

DISCUSSION PAPER

Restructuring Higher Defence Organisation of Pakistan

CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS | AUGUST 2013

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

CCPA	Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CDS	Chief of Defence Staff
CDP	Committee for Defence Planning
CJCS	Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff
CJCSC	Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee
COSC	Chief of Staff Committee
DC	Defence Council
DCC	Defence Committee of the Cabinet
DG	Director General
DNI	Director National Intelligence
DMC	Defence Ministers Committee
DOPC	Defence and Overseas Policy Committee
ECC	Employment Control Committee
EU	European Union
GHQ	General Headquarters
HDO	Higher Defence Organisation
ISI	Inter Services Intelligence
JCC	Joint Chiefs Committee
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
JIC	Joint Intelligence Committee
JSHQ	Joint Staff Headquarters
JSS	Joint Staff Secretariat
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCA	National Command Authority
NSC	National Security Council
PAF	Pakistan Air Force
PILDAT	Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency
PJHQ	Permanent Joint Headquarters
SPD	Strategic Plans Division
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States

PREFACE

The structure of Pakistan's Higher Defence Organisation (HDO) was revamped in 1976. It has not been reviewed since. Experts believe that the existing structure of higher defence organisation needs urgent review and revamp – a need which is highlighted acutely in the aftermath of incidents such as the Abbottabad operation and attacks on PNS Mehran and Salalah border post, etc. Our neighbouring India reviewed and re-organised this structure immediately after the Kargil debacle and has instituted a National Task Force to bring its HDO in line with its projected strategic ambitions.

This paper **Restructuring Higher Defence Organisation of Pakistan has been authored by Gen. (Retd) Ehsan ul Haq**, Former Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, Pakistan, for PILDAT.

Gen. (Retd) Ehsan ul Haq has analyzed Pakistan's Higher Defence Organisation (HDO) structure in comparison with other countries of the World and proposed changes in the current structure.

The objective of the paper is to generate fact-based debate and well-structured policy revisions on the subject. The paper is part of PILDAT's work on Democratic Civil-Military Relations in Pakistan.

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Islamabad
August 2013

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Gen. (Retd.) Ehsan ul Haq

Former Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee

General Ehsan ul Haq was born on September 22, 1949 in Mardan. He is a retired 4 star General in the Pakistan Army who served as the Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee of the Armed Forces until October 8, 2007.

Gen. Ehsan ul-Haq graduated from the PAF Public School, Sargodha in 1967 and was commissioned in the Army Air Defence regiment in October 1969. While serving in the Army, General Ehsan commanded various Infantry and Air Defence divisions. He was promoted as Brigadier in June 1992 and Major General in June 1996. At the time of the army takeover of Civilian Elected Government of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in 1999, Maj Gen Ehsan ul Haq was serving as Director General of Military Intelligence.

On May 14, 2001, Major General Ehsan ul Haq was promoted to the rank of a three star General and in October 2001 was given the command of Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). After completing three year term as the DG ISI, in October 2004, General Ehsan was promoted to four-star General and assumed the post of chairmanship of Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee. General Ehsan ul Haq was also nominated as the first ever Colonel-in-Chief of the Army Air Defence on December 18, 2004. The Colonel-in-Chief is usually the four-star General, and is the ceremonial head of his parent unit. He was decorated with Hilal-e-Imtiaz for his meritorious military services. He retired on October 08, 2007.

He joined the PLDAT Dialogue Group on Civil Military Relations in March 2012.

Introduction

National defence is a collective responsibility of all segments of the society. Although the armed forces of any nation may act as the vanguard, war effort is not restricted to the employment of the military instrument and entails the total power potential of a nation. The Higher Defence Organization (HDO) of any country ensures the optimum utilization of national resources and seamless coordination between the people, the government and the armed forces. This is achieved through a harmonized effort between the political, civil and military elements.

Pakistan, right at its birth, was confronted with a broad spectrum of daunting challenges including the early loss of its undisputed leader. It seriously impacted the structuring and evolution of institutions even in such critical areas as national security, despite existential threats from across the borders. This subjected us to deviations from the recognized norms of Parliamentary supremacy and civilian control and evolved a distorted framework. National security policy formulation and defence management were dominated by the military.

Given the political history of Pakistan, unless we build up credible security policy making mechanisms, subordinated to the Parliament and civilian control, adhoc and parochial interests would continue to impact our policy formulation processes, undermining critical aspects of our national defence effort.

Evolution of Higher Defence Organisation (HDO) in Pakistan

Pakistan inherited the British tradition of civilian primacy over the military and its isolation from active politics. On our independence in 1947, Prime Minister Liaqat Ali Khan held the defence portfolio. A defence Committee of Cabinet (DCC), with a number of ministers as its members, was the supreme State body controlling all defence matters. However, the DCC existed on paper only and hardly ever met. The Prime Minister, as the Defence Minister dealt directly with the Secretary Defence and C-in-Cs of the services.

