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PAKISTAN'S BALOCH INSURGENCY: History, Conflict Drivers, and Regional Implications

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ABSTRACT

The Baloch people are a unique ethno-linguistic group spread between Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan. Throughout history they have been the victims of marginalization within their respective countries. This analysis begins by detailing the low-level insurgency the Pakistani Baloch have fought against the federal government of Pakistan since 2004. It then presents the drivers of historical conflict including tribal divisions, the Baloch-Pashtun divide, marginalization by Punjabi interests, and economic oppression. The contemporary conflict drivers are then examined, which include the construction of the Gwadar mega-port, oil revenues, the war in Afghanistan, and repression by the Pakistani government. The Baloch insurgency will then be placed in a larger regional and global context. By examining the conflict drivers in Pakistani Balochistan and its implications for South Asia, it is clear that while a complete cessation of the conflict is unlikely, ensuring the conflict remains limited is an important element for stability in Pakistan and the region more broadly.

INTRODUCTION

The Baloch¹ insurgency in Pakistan is the result of both historical and contemporary factors, and has implications for stability across South Asia. However, Balochistan is often overlooked or forgotten altogether because of the more prominent internal and regional issues facing Pakistan. The Kashmir dispute, the war in Afghanistan, nuclear safety issues, and the internal struggle with religious extremists dominate headlines. However, relations between Baloch nationalists and the central government have been confrontational since the creation of Pakistan in 1947, periodically turning violent. In 2004, the long-simmering tensions broke out into renewed insurgency. The conflict stems in part from the central government's imposition of a historical narrative of the creation of Pakistan as a religiously homogenous country onto the ethnically distinct Baloch. Today these divisions are also intimately tied to the headline-dominating issues mentioned above. While resolution of the conflict in Balochistan will not solve these internal and regional issues, limiting the insurgency is important in preventing further destabilization of Pakistan and the South Asia region at large.

This analysis begins by detailing the Baloch's low-level insurgency undertaken against the federal government of Pakistan since 2004. It then presents the drivers of historical conflict including tribal divisions, the Baloch-Pashtun divide, marginalization by Punjabi interests, and economic oppression. This section also presents a brief history of relations between Balochistan and the federal government. The analysis then investigates the contemporary conflict drivers, which include the construction of the Gwadar mega-port, oil revenues, the war in Afghanistan, and repression. These historical and contemporary conflict drivers are unlikely to be resolved in the near future. This paper will then place the Baloch insurgency in a larger regional context, which will make clear the importance of managing the conflict for maintaining stability in South Asia.

MAPPING THE CURRENT BALOCH MOVEMENT

Balochistan is Pakistan's largest and least populated province. The Balochs are an ethnically and historically distinct people who inhabit a 375,000 square mile region, roughly the size of Egypt along the Persian Gulf, and are found in the modern states of eastern Iran, Afghanistan, and southwest Pakistan. The military coup in 1999 that brought Pervez Musharraf to power increased general alienation among the Balochs. This is because Balochs see the army as lacking Baloch representation due to

its domination by the interests of the Punjabi—the main ethnic group in Pakistan that accounts for approximately 45 percent of the country’s population.² A primary Baloch grievance is the construction of the mega-port of Gwadar, which began in 2002 and is ongoing. In 2004, a renewed ethnic insurgency broke out, and violence has escalated since the killing of the Baloch leader Nawab Akbar Bugti by the army in 2006 and the unlawful detention and disappearance of many additional Baloch leaders by the Pakistani government.³ US intelligence estimates that around 25,000 army and paramilitary forces are involved in counterinsurgency operations in Balochistan, which has only amplified ethnic grievances.⁴ The current conflict in Balochistan, the bloodiest since the 1970s, has broken a long period of relative peace between Baloch nationalists and the federal government.

