

**CITIZENS REPORT**

# **Performance of the National Security Committee**

**June 01, 2013 - May 31, 2014**

**CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS | JUNE 2014**

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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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## PREFACE

The Citizens Report on the **Performance the National Security Committee (NSC)** during the period of **June 01, 2013 to May 31, 2014** is prepared by PILDAT in the backdrop of principle of democratic oversight of defence and national security. It is the continuation of PILDAT's previous reports that examined the performance of the DCC during March 2008 to March 2013.

The report closely examines the publicly available data and the reports in the media regarding the meetings and performance of the NSC. PILDAT is also grateful to the Secretariat of the National Security Division for its support and cooperation in providing data for this report.

The objective of the report is not to offer a critique of the work of the Committee but to analyse the performance in the backdrop of peculiar security needs of Pakistan and the role NSC is playing with respect to defining and influencing policy and principles of defence and national security.

The report is part of PILDAT's larger focus on improving civil-military relations in Pakistan in the light of the Constitution of Pakistan and assisting Parliament, Cabinet and other institutions in undertaking well researched, objective and non-partisan control and oversight of defence and security sector.

### **Disclaimer**

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

Islamabad  
June 2014



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

After more than 3 months of taking oath, the PML-N Government held a meeting of the Defence Committee of the Cabinet and decided to reconstitute DCC into the Cabinet Committee on National Security (CCNS) on August 22, 2013<sup>1</sup> (78 days after the Prime Minister took oath). The Committee has met 3 times after the reconstitution of the DCC in the past 10 months. Of the three meetings held during the year, the focus has been on issues including internal security situation, talks with Taliban, Afghan situation and violation on the Line of Control (LoC).

Comparing the performance of the Committee with the past 5 years, which held on average 2.4 meetings per year (12 in 5 Years: March 2008 to March 2013), the NSC has slightly surpassed that average during the first year.

However, the real success of the forum lies in its restructuring with a formal secretariat. Replacing the Defence Committee of the Cabinet (DCC), which had no independent secretariat, staff or support infrastructure,<sup>2</sup> the new Committee was formed by creation of an independent Secretariat and two subsidiaries, the Planning Committee and an Advisory Board.

The initial structure of the CCNS was announced to have Services Chiefs as full members alongside the Prime Minister in the Chair and members including Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Defence, Interior and Finance.<sup>3</sup> This composition led one to comment that it may also be more appropriate if the body is renamed as National Security Council or National Security Commission because a Cabinet Committee can only have its membership from the Cabinet. PILDAT also commented in its analysis that another alternative can be that the three Service Chiefs and the Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee should continue to be invited to the CCNS on special invitation rather than making them regular members of the Cabinet Committee on National Security.<sup>4</sup>

Perhaps in view of the above complexity, the CCNS was once again renamed as the National Security Committee (NSC) – the nomenclature that was used for the Committee in the official statement issued after its meeting held on April 17, 2014.<sup>5</sup>

The Committee held its first meeting on August 22, 2013.<sup>6</sup> Its second meeting was held on December 17, 2013,<sup>7</sup> while the third meeting was held on April 17, 2013.<sup>8</sup>

A new division of the Government of Pakistan has been created, namely the National Security Division, with the tasks to function as the secretariat of the National Security Committee, to convene meetings of the Committee, collect, coordinate and collate proposals and input from all relevant Ministries and organisations for the consideration of the NSC, among others.<sup>9</sup>

The restructuring of NSC is indeed a much needed and a laudable step by the Government. However the NSC can only be effective if it holds regular meetings – at least once a month - on security challenges facing the country. It will be appropriate that the rules of business of the NSC should clearly stipulate the periodicity of its meetings. It is also pertinent to mention here that the UK NSC meets on a weekly basis, chaired by the Prime Minister while the Turkish NSC meets on a bi-monthly basis.