Due to acute instability that led to frequent changes in the political leadership, there was little policy guidance or input into national defence management. Subsequently, in 1954, with the induction of a full-fledged Minister of Defence in uniform, General Ayub Khan who was Commander in Chief,

the role of the Ministry of Defence also diminished to a mere routine coordination agency.

At the services level, the Air Force and the Navy were under the GHQ, with the inter-service problems, initially handled by the Deputy Chiefs Organization, later re-designated as Joint Services Secretariat (JSS). When the Pakistan Navy and the Air Force acquired the status of independent services, a Joint Chiefs Committee (JCC) was constituted, with the Army Chief acting as modulator. It was the highest military body responsible for dealing with all inter-service matters related to policy, planning and operational coordination. In 1951 the JSS was re-organized into the Joint Chiefs Secretariat comprising the C-in-Cs of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force.

Despite these re-organizations, vital aspects relating to policy, strategic planning and operational coordination could not receive the desired attention due to greater involvement of Service Chiefs with the teething problems of their services. Thus the country's defence mainly depended on the individual service strategies, priorities and operational plans that were evolved in isolation. Both the 1965 and 1971 wars were fought under the JCS System. The lessons drawn from these wars conclusively pointed to a comprehensive organizational failure both vertically and horizontally.

This necessitated a major overhaul of our HDO, steps towards which were initiated in 1972. A proposal to structure a new HDO, including the conversion of the Joint Chiefs Secretariat into Joint Staff Headquarters (JSHQ), with a full time Chairman, was forwarded to the President. The proposal remained under consideration until May 1976 when the Government at the time released a White Paper establishing the present HDO.

Unfortunately, only 14 months later, the imposition of martial law changed the entire perspective, stemming the consolidation of the HDO and in fact reversing its implementation.

After the end of the military rule in 1989, successive governments toyed with the idea of a Committee for Defence and National Security (CDNS) and National Security Council (NSC) but the political governments continued to adhere to the original 1976 HDO, although making no tangible efforts to effect its complete implementation.

An Appraisal of Contemporary HDO Models in Democratic States

Evolution of HDO in various countries is primarily the consequence of their geo-strategic environment and historical experiences. However, there are a number of similarities between them, in the defence management and political fields that could be useful for comparative study.

In our case the study of Britain and India would be relevant, despite differences in our post-independence experiences, particularly in the political field. Similarly, our extensive defence interaction with the US has also influenced our perceptions and defence structures. Therefore, a study of the American defence organisations would also be quite informative in reforming our HDO. Moreover, the evolving dynamic of civil military relations in countries like Turkey, South Korea and Indonesia also offer some relevant lessons for reforms and evolution of our HDO.

Higher Defence Organisation in USA

Under the United States constitution, the President is the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. He is responsible for policy planning, resource allocation and coordination and monitoring of operations of combat commands through Secretary of Defence and the Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) or directly.

On behalf of the President, the Secretary Defence is responsible for formulating policies related to the Armed Forces. Overtime the authority of Secretary Defence has been appreciably strengthened and the Secretary can now re-assign, transfer, consolidate or abolish major combat functions, including service roles and missions. The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) are directly responsible to Secretary Defence; he makes nominations to the President for promotion of all officers above the rank of Brigadier with advice from JCS.

Other elements of the US HDO are:-

i. **NSC**

It is the supreme policy making body that deliberates on national security issues requiring presidential policy decision. It provides framework for establishing national strategy and policy objectives. The US President is the chairman and its membership includes the Vice President, National Security Advisor and the Secretaries of State and Defence.

Director National Intelligence (DNI), Director CIA and CJCS serve as statutory advisors. Depending on the issue under consideration, other Secretaries, as appropriate, may also be included.

ii. **Department of Defence**

The Department of Defence is composed of the office of the Secretary Defence, the JCS, the office of the Inspector General, Combat Commands (unified and specified) the military Departments (Army, Navy, Air force) and other agencies. It also coordinates with the State Department as both departments detail officers for two years tour of duty on the working staff of the other department to increase coordination between defence and state departments.

iii. **Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS)**

The Chairman is the senior most ranking military officer who should have served as chief of any service, but the Vice Chairman is always from a

different service. The JCS is a corporate body with Chairman as its head. Its members include Chief of Staff Army, Chief of Naval Operations, Chief of Staff Air Force and Commandant of US Marine Corps. Although the CJCS has no command authority, he functions within the chain of command by transmitting to the commanders of the Combat Commands the orders of the President or Secretary Defence. In this strictly advisory role, the JCS constitute the second highest deliberatory body for military policy after the NSC.

