



The Jihadi Propaganda Machine

Briefing Paper
June 2017

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ABOUT COMMANDELEVEN

CommandEleven is a research organization focused on Pakistan’s national security aspects and enhancing global understanding and collaboration opportunities for the nation.

Founded in 2015, CommandEleven provides situational awareness to facilitate a better understanding of the key dynamics that effect Pakistan from a national security perspective, especially in relation to terrorism, insurgencies and extremism.

CommandEleven seeks to inform and guide public policy and decision makers in government, business and military through a rigorous program of publications, conferences, digital medias, policy briefings and recommendations.

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We take it as a badge of honor to be honest. When we engage with analysts on social media, it's to understand their point of view and share ours. That is where intelligence becomes intelligent. But when analysts decide that their opinion is the only possible opinion and become hostile, well, we just won't accept that.

It will be on rare occasions that you'll find me addressing the CommandEleven audience about something related to CommandEleven. We didn't build this platform, bring the best analysts together and begin counter the negative image being wrongly portrayed about Pakistan to sit back and accept someone's blind judgement of our work and organization.

Let's us be crystal clear – CommandEleven has never supported any jihadi organization and never will.

You will not find, on any page of our website, support for or acceptance of any jihadi teachings or ideology. Conversely, I, along with some of our team members, have been directly involved in countering the menace of violent extremism in Pakistan.

We had to provide that disclaimer due to an accusation made by the analyst whose opinion we questioned.

CommandEleven is a platform that is singularly pro-Pakistan. Our analysis and commentaries reflect what we understand to be the best options to resolve national security, counter terrorism and counter insurgency challenges within our borders and with neighboring nations. While many people may not understand, or agree with our positions, they are all supported with facts and an experience that comes from living 15 years in a war zone.

It is specifically for this reason that we will not accept faulty analysis, disinformation or questionable factual representations. Pakistan, as the frontline state in the global War on Terror, has suffered billions in financial losses, tens of thousands of innocent lives martyred and continues to fight the scourge of terrorism from neighboring countries, all while being blamed as the aggressor. The blame game must end for there to be a solution to the situation.

[In an interview with DW](#), Paulo Casaca, founder of the [South Asia Democratic Forum](#) and a former Member of European Parliament from Portugal, shared his thoughts about the "regional solution" for Afghanistan, while bashing Pakistan as the aggressor. Here is his article in the Indian Express calling ["China-Pakistan Economic Corridor \(CPEC\) is a fully militarized project."](#)

A quick look at his organization, and heavily pro-India influence, it is easy to understand how someone could make the illogical statements that he asserted in his interview. His organization has numerous articles and "policy briefings" on issues that India has raised, but absolute silence on Kashmir's human rights abuses and cross-border terrorism from India and Afghanistan into Pakistan. We'd like to believe that his internet in Brussels must have a filter to keep these stories from appearing, but we all know that it's Indian funding that runs his organization – what else does an organization in Brussels have to do with South Asian democracy?

His view is that ***“the US must keep an eye on a hostile China-Pakistan-Russia alliance in Afghanistan.”***

Let's be clear. This is the nightmare scenario for both the United States and India.

China, Pakistan's long-term ally, Russia, India's ally soured by closer US-India ties, and Pakistan, hated by both Afghanistan and India, aligning together to bring peace to Afghanistan and the region.

Now, here is the shift that no one wants to understand. China has mining contracts in Afghanistan and massive investment into Pakistan which they want secured. Yes, there is a [new Cold War starting between China and India](#), but that is geopolitics.

[Russia has apparently offered to mediate](#) between [India and Pakistan](#), even though the Indian media and state institutions refute the [claim with no named Russian diplomatic source](#). We will pretend that we didn't notice that Simla Agreement is misspelled in every "article" refuting the claim. Copy and paste, Indian media, but source and spellcheck. Russia, however, has tapped Pakistan to assist in keeping the flow of terrorists from Afghanistan into Russia. It has been suggested in the media that there is [an ISIS training base in Afghanistan dedicated to training for an attack on Russia](#).

