfless commitment, courage, discipline, integrity, loyalty and respect for others is inculcated in gentlemen cadets. During the training a test exercise spread over three days is carried out side the Sandhurst

premises, which tests the physical, mental and leadership qualities of cadets. The training in senior term lays emphasis on preparing cadets for command assignments, advance leadership, academic studies and other operations. In reply to a question by Senator Nisar A. Memon Colonel Checketts said in the final term one exercise is devoted to scenarios similar to that of Afghanistan including civil interaction and nation building.

Later the delegation had lunch at the officer mess of the Academy where the Members mixed up with senior officers of the Academy. Mementoes were also exchanged at the conclusion of the lunch. The delegation later toured the Old College and Memorial Chapel.

**In meeting with Baroness Taylor, Minister of State for International Defence and Security, Senator Nisar A. Memon thanked the British Government for the assistance during the 2005 earthquake.** Pakistan desires Open General License facility with Britain and in the field of training Pakistan is desirous of berths in NBCW Courses and war games which have still not been offered to Pakistan. He said that Pakistan has



suffered heavy casualties in the war against terrorism and it hurts when it is said that Pakistan should do more. Pakistan has 120,000 troops on the Western border with Afghanistan while allied forces have only 50,000 troops. Last month Pakistan Parliament met in a joint session to discuss defence and security issues and it passed a unanimous Resolution resolving to continue the fight against terrorism and further resolved that only Pakistani forces should take action against terrorists in its territory with credible intelligence from Pakistani, NATO and US agencies. The US drone attacks in FATA are a cause of concern to the people of Pakistan. Referring to Gen. MacKinnon's briefing to Parliamentarians at the US Embassy in Islamabad where the General had said that drone attacks were carried out by the CIA and not the US military. Senator Memon said that it

was a question of Pakistan's sovereignty therefore UK should convey Pakistan's concern about attacks on its territory to the US authorities. Pakistan does not believe in transfer of nuclear technology and assures that Pakistani nuclear weapons would not fall into irresponsible or hostile hands. Pakistan is concerned about the presence of 10,000 Indian troops in Afghanistan and inquired what their task was in that country. Indians are fanning insurgency in parts of Pakistan while Pakistan is not interfering in the internal affairs of India. UK and Pakistan meet at the DCF Forum while India and UK meet at the DCG Forum. The UK team for both these Forums is the same therefore Pakistan feels uncomfortable dealing with the same team.

Senator Zafar Iqbal Jhagra stated that terrorism in Pakistan is a big challenge for the Parliament and the media. The democratic Government in Pakistan should review its foreign policy which would help in resolving the problem of terrorism. Senator Tariq Azeem Khan said that there exists a trust deficit between forces fighting the war against terrorism. Pakistan wants new technology and credible intelligence information for meeting the demand of doing more. Pakistan has lost many soldiers compared to casualties of all the allied forces combined. Senator Saadia Abbasi asked as to what was the policy of British Government in Afghanistan? Was there any pressure to bring the troops back home? Was it possible to do so with or without the consent of the allied forces? She suggested that a comprehensive solution is required including the issue pertaining to development and political stability. Senator Kamran Murtaza said that the drone attacks created negative feelings in Pakistan against the US and the UK. M1-5 is involved in the unrest in Balochistan. The allied forces should initiate dialogue with the insurgents instead of using force in the region. Senator Syed Dilawar Abbas stated that the people of the region are undergoing a long period of agony. The drug trade in the region has grown manifold but the West has not shown any concern. The bulk of money from the illegal poppy cultivation and drug trade goes into financing terrorism therefore the UK Government must do something about this menace. Senator Rukhsana Zuberi said that kidnapping and abduction for ransom should also be taken into account because the money extorted also goes into terrorist activities.

Baroness Taylor responded that while discussing Afghanistan the UK can not forget Pakistan. We know that 1300 people have been killed in Pakistan due to terrorism. Presently there is no exit strategy for the allied forces from Afghanistan. There could be a negative impact about our involvement in Afghanistan and Iraq but people forget why the West engaged in the region. It was following 9/11 terrorists attack and a UN Resolution giving clear mandate for our presence in Afghanistan. There was a direct threat to our countries and that is still the basic reason for this operation. A sustainable government has to be established which can deal with corruption and poppy cultivation. British soldiers are also laying their lives in Afghanistan. Schools were built which were destroyed by terrorists. The issue of drone attacks has to be handled carefully. She said that President Hamid Karzai had made it clear that there could be points of contact with people who are not involved in terrorism. Baroness Taylor was pleased to know about the passage of the unanimous Resolution by Pakistan parliament.

**On 19<sup>th</sup> November 2008 the delegation was given a briefing by the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office.** Mr. Adam Thomson, Director FCO said that the British Foreign Secretary is focused on whatever is going on in Pakistan and with Pakistan. The UK needs a long term and productive relations with Pakistan not because of love for Pakistan but because of its own interests. The UK finds it enormously encouraging that Pakistan had an election and a civil government was in place. It is in the interest of UK to do what it can to support democracy in Pakistan.

Senator Nisar A. Memon said that previously the US left Afghanistan without developing it socially and economically and opened a war theatre in Iraq. Now it is back with drone attacks on Pakistani territory. The causes of terrorism are linked to poverty therefore UK should help in the socio-economic development of Afghanistan. Senator Rukhsana Zuberi stated that FATA has been affected by terrorism and an integrated plan is required to settle the issue. Senator Tariq Azeem Khan asked whether the UK differentiates between the Taliban and terrorists and what was the policy of the UK government on holding talks with the Taliban because previously Pakistan was criticized for opening talks with them. Senator Saadia Abbasi stated that it was imperative for the allied forces to understand the internal dynamics of Pakistan. The war in Afghanistan was sending negative signals about the allied forces. Senator Kamran Murtaza asked whether UK had found any evidence of Taliban involvement in terrorism post 9/11.



Mr. Adam Thomson responded that the UK government was impressed by the unanimous approval of the Resolution by Pakistan Parliament. The security establishment of Pakistan should build on that Resolution. There is no evidence of Taliban involvement in 9/11. The action in Afghanistan was carried out because the Taliban government did not hand over the organizers of 9/11 to the US. The UK has 3 fold objectives in the region.

- i. Elimination of Al Qaeda in Afghanistan and FATA.
- ii. To ensure that the extremist government which played host to Al Qaeda does not return to Afghanistan and
- iii. Help in building a moderate Afghan state to accomplish the first two objectives.

The UK was encouraged to talk to the Taliban Group which wants to reconcile. There is no military solution for Afghanistan and FATA except through negotiations. The UK is interested to establish the writ of the Afghan government across the country and be indifferent to Taliban joining the political mainstream. The UK would agree to dialogue with any group that the Afghan government agreed to talk to as it was Afghanistan's sovereign judgment. The Saudi dialogue with Taliban had got wide publicity which did not help the situation. The UK understands that socio economic development will help in fighting terrorism and supported the US funding going into FATA. The short term problem is the violence in the tribal belt which arouses fear of terrorism in the UK. Mistakes were made by not including Taliban in the Bonn process and earlier by not defeating them clearly. The UK is waiting to find out what the Obama administration policy would be in Afghanistan because President elect Obama had said that there would be a surge of troops but at the same time the political track would also be activated. Mr. Thomson said that missile attacks in FATA can be destabilizing.

**In meeting with the UK House of Commons Defence Committee on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2008 at the British Parliament, London** Rt. Honourable, James Arbuthnot, Chairman of the UK Defence Committee welcomed the Pakistan delegation and said that since we had met recently in Islamabad both sides knew where our countries respective positions are. The issue regarding providing defence equipment to Pakistan was at the top of the defence agenda and was discussed with the UK Defence Committee a day earlier and there seems to be a problem in the Ministry of Defence about decision on this matter.

Senator Nisar A. Memon suggested that a six monthly meeting between the UK and Pakistan Defence Committees should be held alternatively in London and Islamabad subject to availability of finances with both sides. Referring to the unanimous Resolution passed by the Parliament of Pakistan he said that it was decided to open dialogue with stakeholders and Lashkars be formed to fight terrorists. Since UK is working closely with the US the former may convey to the latter to stop drone attacks in Pakistani territory as it was a challenge to Pakistan's sovereignty.

Senator Tariq Azeem Khan in reply to a question from Mr. Adam Holloway MP stated that the entire policy needs to be revisited. The drone attacks in FATA are causing collateral damage. Pakistan is asked to do more despite losing 600 men in the operation. We lack finances and equipment but if that is provided we can carry on. There should be a distinction between the Taliban and the terrorists. Rt. Honourable, James Arbuthnot stated that Britain was not informed about the source of the drone attacks. He suggested that the Pakistan Senate Defence Committee should hold dialogue with the US Armed

Services Committee on this issue. Senator Tariq Azeem Khan stated that the US is talking about bringing India into the game if that was done it would be very problematic for Pakistan. Mr. Bernard Jenkins MP stated that the impression we got from Islamabad was that there was a dysfunctional engagement between the army and the civil administration and that ISI was undermining the situation. Senator Tariq Azeem Khan responded that there was a trust deficit between Pakistan and the UK which had to go. He reminded the hosts that ISI was not an outside force.



Senator Saadia Abbasi stated that the US is not reimbursing the amount spent by Pakistan on the war against terror. The US gave \$ 5 billion for the war against terrorism to Pakistan but now they say that it did not have the desired result. There should be a thorough check to find out why that amount did not bring the desired result. The outside world should support the civilian set up in Pakistan. It may be inefficient and whatever perception some one may have but it is a coalition government and even the religious parities are on board. Sovereignty of Pakistan should be ensured. She said that she does not recognize Taliban as for her they are terrorists because they kill innocent people and even our soldiers. Senator Nisar A. Memon said that the military leadership has told the political leaders that they are the masters and they have to tell the military what action to take. The civilian government has told the military that the operation can not be stopped but at the same time negotiations are also important. Rt. Honourable James Arbuthnot stated that the Members of the UK Defence Committee realized that Pakistan was well involved in the war against terrorism and asked the delegation not to go back with a view that the UK Committee feels that Pakistan was not doing much. We assure Pakistan's sovereignty and suggest that Pakistan should take up the drone issue with the US directly.

**In a meeting with Mr. Gregory Lupton, Assistant Head of Afghanistan Policy, Ministry of Defence** the same issues detailed in the preceding paragraphs were raised. Mr. Gregory Lupton agreed that drug money was funding the insurgency.



Presently 60% of Hilmand Province was under the ISAF and Afghan forces. The key issue on the security side was voter registration so that there is limited intimidation to people to vote. The job of ISAF is to assist Afghan forces in providing security to the run up to the Presidential Elections next year. The UK enjoys good cooperation with the Government of Pakistan and is moving equipment through south of Pakistan into Qandahar. In reply to a question by Senator Kamran Murtaza, Mr. Gregory Lupton stated that the UK will work closely with the new US administration and ISAF. He said he did not know if President Karzai had control on the Pukhtun area but being an ethnic Pukhtun he has close ties with them. The picture of poppy growth is different in different areas. In response to another question from Senator Kamran Murtaza Mr. Gregory Lupton stated that in the 1990s there were terrorists training in the area which was posing a danger to the world. We do not see that threat coming from Afghanistan any more and that was a positive thing. The Afghan government authority had grown after 9/11 and it is more stable than the Taliban government.

**The delegation visited Martin-Baker on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2008.** This manufacturing unit produces ejection seats for the Pakistan Air Force. The delegation was first briefed by the senior management of company and later taken around various shop floors of the factory.



**On 20<sup>th</sup> November 2008 Senators Nisar A. Memon, Rukhsana Zuberi and Naeem Hussain Chattha attended a dinner meeting at the Kashmir Centre, London** where they were received by Mr. Nazeer Shawl, Executive Director of the Center and a large number of Kashmiri and Pakistani Diaspora. The Senators spoke on the occasion and assured Pakistan's complete moral and political support to the Kashmir cause. The Senators stated unequivocally that Pakistan would agree to a solution of the Kashmir issue which also had the blessings of the people of Kashmir. They also supported the idea that Kashmiris should be included in the talks between India and Pakistan on the Kashmir issue.