iv. **Service Chiefs**

The Service Chiefs act as a link between the civil command and the military component and remain the sole authority on recruiting, equipping, training and maintenance of their respective services. They do not exercise direct operational control over the combat commands yet remain the asset provider. Although they do not have direct access to the President but under special circumstances they can represent to him and the congress.

v. **Combat Commands (Unified/Specified)**

US Armed Forces are organized into combat commands for the performance of military missions. Troops from the various departments (i.e. Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines) are placed under the operational command of unified/specified commanders. They are given full operational control over all forces under their command. Lines of command run from the Commander In Chief (the President) through the Secretary Defence via the JCS to the Combat Commanders. The Service Chiefs do not fall in the chain of command.

Analysis

1. The US has a potent National Security Council with the requisite membership, including the political and military leadership. The system also has an effective National Security Advisor to the President who is also member of the NSC.
2. DNI and Director CIA are fully integrated into the NSC and are directly under the President.
3. There are effective lower and upper House Committees of US Congress on defence matters with the President and Secretary Defence accountable to both Houses.
4. The Secretary Defence has appreciable legal authority to establish civilian control over the Chairman and

JCS. The appointment of military chiefs is also subject to approval by the Senate. The Department of Defence has a balanced mix of civilian bureaucrats, technocrats and military experts.

5. Under normal circumstances, the President is not directly accessible to Service Chiefs. Chairman and JCS actively participate in operational planning, strategic direction and budgetary allocation to the services. Chairman, despite an ambiguous authority, has grown in stature and is the sole military spokesman.
6. The well-defined line of control over the Unified and Specified Commands ensures optimum jointness and seamless integration of assets.

Higher Defence Organisation in Britain

The British HDO underwent extensive modifications and refinements after World War II. In 1958 appointment of Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) was created and in 1963 all the Armed Forces committees were subsumed in the Ministry of Defence under a single Secretary of State for Defence.

A Defence Council was established to exercise powers of command and administration over the armed forces. The 1984 White Paper introduced full-scale changes which reduced the powers/authority of individual Service Chiefs. Henceforth, they were required to submit their views or policy to the Secretary of State for Defence through the CDS, whose position was substantially reinforced. This change in policy was implemented despite resistance and many obstacles which had to be removed.

i. Defence and Overseas Policy Committee

Crown Prince is the nominal Commander-in Chief of the Armed Forces but the cabinet, through the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Defence, has the supreme responsibility for national defence. Prime minister and the Cabinet provide the political direction for formulation of the Defence policy and strategy.

ii. National Security Council

One of the first steps of Prime Minister David Cameron's coalition government in the UK was the formation of the NSC in May 2010. The British NSC is a cabinet Committee tasked with overseeing all issues related to national security, intelligence coordination and defence strategy. It is chaired by the Prime Minister and its permanent members are the Deputy Prime Minister, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Defence, Energy and Climate Change, Foreign Affairs, Home and International Development Secretaries. CDS, or his deputy, chairman of the Joint Intelligence Committee and heads of intelligence agencies also attend regularly. A National Security Advisor (a civil servant), acts as the secretary of the NSC and heads a team of staff officers, called the NSC secretariat and located in the cabinet office. NSC, which has been meeting on a weekly basis, has currently three ministerial sub-committees to consider:-

- a. Threats, hazards, resilience and contingencies.
- b. Nuclear Deterrence and Security.
- c. UK's relations with emerging international powers.

iii. Secretary of State for Defence

Although the PM retains supreme responsibility for defence, the Secretary of State for Defence is responsible for the following functions:

- a. Allocate resources among the services
- b. Establish general research and development policy
- c. Setting questions of general administration on which a common policy for the services is desirable
- d. Administering inter services agencies

iv. Chief of Defence Staff and Permanent Under Secretary

The UK Ministry of Defence, headed by Secretary of State for Defence, is a unified and integrated organization which functions both as a Department of Government and as a military headquarters.

In broad terms, the Ministry is divided between the military and civilian staffs. CDS and the Permanent under-Secretary head each respectively. Both render advice to the Secretary of State for Defence on all matters concerning operations, administration and finance.