The transition from the military government of Musharraf to the civilian government of President Zadari in 2008 did little to assuage Baloch discontent. Indeed, in 2009, 792 attacks resulting in 386 deaths were recorded;⁵ approximately 92 percent of the attacks were linked to Baloch nationalist militants. Violence increased in 2010, with 730 attacks carried out resulting in 600 deaths.⁶ Recently, non-political civilian targeting as well as politically motivated attacks and killings have been on the rise.⁷

Simultaneously, leadership of the Baloch nationalist movement remains highly fractured. As a result, the Baloch nationalist movement is not unitary in either its goals or its tactics.⁸ The Jinnah Institute, an Islamabad-based think tank, argues that the multiplicity of Baloch leaders with competing motivations has exacerbated the violence, making deciphering the conflict landscape increasingly difficult.⁹ It is nearly impossible to accurately analyze the structure of the movement given contradictory reports, facts, and figures, a problem compounded by the inaccessibility of Balochistan to the media and independent observers.¹⁰

For many Balochs, however, nationalism does not extend beyond specific tribal loyalties. The three largest tribal groups are the Marri, Bugti, and Mengal tribes. Leaders from these tribes are capable of raising large armies and supplies but remain highly suspicious of each other. Additionally, a 2006 cable from the American Embassy in Islamabad leaked by Wikileaks noted that not all of the tribal leaders have turned against the state, mentioning in part, “There seems to be little support in the province, beyond the Bugti tribe, for the current insurgency.”¹¹ The actions of the Pakistani military appear to confirm this statement; the

military specifically targeted the Bugti tribal chief, Nawab Akbar Bugti, and have focused their efforts primarily on Bugti areas.¹² Additionally, the military has been able to negotiate with tribal leaders one-by-one, preventing them from joining in a common cause against the government.

While the military continues to see the Bugti tribe as the main sponsor of the anti-state insurgency, other tribal leaders have used their forces as leverage against the state to achieve their own ends. Indeed, the cable from the American Embassy goes as far as to suggest that nationalist leaders do not truly believe in secession, and instead use political rhetoric to extract revenues from the national government.¹³ In particular, they desire a larger voice in the province's development and a greater percentage of its natural resource revenues. Tribal leaders Nawab Marri and Attaullah Mengal are said to each possess 4,000 to 5,000 troops and have used them to pressure the government to cede to their demands.

However, as Human Rights Watch notes, the extent to which Baloch political leaders maintain control of militant groups remains unclear.¹⁴ The Pakistani military, on the other hand, believes Baloch leaders have a role in every attack. They have even gone as far as to say that the Balochistan Liberation Army and the Balochistan Liberation Unity Front are merely fronts for tribal fighters attempting to extract revenues from the state.¹⁵ The argument about direct control by Baloch leadership misses the point, however. Genuine disaffection with the government exists among Balochs, regardless of the degree of control under which militant groups operate. Much of the violence and lawlessness is the result of tribal politics, but Baloch nationalists have several legitimate grievances both historical and current, that the Pakistani state has repeatedly failed to address. These must be explored in depth to truly understand the current violence in Balochistan.

HISTORICAL CONFLICT DRIVERS

The conflict in Balochistan has been driven by a number of historical trends that will be outlined in this section, including a weak tribal alliance system, economic oppression, and rivalry with neighboring ethnic groups. The intractable nature of these historical factors has made a conclusive resolution of the conflict impossible, resulting in intermittent uprisings by Baloch nationalists. The development of a Baloch national identity stretches back to the pre-colonial era. At the time, Balochistan was a highly fragmented society. Nasir Khan, the preeminent figure in Baloch

mythology, was the first leader to successfully unify the Baloch tribes in the middle of the 18th Century.¹⁶ He created an army of 25,000 men and set up the first administrative system of government in the region.¹⁷ However, the loose tribal alliances arranged by Khan remained volatile. This fragmentation has hindered economic development in the province, exacerbated problems with neighboring Pashtuns in northern Balochistan and Afghanistan, and left Balochs vulnerable to Punjabi domination. While the Pashtuns and Punjabis have never allied against the Balochs, both have presented distinct problems to them.