**On 20<sup>th</sup> November 2008 the Senate Defence Committee reached Brussels for a two day visit for talks with the NATO high command.** The delegation was received at the Brussels Airport by Pakistan Ambassador to Belgium Mr. Shafkat Saeed and other officials of the Embassy. The Committee held its first meeting with Ambassador Robert Simmons, Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Security Cooperation and Partnership on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2008. Ambassador Simmons welcomed the delegation to the NATO Headquarters and stated that NATO did not see any block or group as a threat. NATO



sees terrorism, proliferation and commodity prices as a genuine threat. There is willingness in NATO to continue operation for peace and stability and for stopping ethnic cleansing. Currently an operation is underway in Afghanistan and our militaries are restructured to meet the desired objectives. NATO is a security alliance but had a wider range of activities to perform. Contacts between NATO and Pakistan have expanded and Pakistan's interest in Central Asia is also known to NATO. Senator Nisar A. Memon talked in detail about the unanimous Resolution passed by the Parliament of Pakistan and the political dialogue with stakeholders and the concept of Lashkar dealing with local negotiations. He also raised the issue of drone attacks by the US in FATA and stated that these attacks should be carried out by Pakistani forces after credible intelligence information had been exchanged. These attacks undermined Pakistan's sovereignty besides causing collateral damage. It was also giving a bad name to the US and the NATO forces. Senator Memon also raised the issue of 2 million Afghan refugees still residing in Pakistan as there was a pressure on government to expedite their rehabilitation as presently Pakistan had its own displaced persons from Bajaur and Swat in the North West Frontier Province.

Senator Kamran Murtaza asked the following questions:

- i. Did NATO charter authorize it to operate outside Europe?
- ii. Did President Karzai enjoy writ in the Pukhtun areas of Afghanistan?
- iii. What would happen after the NATO forces withdrew from Afghanistan?
- iv. Had poppy cultivation increased or decreased after the routing of Taliban Government?

Senator Syed Dilawar Abbas asked if there was any conflict of interest in ISAF and NATO forces and the fall out that it had. He said that in response to his question to Gen. McKinnon in Islamabad he was told that they had no mandate to check poppy cultivation in Afghanistan. Senator Rukhsana Zuberi stated that NATO engagement in Afghanistan was for strengthening the rule of law in that country but the out come is that Pakistan's security and stability had been challenged. After the passage of the unanimous resolution there was a drone attack in FATA. She asked whether the will of the people of Pakistan was not important for the ISAF and NATO forces. The drone attacks have squeezed the space of maneuverability of the elected government.

Ambassador Robert Simmons stated that NATO went into Afghanistan under the mandate of United Nations as Afghanistan was a failed state and a security threat to the world. NATO was working to develop the National Army and Police of Afghanistan. Narcotics statistics had gone up and down over time. Concentration is required in areas which are not under control of ISAF or Afghan forces. NATO will focus on production centers, supply routes and laboratories. There is conflict between ISAF and NATO thinking as these are different operations but with one common commander. NATO respects the sovereignty of Pakistan and is not conducting a security operation in Pakistan.

**The next meeting was held between the Pakistan delegation and Mr. Martin Howard, Assistant Secretary General, Operations Division on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2008.** Mr. Martin Howard stated that the current operation in Afghanistan was based on 4 pillars.

- i. Joint long term commitment to the operation.
- ii. Building Afghan leadership as NATO can not take responsibility of security of Afghanistan indefinitely.
- iii. There has to be comprehensive approach of the role of NATO and ISAF.
- iv. All this needs to be seen in the regional context as Afghanistan can not be taken in isolation. The NATO Secretary General is due to visit Pakistan soon. The alliance is keen to promote a broader relationship between Pakistan and NATO.

The year 2008 had been a tough year because the insurgency had become intense but had not spread. The Narcotics trade had a distorted impact therefore the defence ministers had resolved to do more work with the Afghan government in that regard. NATO's job is not to destroy poppy crops or provide alternative jobs but to look after cross border security aspects. NATO will have to look at the US policy on Afghanistan after Mr. Obama takes oath of office as the President of the US.

Senator Nisar A. Memon inquired whether NATO was planning to involve Iran since a regional approach was required. NATO intends to stay for a long period in Afghanistan but does not mention the timeframe of the stay. Senator Rukhsana Zuberi asked what NATO is doing about the abduction for ransom that is taking place in FATA as they extorted money channeled into financing terrorism. Senator Syed Dilawar Abbas

asked about the timeframe required by NATO to develop security apparatus in Afghanistan and its subsequent withdrawal from that country. Senator Saadia Abbasi stated that there was a pressure on the regional countries for exit of ISAF and NATO forces from Afghanistan. Senator Naeem Hussain Chattha inquired about the functions of the Indian Consulates in Afghanistan along the border with Pakistan. Ambassador Shafkat Saeed stated that Indians maintain a Consulate in Zahidan, Iran, a city where there are no Indians. Senator Kamran Murtaza asked the following questions:

- i. Can the security of Afghanistan be left to the regional forces
- ii. Has NATO found any Al Qaeda links in Afghanistan?
- iii. Will NATO allow Taliban to contest elections in Afghanistan under their agenda?

Mr. Martin Howard responded that there was limited contact between Iran and NATO but certain NATO countries are holding talks with that country. Iranian policy is fragmented. It is supportive of Karzai government. It is also clear to NATO that Iran wants to disrupt NATO operation in Afghanistan. You may not expect a Shia regime supporting a Sunni regime. Over time NATO wants to get to a situation where Afghans take on their security functions including policing. NATO does not have inside information as to what happens to the ransom money. Pakistan and Afghanistan should discuss this issue between themselves. The drone attack is operation enduring freedom by the US and NATO had nothing to do with it. This matter needs to be resolved by Islamabad and Washington as NATO can not exert pressure on the US in this regard. About the role of regional forces to be part of ISAF was quite tricky. NATO is not soliciting forces from India under ISAF command as it will have political implications nor has India demanded this. NATO was open to other countries joining ISAF but it did not consider neighbours joining in. NATO can not pass a judgment whether Taliban should take part in Afghanistan election as it is for the Afghans to decide. Canadians will leave Qandahar in the spring of 2009 and the Dutch will leave in autumn 2010. The commitment of UK is long term and it is thinking about committing more forces to Afghanistan at present.

**The Pakistan delegation held a meeting with Ambassador Claudio Bisogniero, Deputy Secretary General at the NATO Headquarters.** Ambassador Claudio Bisogniero welcomed the delegation to the NATO Headquarters and said that relations between Pakistan and NATO are becoming more important. There are talks with Pakistan on the sidelines of United Nations and the Security Council and the Pakistan Ambassadors channel is also operated. NATO and Pakistan have a shared interested in the region. Terrorists and militants groups are a danger to everyone including Pakistan. Afghanistan remains the number one operational concern of NATO. It will be a long term operation. Afghanistan will not be solved by military action alone but political dialogue, development and economic support would also be necessary. We think the threat in border area was such that regional cooperation is required. NATO values the troops supply line to Pakistan and is thankful to Pakistan for keeping it open. The Tripartite Commission comprising Pakistan, Afghanistan and NATO is an important instrument and he was glad that it resumed meeting in October 2008.

Senator Nisar A. Memon stated that Pakistan shares the common vision of a peaceful world. It is in the interest of Pakistan to have a stable Afghanistan so that gas could be imported from Turkmenistan. Tripartite dialogue is a good solution and long term must be defined as the operation can not go on indefinitely. Islam does not allow terrorism nor did terrorism had any religion. Afghan refugees should be repatriated as they would be casting their vote in the next Presidential Election. Pakistan can help in the development of Afghanistan especially in infrastructure building. Indian presence in Afghanistan is a cause of concerned and the people of Pakistan are sensitive to that. There is reported insurgency by Indians in Afghanistan. There is Saudi engagement with Taliban and Iran and other neighbours should be included in the talks to find a peaceful solution for Afghanistan.

Senator Dilawar Abbas asked if ISAF had done any evaluation to conclude which objectives are achievable in Afghanistan. Senator Saadia Abbasi stated that Pakistan and Afghanistan had traditional ties and there should be trade and commerce and not military build up on both sides. The new government was coming under pressure and the nascent democracy may face problems. Senator Rukhsana Zuberi referred to the invitation from President Asif Zardari to President Karzai for attending his swearing in ceremony at Islamabad, which showed that Pakistan respects the peace and stability of Afghanistan. Senator Kamran Murtaza asked the following questions:

- i. Is Pakistan not the actual loser because of the drone attacks, attacks by suicide bombers and the presence of Indian Consulates and troops in Afghanistan?
- ii. Is there evidence of direct involvement of Taliban in 9/11?
- iii. Do you consider NATO's role within its charter?
- iv. Will the Afghan government allow the Taliban to contest the forthcoming elections under its manifesto?
- v. To what extent the writ of the Afghan government will prevail after ISAF leaves Afghanistan?

Ambassador Claudio Bisogniero responded that military campaign in Afghanistan was progressing and we are doing everything to eliminate civilian casualties. He said that he had seen videos which showed Taliban meetings taking place with children playing outside the building or the militants dressed in religious robes carrying Kalashnikovs under their robes. NATO is really concerned about poppy cultivation which would be dealt with in the future. We do not say that Islam and terrorism go together as terrorists are different people. Pakistan is a crucial part of the solution and NATO and ISAF would leave when objectives are achieved. Mandate given by the UN is a mandate under the UN charter. The role of Taliban in the next election is for the Afghan government to decide. The ISAF operation is not popular and in many NATO countries the popularity of war was low. Energy security is of concern to NATO and it would do more and plan to do things to dispense energy resources.

**In the afternoon the delegation visited the Supreme Headquarter Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) where it was received by Gen. Sir. John McColl, Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe. The delegation was latter escorted to the Eisenhower Conference Center for three briefings regarding NATO Operations around the World by Lt. Col. Kevin Marcus, Commander Buonerba and Lt. Col. Sekan.**



Senator Nisar A. Memon thanked the hosts for the opportunity to visit SHAPE. He said that the military to military contact and the executive contact is already in place and the Committee's visit was part of the political/parliamentary contact. He asked that how the diverse mix of troops in peacekeeping force used different weapons and how was the assignment of each country's participation arrived at. Is it determined by the military or the political commanders and whether there was any special training for countering suicide bombing? Senator Saadia Abbasi stated that Pakistan's relations with the rest of the world are defined in terms of the war on terror and Pakistan could have been part of many things in Afghanistan but it is not involved. Senator Kamran Murtaza stated that Indian presence on the western border of Pakistan was a cause of concern and it is alleged that Indian forces may be brought under NATO command. Senator Rukhsana Zuberi raised the issue of ransom money and its link to terrorism.

Gen. Sir, John McColl responded that Afghanistan was a regional problem and it is important to understand the politics of the region and move accordingly. When we do an operation we carry out an estimate for the political masters. They need to agree to that. Then we deploy the operation and hold a bidding conference for countries to decide on a nation's representation for cohesion and political authority. The basic training of soldiers

was the responsibility of the nation concerned. We have countries of excellence where nations can go for training.

**On 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2008 the delegation visited the Kashmir Centre, Brussels** where it was received by Mr. Abdul Majid Trambo, Executive Director, Kashmir Centre and Pakistani and Kashmiri Diaspora residing in Belgium. Speaking at the gathering Senators Nisar A. Memon assured Pakistan's complete moral and political support to the Kashmir cause. He reiterated that Pakistan would agree to a solution of the Kashmir issue which also had the blessings of the people of Kashmir. He said that Kashmiris should be included in talks on the Kashmir issue.

In Brussels Ambassador Shafkat Saeed hosted a dinner in honour of the delegation which was largely attended among others by Belgian Parliamentarians, senior NATO officials and diplomats accredited to Belgium. Ambassador Shafkat Saeed besides accompanying the delegation to all the meetings held in Brussels, received and saw off the Pakistan delegation at the Brussels Airport. The fixing of meetings and coordination of the program of the delegation in Belgium was carried out meticulously by the Ambassador and his team, which was highly appreciated by the members of the delegation.