Civil officials and service personnel work side by side with neither pre-dominating. The three single service departments advise the Secretary of State for Defence on their respective service matters and ensure implementation of government policies.

v. Defence Council (DC)

The DC is the highest committee in the UK Ministry of Defence. Secretary of State for Defence chairs its meetings and there are nine other members of this committee who are also responsible for implementing the defence policy, which the body formulates. The DC also advises the DOPC on matters of national security requiring expert advice from it.

vi. Chiefs of Staff Committee

The Chiefs of Staff Committee is the most important military committee in the Ministry of Defence. The CDS presides over this committee and the three service chiefs are its members. They retain their separate identity and, at the same time maximum coordination is ensured through different inter-services committees. Each service has a separate board. On all matters affecting an individual service, these boards are the highest decision-making body.

vii. **Chain of Command**

The highest military representative in the British HDO is the CDS. He commands and coordinates the activities of the three services through the Vice CDS and the three service chiefs.

An important development has been the establishment of the Permanent Joint Headquarters (PJHQ). It has brought together, on a permanent basis, intelligence, planning, operations and logistic staff and includes rapidly deployable Joint Force Headquarters. The PJHQ is responsible for planning all UK-led joint, potentially joint, combined and multinational operations and works directly under the Ministry of Defence.

Analysis

1. Britain has a fully integrated HDO, wherein the Prime Minister and the Cabinet jointly provide political direction. Formulation of the NSC is viewed as an important step forward towards better coordination of the national security and re-assertion of the British tradition of collective Government.
2. The Secretary of State for Defence exercises actual control of armed forces through Permanent under Secretary of state and the CDS.
3. The service chiefs are not the members of NSC. Only CDS represents the three services in NSC.
4. Each service retains its identity through service boards, which are committees of senior officers and civil servants.
5. While CDS through his authority and elaborate set up of PJHQ takes all possible measures to ensure integration, the Joint Rapid Employment Force provides a quick response capability.

Higher Defence Organisation in India

Although the management of defence in India has remained under full political control, a tangible characteristic of the Indian HDO has been the increasingly assertive role of the civil bureaucracy in the Ministry of Defence. This is unprecedented in any democratic or socialist country, and has eroded the role of Service Chiefs as professional military advisors.

i. Supreme Commander

Indian President is the supreme commander of the Indian Armed Forces. Although he is 'dejure' head of the Defence Forces, the Prime Minister and the Cabinet, who are collectively responsible to the Parliament for the defence of the country, exercise the 'de facto' control.

ii. NSC

In 1998, under the chairmanship of Prime Minister, India established the NSC. The Council has three tiers i.e., NSC, the Strategic Policy Group and the National Security Advisory Board.

The other members of the NSC include Foreign, Home, Defence and Finance Ministers as well as the National Security Advisor. There is no military member. It has following functions to perform:

- a. To undertake strategic defence reviews and decide on long-term policy options.
- b. To coordinate intelligence assessments with a view to evolve comprehensive analyses and best policy options for the Prime Minister.
- c. Determine the size and structure of nuclear forces, the command, control and communication systems and its final employment.

iii. Strategic Policy Group

Under the Cabinet Secretary, a Strategic Policy Group has been formed to provide inter ministerial coordination and back up to the NSC. The Service Chiefs, secretaries of key ministries, Governor Reserve Bank, Secretary Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) and Director Intelligence Bureau are its members. The already existing Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) has been converted into the NSC Secretariat to provide long-term intelligence information to NSC.

iv. National Security Advisory Board

It comprises of eminent experts in various fields,

including external / internal security, strategic analysis, science & technology. They are from outside government and nominated by the Prime Minister. It meets at least once a month and provides long-term prognoses and analyses for the NSC and recommends solutions and policy options.

v. Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs (CCPA)

It is the highest political organization, which lays down the aims and broad political and defence policy objectives. The Prime Minister Chairs the CCPA and the membership includes Home, Finance, External Affairs and Defence Ministers. Other ministers and Service Chiefs are invited on required basis. The committee deals with all questions relating to both short and long-term defence policies and is served by the civil wing of the Cabinet Secretariat.

vi. Defence Ministers Committee (DMC)

The Defence Minister heads this committee and it includes the Minister of State for Defence, Service Chiefs, Defence Secretary, Secretary of Defence Production and Scientific and Financial Advisors (Defence Services).

It interprets the national aims and objectives, formulates policies and evolves plans. It also deals with the development strategy including force goals, induction of equipment/weapon systems, and development of infrastructure, logistics and resource allocation.

vii. Committee for Defence Planning (CDP)

It is headed by the Cabinet Secretary. Service Chiefs, Principal Secretary to PM, Secretaries of Defence, Planning Commission, Finance, Foreign and Defence production are permanent members.

