

Civil-Military Relations in Pakistan

Comparative Analysis of Election Manifestoes

**Pakistan Peoples Party
Pakistan Muslim League – Nawaz
Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaaf**

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PILDAT is an independent, non-partisan and not-for-profit indigenous research and training institution with the mission to strengthen democracy and democratic institutions in Pakistan.

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Printed in Pakistan

Published: January 2012

ISBN:978-969-558-244-2

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Published by



Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency - PILDAT

Head Office: No. 7, 9th Avenue, F-8/1, Islamabad, Pakistan

Lahore Office: 45-A, Sector XX, 2nd Floor, Phase III Commercial Area, DHA, Lahore

Tel: (+92-51) 111-123-345; Fax: (+92-51) 226-3078

E-mail: info@pildat.org; Web: www.pildat.org

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PREFACE

Throughout Pakistan's history, and persistent even today, there has been a serious debate about whether the ultimate responsibility for the failure or derailing of democracy lies with the military by taking over the country's reins so frequently on one pretext or another or with political parties which did not follow democratic principles or traditions whenever they got a chance to rule, nor provided good governance.¹

Imbalances in civil-military relations affect the political class as a whole, but what have political parties of Pakistan learnt from successive military interventions? Organised political parties serve as engines of democratic consolidation in a country and while institutionalisation of parties is desirable for improving the quality of democracy in Pakistan, where do these parties stand in terms of organised thought on dealing with the most crucial issue in sustainability of democracy today?

This paper examines Election Manifestoes of 3 political parties mainly the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP); Pakistan Muslim League–Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). Election Manifestoes of 2002 and 2007, preceding General Elections 2002 and 2008 respectively have been examined in this study, in addition to the Charter of Democracy, signed between the two former Prime Ministers of Pakistan Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, Chairperson of PPP and Mr. Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, Leader of PML-N in May 2006.

The study of the two successive manifestoes is undertaken so as to trace the development, or lack thereof, of a party's vision on correcting the civil-military imbalances in Pakistan.

Acknowledgments

This paper has been prepared under the PILDAT project titled Dialogue on Civil-Military Relations in Pakistan which is supported by the British High Commission, Islamabad.

Disclaimer

PILDAT and its team made every effort to ensure the accuracy of the contents of this paper and do not accept responsibility for any omission and error, as it is not deliberate.

Islamabad
November 2011

1. **Parliamentary Oversight of Defence in Pakistan**, A PILDAT Background Paper, October 2010. Authored by **Mr. Sartaj Aziz**. <http://www.pildat.org/Publications/publication/CMR/PILDATBPParliamentaryOversightofDefenceinPakistanSeptember2010.pdf>

Introduction

Through four coup d'états in Pakistan, military governments have been in power for about half of the country's life. The latest military government led by General Pervez Musharraf lasted from 1999 to 2008, though a democracy of sorts was restored in 2002 retaining a serving General as the all powerful President of the country. Democracy was restored in 2008 when the President General Pervez Musharraf relinquished the additional position of the Chief of Army Staff the real source of his strength. The Pakistan Military is back to the barracks but it remains a formidable political player capable of effecting the course and direction of political and social change.

Despite return to democracy after every military rule, it appears that Pakistan is passing through a period of constant transition with its governance system termed as "hybrid" with civil-military interdependence.

Countries that have seen a successful transition to democracy after military rules offer examples in which maturity and institutionalization of parties have played a key role in this regard. Pakistan's political parties remain generally weak and suffer from a lack of institutionalized approach. Organised political parties serve as engines of democratic consolidation in a country but many argue that institutionalisation and maturity are not possible in a vacuum. Imbalances in civil-military relations affect the entire political class and institutionalisation of parties is desirable for improving the quality of democracy in Pakistan. In this context, it is important to know where these parties stand in terms of organised thought on dealing with the most crucial issue in sustainability of democracy today?