(IFTIKHAR ULLAH BABAR)  
Secretary Committee

(SENATOR NISAR A. MEMON)  
Chairman Committee

### **III. EXCERPTS FROM PROCEEDINGS**

#### **A. UNITED KINGDOM**

##### **1. MEETING AT THE ROYAL MILITARY ACADEMY SANDHURST (RMAS).**

The Defence Committee delegation led by Senator Nisar A. Memon arrived at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (RMAS) at 1100 hours on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2008 after an hours drive from London and was received by Maj. Gen. David Rutherford-Jones, Commandant on the steps of the Academy. The delegation was taken to the Indian Army Memorial Room for a cup of coffee and fresh up. Thereafter, the delegation was ushered to the auditorium of the Academy for briefing by the Commandant and the Chief of Staff of the Academy.



**Maj. Gen. David Rutherford-Jones, Commandant:** Welcome to the Academy. I will just make a few remarks and then handover the briefing part to the Chief of Staff of the Academy. I will join you for the question answer session in due course of time. The Commandant has three responsibilities to carry out.

- i. That relevant training is imparted to the cadets
- ii. Prepare the trainees for leadership
- iii. Preserve, develop and promote the Academy at Sandhurst

The Military Academies in India and Pakistan continue with some of the traditions followed at Sandhurst. Col. Checketts Chief of Staff of the Academy will brief you about the details of the training imparted at the Academy.

**Colonel Checketts, Chief of Staff at Sandhurst:** I am the life support for the training at Sandhurst. The Academy started as a college which was built in 1812 during the Napoleonic war to train officers for cavalry and infantry regiments. The new college came up in 1911 to cater to the requirements of a large army. The victory building came up in 1971. The Academy has 600 acres of land inside the fence and another 1500 acres on the sides. It is 21 miles on crow flight from Hyde Park Corner in London. There is pressure to give up land but the Academy has resisted the pressure. The UK has 100,000 men strong army and the Academy has to train 650 officers each year. Presently there are 75 cadets from overseas. Cadets at the Academy are from diverse background. The recruitment is done by the army and the academy has nothing to do with that process. However, the academy awards bursaries so that deserving students at high school level can continue their studies to join the Academy. There is also a defence technical universities scheme for technical jobs in the army.



The fresh in take in the Academy arrived in September 2008. This batch has 258 new cadets of which 26 are female. It was expected that 60 females would join the Academy in September but that number has been shrinking perhaps due to wars in various parts of the world. Out of the 258 new cadets 84% are university graduates and the average age of the cadets is 23 years but steadily going up with the youngest at 18 and the oldest at 29. As against the target of 8% only 4% are non British ethnics. Presently the Academy has 2 Afghans and 3 Iraqi cadets while a second Chinese is also under training. In the current batch the academy has for the first time received 2 American

cadets and there are a couple of cadets from Saudi Arabia. For the first time the Academy also has 2 female cadets from Yemen. There is also a scheme for cadets who pay for training. Presently there is no Indian cadet in the Academy. 2 Palestinian cadets passed out this summer.

During the training a test exercise spread over three days is carried out outside the Sandhurst premises which test the physical, mental and leadership qualities of the cadets. Army ethos of selfless commitment, courage, discipline, integrity, loyalty and respect for others is inculcated in gentlemen cadets. The course is spread over a period of 144 weeks. About 10% of the cadets have to repeat a particular segment of the course. There are 42 academic lectures and teaching is led by research. The training in senior term lays emphasis on preparing cadets for command assignments, advance leadership, academic studies and other operations. The budget of the academy is £ 38 million.



**Senator Nisar A. Memon:** Thank you for organizing the visit. Both Pakistan and the UK share a common heritage and have common objectives. The first Pakistani Commander in Chief of Pakistan army was trained at Sandhurst. So far Pakistan has sent 785 cadets for training to the Royal Military Academy.

**Senator Asif Jatoi:** Do students from Cambridge and Oxford Universities also join the academy. How many cadets have military connections?

**Colonel Checketts:** The Academy does receive cadets from these universities. 25% of the cadets have no military connection.

**Senator Saadia Abbasi:** Do male and female cadets under go similar training.

**Colonel Checketts:** Female cadets do not carry as much weight and specs however, they do not like this concession but if that concession is not given injury rate may go up.

**Senator Nisar A. Memon:** Are cadets trained for counterterrorism and peacekeeping?

**Colonel Checketts:** In the final term one exercise is devoted to scenarios similar to that of Afghanistan including civil interaction and nation building.

Later the delegation had lunch at the Officers Mess of the Academy. The members mixed with the senior officers of the Academy. Mementoes were also exchanged on the occasion. The delegation later toured the Old College and Memorial Chapel.

## 2. MEETING WITH BARONESS TAYLOR, MINISTER OF STATE FOR INTERNATIONAL DEFENCE AND SECURITY

The delegation held a meeting with Baroness Taylor, Minister of State for International Defence and Security and Spokesperson for Defence in the House of Lords on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2008 at the Ministry of Defence in London.

**Baroness Taylor:** Welcome to the UK and the Ministry of Defence. I do not know Pakistan well. I did travel to Pakistan a few days ago when I was invited by my constituents from Dewsbury. The UK is satisfied with the reopening of supply route for NATO forces in Afghanistan through Pakistan. It is important for working together with Pakistan and the Allied Forces. The Allied Forces are focusing on counter insurgency and they are keen to work with its allies.

**Senator Nisar A. Memon:** Thank you for the invitation to visit UK. The Committee that I lead is a bipartisan Committee representing all the provinces and parties including PPP, PML (N), PML (Q) and JUI (F). It is a great opportunity for me and my delegation to be here in the UK. Pakistan shares a long heritage of British presence in that part of the world and Pakistanis still remember those days with great respect. The British left behind architecture, railways and other infrastructure and now there has been a transformation in Pakistan to complete democracy. Thank you for the help extended to Pakistan in the aftermath of the 2005 earthquake. In 2006 and in June 2008 the UK House of Commons Defence Committee visited us in Pakistan. The DCF meets regularly and many issues have been settled. Now Pakistan wants the facility of Open General License (OGL) with Britain. In the field of training Pakistan is desirous of berths in NBCW courses or war games, which have yet not been offered to Pakistan. Such training if offered will be greatly appreciated. Pakistan and UK have close association in the field of defence production too. Pakistan needs some defence equipment which is mentioned in the list provided to the UK in the DCF meeting.

Pakistan has suffered heavy casualties in the war against terrorism and it hurts when it is said that Pakistan should do more. Pakistan has 120,000 troops on the Western border while allied forces have only 50,000. Last month Pakistan Parliament met in a Joint Session to discuss defence and security issues. In camera presentations were made by the military and civilian authorities. The Parliament adopted a unanimous Resolution resolving to continue the fight against terrorism and further resolved that only Pakistani forces should take action against terrorists in Pakistani territory with credible intelligence from Pakistani, NATO and USA Agencies. The US drone attacks in FATA are a cause of concern to the people of Pakistan. General McKinnon while briefing parliamentarians at the US embassy in Islamabad had said that drone attacks were carried out by the CIA and not the US military. It is a question of Pakistan's sovereignty therefore UK should convey Pakistan's concern about attacks on its territory to the US authorities. In Pakistan British citizens are comparatively safer than American citizens.

Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto started the nuclear programme and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif tested the nuclear system while President Musharraf set up a world standard Command and Control Authority. Pakistan does not believe in transfer of nuclear technology and assures that Pakistani nuclear weapons would not fall into irresponsible or hostile hands. Pakistan is concerned about the presence of 10,000 Indian troops in Afghanistan and asks what they are doing in that country. Indians are fanning insurgency in Pakistani areas. Pakistan is not interfering in the internal affairs of India and expects the same in return.



**Senator Iqbal Zafar Jhagra:** Terrorism in Pakistan is a big challenge for the Parliament and the media. The Parliament of Pakistan has passed a unanimous Resolution which was drafted by a 17 Member Committee. The drafting Committee has stated in black and white that using force would not give any results therefore dialogue should be initiated

with genuine stakeholders. The democratic government in Pakistan should review its foreign policy which would help in resolving the problem of terrorism. The situation would improve if the withdrawal of troops is also considered because allied forces are seen as occupying forces

**Senator Tariq Azeem Khan:** There exists a trust deficit between forces fighting the war against terrorism. It is always said that Pakistan should do more. Pakistan has many check posts along the border with Afghanistan but it can not fight on both sides of the border. Pakistan can not do more. It wants new technology and credible intelligence information. Pakistan has lost many soldiers compared to casualties of all the allied forces put together. My party the PML (Q) has paid a big political price and the present government may also have to pay the price. No government can pledge to do more. The joint Resolution of the Pakistani Parliament talks of dialogue with the stakeholders. All terrorists are not Taliban and all Taliban are not terrorists. Saudis are opening dialogue with Taliban therefore the allied forces can use carrot and strict policy in Afghanistan.

**Senator Ms. Saadia Abbasi:** What is the policy of British Government in Afghanistan? Is there any pressure to bring the troops back home? Is it possible to do so with or without the consent of allied forces? A comprehensive solution is required including the issue pertaining to development and political stability.

**Senator Kamran Murtaza:** Due to the drone attacks negative feelings are emerging in Pakistan against the US and the UK. MI-5 is involved in the unrest in Balochistan. The allied forces should open dialogue with the insurgents instead of using force in the region.

**Senator Syed Dilawar Abbas:** During the briefing of Gen. McKinnon in Islamabad I had asked if the ISAF and the US forces had exit strategy in Afghanistan. The General had responded that he had no knowledge of it but felt that there should be a dialogue with the stakeholders. The people of the region are undergoing a long period of agony. The drug trade in the region has grown manifold but the West has not shown any concern. The bulk of money from the illegal poppy cultivation and drug trade goes into financing terrorism. The UK Government must do something about this.

**Senator Nisar A. Memon:** About \$ 4 billion worth of poppy is grown in Afghanistan of which 56% is contributed by Hilmand province where British troops are based.

**Senator Rukhsana Zuberi:** Kidnapping and abduction for ransom should also be taken into account. The hijackers of oil tankers at high seas made \$ 100 million from ransom over the year. If the amount of ransom money extorted in Pakistan is added to this figure the amount will go up. Local Lashkar came to the help of people but they are helpless. The drone attacks neutralize everything as only Lashkar members were killed. The day after the Parliament passed a unanimous Resolution drones attacked Pakistani territory which compromised the position of the Government. The nuclear programme was initiated by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Nawaz Sharif Government tested the device while Benazir Bhutto initiated the missiles program. Bangladesh is a radical Muslim country

but there is no insurgency. If the world decides not to accept military dictators many things will be resolved.

**Senator Nisar A. Memon:** UK and Pakistan meet at the DCF Forum while India meets UK at the DCG Forum. The UK team for both these forums is the same therefore Pakistan feels uncomfortable dealing with the same UK team. Dr. Afia Siddiqui, who is in a US prison, should be released and human rights honoured. Pakistan desires to further reinforce its defence relations with the UK.

**Baroness Taylor:** While discussing Afghanistan the UK can not forget Pakistan. Mr. Jack Straw the then Secretary of Foreign Affairs managed to intervene between Pakistan and India during the 2002 stand off between the armies of the two countries and brought the situation between the two Countries back to normal. We know that 1300 people have been killed in Pakistan due to terrorism. It is a difficult situation for everybody. I was pleased to know about the unanimous Resolution passed by the Pakistan Parliament.



Presently there is no exit strategy for the allied forces from Afghanistan. There is a long way to go and we have to think about it. There can be a negative impact about our involvement in Afghanistan and Iraq but people forget why we engaged in the region. Following the 9/11 terrorist attacks a UN Resolution was passed which gives a clear mandate to the presence of allied forces in Afghanistan. There was a direct threat to our countries and that is still the basic reason for this operation. There is no time line for withdrawal because we need a comprehensive solution. A sustainable government has to be established which can deal with corruption and poppy cultivation. Winning militarily is important but that is not the only way. It will take sometime to get through.

British soldiers are also laying their lives in Afghanistan. We have to resolve development issues. Schools were built but have been destroyed. We want to consolidate development progress. Pulling out troops will not help the situation as it is not a quick fix situation. What happens on the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan is important even thousand check points can not bring improvement. The issue of drone attacks has to be handled carefully. High value target is a different issue. I agree that the UK and other countries could in certain circumstances talk to certain people. President Hamid Karzai made it clear that there could be points of contact with people who are not involved in terrorism. The UK is clear about its commitments. It is important to first develop the security forces of Afghanistan and we are trying to do that before the ISAF forces leave. The UK Chief of Defence was in Pakistan to talk to the authorities on how to improve the situation. The UK has strong defence relations with Pakistan. I am glad that the Committee has oversight role and scrutinizes the affairs of the Ministry of Defence.