In the late 1800s, the British exploited this weak tribal alliance system through a divide-and-conquer strategy. The strategy partitioned Balochistan into seven regions so that the British could take control of the area and ensure access to Afghanistan. In 1884, the British annexed Balochistan to British India.¹⁸ Unfortunately, as a result of the tribal rivalries exacerbated by the partition, the infrastructure and economic development of Balochistan suffered relative to other parts of British India, a trend that would continue into the twenty-first century.

The tribal nature of Baloch society also prevented a unified nationalist movement from forming in the lead up to the creation of Pakistan in 1947, which led to the province's annexation. As British withdrawal became imminent in the mid-1940s, some Baloch leaders scrambled to form a sense of common ethnic identity by calling for an independent Balochistan.¹⁹ However, Baloch separatism was the project of only a few tribal chiefs and failed to become a cohesive ideological movement.²⁰ Ultimately, on August 15, 1947, the day after the partition of India and Pakistan, the nascent government in Islamabad forcibly annexed Balochistan. After the partition, Punjabis would maintain their domination of the civil and military bureaucracies of the state, continuing the alienation of the Balochs.

Another long-term conflict driver is the pattern of economic oppression. Balochistan has always been the poorest and least developed of all of Pakistan's provinces.²¹ Since the mid-1970s its share of the country's GDP has dropped from 4.9 to 3.7 percent.²² Balochistan has the highest infant and maternal mortality rate, the highest poverty rate, and the lowest literacy rate in Pakistan.²³ The government has often tried to co-opt Balochs with development projects, but none has achieved any measure of success.

While economic development usually dominates the rhetoric coming from Islamabad, the larger issue for the Balochs remains resource exploitation. This source of tension dates back to the colonial era, when the British began extracting coal from Balochistan.²⁴ Exploitation of the province's natural gas has remained a major Baloch grievance since it was first discovered in 1952, soon after the departure of the British.²⁵ Despite being Pakistan's most abundant province in natural gas, Balochistan has seen little benefit from its gas fields relative to the Sindh and Punjab provinces. This is because a new constitution introduced in 1973 set provincial gas royalties at 12.5 percent. However, the wellhead price of gas from each province was differentiated, based on per capita provincial income in 1953. While this tremendously disadvantaged Balochistan, the dismissal of the provincial assembly in February 1973 left them without recourse. This has resulted in a wellhead price five times lower than in Sindh and Punjab, meaning that Baloch receives less in royalties.²⁶ Furthermore, the government has returned little of the royalties owed to the province, citing the need to recover operating costs.²⁷ Consequently, Balochistan is heavily in debt.²⁸

An historical conflict driver of Baloch nationalism is the Baloch-Pashtun divide, aggravated by British efforts in the region. The British fought several wars in Afghanistan with the strategic objective of keeping it as a buffer zone against Russian expansion. They developed extensive road and rail links throughout the northern parts of present day Pakistani Balochistan, areas mainly inhabited by Pashtuns.²⁹ The effects of road and railway development programs implemented during the colonial era persist today. The Pashtuns in the north of Balochistan have achieved greater economic progress than the Balochs within the province because of infrastructure and commercial links created during the British era.

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 further aggravated the Baloch fear of political domination by Pashtuns. As Afghan Pashtuns fled across the border into Pakistan, Balochs viewed them as foreigners in a land they claimed as their own. Fears of political domination seemed to be confirmed by the success of the Pashtunkhwa Milli Awami Party, a Pashtun nationalist party formed in 1989.³⁰ Stunted economic development resulting from colonial era policies, as well as perceived marginalization as a result of increased Pashtun migration during the Afghan War, are important factors driving Baloch ethno-nationalism.