The CDP is an apex bureaucratic body to cater for integration of defence aspects into the national development plans. It is also mandated to periodically review long-range intelligence assessment of geo-strategic developments, review goals and objectives of national defence efforts, harmonize technological, foreign policy and defence services priorities and finally to review defence plans drawn up by the Ministry of Defence.

viii. Chief of Staff Committee (COSC)

It consists of the Service Chiefs; there is no permanent chairman and meetings are presided over

by the longest serving member. The Services Chiefs act in the advisory capacity to Minister of Defence. The Scientific Advisor to the Defence Minister is invited when a technical matter is under discussion. It formulates plans for the execution of the policy laid down by CCPA and DMC. After their experience in Kargil, Indians embarked on integration of services and decided to adopt the CDS System. The CDS will be assisted by a Vice CDS and three deputy CDS to deal with operations, intelligence and planning. Despite a lapse of over 13 years, the system has not been implemented.

Analysis

1. India has established the NSC through an executive order without the requisite legislative process. It does not provide direct access to the Armed Forces with the political leadership and deprives it of participation in the decision making process at the highest level.
2. The mandate of the CCPA is imprecise and is not specifically related to matters of national security. The practice to have chiefs of all the three services for on the spot professional military advice on this forum has also been discontinued.
3. Political control over the military leadership is firm and well-established. However, the civil bureaucracy has emerged powerfully at the central level and has marginalized the military leadership. Through the CDP the Armed Forces have been further relegated in the consultation process.
4. The Defence Minister functions through too many committees with overlapping membership which slows down the decision-making process.
5. The COSC has no permanent chairman and a separate headquarters. Although the CDS system was approved but has not been implemented for over 10 years apparently due to acute inter services rivalries.

Impact and Experiences of Civil Military Relations in Other Countries

The dynamics of HDO and its reformation has to be viewed in the broader context of the civil military relations. Reforms in the HDO, to ensure a more effective political control would be a significant step toward consolidation of democracy and the integration of all elements of national power into the national defence cause.

However, this is a complex and sensitive issue of governance in most countries and needs to be handled carefully.

While it pre-supposes the autonomous domain of the Armed Forces in respect of professional, technical and service affairs, these are within the policy framework set out by a civil political authority.

The state of civil military relations varies from one country to another and is the consequence of their specific environment and historical experiences. A number of countries have successfully reformed their institutional frameworks to achieve a more harmonious civil military equation, in conformity with the principles of political-civil primacy in national security affairs.

Although there is no perfect solution, it would be useful to learn from the transformation that has been underway in countries like *Turkey*, *South Korea* and *Indonesia*, etc.

Some of the important conclusions that can be drawn from study of the reforms in these countries are as under:

- i. Defence reforms are an inherent part of the overall politico-security transition process in any country and cannot be limited to the defence sector only. By its very nature, it is an extended multi-faceted process, directly related to the geo-political environment, regional security matrix and the internal politico security situation. Taking the example of **Turkey**, the process comprised the end of the Cold War and consequent diminished role of Turkish military in NATO, Turkey's EU accession process, the emergence of a single-party government (by the popular Justice and Development Party) in more than a decade, and its significant achievements in all fields, strategic shift in Turkey's foreign policy (towards relations with Iran and its Arab neighbours) as well as the changes in US Turkish relations during the Iraq

War.

- ii. An important pre-requisite for a successful reform process is a credible popular leadership, with a demonstrated capacity for good governance and a strong political resolve to pursue the process. The leadership should be able to muster broad political and popular ownership of the reforms and be supported by stable democratic /parliamentary institutions, bureaucratic efficiency and a robust rule of law. The most significant strength of the political leadership in a civil-military equation is their political legitimacy and a popular perception of successful deliverance in the challenges facing the people.
- iii. A successful bid at transforming the civil-military equation requires a sustained development of capacities on national security issues in the Parliament, political parties, bureaucracy, media and the broader civil society. This is experienced to be a gradual process that would entail formal studies, evolving processes and institutions, interaction with the armed forces and learning about the experiences and best practices in other countries. Fortunately, considerable work has been done in this field, particularly on forums like PILDAT, which need to be further intensified.
- iv. Finally, a successful reform model requires that the Armed Forces also participate in the process as a willing partner. It is essential as there would have to be simultaneous reforms within the Armed Forces, as witnessed in **Indonesia**. This would require including the Armed Forces in the consensus building towards reform and an objective, transparent and continuing dialogue on all forums, including the Armed Forces institutions. The agenda must not be projected as a zero-sum game and the Armed Forces assured of popular and political support on its corporate interests.