The meeting concluded with exchange of mementoes.

### **3. BRIEFING BY THE BRITISH FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE.**

The delegation of the Standing Committee on Defence and Defence Production was briefed by Mr. Adam Thomson, Director Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2008.

**Mr. Adam Thomson:** Welcome to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Pakistan is the top priority of the British Foreign Secretary. He is focused on what is going on in Pakistan and with Pakistan. The UK needs a long term and productive relation with Pakistan not because of love for Pakistan but because of its own interests. Our security concerns are that whatever is going on have some links to FATA. We look for wider and deeper relationship with Pakistan especially military to military relationship. It has developed productively over the period, with both sides learning from each other. The UK finds it enormously encouraging that Pakistan had an election and a civil government. It is in the interest of UK to do what it can to support democracy in Pakistan which is in the UK's interest.

**Senator Nisar A. Memon:** Thank you for arranging this briefing. Pakistan shares the perception of democracy and human rights with the UK. Pakistan is quite sensitive about guarding its territorial sovereignty. Last month the joint session of parliament passed a Resolution and we want the UK to come closer to the contents of that Resolution. Pakistani forces are fighting the war against terrorism and now it is time that the allied forces did more. Previously the US left Afghanistan without developing it socially and economically and opened a war theatre in Iraq. Now the US is back and this time with drone attacks. The causes of terrorism are linked to poverty therefore UK should help in the socio-economic development of Afghanistan. Pakistan needs some defence equipment the list of which was provided to the UK authorities in the DCF meeting.

**Senator Rukhsana Zuberi:** FATA has been affected by terrorism and an integrated plan is required. We have already held talks with Parliamentarians in Germany and Afghanistan on the sidelines of conferences and workshops which helped in understanding the situation better.

**Senator Tariq Azeem Khan:** Does the UK differentiate between the Taliban and terrorists and what is the policy of the UK government on holding talks with the Taliban because previously Pakistan was criticized for holding talks with Taliban.

**Senator Saadia Abbasi:** The new government is facing challenges and there could be problems. It is imperative for the allied forces to understand the internal dynamics of Pakistan. The war in Afghanistan is sending negative signals about the allied forces.

**Senator Kamran Murtaza:** Has the UK found any evidence of Taliban's involvement in terrorism post 9/11. What is your evaluation of the pre and post war situation in Afghanistan?



**Mr. Adam Thomson:** The UK government is impressed by the unanimous approval of the Resolution by Pakistan Parliament. The security establishment of Pakistan should build on that. There is no evidence of Taliban involvement in 9/11. The action in Afghanistan was the result of Taliban Government's reluctance to hand over the organizers of 9/11 to the US. The UK has 3 fold objectives in the region.

- i. Elimination of Al Qaeda in Afghanistan and FATA.
- ii. To ensure that the extremist government which played host to Al Qaeda does not return to Afghanistan. and

- iii. Help build a moderate Afghan state to accomplish the first two objectives.

The UK was encouraged to talk to Taliban. We split them into two groups, one which wants to reconcile and the other which does not. There is no military solution to Afghanistan and FATA. It has to be resolved through negotiations. The UK is interested in establishing the writ of the Afghan government across the country and the UK will be indifferent to Taliban joining the political mainstream. It is difficult to make a generalization between terrorism and Taliban. Marriot Hotel bombing in Islamabad has a Taliban dimension. Political deals can be struck with previously violent people who want to join the mainstream. The UK feels solidarity with Pakistan for the terrorism which has Taliban dimension especially the Haqqani network. The UK will agree to dialogue with any group that the Afghan government agreed to talk to as it is Afghanistan's sovereign judgment. The Saudi dialogue with Taliban has got wide publicity which has not helped the situation. The UK does understand the position Pakistan military and political establishment faces in FATA and our concern is about tension between the short term and long term effort. The UK understands that socio-economic development will help in fighting terrorism and supports the US funding going into FATA. The short term problem is the violence in the tribal belt which arouses fear of terrorism in the UK. I agree that ISAF entry into Afghanistan has attracted violence to drive foreign forces out. Mistakes were made by not including Taliban in the Bonn process and earlier not defeating them clearly. Historian will debate this issue but unfortunately we are where we are.

**Senator Iqbal Zafar Jhagra:** Is there any thinking on devising a policy for withdrawal of forces from Afghanistan?

**Mr. Adam Thomson:** We are waiting to find out what the Obama Administration policy will be in Afghanistan because President-elect Obama says there will be a surge along side the political track. Missile attacks in FATA can be destabilizing.

**Senator Nisar Memon:** What about the fate of 2 million Afghan refugees in Pakistan and whether the UK is working with UNHCR for their repatriation.

**Mr. Adam Thomson:** The UK is working with UNHCR but we need to move millions of refugees and that has to be done progressively.

**Senator Asif Jatoi:** Does the UK have its own policy on Afghanistan or is it following the US policy.

**Mr. Adam Thomson:** We will not accomplish anything if the US does not do so. The US has moved to reconciliation and community outreach in the last year. Foreign policy is a triangulation of different perceptions.

The meeting concluded with exchange of mementoes.

#### 4. MEETING WITH THE UK HOUSE OF COMMONS DEFENCE COMMITTEE

A meeting of the delegation of the Standing Committee on Defence and Defence Production was held with the UK House of Commons Defence Committee on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2008 at the British Parliament, London. The Pakistan delegation was led by Senator Nisar A. Memon while the UK side was led by its Defence Committee Chairman, Rt. Hon. James Arbuthnot MP.

**Rt. Hon. James Arbuthnot:** Welcome to the U.K and the British Parliament. It is a pleasure to see you in London soon after our meeting in Islamabad in July 2008. Since we met recently we know where our countries positions are presently and the issue is at the top of defence agenda regarding the defence equipment for Pakistan. The matter was discussed in the UK Defence Committee yesterday and there is a problem in the Ministry of Defence about the decision on this. President Karzai of Afghanistan visited the UK last week and it was decided that 2000 extra UK troops would go to Afghanistan. He did not know whether this information was correct but the Government does not admit. This visit of the Pakistan Senate Defence Committee should be taken as a first of series of visit to the UK.



**Senator Nisar A. Memon:** Thank you for the invitation to visit the UK. Our two Committees met in Islamabad in 2006 and 2008 and it was found that the interaction was necessary. The Government to Government interaction is good and the 10<sup>th</sup> DCF meeting was also held recently. There has been a major change since we last met. We have presented the report of our last discussion with you to the Senate. I think once a year meeting is possible whereby the Senate Committee can come after every six months and so could the UK House of Commons Defence Committee but it will depend on the

finances available with the House of Commons and the Senate of Pakistan. Last month a joint Parliamentary Session was called and a presentation was made by a senior military officer on the security situation around Pakistan. It was an in camera meeting so that every body could discuss openly. A unanimous Resolution was adopted at the end of the Session. It was decided that war against terrorism will not be a military affair only but will have political content too. It was decided to open dialogue with stakeholders and Lashkars be formed to fight terrorists. It also condemned the violation of our territorial integrity. The military is engaged in the war against terrorism. Pakistan has done a lot in the war against terrorism and has suffered many casualties but the perception in the US is different. Pakistan has 120,000 troops as against 50,000 ISAF troops. We think the joint Resolution must be honoured. Since UK is working closely with the US you may like to convey to them to stop drone attacks in Pakistani territory. Our sovereignty has been challenged.

**Mr. Adam Holloway, MP:** If we did not win the war against terrorism could you tell us as to what can be done.

**Senator Tariq Azeem Khan:** The entire policy regarding Afghanistan and Pakistan needs to be revisited. The drone attacks in FATA are causing collateral damage. It has direct effect on Pakistan. Every time there is a drone attack we have a problem. We are asked to do more although we lost 600 soldiers in this operation. We lack finances and equipment but if you can give us both we can carry on. There should be complete trust between us as 50% trust will not do.



**Mr. Adam Holloway MP:** What should we do to drive the drivers to operation?

**Senator Tariq Azeem Khan:** There should be a distinction between the Taliban and the terrorists. The Saudis are talking to Taliban in Afghanistan and that should continue.

**Rt. Hon. James Arbuthnot:** The US has said that these are not US drones. We in Britain are not informed what the US is doing. We might go to Russia next year and your dialogue with the US is absolutely essential therefore your Committee needs to go there. Discussion between your Committee and the US Armed Services Committee is also essential.

**Senator Tariq Azeem Khan:** The US agrees to the drone attacks but they say the CIA is doing it.

**Senator Nisar A. Memon:** The UK should look at the Helmed province where 56% poppy is grown, which has a value of \$ 4 billion in the international market. Karzai is the president of Afghanistan but his writ does not cover the entire country. The UK need to engage Afghans on the issue of poppy cultivation. Why are the Afghans not stopped to grow poppy? Drugs and arms have a close nexus and it brings a bad name to your country.

**Rt. Hon. James Arbuthnot:** Britain has accepted the responsibility to be the lead nation but what alternative crops can be introduced to substitute poppy. Security is the main issue and the police have to be strengthened.

**Senator Nisar A. Memon:** Afghanistan as neighbour is important for us because we have to import gas from Turkmenistan. Presently the environment is not safe and the Kabul Government is surviving because of the presence of ISAF. Local engagement in Afghanistan is important and if you finance their development especially roads, hospitals and schools it will have an impact. Pakistan does not talk of the strategic depth in Afghanistan any more. The ISAF must have an exit plan, a well coordinated plan not like the one when the US left Afghanistan and opened a war theatre in Iraq. India must not interfere in parts of Pakistan in connivance with other countries because the people of Pakistan will resist that. Balkanization of the region will be dangerous and the UK should step up its efforts to help the situation.

**Mr. Dai Havard, MP:** Any solution may be a regional solution. I was interested in your political development. The Prime Minister of Pakistan had told us in July 2008 that his administration is coming in. Now that you have a new President so what is the update on the situation. Both Pakistan and Afghanistan have said that the border between the two countries was porous so in that context did they put up a joint intelligence gathering mechanism.

**Senator Nisar Memon:** Joint meeting with Afghanistan are held quite frequently. Sometimes the statements of President of Afghanistan deteriorate the situation although President Zardari invited him to Islamabad for his swearing in ceremony. There is a trust deficit between the two countries but there is a change with the installation of the new President to work with Pakistan.

**Mr. Dai Havard, MP:** We need to know why would somebody come from Langley and shoot the wrong people.

**Senator Nisar A. Memon:** We are working with the approach that this is our problem. We are looking for an out of box solution with India. The political engagement with stakeholders will help you and your forces. Pakistan has liaison office in London and you have a liaison office in Pakistan but this cooperation should be extended. The people of Pakistan are asking their Government to take action. Enough is enough.

**Senator Tariq Azeem Khan:** The US is talking about bringing India into the game. It would be very problematic for Pakistan. Pakistan's sovereignty has to be honoured.

**Mr. Adam Holloway MP:** I agree with that.

**Mr. Bernard Jenkins, MP:** The impression we got from Islamabad was that there is a dysfunctional engagement between the army and the civil administration and that ISI is undermining the situation.

**Senator Tariq Azeem Khan:** There is trust deficit between Pakistan and the UK and that has to go. When you mention ISI the antennas go up as they are not an outside force.

**Senator Asif Jatoi:** Does the UK consider ISI a rogue security agency. We want a stable Afghanistan as it is our neighbour.

**Mr. Bernard Jenkins MP:** There are rogue elements in the ISI. How can we assist you to address this situation? Our agencies are responsible to us and there accounts are checked and there are no foreign accounts.

**Senator Saadia Abbasi:** History is the excess baggage that we are carrying. Has the government got the resources to engage in all operations? The US gave \$ 5 billion for the war against terrorism to Pakistan. Now they think that this did not have the desired result and it is not reimbursing the amount spent by Pakistan lately. The Advisor on Finance to the Prime Minister of Pakistan has said that we are facing financial crunch because of this. There should be a check to find out why the amount spent did not bring the desired result. The out side world should support the civilian set up in Pakistan. It may be inefficient or whatever perception you may have but it is a coalition government and even the religious parties are on board. Sovereignty of our country should be ensured. Stability of the region is important. We do not recognize Taliban, for me they are terrorists. They kill innocent people. They killed our soldiers and at one point killing 10 soldiers in a day which is too much. I am sure your constituents may be asking you to pull out troops from Afghanistan.