[China has stepped forward to bring resolutions between Pakistan and Afghanistan](#). China is making heavy investments into Pakistan, which must be secured. Most of those investments are in troubled province of Baluchistan, where cross-border terrorism and support of insurgencies has made the province unstable. China's interest is with the geopolitical strategy and long-term support of Pakistan in tough times.

The United States and India, after 15 years of being involved, some would say pulling the strings, on ground in Afghanistan's government and security, there is nothing to show in results. We would dare to say that with ISIS-Khorasan taking a firm hold in Afghanistan, things are actually significantly worse and degrading from there.

A REGIONAL SOLUTION

The first question addresses the US Secretary of Defense James Mattis statement that the "US would opt for a regional solution," where Casaca believes that the delegation of troops levels to the Pentagon means a military solution to Afghanistan – *“President Donald Trump has delegated the authority and responsibility for Afghanistan to Jim Mattis, which means the main thrust of the US' Afghanistan policy will remain militaristic.”*

It was former President Barak Obama, speaking at a United Nations summit on Countering Violent Extremism, argued the [world will ultimately beat back Islamist militants with "better ideas."](#)

[This broader challenge of countering violent extremism is not simply a military effort. Ideologies are not defeated with guns, they are defeated by better ideas and more attractive and more compelling vision. So, the United States will continue to do our part by continuing to counter ISIL's hateful propaganda, especially online.](#)

We'll constantly reaffirm through words and deeds that we will never be at war with Islam. We are fighting terrorists who distort Islam and its victims are mostly Muslims.

The suggestion alone [drew heavy fire from opposition parties and media outlets](#), unable to understand his multipronged strategy to end the source of the problem – the ideology of violence.

Realistically, there is no solution to Afghanistan outside Afghanistan.

Until the Afghan people are fully invested in the process, they will never believe that the government represents them. Since the US invasion of Afghanistan, Afghan citizens have been forced to accept the leaders that were selected for them by their military overlords. Other than voting for warlords, drug smugglers and criminals, the US has not been able to field honest, patriotic candidates from the Afghan people, who share their hopes and dreams.

The first step of any regional solution is bringing all the parties together on one platform to discuss their cooperation for one objective – a strong, stable Afghanistan. That means that the foreign sponsored governments of Afghanistan must end and a real system of accountability must be established. Corruption and nepotism is already rampant in governance and will only escalate if not controlled now.

The advantage of all the parties cooperating is that Afghan solutions are found for Afghan problems. Currently, American, European and Indian solutions are being applied, which don't support the hopes and dreams of the Afghan people.

The second step to a regional solution is ending the blame game between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Pakistan has provided needed support, assistance and safe haven to Afghans fleeing their own country's warring past. Please do remember that Pakistan shares a 2,430 kilometer (1,500 miles) long, porous border with Afghanistan, making it very difficult to patrol constantly. Many of our readers are wondering why we put the blame game before strengthening institutions – how do you strengthen institutions whose first response is to blame the neighbor rather than look at their own failures?

The third step is strengthening the institutions of Afghanistan, from government to security. Afghans have suffered under the democratic dispensation. Outside the [reports that weapons](#) have [disappeared in Afghanistan & Iraq](#), the [defections](#) to [the Taliban](#), and the [sale of weapons by security forces](#) for [salary](#), [prove the levels](#) of [corruption in government and in provinces is outlandish](#), unless that is the democratic system the US wanted to establish.

This gives you the basis for a regional solution.

This is how you start winning against an ideological war, take away their propaganda tools.

PAKISTAN AS A PARTNER FOR PEACE

"It is now clearer than ever that accepting Pakistan as the solution rather than the problem to the Afghan conflict will doom any US military effort in Afghanistan." –Paulo Casaca

Pakistan, as we said previously, has suffered greatly as a frontline state in the War on Terror. Not only through the bases in FATA that became targets of Pakistan's military and the US drones, but the cross-border attacks from terrorist safe havens in Afghanistan has taken a heavy toll. Pakistan's interests with a peaceful, stable Afghanistan is a strong Pakistan.