1. For details, please see Reconstitution of NSC approved, The News, August 23, 2013, <http://images.thenews.com.pk/23-08-2013/ethenews/t-24938.htm>
2. For details, please see PILDAT Citizens Report on Performance of Cabinet Committee on Defence: March 2012-March 2013 can be accessed at: [http://www.pildat.org/Publications/publication/CMR/PerformanceoftheDefenceCommitteeoftheCabinet\\_Mar2012toMar2013.pdf](http://www.pildat.org/Publications/publication/CMR/PerformanceoftheDefenceCommitteeoftheCabinet_Mar2012toMar2013.pdf)
3. For details, please see Reconstitution of NSC approved, The News, August 23, 2013, <http://images.thenews.com.pk/23-08-2013/ethenews/t-24938.htm>
4. For details, please see PILDAT Monitor on Civil-Military Relations: August 01 – December 15, 2013: [http://www.pildat.org/publications/publication/CMR/MonitorOnCivil-MilitaryRelationsinPakistan\\_August012013\\_December152013.pdf](http://www.pildat.org/publications/publication/CMR/MonitorOnCivil-MilitaryRelationsinPakistan_August012013_December152013.pdf)
5. For details, please see Third meeting of NSC, Prime Minister's Office, April 17, 2014, [http://pmo.gov.pk/press\\_release\\_details.php?pr\\_id=438](http://pmo.gov.pk/press_release_details.php?pr_id=438)
6. Govt, armed forces agree on strategy for national security, The News, December 18, 2013, <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-13-27363-Govt-armed-forces-agree-on-strategy-for-national-security>
7. National Security Division, Government of Pakistan
8. Ibid
9. Memorandum on Allocation of Functions to the National Security Division, April 09, 2014, Cabinet Secretariat, Government of Pakistan





## Background

Decision-making in matters of defence is to be a well-coordinated effort between the civil and the military elements in democratic countries. However, in Pakistan, civilian hold over matters related to Defence and National Security has been minimal owing to its peculiar history of civil-military relations.

Pakistan faces multifarious challenges on a wide spectrum of issues, none more critical than the various security challenges that go beyond the domain of traditional security. From the conventional definition of national security being determined by defence against external threats and internal dangers, maintenance of domestic law and order and police forces, the concept of security in recent times has expanded to include food security, energy security, environmental security, employment security, human resource development and inter- Provincial and social harmony. These non-traditional security areas now comprise the predominant content of National Security for most developed countries while the traditional components of Defence and Internal Security retain their own respective importance.

It has been long been felt that Pakistan needs to effectively manage its radically changed internal and external security challenges. Such steps, PILDAT and its Dialogue Group on Civil-Military Relations have advised over the years, should begin with a formal recognition in both the nomenclature and the structure of policy mechanisms.

Keeping in view Pakistan's complex security scenario as well as its peculiar civil-military relations, scholars have recommended that the Defence Committee of the Cabinet (DCC) should be reconstituted into a Cabinet Committee on National Security and Defence. Not only that the Terms of Reference of the reconstituted body should focus on the national security agenda, with the aim to formulate a national security policy that will become the guiding framework for its subsidiary policies – defence policy, foreign policy and economic policy - but that the forum should also fulfil a critical role of an effective channel of communication and

serve to remove the classical gap in perceptions as well as communication between the political and the military leadership.<sup>10</sup>

That this critical forum should be backed by a multi-tiered and effective secretariat has also been part of the key recommendations in this area.<sup>11</sup> The Forum, through its secretariat, should ensure clear, prior identification of objectives, allocation of resources and monitoring of progress on a timely and pre-emptive basis. This, it has been argued, will minimize the chances for the eruption of major crises and enable adequate capacity for rapid and effective response.

## The PML-N Manifesto Pledge

Recognising the need for reconstituting the DCC into an effective forum, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), in its 2013 Election Manifesto,<sup>12</sup> pledged that: *“For purposes of regular and systematic coordination and consideration of all matters related to national security, a Cabinet Committee on Defence and National Security, to be headed by the Prime Minister and assisted by a Permanent Secretariat, will be established to maintain democratic oversight of all aspects of foreign, defence and national security policies.”*<sup>13</sup>

## Restructuring of the DCC

After more than 3 months of taking oath, the PML-N Government held the first meeting of the Defence Committee of the Cabinet and decided to reconstitute the DCC into the Cabinet Committee on National Security (CCNS) on August 22, 2013<sup>14</sup> (78 days after the Prime Minister took oath). The Defence Committee of the Cabinet (DCC) was ineffective and also infrequently met – only 12 times in 5 years of previous Government: 2008-2013 - and had no independent secretariat, staff or support infrastructure.<sup>15</sup>

According to an official statement after the meeting, it was announced that the CCNS will be chaired by the Prime Minister and will include ministers of Foreign Affairs, Defence, Interior and Finance, the Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCS) and Chiefs of