**Senator Kamran Murtaza:** Did the Taliban become terrorists before or after ISAF came to Afghanistan. Is there any evidence that they were involved in 9/11?

**Senator Nisar A. Memon:** The Pakistan military has told the leadership that you are the political masters tells us what to do. The civilian government said that the operation can not be stopped but at the same time negotiations are important. When the financial crunch came the Chief of Army Staff decided not to go ahead with the construction of new GHQ in Islamabad. On the issue of terrorism, sovereignty and sensitive assets all stakeholders in Pakistan have the same view.

**Rt. Hon. James Arbuthnot:** The members of my Committee and I have realized that Pakistan is indeed well involved in the war against terrorism and that Pakistan lost more troops. We know that your previous and new President and Prime Minister have also faced terrorist threats. Do not go back with a view that we think that Pakistan is not doing much. We assure Pakistan's sovereignty. I don't know how much we can intercede but you should take it up the drone issue with the US directly. It was a major step to invite President Karzai to Islamabad for the swearing in of President Zardari. The invitation to Karzai received wide publicity and I think that things are improving. We mentioned our meeting with your Prime Minister to President Karzai and he said he had all the respects for your Prime Minister.

The meeting concluded with exchange of mementoes.

5. **MEETING OF THE DELEGATION WITH MR. GREGORY LUPTON, ASSISTANT HEAD OF AFGHANISTAN POLICY, MINISTRY OF DEFENCE ON JOINT COMMITMENTS INCLUDING AFGHANISTAN**

**Mr. Gregory Lupton:** Welcome to the Ministry of Defence. Pakistan military had been doing great work in the border area. There will be elections in Afghanistan next year and the new US administration is also coming in January 2009. We will have to see where ISAF will go. I would be glad to answer any questions that you may have.

**Senator Nisar A. Memon:** We appreciate today's meeting. I think the UK and Pakistan should stay together especially on your appreciation of Pakistan army's contribution. It is important that other allies should be briefed on that. What is important for us to understand is the poppy phenomena and why it has not been raised with Afghanistan. What is your intelligence agencies information about funding to the Taliban movement? What is your assessment of the writ of Karzai's Government and what is the assessment about him for the next Presidential elections in Afghanistan. Who are the other candidates and the level of your interaction with them? Pakistan has good cooperation with the UK Ministry of Defence following the DCF meeting. Most of the issues pertaining to licenses were resolved. We want to know your views about granting general sales license to Pakistan. How are your forces operating in Afghanistan and what are their logistic problems. Are your supplies coming through Pakistan and what are the problems?

**Mr. Gregory Lupton:** The UK is supporting development, reconstruction and governance in Afghanistan. We have a senior diplomat in Hilmand province to coordinate all those activities. We have made some progress on that and looked at the case of offenders and livelihood for the formers. Drug money is funding the insurgency.

The approach is very seasonal. Teams go into the area to destroy crops when it is growing and then stopping the product going to the market. The activity of the ISAF is to support the government to come into the inaccessible areas. Presently 60% of Hilmand province is under the ISAF and Afghan forces. The Key issue on the security side is voter registration so that there is limited intimidation to people who want to vote. It is too early to say who the other Presidential candidates would be. Our job is to assist Afghan forces in providing security to the run up to the Presidential Elections. We are working with the office of the Governor and the Line ministries so that there is capacity in the civil structure. There is a dialogue whether our forces have sufficient equipment. Now they have more equipment and the commanders have greater flexibility. The UK has good cooperation with the Government of Pakistan and we are moving equipment through the South of Pakistan into Qandahar. There are other routes and lines of communication as well. Qandahar Airport has also been expanded.

**Senator Nisar A. Memon:** What type of equipment are the Taliban using and whether ISAF has captured any equipment in their use. If a delegation from the UK wants to visit Hilmand when would they go and whether a Pakistan delegation could go there.



**Mr. Gregory Lupton:** It is a government to government understanding. We work closely with the media and the UK; Chief of Staff just returned from Afghanistan and briefed the media. We also work with the Red Cross and some NGOs which are instrumental in Afghanistan. So there is a large network of actors in that area including the UN. The Taliban command and control is mostly based in the South in Qandahar and beyond and the Government of Pakistan knows about this. Our approach has to be political and we need to bring development to Hilmand which will have an impact. The ISAF are not structured as an insurgency apparatus.

**Senator Kamran Murtaza:** Will there be any change in Afghanistan policy after the new US government takes office and will the UK follow that policy. Do the ISAF have control of the Pukhtun area? Has poppy growth increased or decreased in the recent past and will you allow Taliban to contest the next election with their agenda.

**Mr. Gregory Lupton:** The UK will work closely with the new US administration and ISAF. It is not easy to say how the new US government will deal with certain issues. We want to work with all our partners. We want a stable Afghanistan and we want to develop their army, police and public services. I do not know if President Karzai has any control on Pukhtun area but being an ethnic Pukhtun he has close ties with them. If you look across Afghanistan the poppy growth picture is different. In some areas it has gone down while in others it has increased. The Governors have a different approach to the problem. In Hilmand there is a minor reduction and we are monitoring it on a year to year basis. I am not aware if Taliban is one entity and will stand as one party in the elections. All parties are part of the process and will depend on how the Afghan Government reaches out on this issue. The Saudis are working with President Karzai to talk to the Taliban. President Karzai and President Zardari also talked on these issues pertaining to the overall solution of the problem.

**Senator Kamran Murtaza:** Was Afghanistan stable during the Taliban or is it more stable now.

**Mr. Gregory Lupton:** In the 1990s there was terrorist training which was a danger to the world. We are not seeing that threat coming from Afghanistan any more and that is the positive thing. The Afghan government authority has grown after 9/11 and it is more stable than the Taliban Government.

**Senator Saadia Abbasi:** Thank you for the positive comments about the role of Pakistan army. The Pakistan army is under a lot of stress due to the operation because there is a political fall out of the drone attacks. The political force is also supporting them. The US Government is not reimbursing costs incurred by Pakistan in the war against terrorism since last year.

**Senator Rukhsana Zuberi:** The drone attacks are exerting pressure on the political government in Pakistan as it is construed as an attack on our sovereignty. This should be stopped immediately. It was mentioned by the Afghan Government that two of our ministers had negative remarks about women. Has it been brought to the notice of President Karzai that a congregation of 500 women held in Kabul brought an issue of a woman to his notice and he told them that it was part of their custom and left the congregation? Is the UK aware of kidnappings taking place from Pakistan to Afghanistan? Ransom money is collected overseas and data should be collected on the kidnapping and the sums of money involved because all this money is channeled into funding terrorist activities. Over a period of one month 66 people were kidnapped in Karachi and taken to NWFP and Balochistan. Some Senators also paid up ransom money to the kidnapers. We met President Karzai in Kabul and he was happy about being invited to the swearing in ceremony of President Zardari.

**Mr. Gregory Lupton:** This will definitely help us and we will look into this.

**Senator Asif Jatoi:** Does the UK have its own policy or does it follow US policy.

**Mr. Gregory Lupton:** We have our own policy and the UK Government follows the people. The Ministers follow the people. The British people had reservations over Iraq but they supported Afghanistan action.

**Senator Saadia Abbasi:** From credible sources we have information about the involvement of India in the unrest in NWFP and we do not doubt the veracity of these reports. If the idea is to destabilize Pakistan as was done in 1971 then it will not succeed and will not be accepted. The views of the people of Pakistan and the Government of Pakistan are very strong about this.

The meeting concluded with exchange of mementoes.

## **6. VISIT TO MARTIN-BAKER**

The delegation visited Martin-Baker on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2008. This manufacturing unit produces ejection seats for the Pakistan Air Force. The delegation was first briefed by the senior management of the company and later taken around various shop floors of the factory.



The history of the Pakistan Air Force's relationship with Martin-Baker is almost as old as the Air Force itself. The Royal Pakistan Air Force (RPAF) was formed in 1947 following the Partition of India. Initially it had no jet aircraft, but by the early 1950s

British Super marine Attacker aircraft had been acquired, fitted with an early Martin-Baker seat type, the Mk 2A. The first squadron equipped with these aircraft was the Number-11 "Arrow". The Attacker had a rather unsatisfactory service in the Pakistan Air Force with frequent attrition and maintenance problems. Consequently, the Attacker remained in service only until 1956 and there are no recorded ejections from this aircraft. In 1956 the Pakistan Air Force received the first of 102 F-86F Sabre 6 aircraft from America, fitted with US ejection seats, followed by 90 ex-German Air Force F-86 Sabre 6 aircraft (known locally as F-86E) that had been retro-fitted with Martin-Baker Mk GW5 ejection seats. In the mid-1960s acquisition of aircraft from Western sources was limited by an arms embargo, so the Pakistan Air Force started a relationship with China that continues to this day. As part of the post-1965 replacement and expansion program, the Pakistan Air Force acquired 60 Chinese Shenyang F-6s, the Chinese version of the MiG-19. These were initially flown fitted with the Chinese ejection seats with which they had been delivered, but a high aircraft attrition rate and poor ejection recovery performance lead the Pakistan Air Force to replace the Chinese seats with a safer Martin-Baker seat type. The Pakistan Air Force F-6 was the first aircraft in the world to see operational service with the Martin-Baker Mk 10 seats, the Mk PKD10. The Mk 10 seat, and its lightweight derivative the 10L, became the mainstay Martin-Baker ejection seat for the 1970s through to the 1990s, fitted to a multitude of aircraft types, and the 10L remains in production to the present day.



Starting in the 1970s, the PAF has acquired a significant number of Dassault Mirage III and Mirage 5 aircraft from a variety of sources, variously fitted with Martin-Baker Mk 4 and Mk 6 seats (Mk PRM4, and PRM6). The Chinese F-6 ejection seat approach paved the way for several Chinese manufactured aircraft that followed into Pakistan Air Force service. Aircraft were delivered to Pakistan fitted with Chinese ejection seats, which were then immediately replaced by Martin-Baker seats before

entering service (except for the K-8 where the Martin-Baker seat was fitted at the factory, before delivery).

The Pakistan Air Force has an impressive success rate with live ejections using Martin-Baker seats. Since 1966 there have been 184 Pakistan Air Force ejections reported to Martin-Baker, of which 96% were successful. The small number that were not successful can generally be explained by 'out of envelope' ejections. In 2002 Martin-Baker received a contract to supply the Mk 16 seat for the latest Sino-Pakistan collaborative aircraft, the Chengdu Super-7 (now JF-17). The Mk 16 seat type is the very latest of the Martin-Baker seat family, and has become the mainstay replacing the 1970s heritage Mk 10L seat as the choice for most new aircraft programmes for which Martin-Baker has been selected. Like its Mk 10 / 10L seat predecessor, the Mk 16 seat has already firmly established itself, with several variants in service, or soon to enter service. Although a Martin-Baker Mk 16 seat, the Mk CN16LE, has been delivered and fitted to the prototype PT4 aircraft, in a break from previous practice the future for the Martin-Baker Mk 16 seat in the JF-17 is currently uncertain, with the Pakistan Air Force appearing to favour the Chinese ejection seat. However, a final selection for the full scale production aircraft has yet to be made. For the production of JF-17 Martin-Baker continues to offer one of the most advanced variants of the Mk 16 seat family, the Mk PK16LE seat with the latest technology advances.



**Senator Nisar A. Memon:** Thank you for the visit and the comprehensive briefing, the lunch goes without saying.

## 7. MEETING AT KASHMIR CENTER LONDON

On 20<sup>th</sup> November 2008 Senators Nisar A. Memon, Rukhsana Zuberi and Naeem Hussain Chattha attended a dinner meeting at the Kashmir Centre, London where they were received by Mr. Nazeer Shawl, In Charge of the Center and a large number of Kashmiri and Pakistani Diaspora. The Senators spoke on the occasion and assured Pakistan's complete moral and political support to the Kashmir cause. The Senators unequivocally told the gathering that Pakistan will agree to a solution of the Kashmir issue which also had the blessings of the people of Kashmir. They also supported the idea that Kashmiris should be included in the talks between India and Pakistan on the Kashmir issue.