It is also worth noting that political parties and their leadership enjoy a huge clout in Pakistan's current political system. While political parties are seen as personality driven, it is the leadership of the parties that remains the major drivers of party policies and hence any influence on policy change remains ineffective unless it is initiated or at least approved by the top party leadership.

This paper examines Election Manifestoes of 3 political parties mainly the **Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP)**; **Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N)** and **Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)**. Election Manifestoes of 2002 and 2007, preceding General Elections 2002 and 2008 respectively have been examined in this study, in addition to the Charter of Democracy that was signed between the two former Prime Ministers and political rivals: Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, Chairperson of PPP and Mr. Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, leader of PML-N in May 2006.

Do political parties have concrete plans to achieve the goal of bringing military under the civilian democratic control, as enshrined in the Constitution of Pakistan? How specific and well-rooted are some of the manifesto promises? This paper will explore the growth and evaluation of three major political parties, in the context of Civil-Military relations in their manifestoes, from 2002 to current position.

The study of successive manifestoes is undertaken so as to trace the development, or lack thereof, of a party's vision on correcting the civil-military imbalances in Pakistan.

Comparative Analysis of Election Manifestoes

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Political Parties' Manifestoes in 2002

Political parties seek mandate from the people on the basis of pre-defined agenda or programmes presented in the shape of their election manifestos. While each political party has a different set of ideology and each of them represents a certain policy objective, the election manifestos of political parties usually focus on addressing the popular issues at the time of every election. In this way, party manifestos enshrine broad objectives, ideals, policy frameworks and public declarations that a party promises to follow in the event of its success during the election process.

In 2002 Pakistan was under the military rule of General Pervez Musharaf and there was, therefore, a practical issue at hand on how to revert to civilian rule by sending the military back to barracks.

Pakistan Peoples Party - Parliamentarian

While no specific mention of civil-military relations or imbalances is made in the Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarian (PPPP) manifesto, it outlines following policy goals in its Election 2002 manifesto:

- i. A Truth and Reconciliation Commission to be made to acknowledge victims of political injustice who fell prey to state sponsored perversion of justice to meet the ends of an unholy agenda to destroy trust in public representatives and promote militarism of society.
- ii. The PPP Parliamentarians opposes waste and extravagance through non-audited accounts and re-appropriation of [defence] budgets. It plans putting in place a parliamentary committee to inspect defence accounts which will also be submitted to the defence committee of the cabinet.
- iii. Greater transparency in defence purchases and a rationalisation of defence expenditure to make the Armed Forces fit and professional in discharging their core responsibility of defending the territorial integrity and frontiers of Pakistan.
- iv. The educational curriculum in defence institutes will be revised to ensure military respect for democracy, democratic institutions and elected officials.²

Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz

The PML-N outlined a clear and detailed stance regarding civil-military relations in its manifesto. The major points in PML-N manifesto of 2002 in this regard are:

- i. The Defence Committee to be reconstituted into a Cabinet Committee on Defence and National Security.
- ii. Defence budget barring classified items shall be debated [in the Parliament].
- iii. Military's honour and respect as a professional and apolitical institution shall be restored.
- iv. Necessary Constitutional amendments to block the future military take-over.
- v. Military law to be amended to make obedience of unlawful command a crime like the disobedience of a lawful command.
- vi. The efficacy of the Higher Defence Organization to be reviewed and Defence Production capability to be professionalized and commercialized.
- vii. The Service Chiefs to be appointed by the President on advice of the Prime Minister on merit.
- viii. Military intelligence agencies to be confined to security and counter terrorism assignments only.
- ix. Highest professional standards in the Armed Forces to be maintained.³

Pakistan Tahreek-e-Insaf

The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, like many other political parties including the PML-Q, did not address the issue of the role of military in government affairs in its Election 2002 Manifesto.