10. For details, please see a number of PILDAT publications and recommendations since 2004 on reconstituting the DCC under the subject of “Civil-Military Relations and Democracy” in the Publications section of PILDAT website: [www.pildat.org](http://www.pildat.org)
11. PILDAT Recommendations that have been shared with Leadership of major political parties in September 2012 can be accessed at: <http://www.pildat.org/publications/publication/CMR/PILDATRecommendationsonImprovingCMRSeptember2012.pdf>
12. The PML-N's Manifesto 2013 can be accessed at: <http://www.pmln.org/manifesto/>
13. The PML-N Manifesto 2013: Pages 81-82: <http://www.pmln.org/manifesto/>
14. For details, please see Reconstitution of NSC approved, The News, August 23, 2013, <http://images.thenews.com.pk/23-08-2013/ethenews/t-24938.htm>
15. For details, please see PILDAT Citizens Report on Performance of Cabinet Committee on Defence March 2012-March 2013 [http://www.pildat.org/Publications/publication/CMR/PerformanceoftheDefenceCommitteeoftheCabinet\\_Mar2012toMar2013.pdf](http://www.pildat.org/Publications/publication/CMR/PerformanceoftheDefenceCommitteeoftheCabinet_Mar2012toMar2013.pdf)

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staff of the Pakistan Army, Navy and Air Force. It was also stated that the Committee will focus on the national security agenda with an aim to formulate a national security policy that will become the guiding framework for its subsidiary policies — defence policy, foreign policy, internal security policy and other policies affecting the national security.<sup>16</sup> A formal decision was also taken to establish a permanent secretariat of the CCNS.

An ambiguity, however, was created in announcing the full membership of the Services Chiefs in the CCNS leading to questions on how could non-cabinet members become full membership of a Cabinet body. It was felt that either the body should be more appropriately named as the National Security Council or the National Security Commission or that the three Service Chiefs and the Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee should be invited to the CCNS on special invitation.<sup>17</sup>

Perhaps in view of the above complexity, the CCNS was once again renamed as the National Security Committee (NSC) – the nomenclature that was used for the Committee in the official statement issued after its meeting held on April 17, 2014.<sup>18</sup>

### **Secretariat of the Committee**

According to the official notifications received from the National Security Division, the reconstituted Committee, chaired by the Prime Minister, includes the following members:<sup>19</sup>

- i. Minister of Foreign Affairs
- ii. Minister of Defence
- iii. Minister of Interior
- iv. Minister of Finance,
- v. Chairman Joints Chief of Staff Committee (CJCSC)
- vi. Chiefs of Staff of Pakistan Army, Navy and Air Force.

The real success of the Forum lies in its restructuring

with a formal secretariat. Replacing the Defence Committee of the Cabinet (DCC), which had no independent secretariat, staff or support infrastructure,<sup>20</sup> the new Committee was formed by creation of an independent Secretariat and two subsidiaries, the Planning Committee and an Advisory Board.

A new division of the Government of Pakistan has been created, namely the National Security Division, with the tasks to function as the secretariat of the National Security Committee, to convene meetings of the Committee, collect, coordinate and collate proposals and input from all relevant Ministries and organisations for the consideration of the NSC. Formulation of a comprehensive National Security Policy has also been declared as one of the key functions of the National Security Division while it is to also coordinate the implementation of strategies and policies approved by the NSC. The division is also tasked with the formulation of strategies, under the guidance of the NSC, to counter negative propaganda against Pakistan and its institutions. The Division is to brief the Parliament and its Committees related to National Security Issues as well as conduct National Security related dialogues with other countries.<sup>21</sup>

As per official communiqué received from the National Security Division, the National Security Committee (NSC) is now considered as the principle decision-making body on all National Security issues. It is an apex forum that provides opportunity to all State institutions to provide inputs so that key National Security-related decisions are taken through collective thinking to promote the short, medium and long-term strategic interests of the country in a rapidly changing regional and global security environment. National Security is of paramount importance for consolidating the economic gains. The NSC will be assisted by a Planning Committee and an Advisory Board. The Planning Commission of the NSC has held in depth deliberations on key issues impinging on national security. To keep the general public informed of the deliberations and key decisions of the NSC, a press release is issued after each of its meetings.<sup>22</sup>

16. For details, please see Reconstitution of NSC approved, The News, August 23, 2013, <http://images.thenews.com.pk/23-08-2013/ethenews/t-24938.htm>