Domination by Punjabis is another historical conflict driver that dates to the colonial era. During the colonial era the British favored Punjabi control of the region, and therefore arranged a political structure favorable to their interests over those of the Balochs. They entrusted the administrative and military institutions to Punjabis while Balochs were completely excluded.³¹ Because of their small and fragmented population, Balochs were adversely affected by British policy more heavily than other ethnic groups—the structural legacy of which would continue following the partition and the simultaneous departure of the British in 1947.³²

Indeed, mistrust of Punjabis sparked a Baloch uprising following the implementation of the One Unit Scheme in 1955. The plan originally had little to do with the Balochs; it was an attempt by Punjabi interests to consolidate the four ethnically diverse provinces of West Pakistan, including Balochistan, into a single administrative entity in order to counter an ethnically homogenous and numerically superior East Pakistan. East Pakistan, which would become the independent country of Bangladesh in 1971, was composed of ethnic Bengalis and was separated from West Pakistan by over 1,000 miles of Indian territory. Its population was also larger than that of all of West Pakistan's ethnic groups combined.³³ The Bengalis, like the Balochs, had always felt underrepresented in politics and the military establishment despite their massive population. The Bengalis and Balochs shared an ideological affinity for increased autonomy and a dislike for Punjabis, but their political affiliation extended no further.

The One Unit Scheme nonetheless led to a violent response from Baloch nationalists, for reasons having nothing to do with the Bengalis. The Scheme decreased Baloch representation at the federal level and forestalled the establishment of a provincial assembly, which had yet to be approved by the central government nearly a decade after the partition. The Khan of Kalat was thus able to mobilize various tribal chieftains against the One Unit Scheme because it was seen as centralizing too much power in the federal government and limiting provincial autonomy.³⁴ The revolt was ended in 1958 through harsh government repression and the arrest of several nationalist leaders. Over the next decade Balochistan was treated more like a colony than a part of the Pakistani state. Punjabis and other non-Baloch groups controlled the administration of the province. Additionally, resource exploitation by the central government, low rates of literacy, and overall impoverishment plagued the province.³⁵

Dominance by Punjabis would continue after Balochistan became an independent province in 1970 following the dissolution of the One Unit Scheme. In 1972, the newly restored civilian federal government permitted Balochistan to hold its first provincial elections, which brought to power the highly ethno-national National Awami Party (NAP). However, Pakistani President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto removed the NAP government by dismissing the Baloch provincial government in early 1973, following allegations that they were conspiring with foreign governments.³⁶ This set off the most violent Baloch insurgency to date.³⁷ During the four years of violence that ensued, estimates by scholar Selig Harrison put the number of Baloch fighters at 55,000 and the number of Pakistani troops at 80,000 with the death toll at 5,300 for Baloch militants and 3,300 for the Pakistani troops.³⁸

The militant response of the Baloch was largely driven by their rivalry with the Punjabi. First, the dismissal of the provincial assembly was seen as ethnically driven. Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party (PPP) had come to power at the federal level and the demands of the nationalist NAP in Balochistan threatened to undermine the control of the PPP and its Punjabi support base.³⁹ Second, the Punjabi-dominated military's harsh response was driven by ethnic concerns. The army had become increasingly wary of accommodating ethno-national demands after Bengalis successfully seceded from Pakistan and formed the country of Bangladesh in 1971.⁴⁰ The secession of East Pakistan was an episode that the army feared would be repeated in Balochistan and thus sought to crush the insurgency.

A military coup in 1977 led to the execution of Bhutto and brought General Muhammad Zia to power. While he made no concessions on the issue of autonomy, Zia negotiated an uneasy, 25 year-long truce with Baloch nationalists, starting with the release of Baloch prisoners. There are three main reasons for this. First, the failure of the bloody insurgency in the 1970s disheartened many radical Balochs. Second, the collapse of the Mohammed Daoud government in Afghanistan in 1978 deprived these radicals of external support.⁴¹ Lastly, Zia allowed Baloch nationalists to run in elections throughout the 1980s as long as they were not connected with a party; partially as a result, provincial assemblies formed by the winners of these elections had little actual power or autonomy.⁴² While Balochistan was largely peaceful during the 1980s and 1990s, the historical roots of the conflict were never resolved, which allowed for a renewed outbreak of violence in 2004.

