

**REPORT OF THE JOINT MEETING OF SENATE  
STANDING COMMITTEES ON DEFENCE AND  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

# 2104

*In compliance with Ruling of the Chairman Senate dated  
12<sup>th</sup> May, 2016 on the subject:-*

***"Border situation with India and Afghanistan and  
Pakistan's defence preparedness"***

**Report No. 03  
(Fourteenth Parliamentary Year)**

**PRESENTED BY  
(SENATOR MUSHAHID HUSSAIN SAYED)  
CHAIRMAN  
SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE**

**&**

**(SENATOR NUZHAT SADIQ)  
CHAIRPERSON  
SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS**



## SENATE SECRETARIAT

### REPORT OF THE JOINT MEETING OF SENATE STANDING COMMITTEES ON DEFENCE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS

We have the honour to present the report, on behalf of the Senate Standing Committees on Defence & Foreign Affairs in compliance with the Ruling of the Hon'ble Chairman Senate dated 12<sup>th</sup> May, 2016

2. The Agenda before the Committees was as follows:-

Border situation with India and Afghanistan and Pakistan's defence preparedness;

3. The composition of the Committees is as under:-

1.	<b>Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed</b>	<b>Chairman</b>
2.	<b>Senator Nuzhat Sadiq</b>	<b>Chairperson</b>
3.	Senator Ilyas Ahmad Bilour	Member
4.	Senator Hidayat ullah	Member
5.	Senator Atta ur Rehman	Member
6.	Senator Col. (R) Syed Tahir Hussain Mashhadi	Member
7.	Senator Lt. Gen ( R) Salahuddin Tirmizi	Member
8.	Senator Lt. Gen. (R) Abdul Qayyum	Member
9.	Senator Muhammad Javed Abbasi	Member
10.	Senator Farhatullah Babar	Member
11.	Senator Farooq Hamid Naek	Member
12.	Senator Mrs. Sehar Kamran	Member
13.	Senator Brig. ( R) John Kenneth Williams	Member
14.	Senator Muhammad Daud Khan Achakzai, Advocate	Member
15.	Senator Haji Momin Khan Afridi	Member



16.	Senator Syed Muzaffar Hussain Shah	Member
17.	Senator Ms. Ayesha Raza Farooq	Member
18.	Senator Karim Ahmed Khawaja	Member
19.	Senator Ms. Sassui Palijo	Member
20.	Senator Syed Shibli Faraz	Member
21.	Minister for Defence	Ex-Officio Member
22.	Advisor to Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs	Ex-Officio Member

4. Third joint meeting of the Senate Standing Committees on Defence & Foreign Affairs was held on 20<sup>th</sup> October, 2016 at 11:00 am in Committee Room No. 1, Parliament House, Islamabad under the Joint Chairmanship of Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed & Senator Nuzhat Sadiq. The following members of the Committee attended the meeting:-

- i. Senator Muhammad Javed Abbasi
- ii. Senator Farhatullah Babar
- iii. Senator Lt. Gen. (R) Salahuddin Tirmizi
- iv. Senator Brig. (R) John Kenneth Williams
- v. Senator Mrs. Sehar Kamran
- vi. Senator Col. (R) Syed Tahir Hussain Mashhadi
- vii. Senator Muhammad Daud Khan Achakzai, Advocate
- viii. Senator Karim Ahmed Khawaja
- ix. Senator Ms. Ayesha Raza Farooq
- x. Senator Syed Shibli Faraz

5. The meeting commenced with recitation from the Holy Quran. Both the Chairpersons welcomed the participants and explained the purpose of this joint meeting of the Senate Standing Committees on Defence & Foreign Affairs.



## **Situation on the border with Afghanistan**

6. The Secretary, Ministry of Defence elaborated that Pakistan has a highly porous border of 2611 Kms. with Afghanistan which poses a major challenge in checking the flow of terrorists, miscreants, drug traffickers and smugglers. In addition to the routes serving as traditional crossing points i.e. Torkham, Chaman, Ghulam Khan and Angoor Adda there are other non notified crossing routes across the border. According to Directorate General of Military Operations there are 78 such routes out of which 62 are non-frequent and 16 are frequent. However, there are many other small entry points making a total of around above one hundred crossings along the entire border. Many of these routes are frequented for cross-border movements including those of militants, terrorists, smuggling of drugs, arms, illegal goods etc. This indicates the need of an effective border management policy by both countries.