Analysis of Pakistan's Higher Defence Organization

Pakistan's HDO, as enunciated in the white Paper in 1976, has been in existence for 37 years. A comprehensive analysis of this system, its functioning and contribution, is essential for recommending appropriate reforms.

i. Prime Minister

The 1976 White Paper forcefully asserts the centrality of the role of Prime Minister. Prime Minister determines the national aims in the field of defence and directs national effort accordingly. He is responsible for:

- a. Allocation of necessary resources to defence within the State's capacity.
- b. Establishing and reorganising institutions to ensure coordinated application of resources.
- c. Raising and development of armed forces.
- d. Co-ordinating defence policy with domestic and external policies.

ii. Defence Committee of the Cabinet

Defence committee of the Cabinet, (DCC) is the apex political body, for all matters relating to national security and defence policy. The Prime Minister chairs the DCC. Its membership includes the Ministers of Defence, Foreign Affairs and Finance. Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCSC) and the three Services Chiefs are in attendance. Other ministers and officials may be invited, if required. Military Wing of the Cabinet Division acts as the secretariat of the DCC.

The committee is responsible to evaluate the total threat to national security, evolve national security/defence policy, allocate resources, define the role and tasks of the Armed Forces in accordance with the national policy/strategy and coordinate appropriate actions through various ministries which have a bearing on national defence.

Some important observations on the functioning of the DCC are as follows:

- a. While the White Paper is emphatic about the role and responsibility of the Prime Minister in national defence and the DCC, a sub-committee of the cabinet, there is no reference to the role and responsibility of

the cabinet as a corporate body, answerable to the Parliament and the nation.

- b. The DCC is not a permanent body and is summoned on as required basis, invariably in response to an emergent or crisis situation. In actual practice, its meetings are rare, which precludes the opportunity for regular interaction on national defence/security issues, causing adhoc control and inadequate political direction.
- c. In the absence of a dedicated secretariat and permanent staff, the DCC has not been able to develop into a pro-active and effective forum for decision-making on national security and pursue the implementation of its directives. Moreover, such forums are invariably backed by a think tank of experts to provide independent institutionalized analysis on the security environment, threat perception and response options.
- d. The composition of the DCC may also require a review as it has been experienced that in our current political dispensation; there may not be any representative from one or more of the federating units in the committee. It was for this reason that the NSC, established by President Musharraf, included the Chief Ministers.

iii. Defence Minister

The Defence Minister, in our environment is invariably a person who has little exposure to defence planning. There is also inadequate awareness of military affairs generally amongst other members of the Cabinet, Parliamentarians and even the senior bureaucracy.

While hampering serious political inputs in defence planning, it creates undesirable imbalance by over reliance on the military leadership.

Moreover, there has been frequent practice of the PM himself holding the portfolio of Defence Minister. This tends to hamper institutionalized functioning of political and defence echelons as well as inter-ministerial coordination, while enhancing the exposure and influence of the military.

Moreover, as a matter of political expediency, rather than any cogent administrative or conceptual reason, a separate Ministry of Defence Production, under a full time Minister, has also been created. This has further complicated the coordination at the level of the Ministry of Defence.

iv. **Defence Council**

Defence Council is responsible to translate the defence policy formulated by the DCC into military policy. Its role is to examine, review and recommend for approval, to the DCC, the role, size and structure of the three services. It also formulates policies for indigenous production, research and development and induction or procurement of defence materials and equipment. Defence Minister chairs it and the membership has a good mixture of civilian and military experts. The body has been the least effective component of the HDO or almost non-existent because of the following reasons:-

- a. The Prime Minister as Defence Minister could not convene its meetings. Given his multifarious commitments, it would be unfair to expect a Prime Minister, acting as Defence Minister to either have the time, or inclination, to participate in such forum.
- b. The direct access of Services Chiefs to the PM undermines the role of Defence Minister and the Defence Council.
- c. The DC is assigned roles for which the desired expertise amongst its members is not available, especially, defence procurement, scientific research (R&D), indigenous production and intelligence.

v. **Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee**

The Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (JCSC) is the highest military body for rendering professional military advice. It consists of a permanent chairman and the three Chiefs of Staff.

In order to maintain the identity of individual services the Chairman has been refrained from giving directives to the services. He in consultation with JCSC periodically reviews the role, size, and structure of the armed forces in order to meet the threat. In case of divergence of views CJCS presents alternatives and gives his own views, to the Defence Minister.

Following structural problems have prevented the achievement of the objectives outlined in the White Paper:

- a. With the mandate given to the JCSC and the role assigned to the Chairman, it has not been possible to harmonize military strategy with national policy. The Chairman is the senior most ranking officer but he has not been the sole or even the principal spokesman of the services' and on security matters. The direct access of the service chiefs to PM undermines his

role.