CONTEMPORARY CONFLICT DRIVERS

Aside from the historical grievances of political and economic subjugation, the construction of the Gwadar mega-port, expanded natural gas exploration, the war in Afghanistan, and the military's harsh response to nationalist demands have fueled the current Baloch insurgency. The contemporary factors fueling the insurgency are complex, making resolution of the conflict improbable. The largest conflict driver in Balochistan today is the construction of Gwadar. Announced in 2001, the Chinese-funded project is aimed to transform the small fishing village of Gwadar into a major transportation hub on par with Dubai. Beyond the lofty rhetoric about the development benefits of the port, Gwadar is of extreme strategic importance to Pakistan. A new deep-water port counters Indian naval projection,⁴³ consolidates relations with China, and serves as a passageway for Pakistan's natural resources to the energy-hungry markets of India, China, and East Asia.⁴⁴

Despite its importance, the federal government has excluded Balochs from the Gwadar development process. The project is run entirely by the federal government and employs few Balochs in construction of the massive port, instead relying on Chinese engineers and laborers. Army personnel have been posted in the area to secure it from insurgent attacks. One observer noted that there has been little improvement in living standards for Balochs in the area. A parallel town for workers at Gwadar is being built close to the old one in order to segregate Balochs from the growing influx of outsiders.⁴⁵

Additionally, government officials illegally sold much of the land around Gwadar, making massive profits at the expense of local Balochs.⁴⁶ The economic marginalization of the Balochs in Gwadar has only led to increased resentment and resistance on the part of the Baloch thus convincing the government of the need to take a more hardline approach to achieve its economic ambitions. In this way, a cycle of animosity perpetuates the conflict.

Expanded natural gas exploration is another source of conflict. Balochistan is a transit site for a proposed Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) pipeline that would bring gas from Iran to Pakistan and eventually on to India.⁴⁷ Baloch militants have frequently targeted gas pipelines and termini as a way of demonstrating their disillusionment with the federal

government's exploitation of the province. Previous attacks have not only cut off power to major cities for several days, but also threatened negotiations with Iran and India over the IPI pipeline.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, Islamabad remains unwilling to negotiate with the Balochs on the very resources that cause Balochs to remain a nuisance.

The current US-led war in Afghanistan is another contemporary conflict driver. It has further marginalized Balochs in two ways. First, the war has caused an influx of Pashtun refugees from Afghanistan into Balochistan, numerically marginalizing the Baloch population within their own province.⁴⁹ This is particularly problematic because, as noted earlier, hostilities between Balochs and Pashtuns date back to the colonial era.⁵⁰ Second, an influx of extremist militants has brought more federal army and paramilitary troops into the province, which has unnerved Baloch nationalists. Many displaced Taliban troops fleeing from Afghanistan have settled in Balochistan. In fact, Quetta, the provincial capital, has become the *de facto* capital of al Qaeda and the Taliban in Pakistan.⁵¹ The Baloch have not reacted favorably given the military's history of ethnic repression and its perceived domination by Punjabis. In response, Baloch nationalists have begun killing non-Baloch settlers, primarily Punjabis, educators, and moderate Baloch political leaders opposed to violence.⁵² The violence has become so widespread that for most of 2011, Balochistan recorded the highest number of instances of violence of any Pakistani province.⁵³ While the war in Afghanistan is not a primary driver of Baloch resistance, it has numerically marginalized Balochs within the province and invited Pakistani forces into the region, which has both increased lawlessness and further radicalized the nationalists.

While the Taliban presence has led to an influx of Pakistani forces into the province, the military's harsh response to the Baloch insurgency has led to a spiral of violence.⁵⁴ A report by the Pakistan Security Research Unit notes, "Islamabad's militarized approach has led to...violence, widespread human rights abuses, mass internal displacement and the deaths of hundreds of civilians and armed personnel."⁵⁵ The International Crisis Group also notes that, as in the past, the attempt to crush the insurgency is feeding Baloch disaffection.⁵⁶ Many Balochs have been imprisoned and held without charges, and the kidnapping of dissidents has become routine, alienating moderate Balochs from the government. This kidnapping trend has risen sharply since 2006. A report released by the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan documented 143 missing persons and 140 recovered bodies in Balochistan from 2006 to 2011.⁵⁷