7. During recent months at the Pak-Afghan border, there have been an increase in the number of cross border incidents. Allegations from both sides pertain to the rising incidents of cross border firings and mortar shelling. The presence of a number of insurgent groups in the area on the Afghan side, makes it difficult to ascertain whether the firing/shelling has been done by the security forces or the insurgents. However, the relevant authorities on both sides conduct flag meetings and raise the issues bilaterally for an amicable resolution.

8. According to the Military Operations Directorate, Govt. of Pakistan, 86 cross border violations from Afghan territory have taken place since the commencement of Operation Khyber-III in mid August, 2016. Two serious incidents of cross-border firing occurred over the past week. On 14 October, a suicide bomber approaching from Afghan side of the border exploded himself at Kharlachi crossing in Kurram Agency injuring a Pakistani soldier. Similarly on 16 October, small arms and rocket propelled grenades were fired from Afghan territory in Khawaja Khidar area, South Waziristan Agency, resulting in shahadat of two Pakistani soldiers and seriously injuring one.

9. Pakistan is following an effective border management policy by maintaining close coordination with the Afghan Government through regular consultations. As a result of operation Zarb-e-Azb the terrorists and miscreants have either been obliterated or have left the area. Effective border management measures





were instituted at Torkham border crossing w.e.f. 1st June, 2016 as a model project by introducing travel documentation regime.

10. It was decided to improve infrastructure including reconstruction of gates, setting up of a pedestrian crossing and activating customs checks. On 13<sup>th</sup> June, 2016 Afghan security forces fired across border at Pakistani check point. As a result of which one Pakistani Major embraced shahadat. To resolve this issue Pakistan invited Afghanistan for talks and an Afghan delegation led by Deputy Foreign Minister arrived in Islamabad on 20<sup>th</sup> June, 2016. During these meetings the importance of a suitable border management mechanism was highlighted. There was a meeting between the Advisor to the Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs and the Afghan Foreign Minister on the sidelines of SCO Summit in Tashkent on 24<sup>th</sup> June, 2016 whereby both sides agreed to the establishment of a mechanism for consultation between the two states. This mechanism provides for an institutional framework to control the movement of people and vehicles between the two countries. The mechanism also has a Joint Technical Working Group headed by the two Director Generals, MOs. First meeting of the Group was held on 26<sup>th</sup> July, 2016, whereas the second meeting is expected to be held in Kabul in the last week of October, 2016.

11. There was also an incident causing border disruption that took place in August when a group of Afghan Youth celebrating Afghan Independence Day ransacked the Friendship Gate at the Chaman border crossing and burned a Pakistani flag. Consequently, the gate was closed leading to suspension of trade activities and a long queue of Afghan-bound containers at the crossing. A protest was lodged with the Afghan Government. The gate remained closed for two weeks before it was reopened on 1st September, 2016 after negotiations in which the two side agreed to pay due respect to each others testimonials and hold a monthly flag meeting to address issues of mutual interest for ensuring a peaceful environment.

12. The Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs apprised the meeting about the major developments on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. He indicated that 75% of internally displaced families, as a result of success of operation Zarb-e-Azb, have been repatriated to their native areas. The key to resolution of all outstanding disputes between Pakistan-Afghanistan lies in the reconciliation process which unfortunately has stalled after the Mullah Mansoor incident.



13. The Secretary, Ministry of Defence then apprised the meeting about the situation on Pakistan-India border. Pakistan shares 1094 Kms. of international border and 193 Km. of Working Boundary (between Pakistan and Indian Occupied Kashmir and 767.67 Km. of Line of Control (LOC) (between AJK and Iok). There are 598 gates installed at the 1094 Km. long international border and in the same manner, 179 gates have been installed at the 193 Km. long Working Boundary. In order to avoid a knee jerk reaction from both sides, a hotline link exists between the Directors General Military Operations of both the countries. The framework of border management between the two countries is based upon the Border Ground Rules of 1960. Since the Uri incidence there have been 58 cease fire violations from the Indian side across the Line of Control (LOC). Over the past one year 103 instances of cease fire violations from the Indian side have been reported for the whole year.

14. The Secretary, Ministry of Defence reiterated that as per reports 40% to 60% of the armed forces of India deployed in IOK were currently out of their Cantonments whereas one additional division has been moved into the Kashmir Valley. There were reports that SU 30 Aircrafts have been deployed and a proactive strategy is in place by India. Pakistan is aware of this situation which can possibly have three consequences:-

- i. Application of an indirect strategy by India targeting soft and high value targets .
- ii. The direct strategy whereby ground and air activity by Indian forces is a possibility and
- iii. Thirdly a combination of both these strategies.