- b. Although the Chairman JCSC has been designated as the principal staff officer to assist the Prime Minister in the supervision and conduct of war (during war time), he has no jurisdiction over the planning, budgeting, training or even operations of armed forces during peace time. This is a serious dichotomy as the Armed Forces have to develop and prepare for war during peace time. Moreover the transition from peace time to war time status must entail minimum dislocation in the command and management systems.
- c. Although there has been some progress towards better integration of the force development strategy at the JS HQ level, we have a long way to go to achieve the requisite level of jointness essential for success, at the strategic, operational and tactical levels in any future conflict. Besides being a force multiplier, jointness can be an enormous source of economy in defence outlays. However even the inter- services elements placed under the JS HQ in the White Paper have yet to be transferred to it.
- d. With the operationalization of nuclear weapons, the need for a joint strategy and the seamless integration of the conventional and nuclear strategies has become a critical point. Since this can only be achieved at the JS HQ, the lingering perceptions about services autonomy cannot hold good any further.
- e. Technically, the Chairman can be from any Service. However due to the asymmetry in the size of the Army viz the other two services, there has been a divergence of opinion on the issue. Consequently the Chairman, except for two occasions, have always been from the Army.

vi. **National Command Authority**

In the wake of the Nuclear Tests in 1998, studies were undertaken to evolve an effective command and control structure for our strategic programmes. As a consequence of this exercise, the government formally announced the establishment of National Command Authority (NCA) in February 2000. The Secretariat of the NCA is the Strategic Plans Division (SPD), located in the JS HQ. NCA comprises two elements, (with the SPD supporting both as a Secretariat):-

a. **Employment Control Committee (ECC)**

It is the apex body of the NCA, comprising senior political and military policy makers. This forum provides policy direction, exercises control over all strategic forces and has the authority on employment

of nuclear weapons. Chaired by the Prime Minister, and with the foreign minister as the vice chairman, it includes the ministers of defence, finance and interior as well as the chairman JCSC and the three service chiefs. The Director General SPD acts as the secretary of the ECC. Other ministers, federal secretaries, heads of intelligence services, etc may be invited, when required.

b. Development Control Committee

It is a subordinate committee comprising military and scientific elements and is tasked to implement the strategic force goals set by the ECC and oversee the technical and financial aspects of the strategic programmes. This committee is also chaired by the Prime Minister and includes the Chairman JCSC (Deputy Chairman), Service Chiefs, heads of the strategic/scientific organizations and the DG SPD (who acts as the secretary).

Analysis

1. Unlike other democratic nuclear weapon states, we have a separate dedicated chain of command for the nuclear/strategic programmes, with considerable overlap. Although the system has delivered effectively, a review of the HDO would need to consider the NCA structure as well.
2. The presence of the Prime Minister, Chairman JCSC and Service Chiefs in the Development Control Committee makes the absence of the Defence Minister on this forum obviously anomalous.

Recommendations

Despite continuing challenges on the political, security and economic fronts, Pakistan has progressed towards consolidation of democracy over the past few years. While we must persist with our endeavours for adherence to genuine democratic principles and the rule of law, we may consider revisiting the 1976 White Paper on HDO to bring it in conformity with the obtaining realities, in the light of the experiences gained over the last 37 years. This would entail legislative and administrative measures, primarily to reform and address the weaknesses in the present HDO.

As an important step forward in the civil-military relations, it must be handled in an astute and deliberate manner.

Following recommendations to reform the HDO are offered in relation to reforming the **Defence Committee of the Cabinet**:

1. The concept of Parliamentary supremacy and civilian control of the Armed Forces, enunciated in the Constitution, warrant that national aims and objectives in the field of national defence and security be determined by the Prime Minister, with the cabinet, as a corporate body. Although defence and national security matters may continue to be deliberated in the DCC, and it may remain as the executive decision-making body, the Cabinet, headed by the Prime Minister, should be collectively responsible to the Parliament and the nation.
2. In accordance with the need to adopt a more comprehensive approach to national security, and address the frequently voiced recommendations for a NSC, the DCC may be restructured as the Cabinet Committee on Defence and National Security as follows:
 - i. Like the NSC in the United States, the committee, in addition to the cabinet members, should include the Chairman JCSC as a military representative and a National Security Advisor (with the status of a Federal Minister) in attendance.
 - ii. The committee should be backed by a permanent secretariat and a think tank of experts' /technocrats to be headed by the National Security Advisor.
 - iii. National Security Advisor should also, on behalf of the Prime Minister, be the coordinator for intelligence, a function that is essential for integration of our intelligence organizations. Alternately, the establishment of a separate Joint Intelligence Committee may be considered. National Security Advisor can be the chairman of this committee or a separate chairman can be Deputy National Security Advisor.
3. There is a need to strengthen and articulate the role of the **Ministry of Defence** by:
 - i. Always having an empowered full time Minister of Defence to exercise authority over the Armed Forces on behalf of the Prime Minister. The Minister of Defence may also be included in the Development Control Committee of the NCA as a Deputy Chairman.
 - ii. Ministry of Defence Production may revert to its earlier status of a separate division under the Ministry of Defence, headed by a Minister of State.
 - iii. The Ministry should primarily be manned by civilian staff except where the expertise of uniformed military personnel is inescapable. There is an urgent need to develop the capacity in the civil bureaucracy on defence matters.
 - iv. While empowering and articulating the functioning of the Ministry of Defence, it is essential to clearly delineate political /policy direction by the political leadership, and exercise of administrative authority by the civil bureaucracy from the operational control of the Armed Forces, which must firmly rest with the military authorities. There must be cognizance of the corporate interests of the Armed Forces and the need for operational autonomy.
 - v. Establishment of an appropriate media/public relations office in the Ministry of Defence and integration of the Services Public Relations Organization with it.
4. The **Defence Council** be made effective and functional through:
 - i. Regular meetings and the availability of qualified staff, with the requisite expertise, in military policy formulation and management.
 - ii. Establishment of sub-committees, comprising technocrats, to advise on research, development, production and procurement of weapons and equipment. Some of these committees already exist
- iv. The restructured DCC (or Cabinet Committee on Defence and National Security), may require harmonization with the National Command Authority, where the Employment Control Committee has a similar composition (except the Service Chiefs and the Director General Strategic Plans Division acting as the secretary).