That the Baloch issue has been handled militarily rather than politically makes sense given the lack of civilian control over the country. Despite the restoration of democracy after the departure of General Pervez Musharraf, the military remains the dominant political authority and pays no heed to the commands of the civilian government. As Adeel Khan notes, “[The military] has earned the dubious distinction of being an army that keeps trying to conquer its own people.”⁵⁸ Unsurprisingly, its response to nearly any problem has been one of overwhelming force. As a consequence, Balochistan has become a third front for the military, the other two being the low-level conflict over Kashmir with India and the battle against Islamic militants who challenge the authority of the state. Ultimately, civil-military relations in Pakistan show no signs of changing, indicating the unlikelihood of any near-term alteration of the state’s policy on Balochistan.

DOMESTIC & REGIONAL IMPLICATIONS

An escalation of the Baloch insurgency could have disastrous repercussions for security in Pakistan and neighboring countries such as Iran and India. Firstly, containing the Baloch insurgency is important to the stability of Pakistan. At present levels, the conflict is unlikely to threaten the stability of the state. Pakistan’s military is relatively large with 640,000 well-trained troops,⁵⁹ making it capable of maintaining order in the country. However, expansion of the current Baloch insurgency could undermine the territorial integrity of the state.

Escalation of the Baloch conflict could potentially lead to the balkanization of Pakistan, a scenario that has been discussed extensively over the past decade.⁶⁰ The insurgency could also combine with other movements to stress the capacity of the Pakistani state to maintain control. For instance, if the Baloch insurgency were to gain ground or spread to other provinces such as Sindh, which also has a history of ethno-nationalism, Pakistan could lose vast swaths of territory. In such a scenario, Punjabis may decide that maintaining the unity of the country is not worth the cost.⁶¹ If the nationalists were to join forces with Islamist insurgents, the consequences could be equally devastating.

The implications of an expanded Baloch insurgency extend beyond Pakistan. One such danger is that the conflict in Balochistan could spill over into Iran, which views the widening insurgency in Pakistani

Balochistan in terms of its own Baloch population. In 2005, a nascent Baloch rebellion against the Iranian regime began, though it has not gained significant ground.⁶² While Iran and Pakistan cooperated in quelling Baloch national movements in the past, Balochistan has become a point of tension between the two as each suspects the other of interfering with its internal affairs.⁶³ An escalation in violence in Pakistani Balochistan has the potential to increase violence and instability in Iran.⁶⁴ At a minimum, the Pakistani Baloch conflict will continue to forestall the development of the IPI pipeline,⁶⁵ which is important to promoting security in the region by increasing trade ties and giving both Iran and India a stake in the stability of Pakistani Balochistan.⁶⁶

The most pressing regional concern is that the Balochistan conflict could destabilize the uneasy Indo-Pakistani peace. In particular, Pakistan harbors suspicions that India may be using Baloch insurgents as proxies. Pakistan's press frequently claims that Baloch rebels possess highly sophisticated armaments, suggesting the possibility of foreign intervention in the conflict.⁶⁷ In 2004, military officials were quoted as saying that over 200 Baloch rebels had been trained within Pakistan by the Indian government, which was used as a pretense for Pakistani military operations in the province.⁶⁸ Accounts from third-party sources lend some credence to these claims. According to Christine Fair, a Pakistan expert at Georgetown University, "It would be a mistake to completely disregard Pakistan's regional perceptions... Indian officials have told me privately that they are pumping money into Balochistan."⁶⁹ Whether Indian involvement is real or perceived, it has hardened the stance of the Pakistani government towards the rebels.