#### IV. EXCERPTS FROM PROCEEDINGS

##### B. BELGIUM

###### 1. MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR. ROBERT F. SIMMONS, JR., DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL FOR SECURITY COOPERATION AND PARTNERSHIP, POLITICAL AFFAIRS AND SECURITY POLICY DIVISION ON 21<sup>ST</sup> NOVEMBER 2008 IN BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

**Ambassador Robert F. Simmons:** Welcome to NATO Headquarters. NATO does not see any block or groups as a threat. We see terrorism, proliferation and commodity prices as a genuine threat. NATO has extended its relations with countries of the Mediterranean. The current view is that more members should join the alliance. In 2003 in a summit meeting in Istanbul it was decided to focus on the Caucuses region and Central Asia. There is willingness in NATO to continue operations for peace and stability and for stopping ethnic cleansing. With that in view operations were carried out in Kosovo and Macedonia. Now an operation is going on in Afghanistan and our militaries are restructured to meet the desired objectives. It is no secret that we need all the resources for operations in Afghanistan. NATO is a security alliance but we have a wider range of activities to perform. NATO also helps in disasters not for military purposes but because military mobilizes early. NATO has a scientific activity for scientific problems. There is also a public diplomacy department and NATO is an important place for political consultation. ISAF has been moved from the West to the East. Contacts with Pakistan have expanded and NATO came to Pakistan's assistance in the 2005 earthquake. There is a good dialogue with Pakistan and Pakistan's interest in Central Asia is known to us. We can discuss broader issues like proliferation but there could be disagreements. There is a triangular affair to carry out dialogue consisting of NATO, Pakistan and the Embassy of Pakistan. There is military to military dialogue but the civilian dialogue is also important.

**Senator Nisar A. Memon:** Thank you for providing us an opportunity to meet the top officials of NATO. We thank NATO for the assistance during the 2005 earthquake. The President of Pakistan had taken an initiative to invite President Karzai for his swearing in ceremony. Pakistan is committed to the war against terrorism and it has suffered more casualties than NATO which has 50,000 troops whereas Pakistan has 120,000 troops. Last month the Parliament of Pakistan passed a unanimous Resolution in its joint session wherein presentations were made by the military and the civilian representatives. A 17 member Committee had been formed to implement the Resolution. The Resolution states that along side military operation there should be political dialogue with stakeholders in the region. The concept of Lashkar, dealing with local negotiations, has also been initiated. A new development which is the cause of concern for the people of Pakistan is the drone attacks by the US in FATA. Even on the second day of the passage of the Resolution a drone attack was carried out. Pakistan feels that these attacks should be carried out by its forces after credible intelligence information has been exchanged with

Allied Forces. These attacks undermine our sovereignty besides causing collateral damage. It is giving a bad name to the US and the NATO forces.

Pakistan still has 2 million Afghan refugees and there is pressure on the Government to expedite the rehabilitation effort as presently we have our own displaced persons from Bajaur and Swat in the North West Frontier Province. The people of Pakistan feel that they have done a lot and now it is for the other side to do more. There is a long porous border and a lot of people cross the border from both sides. The biometrics equipment which was provided to monitor the movement of people was destroyed. It is a difficult situation despite the check posts on either side. Pakistan respects the sovereignty of Afghanistan and wants a stable Afghanistan as its neighbour. Pakistan is concerned about the presence of 10,000 Indian troops in Afghanistan on the border with Pakistan. Our delegation told the UK authorities that the British troops are located in the Hilmand province but despite that 86% of the area is under poppy cultivation which produces \$ 4 billion worth of narcotics and the money from that trade goes into terrorism. Military to military contact is there but we need to have political dialogue as well. Pakistan desires a stable Afghanistan so that development can take place and Pakistan can bring gas from Turkmenistan. Karzai is localized to the Kabul area. Presidential election in Afghanistan is coming up which should be credible. What are NATO's plans for development of Afghanistan?

**Senator Saadia Abbasi:** We appreciate and thank NATO for the human operation carried out by it in the 2005 earthquake affected areas in northern Pakistan. Recently 2 attacks were carried out on NATO Convoy, how this route can be secured as the resources of Pakistan military are limited.

**Senator Kamran Murtaza:** The drone attacks in FATA are a cause of concern for every Pakistani. He asked the following questions:

- i. Does the NATO charter authorize it to operate outside Europe?
- ii. Does President Karzai enjoy writ in the Pukhtun areas of Afghanistan
- iii. What would happen after the NATO forces withdraw from Afghanistan and.
- iv. Has poppy cultivation increased or decreased after the routing of Taliban Government.

**Senator Syed Dilawar Abbas:** Is there any conflict of interest in ISAF and NATO forces and what fall out does it have. I asked General McKinnon in Islamabad about any exit strategy of ISAF forces to which he responded that there was none. I also raised the issue of increase in poppy cultivation in Afghanistan and Gen. McKinnon told me that they had no mandate to check poppy cultivation.

**Senator Rukhsana Zuberi:** NATO engagement in Afghanistan was for the strengthening of the rule of law in that country. The out come is that in Pakistan our own security and stability has been challenged and a situation arrived when Marriot Hotel bombing took place in the heart of the capital. The very next day after the passage of the

unanimous Resolution in the joint session of Parliament drone attack was carried out in FATA. Is the will of the people of Pakistan not important for the ISAF and NATO forces? The space to maneuver for the elected government has squeezed.

**Ambassador Robert F. Simmons:** NATO is not focusing on border issues. NATO went into Afghanistan under the mandate of United Nations as Afghanistan was a failed state and a security threat to the world. The question of governance is also an issue. Localized development projects are successfully going on but the Afghan government has to take over. UNAMA Chief is facing financial constraint from the UN. NATO is working to develop the National Army of Afghanistan and in Kabul they have already taken over responsibilities. Narcotics statistics have gone up and down over time. The recent report says that it has gone down but I am not minimizing the issue. Concentration is required in areas which are not under control. NATO will focus on production centers, supply routes and laboratories. NATO works in collaboration with UNOCD. There is conflict between ISAF and NATO thinking as these are different operations but the commander is common. NATO respects the sovereignty of Pakistan and is not conducting a security operation in Pakistan as it is the job of Pakistan itself but supply routes to the ISAF and NATO forces should be kept open. Turkmenistan is supplying fuel for NATO forces in Afghanistan.

**Ambassador Shafkat Saeed:** France is interested in a Conference on Afghanistan to which India would also be invited.

**Ambassador Robert F. Simmons:** NATO has no role in that nor would it be invited. It is something like 6+2 structure of the Taliban time. It is not a NATO but a French idea.

**Senator Nisar A. Memon:** Extending the dialogue to other countries of the region may complicate the situation. A +3 situation would be okay.

**Ambassador Shafkat Saeed:** Bucharest Conference will focus on development including the pledges not fulfilled by donor so far.

**Ambassador Robert F. Simmons:** It is UNAMA's issue and not of NATO.

Meeting concluded on vote thanks to both sides.

2. **MEETING WITH MR. MARTIN HOWARD CB, ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL, OPERATIONS DIVISION NATO ON 21<sup>ST</sup> NOVEMBER 2008**

**Mr. Martin Howard:** Welcome to NATO Headquarters. It is a pleasure having you here. I have dealt with many operations and Afghanistan is the biggest of them all. This operation will continue for months and years. It needed a military plan to carry out this operation which is based on 4 pillars.

- i. Joint long term commitment to the operation. There are problems pertaining to inadequate helicopters and shortage of some battalions.
- ii. Building Afghan leadership as NATO can not take responsibility of security of Afghanistan indefinitely. Afghanistan National Army is in a batter position now and NATO concern remains about the problem of corruption in Afghanistan Police.
- iii. There has to be comprehensive approach of the role of NATO and ISAF. In spring 2008 NATO was encouraged by the UNAMA mandate. NATO has senior level representatives in Afghanistan and helps the authorities to bring coherence to the alliance.
- iv. All this needs to be seen in the regional context as Afghanistan can not be taken in isolation. The NATO Secretary General is due to visit Pakistan soon. The alliance is keen to promote a broader relationship between Pakistan and NATO.

The year 2008 has been a tough year. The insurgency had become intense but has not spread. The insurgency gives the perception that security is bad and perception counts. When the foreign ministers would meet in Brussels in a week's time they would discuss how to deal with that perception and crucially how NATO could facilitate elections in Afghanistan. The narcotics trade has a distorted impact therefore the Defence Minister's have resolved to do more work with the Afghan government. NATO's job is not to destroy poppy crop or provide alternative jobs but is to look after cross border security aspects. NATO will have to look at the US policy on Afghanistan after Mr. Obama takes oath of office as the President of the US.

**Senator Nisar A. Memon:** Pakistan is feeling the brunt of the US drone attacks but it still continues to fight the war against terrorism. Is NATO planning to involve Iran since a regional approach is required? You said that NATO will stay in Afghanistan for a long time but you did not mention the time frame. When will the forces of Afghanistan take over responsibilities in their country so that neighbours can feel comfortable? Pakistan has ensured that supply routes to NATO forces in Afghanistan through Pakistan remain open.

**Senator Rukhsana Zuberi:** In FATA people are abducted for ransom and the ransom money is funneled into financing terrorism. Drone attacks are exerting a lot of pressure on the Government of Pakistan as the people are against the US and they are asking what the government is doing on that account.

**Senator Syed Dilawar Abbas:** What is your assessment of the time frame required by NATO to develop security apparatus in Afghanistan and its subsequent withdrawal from that Country?

**Senator Kamran Murtaza:**

- i. Can the security of Afghanistan be left to the regional forces
- ii. Has NATO found any Al Qaeda link in Afghanistan?
- iii. Will NATO allow Taliban to contest elections in Afghanistan under their agenda?

**Senator Saadia Abbasi:** There is pressure on the regional countries for exit of ISAF and NATO forces from Afghanistan.

**Senator Naeem Hussain Chattha:** What are the functions of Indian Consulates in Afghanistan along the border with Pakistan?

**Ambassador Shafkat Saeed:** Indians have a Consulate in Zahidan in Iran, a city where there are no Indians.

**Senator Nisar Memon:** It is said that Indian forces are being brought under NATO command in Afghanistan. What is your take on this?

**Mr. Martin Howard:** There is little contact between Iran and NATO but certain NATO countries are holding talks with that country. Iranian policy is fragmented. It is supportive of Karzai Government. It is also clear to NATO that Iran wants to disrupt its operation in Afghanistan. You may not expect a Shia regime supporting a Sunni regime. It will take years to exit from Afghanistan. Over time NATO wants to get to a situation where Afghans take on their security functions including policing. We have read press and intelligence report about abductions. I do not have inside information into what happens to the ransom money. It may well be paid for terrorism but I don't have a major inside. Pakistan and Afghanistan should discuss this issue between themselves. I understand the difficulty of Pakistan carrying out operation in FATA. The drone attack is Operation Enduring Freedom by the US and NATO has nothing to do with it. This matter needs to be resolved by Islamabad and Washington. NATO can not exert pressure on the US in this regard. If we could find 34 clean professional governors in Afghanistan we would be happy. There is role for UNAMA to develop Afghanistan. About the role of regional forces to be part of ISAF is quite tricky. NATO is not soliciting forces from India under ISAF command. It will have political implications. Nor has India demanded this. NATO is open to other countries joining ISAF but it does not consider neighbours. Senior Taliban leadership is present in Afghanistan but Al Qaeda leadership is elusive. NATO can not pass a judgment whether Taliban should take part in the Afghan elections as it is for the Afghans to decide. Canadian position is clear that they will leave Qandahar in the spring of 2009 and the Dutch will leave in autumn 2010. The commitment of UK is long term and it is thinking about committing more forces to Afghanistan at the moment. I hope the good relations between Afghanistan and the new Pakistani leadership would continue.

The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks to both sides.

3. **MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR CLAUDIO BISOGNIERO, DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL, NATO ON 21<sup>ST</sup> NOVEMBER 2008**

**Ambassador Claudio Bisogniero:** Welcome to the NATO Headquarters. Relations between Pakistan and NATO are becoming more important. We hope the meetings will bring us closer and understand each others issues. The two pillars of our cooperation are military and political. There are talks with Pakistan on the sidelines of United Nations and the Security Council and the Pakistan Ambassadors channel is also operative. NATO and Pakistan have a shared interest in the region. Terrorists and militant groups are a danger to everyone including Pakistan. Terrorism knows no boundaries. Political contexts are very very important. Your presence here is very essential. We can work together in many areas and NATO can invite peoples from Pakistan for training. NATO is determined to fight international terrorism and as we fight against violent extremists, like the people, who bombed the Marriott Hotel in Islamabad. We want to strengthen each others position.