So far the activity from India is confined to cease fire violations only of which a befitting response is given by the Pakistan side.

15. Pakistan Air Force is also very active and is conducting exercises Hallmark. Our Air bases are alert. The Pakistan Navy is also active and alert in the seas. Pakistan does not initiate any border violations but all border violations are responded adequately.

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16. On the issue of a "Supposed Surgical Strike" by India, the Secretary Defence explained that it has to involve a physical crossing of the Line of Control (LOC) along with a physical attack on the predetermined target. None of these actions actually took place so they can be no question of a surgical strike. He further reiterated the readiness of Pakistan to use diplomatic channels on all disputes with India, but Pakistan Army was vigilant and fully capable of thwarting any mis-adventure by India.
17. During the question answer session, Senator Muhammad Javed Abbasi welcomed the Secretary Defence and inquired the role of Pakistan in the Intra-Afghan Dialogue between the Taliban and Afghan Government. He also inquired about the effectiveness of the border management with Afghanistan and whether it was likely to improve our working relationship with Afghanistan.
18. Senator Farhatullah Babar also welcomed the Secretary Defence and inquired whether after the Uri incidence, the Government of Pakistan was providing any help in investigation, to the Indian Government, after reportedly some telephone numbers and DNA samples were provided to us by the Indians. If we have committed to help in conducting the investigation have we identified any person allegedly involved in the incidence?
19. Senator Lt. Gen. (R) Salahuddin Tirmizi inquired about the unusual movement of the Indian army in the Indian held Kashmir. He specifically asked about the movement of a division of the Indian army in the Pir Panjal area and whether it was ascertained that this was a hostile movement or just a routine movement in connection with winter exercises of the Indian Army.
20. Senator Col. (R) Syed Tahir Hussain Mashhadi also welcomed the Secretary Defence and inquired about the status of our response to the Indian action of diplomatically isolating Pakistan. He further inquired what efforts were being made by Pakistan in taking the Afghan peace process further and what contingencies have we prepared in case of an emergency? What would be the response to a situation like a surprised surgical strike?
21. Senator Brig. (R) John Kenneth Williams inquired about the effectiveness of the measures taken in the Pakistan-Afghan border management as we were only managing a few crossing points whereas the rest of the border was wide open for any



cross border activity. What measures were being adopted for managing this long border? He also inquired about the unusual movement of the Indian Army in the Pir Panjal area and what was the response by the Pakistan army in this respect?

22. The Hon'ble Chairperson Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Senator Nuzhat Sadiq inquired about Pakistan's response in the face of active deployment of SU 30 Fighter planes by India in Kashmir.

23. Senator Mrs. Sehar Kamran inquired about the status of control of border crossings. She further inquired about a permanent solution to this problem and whether Pakistan was planning to fence the Pakistan-Afghanistan border.

24. Senator Dr. Karim Ahmed Khawaja highlighted Indian Prime Minister Modi's statement where Indian actions were identified similar to those by Israel. The Honourable Senator advised to take this very seriously and be prepared for any eventuality.

25. Senator Ms. Ayesha Raza Farooq also raised the question of cross border movement and its management between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The Senator highlighted that there were a lot of divided tribes on both sides of the border which frequently moved to and fro. She inquired whether we were keeping a record of such movements which could also help the civilian Government in carrying out an effective polio campaign.

26. The Secretary Defence in reply apprised that despite our best efforts three border management incidences have occurred this year. First one at Torkham, the second at Angore Ada and the third one at Chaman. The Pakistani response was firm and the Afghan side had to resolve these issues through diplomatic channels. Currently Pakistan is still hosting a huge number of Afghan refugees who are being repatriated in an organized manner. We have always provided all requisite assistance to these displaced persons. 33000 registered families of Afghan refugees have returned home during the past one year. Assistance in respect of their rehabilitation in Afghanistan has also been discussed with the Afghan side.

27. The Chairman Defcom highlighted that we have been model hosts for the Afghan refugees for the longest period of time. This is when Europe wants to throw out



its refugees whereas we are still willing to host them and provide them all assistance for a safe passage home. The Hon'ble Chairman Defcom criticized the activities of RAW and NDS in creating discord between the two countries. The Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs also regretted hostile statements coming from Afghan leadership.