The consequences of Indian support for insurgents in Balochistan could be disastrous for peace in South Asia. Pakistan has previously used proxies to inflict casualties in Indian-administered Kashmir and throughout the rest of the country. However, such a strategy by India in Balochistan may prompt less restraint from Pakistan than India has shown, risking war and even a nuclear exchange. Indian support for Baloch separatists could conceivably result in the breakup of Pakistan along ethnic lines with the possibility of a mass migration of refugees following the balkanization of Pakistan.⁷⁰ A massive influx of migrants to India would certainly prompt a humanitarian crisis, stretching the capacity of the Indian government. It may also lead to communal violence between Muslim immigrants and Hindus in India. Finally, in such an instance, the behavior of a broken Pakistani military would be unpredictable, risking a nuclear conflict. In

sum, while India may be tempted to support Baloch separatists, the consequences of doing so could be catastrophic. Limiting the Baloch insurgency in Pakistan is thus an important element for stability in South Asia.

CONCLUSION

The conflict in Balochistan threatens to further destabilize an already fragile region. Understanding the present conflict requires an understanding of more than 150 years of social, political, and economic oppression. The history of the Baloch people includes colonial subjugation, forcible annexation, the refusal of sub-state ethnic claims, interference in local affairs, and the inability of Islamabad to deliver genuine development. A long history of rivalry with neighboring Pashtuns is an often overlooked grievance of Baloch nationalists as well. Further, tribalism and factional conflict have kept the Balochs from advocating a coherent set of demands. These long-term conflict drivers must be considered when addressing the present conflict. However, several factors make the current Baloch insurgency unique. The issue of Gwadar, the increasing importance of natural gas revenues, and a renewed influx of Afghan refugees, have further complicated the situation. Furthermore, the state's harsh response to the current insurgency has fed a conflict spiral, making reconciliation less likely.

Unfortunately, peaceful resolution of the conflict in Balochistan is improbable in the near future because neither side is likely to change its behavior. The military will maintain its strategy of targeting recalcitrant Baloch leaders, while some nationalists will continue to use violence as a means of extorting concessions from the federal government. The state will attempt to negotiate with those it sees as moderate in order to buy as much peace as possible. However, the underlying problem of genuine development aid is unlikely to be addressed. As such, intermittent attacks against the state and non-Baloch tribal groups will continue for the foreseeable future.

Given that Balochistan is important to broader regional peace, it should be accorded more attention in academic and policy discourse. While the Baloch insurgency will remain active in the medium term, its consequences can be mitigated. Genuine development in the province and an end to the harsh repression of Baloch nationalists would be a start. These policies may not overcome the deep-seated antipathies of Baloch

rebels, but they will ensure the conflict remains limited. Pakistan's neighbors would also be well advised to avoid inciting the conflict. Failure to do so could have serious repercussions for Pakistan and its South Asian neighbors.

¹ The transliteration of Baloch leads to the alternate spellings Baluch and Baluchistan. For convenience, all quotations using the alternate spelling have been standardized.

² Livingston, Ian and Michael O'Hanlon. "Pakistan Index," *Brookings Institute* (December 29, 2011): 12.

³ "Pakistan: The Forgotten Conflict in Balochistan," *International Crisis Group Asia Briefing No. 69* (October 2007): 2-5.

⁴ Jetly, Rajsree. "Resurgence of the Baluch Movement in Pakistan: Emerging Perspectives and Challenges," in Jetly, Rajshree. ed. *Pakistan in Regional and Global Politics* (New York: Routledge, 2009): 215.

⁵ "Pakistan Security Report 2009," *Pak Institute of Peace Studies* (January 2010).

⁶ "Pakistan Security Report 2010," *Pak Institute of Peace Studies* (January 2011).

⁷ Zaidi, Salman. "Policy Brief: Making Sense of Violence in Balochistan 2010," *Jinnah Institute* (January 2010) <http://www.jinnah-institute.org/programs/strategic-security-program/212-policy-brief-making-sense-of-violence-in-balochistan-2010> (accessed Dec. 10, 2011).

⁸ Wirsing, Robert. *Baloch Nationalism and the Geopolitics of Energy Resources: The Changing Context of Separatism in Pakistan* (Strategic Studies Institute, April 2008): 21.

⁹ Zaidi.