Afghanistan remains the number one operational concern of NATO. We are pursuing our military presence and in Bucharest our military plan will come about. It will be a long term operation. We are happy to see the Afghan army and police taking more control. Afghanistan will not be solved by military action alone but political dialogue, development and economic support. We call it the comprehensive approach. The crucial point is the regional cooperation. We think the threat in border area is such that regional cooperation is required. We value the troops supply line through Pakistan and we are thankful to Pakistan for keeping it open. The Tripartite Commission of Pakistan,

Afghanistan and NATO is an important instrument and I am glad we resumed meeting this October.

**Senator Nisar A. Memon:** Thank you for receiving the Defence Committee delegation at NATO Headquarters. We appreciate NATO's assistance during the 2005 earthquake in Pakistan. This contact between the Defence Committee and the NATO is extremely helpful. The dialogue between the Senate and NATO should be an ongoing process. We share a common vision of a peaceful world. If that is achieved Pakistan will develop peacefully. The new government has started dialogue within the country. The in camera joint session was held to devise ways to protect the people of Pakistan from the weapon of suicide bombers. We look at the entire issue comprehensively but the root cause is deprivation. During the joint session military and political representatives made presentations where after the parliament passed a unanimous Resolution. One of the points of the Resolution is that terrorism will be dealt with militarily but political side will also be initiated. It also says that all parties should respect the sovereignty of Pakistan but on the second day there were drone attacks which besides killing 2 or 3 Al Qaeda members caused much collateral damage. The people of Pakistan want to see an end to the drone attacks. Pakistan has suffered tremendously and has contributed a lot in the war against terrorism and paid the price. President Karzai controls a small area of Afghanistan and that too with the help of ISAF. Poppy cultivation has not been brought under control. Afghanistan needs to do a lot. It is in our interest to have a stable Afghanistan so that we can import gas from Turkmenistan. Contacts between the parties are important for removing any misunderstandings. Tripartite dialogue is a good solution. Long term must be defined as things can not go on indefinitely. President Zardari made a good beginning by inviting President Karzai to his swearing in ceremony in Islamabad.

The United States did not complete its mission after the removal of the Taliban Government and ventured into Iraq and now it is coming back which is proving expensive. Islam does not allow terrorism. Moreover terrorism has no religion. Afghan refugees should go back to Afghanistan as they would be casting their votes in the next Presidential election. NATO must complete the agenda of a peaceful Afghanistan. Pakistan can help in the development of Afghanistan especially in infrastructure building. Indian presence in Afghanistan is a cause of concern and the people of Pakistan are sensitive to that. There is reported insurgency by Indians in Balochistan. There is Saudi engagement with Taliban. Iran and other neighbours should also be included to find a peaceful solution.

**Senator Dilawar Abbas:** Has ISAF done any evaluation to conclude which objectives are achievable in Afghanistan? Is there an exit strategy for NATO forces from Afghanistan?

**Senator Kamran Murtaza:** Pakistan was not facing any problems which arose after its engagement in the war against terrorism.

- i. Is Pakistan not the actual loser because of the drone attacks, attacks by suicide bombers and the presence of Indian Consulates and troops in Afghanistan?
- ii. Is there evidence of direct involvement of Taliban in 9/11?
- iii. Do you consider NATO's role within its charter?
- iv. Will the Afghan government allow the Taliban to contest the forthcoming elections under its manifesto?
- v. To what extent the writ of the Afghan government will prevail after ISAF leaves Afghanistan?

I suggest that regional and Islamic countries may be involved to find a solution of the Afghanistan solution.

**Senator Saadia Abbasi:** Because of the role of NATO in Afghanistan people are not happy. Is it not time to explore other viable options? They want their borders to be secure. Pakistan and Afghanistan have traditional ties. There should be trade and commerce and not militancy buildup on both sides. These are dilemmas for the new government in Pakistan, which is coming under pressure and the new democracy may face problems. Pakistan has paid a big price fighting the war against terrorism even Benazir Bhutto lost her life.

**Senator Rukhsana Zuberi:** We had discussions with Afghan Parliamentarians on the sidelines of other conferences like the one in Berlin and in Kabul. Before the swearing in ceremony of President-elect Asif Zardari, President Karzai congratulated him on the phone to which President Zardari said that he would not accept facilitations on the phone and President Karzai should attend his swearing in ceremony. It shows that we respect the peace and stability of Afghanistan. I look forward to working with NATO on energy issues in Pakistan.

**Ambassador Claudio Bisogniero:** Parliamentary contacts are very very important. NATO Parliamentary Assembly is there and discussions could be held with them as well. Contacts between Pakistan and Afghanistan are important. Previously we were very concerned. Military campaign in Afghanistan is progressing. Whenever NATO makes some progress in Afghanistan the frequency of suicide attacks increases. We are doing everything to eliminate civilian casualties. We will not engage if there is risk of civilian casualties but the problem is that militants hide behind civilians. I have seen videos and evidence where Taliban meeting is taking place and children are made to sit outside the building. The militants dress in religious robes under which they carry Kalashnikovs. Taliban strategically targets the civilians. Was that an ideal situation when nothing was happening in Afghanistan? Was that acceptable in the long run? The contacts between Pakistan and NATO have increased and these attacks are coordinated but every plan is not perfect. We have said that we will not go beyond Pakistan's border.

NATO is building the Afghan National Army. Much progress has not been made on the Afghan Police and we need to do more. When we move out of an area the Taliban come and punishes the local people, who collaborated with NATO. NATO is really

concerned about poppy cultivation and it will be dealt with in future. We do not say that Islam and terrorism go together. Terrorists are different people. We must finish our agenda as we can not continue forever. However, it will be a long term commitment. Pakistan is a crucial part of the solution. We will leave when objectives are achieved but it is not an open ended operation. Mandate given by the UN is a mandate under the UN charter. The role of Taliban in the next election is for the Afghan government to decide. The ISAF operation is not popular and in many NATO countries the popularity of war is low. Energy security is of concern to NATO and it will do more and plan to do things to dispense energy resources.

**Senator Nisar A. Memon:** Thank you for the time and the useful discussion.

#### **4. SUPREME HEADQUARTERS ALLIED POWERS EUROPE (SHAPE)**

On April 4, 1949 twelve nations from Western Europe and North America signed the North Atlantic Treaty in Washington, D. C. A key feature of this treaty is Article 5, in which the signatory members agreed that “an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all.” Initially, however, the alliance was not very well prepared to carry out the mission of defending its territory. In addition to grave shortages of troops and equipment, there was no command structure to direct the overall defence of Western Europe. All this changed after the outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950 in which fears were raised that a similar threat could soon face Europe. The nations of the alliance agreed to increase their defence efforts and began working on the creation of an integrated military command structure with an overall commander for NATO forces in Europe. On April 2, 1951 General Eisenhower signed the activation order for Allied Command Europe and its headquarters at SHAPE. On the same day ACE’s subordinate headquarters in Northern and Central Europe were activated, with the Southern Region following in June. In July 1951 SHAPE’s new headquarters complex in Rocquencourt opened for business.

The Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) for Allied Command Operations (ACO) is tasked with

- contributing to the peace, security and territorial integrity of Alliance member countries by
  - assessing risks and threats,
  - conducting military planning, and
  - Identifying and requesting the forces needed to undertake the full range of Alliance missions, as and when agreed upon by the North Atlantic Council and whenever they might be required.
- contributing to the Alliance’s crisis management arrangements,
- Providing for the effective defence of the territory of NATO countries and of their forces.

If aggression occurs, or if the North Atlantic Council believes that aggression is imminent, SACEUR

- executes all the military measures within the authority and capabilities of his Command needed to demonstrate Allied solidarity and preparedness
  - to maintain the integrity of Alliance territory,
  - to safeguard the freedom of the seas and lines of communication and trade, and
  - to preserve the security of NATO member countries or restore it if it has been infringed.

## 5. VISIT TO SHAPE

On arrival at SHAPE the delegation was received by Gen. Sir John McColl, Deputy Supreme Allied Commander, Europe and escorted to the Eisenhower Conference Centre for a briefing. Other dignitaries present on the occasion were:

1. Ambassador Butler, USA Civ, POLAD
2. Major General Wright, USA AF, DCOS OPS
3. Brigadier General Jean-Jacques Bart, FRA A, ACOS J7
4. Commander Buonerba, USA N, J3 SDC
5. Lieutenant Colonel Pietro Maragelino, ITA A, Military Cooperation Division
6. Lieutenant Colonel Ladislav Sekan, CZE AF, J7

**Gen. Sir, John McColl:** Welcome to SHAPE. It's a very important visit and we were looking forward to it. We have prepared a briefing for you and we can take questions at the end of each briefing.



## 6. BRIEFING BY Lt.Col. KEVIN MARCUS, DIRECTOR OF STAFF

SHAPE has three joint command headquarters, which are headed by 3 full general officers. BRUNSUM is responsible for Afghanistan and the surrounding countries. ISAF Mission is ongoing in Afghanistan. The objective is to assist the Afghan Government to maintain security, support development efforts and extend the control of the Afghan Government. Germany is responsible for North Afghanistan. Qandahar region rotates between the US and Canada. NATO remains engaged in the Balkans. NATO force in Kosovo presently at 16,000 men level will be reduced by 50% next year. NATO is also engaged in Iraq. It has trained 450 policemen in Iraq so far. NATO also provides support to the African Union. Today 16,000 NATO soldiers are engaged in operation while 60 years ago this number was nil. General James Mattis is the Supreme Allied Commander based in Europe while General Craddock is Supreme Allied Commander Europe.

**Senator Nisar A. Memon:** Thank you for providing us an opportunity to visit SHAPE. Thank you for the assistance during the 2005 Earthquake in Pakistan. Our visit is part of the political/parliamentary contact. The military to military contact and the executive

contact is already there. My question is that Pakistan has contributed 10,000 soldiers to peace keeping force and the weapons they use are from Pakistan. How the diverse mix in NATO use different weaponry. How is the assignment of each country's participation arrived at? Is it determined by the military or the political commanders? Terrorism is a new phenomena and the weapon is suicide bomb. Is there any special training for countering this?

**Gen. Sir, John McColl:** Afghanistan is a regional problem and we need to understand the politics of the region and move accordingly. When we do an operation we carry out an estimate for the political masters. They need to agree to that. Then we deploy the operation and hold a bidding conference for countries to decide on a nation's representation for cohesion and political authority. The basic training of soldiers is the responsibility of the nation concerned. We have countries of excellence where nations can go for training.

**Senator Saadia Abbasi:** Whatever is happening in Pakistan is a challenge to the political leadership of Pakistan. We are losing young soldiers and officers. How is it that the challenge has emerged from across the border? Pakistan's relations with the rest of the world are defined in terms of the war on terror. We could have been a part of many things in Afghanistan but we are not involved. So is there a military solution or other ways of tackling it. How are the Taliban fighting? Is it the military, the new government or the tribal system? The army of Pakistan is not trained for such a war fare.

**Senator Nisar A. Memon:** The unanimous Resolution passed by the joint session of our Parliament says that military action should go ahead but political dialogue is also necessary.

**Senator Kamran Murtaza:** We have drone attacks in FATA area. India is also present on the Western border. It is alleged that Indian forces may be brought under NATO command. Till when the Karzai Government will sustain without NATO protection.

**Gen. Sir, John McColl:** The NATO forces do not operate across the border. Coalition operators under the US are carrying out the drone attacks. Economics aside Afghanistan will still require ISAF support for training and financing of military. The target is to train 122,000 troops by 2013 however this deadline may be brought forward.

**Commander Buonerba:** There is an ISAF liaison office in Islamabad. It facilitates enhanced cooperation and coordination. This office has 6 Pakistani, 6 Afghan and 6 ISAF officers. Communication lines will be established on both sides of the border. The 3 lines of communication are Northern, Central and Southern regions.