Before anyone points a finger at Pakistan for the Taliban, please do remember that once the USSR invasion was defeated, the US and the CIA packed their bags and left immediately, leaving Pakistan to sort out the problems that arose from being a frontline state during that conflict. People unfamiliar with Pakistan's history forget that we were partners with the US & Saudi Arabia during the USSR invasion, and partners with Saudi Arabia in recognizing and supporting the Taliban government. Neither activity was solely and wholly Pakistan's foreign policy decision.

We are sure that most analyst will point to the terrorist groups that haunted Pakistan from FATA since 2007, but according to the [Afghanistan Analysts Network](#) and [the New York Times](#), Afghanistan's state policy was to create and support them for "strategic depth."

Both of the linked articles will challenge everything you have been told by the Western and Indian media.

We also [share this map](#), which shows where in Pakistan, Afghan refugees have repatriated from and you can compare the provinces for increase in acts of terrorism or extremism.

INDIA – PAKISTAN SAME PAGE FOR AFGHANISTAN RESOLUTION

"Russia, China and Pakistan clearly favor the inclusion of the Taliban in the Afghan government. They do not consider India or even the US as potential partners."

Casaca doesn't want to take into account that the Taliban currently control close to 47% of Afghan soil. They are the government, the police and the military in those areas. When a domestic force controls almost 50% of your country, the need to negotiate and include them in the government is imperative. It is not about what the foreign powers want, it is about what ground reality dictates.

We will [also recall](#) that the [Taliban was removed](#) from the [list of terrorist organization in the US](#), in an [effort to limiting their capabilities](#). The United Nations even [removed Gulbuddin Hekmatyar from the Global Terrorists List](#) on Afghanistan's government request.

Why do these 3 countries not accept the US or India as partners in Afghanistan? 15 years of no results in Afghanistan.

India especially is well known for fueling problems between Pakistan & Afghanistan starting with Muhammad Daud, former President of Afghanistan via military coup, to supporting the Baluchistan insurgency from Afghan soil. Pakistan's government and military have long believed that India has wanted to box Pakistan in case of war, through Afghanistan.

TALIBAN DEPENDENCE ON PAKISTAN

Casaca seems to be confused with his answer to this question. Previously, he claimed that China's involvement in Afghanistan would mean stronger ties between Pakistan and the Taliban. Now, he extolls the enhanced relationship between the Taliban and Iran, even suggesting that *"the situation has evolved to the point where Iranian authorities might have replaced Islamabad as the main provider of external support to the Taliban."*

He does, however, do a great justice in connecting the drone killing of former Taliban Emir Mullah Akhtar Mansour to a *"long stay in Iran also shows how close ties are now between Iran and the Taliban."*

He also seems to miss the fact the [US has openly accused Russia](#) of [providing weapons to the Taliban](#). [A big fact to omit](#).

CHALLENGING THE NEW ALLIANCE

"The US needs to realize it is facing a hostile tripartite alliance of Pakistan, Russia and China in Afghanistan. It must answer the challenge by promoting its own alliance with India and the European Union."

What the US needs to realize is that they must get on board with the regional powers to find a solution in Afghanistan. If they continue to believe that they alone have the solution to Afghan problems, the last 15 years shows exactly what we can expect.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

As Director General of **CommandEleven**, Khalid Muhammad takes over 26 years of international experience to guide and drive his team to deliver accurate, reliable and actionable analysis for private organizations, institutions, government policy and media outlets. He provides tactical and comprehensive analysis into terrorist and extremist groups operating in the Indian sub-continent and Middle East, including recruitment, financing, operations and warfare strategies. His experience and vision guide the growth and expansion of **CommandEleven** into new opportunities.

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