28. The Secretary Defence highlighted the salient features of border management with Afghanistan. He then re-emphasized the unusual movement of the Indian army in Indian held Kashmir and reiterated that Pakistan army was vigilant and was keeping a close watch on any hostile move by the Indians. In response to Senator Farhatullah Babar's question, Secretary Defence stated that telephone numbers of two persons of Muzafarabad were provided by the Indians along with a sketch in Pushto. All efforts were being made to trace out these persons but no progress has yet been made. In response to the question of the Hon'ble Chairperson, Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs the Ministry of Defence stated that all Pakistani airbases were fully alert to the situation. He further emphasized that 79 new wings of the Frontier Corps were being raised as they would be tasked with managing the border with Afghanistan, thereby relieving pressure on the army. Pakistan army was being provided full assistance by the Federal Government and the people of Pakistan. In response to the question by Senator Lt. Gen. (R) Salahuddin Tirmizi regarding provision of \$ 100 million by the US for border management. The Ministry of Defence promised to give us the details.


29. The Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs once again reiterated that we need to show restraint while remaining alert to any hostile intentions against Pakistan by any country. The Foreign Secretary stressed that Pakistan has always welcomed Intra-Afghan Dialogue as a means to achieving peace in the area. We have always declared that Pakistan has no favourites in Afghanistan and does not distinguish between good and bad Taliban. The Afghan's need to talk amongst themselves. To assist in this we have squeezed space for the Taliban and as a result we have a positive feedback on the issue. The only issue remains of a timeline and strategies. Our aim is to reduce threats for Pakistan which is evident from the fact that incidences of terrorism have been markedly reduced in Pakistan. We are assisting negotiations with Taliban, but only behind the scenes. Pakistan is also aware of the new developments which include a reproachment of the Afghan Government with Gulbadin Hikmatyar. We feel that the




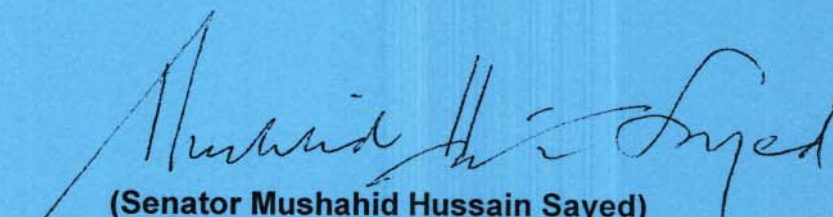
direction is correct and Afghanistan will soon realize our positive approach and help for peace in the region. We are also providing a \$ 500 million assistance to Afghanistan as a gesture of goodwill. As neighbours we want to live in peace with all, with whom we have centuries old ties.

30. In the end, Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Chairman Senate Standing Committee on Defence read out a resolution which was tabled by Senators Sehar Kamran and Dr. Karim Ahmed Khawaja condemning statements of Indian Prime Minister Modi at BRICS Conference in Goa, India. Text of the resolution is attached.

31. The Senate Joint Committee on Defence & Foreign Affairs adopted this report and approved its laying before the Honourable House.

  
(Dr. Syed Pervaiz Abbas)  
AS / Secretary Committee

  
(Senator Nuzhat Sadiq)  
Chairperson  
Senate Standing Committee on  
Foreign Affairs

  
(Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed)  
Chairman  
Senate Standing Committee on Defence



## RESOLUTION

The Joint meeting of Senate Standing Committees on Defence & Foreign Affairs condemns the recent aggressive statement of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi attributing terrorism to Pakistan at the recent BRICS Summit held in Goa, India. The example of comparison with Israel regarding the surgical strike is also condemned. We strongly reject Indian propaganda and baseless campaign against Pakistan. Such tactics cannot divert global attention from the atrocities being committed by the Indian army in Indian occupied Kashmir.

We appreciate the stance of other BRICS members, particularly China and Russia for showing Responsibility, Restrain, Balance and Maturity in handling issues of peace, security and stability in South Asia.

The Senate Committees of Defence & Foreign Relations further condemn Indian Prime Minister giving example of Israeli strikes in Palestine to justify possible Indian strikes across the LOC. Kashmir and Palestine are international disputes as per the United Nation resolutions. Any so called strike across the LOC would be a violation of the UN Charter, International Law and an act of aggression against Pakistan, to be given a befitting response.

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