¹⁰ Wirsing, 21.

¹¹ "2006: Who's Who in Balochistan," *Dawn* (May 28, 2011) available at <http://www.dawn.com/2011/05/28/2006-whos-who-in-balochistan.html> (accessed Dec 6, 2011).

¹² Aslam, Rabia. "Greed, Creed, and Governance in Civil Conflicts: A Case Study of Balochistan," *Contemporary South Asia* Vol. 19, No. 2 (June 2011): 195-196.

¹³ "2006: Who's Who in Balochistan."

¹⁴ "Their Futures Are at Stake," *Human Rights Watch* (December 2010): 10.

¹⁵ Wirsing, 22.

¹⁶ Harrison, Selig. "Baluch Nationalism and Superpower Rivalry," *International Security* Vol. 5, No. 3 (Winter 1980): 156.

¹⁷ Khan, Adeel. "Baloch Ethnic Nationalism in Pakistan: From Guerilla War to Nowhere?" *Asian Ethnicity* Vol. 4, No. 2 (June 2003): 286.

¹⁸ Khan, Adeel "Baloch Ethnic Nationalism in Pakistan," 283.

¹⁹ Khan, Adeel. "Baloch Ethnic Nationalism in Pakistan," 285.

²⁰ Cohen, Stephen. *The Idea of Pakistan* (Washington DC: Brookings, 2006): 219.

²¹ Kennedy, 157.

²² Jetly, 216-217.

²³ Baloch, Sanaullah. "The Baloch Conflict: Towards a Lasting Peace," *Pakistan Security Research Unit No. 7* (March 2007): 5-6.

²⁴ Khan, Adeel "Baloch Ethnic Nationalism in Pakistan," 284.

²⁵ Aslam, 194.

²⁶ "Conflict in Balochistan: HRC Fact-Finding Missions," *Human Rights Commission of Pakistan* (August 2006): 56.

In Balochistan the wellhead price is \$0.38 while it is approximately \$2 in the other provinces,

- ²⁷ Ahmed, Gulfaraz. "Management of Oil and Gas Revenues in Pakistan," *The World Bank* (March 3, 2010): 11.
- ²⁸ "Pakistan: The Forgotten Conflict in Balochistan," 9.
- ²⁹ Present day Pakistani Balochistan was part of British India, as Pakistan did not exist until Partition in 1947.
- ³⁰ Khan, Adeel. *Politics of Identity* (New Delhi: Sage, 2005): 124.
- ³¹ Roy, Kaushik. "The Construction of Regiments in the British Indian Army: 1859-1913," *War in History* Vol. 8 No. 2 (April 2001): 139.
- ³² Talbot, Ian. *Pakistan: A Modern History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005): 56
The departure of the British from their Indian colony led to the creation of two states, Pakistan and India, along religious lines with the former being Muslim and the latter Hindu.
- ³³ Cohen, 7.
- ³⁴ Harrison, Selig. *In Afghanistan's Shadow* (New York: Carnegie, 1981): 27.
- ³⁵ Khan, Adeel. "Baloch Ethnic Nationalism in Pakistan," 287.
- ³⁶ Titus, Paul and Nina Swindler. "Knights, Not Pawns: Ethno-Nationalism and Regional Dynamics in Post-Colonial Balochistan," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* Vol. 32, No. 1 (February 2000): 60.
- ³⁷ Khan, Adeel. "Renewed Ethnonationalist Insurgency in Balochistan, Pakistan: The Militarized State and Continuing Economic Deprivation," *Asian Survey* Vol. 49, No. 6 (November/December 2009): 1076. and Harrison, *In Afghanistan's Shadow*, 37.
- ³⁸ Selig S. Harrison, "Ethnicity and Politics in Pakistan: The Baluch Case," in Hutchinson, John and Anthony Smith eds. *Ethnicity* (Oxford University Press; Oxford, 1996), 298.
- ³⁹ Khan, Adeel. *Politics of Identity*, 117.
- ⁴⁰ Talbot, 224.
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