**Lt. Col. Sekan:** Pakistan is a contact country for education and training. Contact countries are those with which NATO has dialogue. In 2006, 4 Pakistanis students attended NATO School. There are mobile education training teams (METT) also.

**Senator Rukhsana Zuberi:** Abduction for ransom is taking place in our part of the world and the ransom money is used for terrorism. Your operation is an off shoot of the cold war. A large number of refugees still remain in Pakistan.

**Senator Kamran Murtaza:** Are all training facilities open to Pakistanis?

**Gen. Sir, John McColl:** Bilateral relations may be developed on that then NATO can make it available.

The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks to both sides.

## 7. MEETING AT KASHMIR CENTER BRUSSELS

On 22nd November 2008 the delegation visited Kashmir center Brussels for a luncheon meeting. On arrival at the Centre, the delegation was received by Mr. Majid Trambo In charge of the Center and a large number of Kashmiri and Pakistani Diaspora residing in Europe. Speaking on the occasion Senators Nisar A. Memon reiterated Pakistan's complete moral and political support to the Kashmir cause. Pakistan will agree to a solution of the Kashmir issue which also had the blessings of the people of Kashmir therefore Kashmiris should be included in the talks between India and Pakistan on the Kashmir issue.



(IFTIKHAR ULLAH BABAR)  
Secretary Committee

(SENATOR NISAR A. MEMON)  
Chairman Committee

V. **PRESS RELEASES FROM UK, BELGIUM & PAKISTAN**

Islamabad, November, 15, 2008

**Senate Delegation leaves for UK and Brussels**

A delegation of the Senate Standing Committee on Defence & Defence Production led by its Chairman, Senator Nisar A.Memon is leaving tomorrow (16-11-2008) for United Kingdom on the invitation of the Defence Committee of House of Commons, UK. The delegation will later visit NATO Headquarters, Belgium.

The visit aims at strengthening bilateral ties through an inter-parliamentary dialogue on international and regional issues including the challenges of War on Terror.

Senators Syed Dilawar Abbas, Asif Jatoi, Ms. Saadia Abbasi, Mrs. Rukhsana Zuberi, Kamran Murtaza, Iqbal Zaffar Jhagra, Naeem Hussain Chattha and Tariq Azeem Khan and Secretary Committee Iftikharullah Babar will accompany Senator Nisar A. Memon during the visit.

London , November, 18, 2008

**Senate Defence Committee Visits Royal Military Academy Sandhurst**

The Senate Standing Committee on Defence & Defence Production led by its Chairman, Senator Nisar A. Memon visited the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (RMAS) today. Maj. General David Rutherford Jones, Commandant RMAS along with other officers received the Senate delegation on the steps of the Academy. Later, the Commandant and Chief of Staff of the Academy briefed the committee on the role and objectives of the Academy in training officers primarily for the British Army along with officers for 38 other countries of the world. Pakistan, he said, regularly sent cadets for training and without any exception they performed very well at the Royal Military Academy.

He said that the Academy laid great stress on inculcating leadership qualities for under training officers to groom them for future role in the army. The members showed keen interest in objective and mode of training at the Academy and asked questions regarding the same. Later lunch was hosted by the Commandant for the delegation in the Officers' Mess.

The delegation on visit to the UK comprise of Senators Syed Dilawar Abbas, Asif Jatoi, Ms. Saadia Abbasi, Mrs. Rukhsana Zuberi, Kamran Murtaza, Iqbal Zaffar Jhagra, Naeem Hussain Chattha and Tariq Azeem Khan and Secretary Committee Iftikhar Ullah Babar.

London , November, 19, 2008

### **Senate Defence Committee meets Minister for International Defence and Security**

The Senate Standing Committee on Defence & Defence Production led by its Chairman, Senator Nisar A. Memon spent a busy day at London today. In the morning the members of the Committee held a meeting with Ms. Baroness Taylor, Minister for International Defence and Security at the Ministry of Defence. She said that the Government of United Kingdom was pleased that supply routes to ISAF in Afghanistan has reopened. It is important for the working of NATO Forces in that area and we look forward to working with our allies including Pakistan in fighting terrorism. The Members of the Committee showed deep concern about the attacks being carried out by drones in the Tribal Areas of Pakistan. They emphasized that this action is earning a bad name for the United States and its allies including the United Kingdom.

In the second meeting at the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) where the committee was briefed about the United Kingdom's policy towards Afghanistan and the role of ISAF Forces in Afghanistan. The Committee was informed that Pakistan is a top priority of the FCO and it is for that reason that the Secretary of State visits Pakistan and the region quite frequently. There was a show of keen desire for continued close relations especially military to military relationship between Pakistan and United Kingdom. The setting up of civilian political system in Pakistan was a great encouragement for UK Government. Senator Nisar A. Memon, in his remarks conveyed to the British authorities that it is time that the allied forces powers operating in Afghanistan should do more as Pakistan is playing its due role and has sacrificed numerous lives both of the security personal and the civilian population of FATA.

In the afternoon the Senate Committee on Defence and Defence Production continued its talks with the House of Commons Defence Committee which was started in 2006 and followed in July 2008 when the UK Defence Committee visited Pakistan. The UK Committee was told that the Parliament of Pakistan has passed a unanimous resolution in a joint session which was held in camera last month. The message of the resolution was conveyed very clearly that the war on terror will not be a military affair but will include political content too. The resolution condemned intervention in the territorial sovereignty of Pakistan. It also calls upon all stake holders to open dialogue for the resolution of the problem. The UK Committee was very interested in wanting to know as to how the problem being faced in the war against terrorism and the Afghan situation resolved in an amicable manner.

The delegation on visit to the UK comprise of Senators Syed Dilawar Abbas, Asif Jatoi, Ms. Saadia Abbasi, Engr. Rukhsana Zuberi, Kamran Murtaza, Iqbal Zaffar Jhagra, Naeem Hussain Chattha, Tariq Azeem Khan and Secretary Committee Iftikhar Ullah Babar.

Brussels , November 21, 2008

**Senate Defence Committee visits NATO Headquarters in Brussels**

The Senate Standing Committee on Defence & Defence Production led by its Chairman, Senator Nisar A. Memon arrived in Brussels on a two day visit to hold talks with NATO officials. The committee met three Assistant and Deputy Secretary Generals of NATO separately and were given in depth presentation on NATO operations and held in depth discussion on a wide range of issues concerning the region. The first meeting was held between the Committee and Ambassador Robert F. Simon, Dy Assistant Secretary General to discuss security cooperation and partnership. The second meeting was held with Ambassador Martin Howard on NATO's operations in Afghanistan and the third meeting was held between Ambassador Claudio Bisogniero who received the Committee on behalf of Secretary General on the overall relations between Pakistan and NATO with specific focus on Afghanistan.

The committee emphasized to the NATO officials that drone attacks on Pakistani territory was a serious cause of concern for the people of Pakistan as it infringed on the sovereignty of the country besides collateral damage which increased the sufferings of the innocent population. The Committee also conveyed to the concerned officials that these attacks were giving bad name to the US and its allies operating in Afghanistan. Senator Nisar A. Memon said that the people of Pakistan feel that they have contributed significantly in the war against terrorism and it was now for the other side to contribute its due share.

The Committee also raised the issue of tremendous growth of poppy cultivation in Afghanistan and the NATO forces have not kept a check on this illegal production which is now fueling the operations of terrorists in the region. The members of the Committee also raised the question of the presence of Indian consulates and forces in Afghanistan and questioned their role in the war of terror without any mandate.

The Committee also tried to understand the timeframe by which NATO and ISAF forces will leave Afghanistan and return the country to the Afghan Government and people.

The NATO officials stated unequivocally that NATO and ISAF forces respect the sovereignty of Pakistan and that these forces had no mandate to cross the border into Pakistan. They also emphasized that Afghan National Police and Afghan National Army are being trained to be able to combat such menace and maintain law and order in Afghanistan. These officials estimated that adquarters and ISAF forces will continue to stay in Afghanistan till the Afghan Army and Police are trained and Afghan government requires them to stay to meet the security challenges.

The Committee visited NATO Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) at Mons, Belgium. They were received by Deputy Supreme Allied Commander General Sir John McColl and various Commanders presented different aspects of their operations. The presentations were followed by discussions focused on operations in Afghanistan.

The delegation on visit to the Belgium comprise of Senators Syed Dilawar Abbas, Ms. Saadia Abbasi, Engr. Rukhsana Zuberi, Kamran Murtaza, Naeem Hussain Chattha and Secretary Committee Iftikhar Ullah Babar.

Islamabad, November 24, 2008

### **Senate Defence Committee returns after UK and Belgium meetings**

The Senate Standing Committee on Defence & Defence Production led by its Chairman, Senator Nisar A. Memon returns after its meetings in London, Brussels and Mons with House of Commons Defence Committee, UK Defence Ministry, UK Foreign Ministry, Martin Baker Manufacturing, NATO and SHAPE Headquarters in Brussels. The delegation was also invited to Kashmir Centres in London and Brussels where they meet met and supported the Kashmir's right to self determination.

The delegation held meeting with Ms. Baroness Taylor, Minister for International Defence and Security at the Ministry of Defence. She said that the Government of United Kingdom was pleased that supply routes to ISAF in Afghanistan has reopened. It is important for the working of NATO Forces in that area and we look forward to working with our allies including Pakistan in fighting terrorism. The Members of the Committee showed deep concern about the attacks being carried out by drones in the Tribal Areas of Pakistan. They emphasized that this action is earning a bad name for the United States and its allies including the United Kingdom.

Later at the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) the Committee was briefed about the United Kingdom's policy towards Afghanistan and the role of ISAF Forces in Afghanistan. The Committee was informed that Pakistan is a top priority of the FCO and it is for that reason that the Secretary of State visits Pakistan and the region quite frequently. There was a show of keen desire for continued close relations especially military to military relationship between Pakistan and United Kingdom. The setting up of civilian political system in Pakistan was a great encouragement for UK Government. Senator Nisar A. Memon, in his remarks conveyed to the British authorities that it is time that the allied forces powers operating in Afghanistan should do more as Pakistan is playing its due role and has sacrificed numerous lives both of the security personal and the civilian population of FATA.

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Pakistan Senate Committee also visited the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (RMAS). Maj. General David Rutherford Jones, Commandant RMAS along with other officers received the Senate delegation on the steps of the Academy. Later, the Commandant and Chief of Staff of the Academy briefed the committee on the role and objectives of the Academy in training officers primarily for the British Army along with officers from 38 other countries of the world. Pakistan, he said, regularly sent cadets for training and without any exception they performed very well at the Royal Military Academy.

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The delegation on visit to the UK comprise of Senators Syed Dilawar Abbas, Ms. Saadia Abbasi, Engr. Rukhsana Zuberi, Asif Jatoi, Kamran Murtaza, Iqbal Zaffar Jhagra, Naeem Hussain Chattha, Tariq Azeem Khan and Secretary Committee Iftikhar Ullah Babar.

At the conclusion of the visit to UK, the Committee left for Belgium to hold talks with NATO officials. The committee met three Assistant and Deputy Secretary Generals of NATO separately and were given in depth presentations on NATO operations and held in depth discussion on a wide range of issues concerning the region. The first meeting was held between the Committee and Ambassador Robert F. Simon, Dy Assistant Secretary General to discuss security cooperation and partnership. The second meeting was held with Ambassador Martin Howard on NATO's operations in Afghanistan and the third meeting was held between Ambassador Claudio Bisogniero who received the Committee on behalf of Secretary General on the overall relations between Pakistan and NATO with specific focus on Afghanistan.

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The Committee visited NATO Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) at Mons, Belgium. Deputy Supreme Allied Commander General Sir John McColl received them and various Commanders presented different aspects of their operations. The presentations were followed by discussions focused on operations in Afghanistan.

The newly appointed Pakistan Ambassador in Belgium Shafkat Saeed, who still has to present his credentials, received the delegation at the airport and briefed the Committee prior to the meetings and accompanied the delegation in the meetings. The professional support by our Ambassador and his team was very valuable.

The delegation on visit to the Belgium comprised of Senators Syed Dilawar Abbas, Naeem Hussain Chattha, Ms. Saadia Abbasi, Engr. Rukhsana Zuberi, Kamran Murtaza and Secretary Committee Iftikhar Ullah Babar.