2. Pakistan Peoples Party Manifesto, June 2002: <http://www.ppp.org.pk/manifestos/2002.html>

3. Election 2002: A Comparative Study of Election Manifestoes of Major Political Parties: A PILDAT Paper October 2002:

<http://www.pildat.org/Publications/publication/manifestoes/whatdopoliticalpartiespromise-comparisonofpoliticalpartiesmenifesotes2002.pdf>

Charter of Democracy on Civil-Military Relations

The Charter of Democracy (CoD) has been termed as a landmark agreement between former Pakistani Prime Ministers Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif. This was the first time that two bitter political rivals agreed on future course of action. Major highlight of the charter was that both leaders pledged not to seek the Army's support for coming to power in the future. The document outlined steps to end the military rule established by the 1999 Pakistani coup d'état led by General Pervez Musharraf and restore civilian democratic rule. The charter committed the two parties to struggle against dictatorship and, on coming to power, to do away with the 'distortions' made in the Constitution after the overthrow of the PML-N government. Key points are below:

- i. National Security Council will be abolished. Defence Cabinet Committee will be headed by Prime Minister and will have a permanent secretariat. The Prime Minister may appoint a Federal Security Adviser to process intelligence reports for the Prime Minister.
- ii. The efficacy of the higher defence and security structure, created two decades ago, will be reviewed.
- iii. The Joint Services Command structure will be strengthened and made more effective and headed in rotation among the three services by law.
- iv. Truth and Reconciliation Commission will be established to acknowledge victims of torture, imprisonment, state-sponsored persecution, targeted legislation, and politically motivated accountability. The commission will also examine and report its findings on military coups and civil removals of governments from 1996.
- v. A commission shall also examine and identify the causes of and fix responsibility and make recommendations in the light thereof for incidences such as Kargil.
- vi. An effective Nuclear Command and Control system under the Defence Cabinet Committee will be put in place to avoid any possibility of leakage or proliferation.
- vii. We shall not join a military regime or any military sponsored government. No party shall solicit the support of military to come into power or to dislodge a democratic government.
- viii. All military and judicial officers will be required to file annual assets and income declarations like Parliamentarians to make them accountable to the public.
- ix. The ISI, MI and other security agencies shall be accountable to the elected government through Prime Minister Secretariat, Ministry of Defence, and Cabinet Division respectively. Their budgets will be approved by DCC after recommendations are prepared by the respective ministry. The political wings of all intelligence agencies will be disbanded.
- x. A committee will be formed to cut waste and bloat in the armed forces and security agencies in the interest of the defence and security of the country. All senior postings in these agencies shall be made with the approval of the government through respective ministry.
- xi. All indemnities and savings introduced by military regimes in the Constitution shall be reviewed.
- xii. Defence budget shall be placed before the Parliament for debate and approval.
- xiii. Military land allotment and cantonment jurisdictions will come under the purview of Defence Ministry. A commission shall be set up to review, scrutinise, and examine the legitimacy of all such land allotment rules, regulations, and policies, along with all cases of state land allotment including those of military urban and agricultural land allotments since 12th October, 1999 to hold those accountable who have indulged in malpractices, profiteering and favouritism.

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Political Parties' Manifestoes in 2008

Being signatories of the CoD, both PPPP and PML-N drew from their commitments in CoD to pledge to the people in their 2007 Election Manifestoes on improving civil-military imbalance in Pakistan. Since PTI did not take part in General Election 2008, it did not release an Election Manifesto ahead of Election.

Pakistan people's Party - Parliamentarian

In its Election Manifesto 2007, the PPPP mainly reproduced the Charter of Democracy (CoD), terming it as the Magna Carta of Pakistan. The party pledged that it "reaffirms its commitments to implement the Charter of Democracy; the veritable Magna Carta of Pakistan."⁴ The key points quoted from CoD in the PPPP manifesto include the following:⁵

- i. Signatories to the Charter will not join Military regimes or sponsored Governments.
- ii. The appointment of three services chiefs to be made by the Prime Minister.
- iii. The National Security Council to be abolished and replaced by the Defence Committee headed by the Prime Minister.
- iv. Nuclear Command and Control to be placed under the Defence Committee of the Cabinet.
- v. All Military and Judicial Officers to file annual statements of wealth and Income.
- vi. All Security Agencies including ISI and MI to be made answerable to the elected Prime Minister.
- vii. All indemnities promulgated by military regimes to be reviewed.
- viii. Defence budget to be placed before and approved by the Parliament.
- ix. Military Land and Cantonments to be controlled by the Ministry of Defence.

Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz

The PML-N more or less retained its pledges on fixing civil-military relations from 2002 in its manifesto ahead of 2008 General Election. Main points of PML-N pledges are as

follows:

- i. To ensure the Armed Forces perform only such functions as are assigned to them under the Constitution.
- ii. National Security Council to be abolished. The Defence Committee of the Cabinet to be reconstituted as Cabinet Committee on Defence and National Security chaired by the Prime Minister. The newly structured committee to have a permanent secretariat under National Security Advisor to the Prime Minister.
- iii. The Joint Services Command Structure to be strengthened and made more effective.
- iv. Military's honour and respect as a professional and apolitical institution to be restored. Highest professional standards in the Armed Forces shall be maintained.
- v. Pensions and other facilities for Armed Forces to be improved and special programmes launched for the well being of disabled soldiers and their families.
- vi. The Defence budget to be brought within the purview of National Assembly approval.

Pakistan Tahreek-e-Insaf

The PTI manifesto⁶ neither specifically addresses the civil-military imbalance in Pakistan nor it offers any pledges to improve civil-military equation in Pakistan. The PTI manifesto addresses topics such as Economic Policy and National Security under which its pledges include the following:

- i. Rationalize the Defence expenditure and subject the defence budget to a Parliamentary scrutiny committee.
- ii. Rationalize the size and structure of our Armed Forces in view of the strength gained from our deterrence capability.
- iii. Initiate urgent measures to strengthen the air and naval arms of the armed forces in addition to focus on modernizing the army.
- iv. Pay special attention to the needs of the retired military personnel.

4. *Towards Peace and Prosperity in Pakistan, Manifesto 2008*, the PPPP Manifesto: <http://www.ppp.org.pk/manifestos/2008.pdf>

5. *Election 2008: A Comprehensive Analysis of Election 2008 Manifestoes of Major Political Parties*, A PILDAT Paper, December 2007: <http://www.pildat.org/Publications/publication/elections/Election2008.pdf>

6. *Pakistan Tahreek-e-Insaf Manifesto*: <http://www.insaf.pk/docs/PTImanifesto.pdf>

7. The ISI already reports to the Chief Executive, i.e., the Prime Minister of Pakistan. In July 2008, the Peoples Party Government issued a notification to place ISI under the administrative, financial and operational control of the Interior Division. However, the Government put the order on hold almost immediately saying further deliberations are needed on "coordinating intelligence efforts."

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Status of Implementation of PPPP Manifesto Pledges

Both PPPP and the PML-N have not changed or updated their manifesto pledges formally since after the 2008 General Election. The PPPP, the party in power since 2008, has, however, taken some steps forward on the pledges it made in 2007 manifesto. Below is an analysis of the actions taken by the PPPP government since 2008 on its election pledges on civil-military relations in Pakistan:

Table 1: Status of Implementation of PPPP Manifesto Pledges

No.	Manifesto 2008 Pledges	Action Taken	Status
1.	Signatories to the Charter will not join Military regimes or sponsored Governments		
2.	The appointment of three services chiefs to be made by the Prime Minister	Yes	Through the 18 th Constitutional Amendment (April 2010), the President is now to appoint the Services Chiefs on the binding advice of the Prime Minister.
3.	The National Security Council to be abolished and replaced by the Defence Committee headed by the Prime Minister	Yes, Partly	The NSC is not constituted though the law still stands on the statute; the Defence Committee of the Cabinet meets under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister, though, contrary to the CoD pledges, it does not have a dedicated permanent secretariat.
4.	Nuclear Command and Control to be placed under the Defence Committee of the Cabinet	No	The Nuclear Command and Control Authority serves under the Chief Executive, i.e., Prime Minister.
5.	All Military and Judicial Officers to file annual statements of wealth and Income	No	No legislation has been moved or passed in this regard in the Parliament which makes it binding for Military and Judiciary to file annual statements of assets that can be made publicly available. Not only that the PPP-leading the current ruling coalition did not take an initiative, the PML-N members also did not move a private member's bill in this regard.
6.	All Security Agencies including ISI and MI to be made answerable to the elected Prime Minister	No	Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) already reports to the Prime Minister. ⁷ Military Intelligence, however, continues to report to the Army Chief.
7.	All indemnities promulgated by military regimes to be reviewed	No	Parliament did not give indemnity to the November 3, 2007 actions of Gen. Pervez Musharraf
8.	All indemnities promulgated by military regimes to be reviewed	No	In keeping with its promise, the PPPP Government has brought more details of the Defence Budget since Budget 2008 to the National Assembly of Pakistan
9.	Military Land and Cantonments to be controlled by the Ministry of Defence	No	De-facto position is that Military Land and Cantonments are already controlled by the MoD.

7. The ISI already reports to the Chief Executive, i.e., the Prime Minister of Pakistan. In July 2008, the Peoples Party Government issued a notification to place ISI under the administrative, financial and operational control of the Interior Division. However, the Government put the order on hold almost immediately saying further deliberations are needed on "coordinating intelligence efforts."

Conclusion

Pakistan's citizens and society have begun to loudly question the role of military in politics and key issues of policy formulation in Pakistan. In fact, the military's political role and its repeated interventions are considered a major stumbling block in Pakistan's transition towards a sustainable democracy.

Viewed in the context of countries that have had successful transition to democracy after successive military interventions, it can be safely argued that Military's political role and influence can not be effectively curtailed in Pakistan unless there is a rigorous roadmap and agenda followed by political parties of Pakistan. While the Charter of Democracy signed by PPP and PML-N is termed as a milestone in this regard and this paper analyses the steps that have been undertaken to implement the CoD so far, it is also worth noting that CoD offers only a start.

Political parties in Pakistan, weak and splintered as they are, have suffered the most through military interventions. Parties and leaders have gone to gallows, suffered exiles and languished behind bars. Yet the determination, resolve and the resourcefulness needed to confine military to its professional affairs is somewhat wanting. Parties in power have not shown maturity in dealing with imbalances in civil-military relations. The pendulum in this regard continues to swing to one or the other extreme when it comes to establishing a constitutional equation of civil-military relations in Pakistan.

The study of the manifestos of 3 political parties shows that despite deep understanding at places, the public pledges neither show consistent understanding of legal and constitutional positions on this issue, nor is there any effort to outline a steady and step by step approach in resolving this key issue that holds Pakistan's dream of sustainable democracy hostage.

Like any professional body, political parties needed to approach this issue with the scholarship and maturity that it demands. Parties need to focus energies on studying and learning from contemporary examples countries' return to democracy after military rule. Think Tanks or special research and study units need to be established within Pakistan's parties that should be devoted to study relevant regional and international models and offer recommendations on parties policies and plans to party decision-making bodies. Model Manifestoes on addressing civil-military imbalance in Pakistan need to be outlined and implemented. Political parties have or must have their hands on the pulse of the people. Only a well-studied, mature and well-rounded approach, that is carved keeping in view public sentiments, can help Pakistan achieve a Constitutional equation of civil-military relations.



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Head Office: No. 7, 9th Avenue, F-8/1, Islamabad, Pakistan
Lahore Office: 45-A, Sector XX, 2nd Floor, Phase III Commercial Area, DHA, Lahore
Tel: (+92-51) 111-123-345; Fax: (+92-51) 226-3078
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