- and operate under either the Defence Production Division or JSHQ and may have to be re-designated.
- iii. Ensure effective inter-ministerial coordination, particularly with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through the exchange postings of officers.
 5. The concept of joint operations, to handle the entire war effort, has gained currency and replaced the earlier precepts about autonomy of services Headquarters, which are considered wasteful and less effective. We have to ultimately adopt a fully integrated **Chief of Defence Staff model**, which is acknowledged as the most suitable option and implemented in most countries. Our current system of JCSC and the JSHQ has to be modified accordingly. However, we need to transition deliberately, may be in phases, to minimize any possible disruptions and without impairing our operational preparedness.
 6. Chairman JCSC may be re-designated as the Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff and the JSHQ as the Joint Services Headquarters with sufficient authority over important subjects concerning the services, both in peace and war, including joint planning and coordination for conduct of operations, budgeting, force development (including weapon induction, defence production and procurement), communications, logistics, intelligence coordination, information and preparedness for war. This would require the restructuring of the JSHQ and transfer of inter services organizations and functions indicated in the White Paper, under it.
 7. To overcome the lack of consensus on the rotation of the Chairman between the Services, it is proposed that the appointment of a 4-star Vice Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff may be created which is in vogue in many countries. Thus while the Chairman may continue to be from the Army (due to the predominance of land strategy and asymmetry in the size of the services), the Vice Chairman may be on rotation between the Navy and the Air force.
 8. To ensure an integrated response through jointness in planning and management of the armed forces and better articulate the civil military relations, the Chairman JCS:
 - i. Should be the single point of contact between the political and military leadership. The right of direct access by the service chiefs should be only in very exceptional circumstances, if there is a disagreement with the Chairman.
 - ii. The chain of command should run from the Prime Minister to Defence Minister to Chairman JCS and then the Service Chiefs. In case of war, the Chairman, duly assisted by the JCS, would be the Principal Military Advisor to the Prime Minister.
 - iii. Promotion of three stars and above in all services should be controlled by the Chairman, who would make recommendations to the Defence Minister/Prime Minister for approval.
 9. The service chiefs will continue to be members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and responsible for training and administration of their respective services. Services Headquarters will plan and conduct operations through their existing commands, within the guidelines laid down by the JCS/JSHQ.
 10. The capacity of the Parliamentary Committee must be upgraded to ensure effective oversight of the Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces. The priority in this regard should be a better monitoring of the defence budget and procurements. This would require closer interaction between the Defence, Finance and Public Accounts Committees of the Parliament to evolve processes that can overcome concerns over security, while adhering to the principles of accountability and transparency before public representatives.

Conclusion

Over the last few years, there have been important gains towards consolidation of the democratic process. The completion of the tenure of the Assemblies and the orderly transition after the 2013 Election, are significant milestones.

However, there continue to be grave challenges of internal security, revival of national economy and governance that would test the credibility of the political leadership, reputation of the democratic institutions and progress towards a sustainable democracy.

Reforms in the HDO, to achieve political primacy in security policy formulation and management, would be a significant step towards the harmonization of civil military relations in accordance with democratic norms.

However we must realistically analyse the timing and pace of its implementation in the framework of our historical experiences and the current challenges, particularly the security challenges.

An inclusive, measured approach, in consonance with the principles of democracy and operational autonomy of the Armed Forces, will be in the best national interest.



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