17. For details, please see PILDAT Monitor on Civil-Military Relations: August 01 – December 15, 2013:

[http://www.pildat.org/publications/publication/CMR/MonitorOnCivil-MilitaryRelationsinPakistan\\_August012013\\_December152013.pdf](http://www.pildat.org/publications/publication/CMR/MonitorOnCivil-MilitaryRelationsinPakistan_August012013_December152013.pdf)

18. For details, please see Third meeting of NSC, Prime Minister's Office, April 17, 2014, [http://pmo.gov.pk/press\\_release\\_details.php?pr\\_id=438](http://pmo.gov.pk/press_release_details.php?pr_id=438)

19. Ibid

20. For details, please see PILDAT Citizens Report on Performance of Cabinet Committee on Defence: March 2012-March 2013 can be accessed at: [http://www.pildat.org/Publications/publication/CMR/PerformanceoftheDefenceCommitteeoftheCabinet\\_Mar2012toMar2013.pdf](http://www.pildat.org/Publications/publication/CMR/PerformanceoftheDefenceCommitteeoftheCabinet_Mar2012toMar2013.pdf)

21. Memorandum on Allocation of Functions to the National Security Division, April 09, 2014, Cabinet Secretariat, Government of Pakistan

22. National Security Division, Government of Pakistan

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## **Meetings of the National Security Committee (NSC): August 2013-May 2014**

The NSC met 3 times after the reconstitution of the DCC in the past 10 months. Of the three meetings during the year, the focus mostly was on internal security situation, talks with Taliban, Afghan situation and violation on the Line of Control (LoC). It had held in depth deliberations on wide ranging issues impacting on internal and external security. These discussions have primarily focussed on improving the internal security of the country and making it an anchor of peace and stability in the region.

A brief of each meeting, based on the information provided by the National Security Division, Government of Pakistan is presented below:

### **1<sup>st</sup> meeting: DCC Reconstituted: August 22, 2013**

The much-awaited meeting of the Defence Committee of the Cabinet (DCC) was held after more than three months of the PML-N Government taking oath. The CCNS was constituted and renamed into National Security Committee (NSC) in its first meeting on August 22, 2013.<sup>23</sup>

The DCC meeting was attended, with Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in the chair, by Interior Minister Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan, Prime Minister's Adviser on National Security and Foreign Affairs, Mr. Sartaj Aziz, Finance Minister Senator Ishaq Dar, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee and the three Services Chiefs.

The agenda included matters relating to national security. Presentations were made by the Adviser to the Prime Minister on National Security and Foreign Affairs, Foreign Secretary and the Director General Military Operations (DGMO).

During the meeting, the reconstitution of the DCC into the Cabinet Committee on National Security (CCNS) was approved. According to the statement, the CCNS will be chaired by the Prime Minister and will include Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Defence, Interior and Finance, the CJCS and three Services Chiefs. It was said that the Committee will focus on the national security agenda with an aim to formulate a national security policy that will become the guiding framework for its subsidiary policies — defence policy, foreign policy, internal security policy and other policies affecting the national security.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting: December 17, 2013**

The second meeting of the National Security Committee was held on December 17, 2013 in Prime Minister House.

The meeting was chaired by the Prime Minister and was attended by Ministers of Defence, Finance, Interior, Information, Adviser on Nation Security and Foreign Affairs, Chairman Joint Chief of Staff Committee, Chief of Army Staff, Chief of Naval Staff, Chief of Air Staff and other senior officials.

The discussions at the Committee meeting focussed on three key issues: formulation of strategy on security to safeguard Pakistan's national interest, engaging TTP and relations with Afghanistan. The Committee discussed a number of measures to improve law and order situation and overcome the challenges of extremism and militancy. It was agreed that without restoring a secure environment the country could not progress economically.

The Committee reaffirmed Government's commitment to negotiations with various groups of TTP and agreed that use of other options will be considered only as a last resort. The Interior Minister briefed the participants on the security situation and the need to strengthen the security forces across the country.

The Committee reiterated Pakistan's resolve to further improve its relations with Afghanistan in all fields, including political, economic and security spheres. It was decided to continue Pakistan's support to an Afghan-owned and Afghan-led reconciliation process. The Committee also agreed to improve the western border to prevent cross-border movement of criminals on both sides.

The Prime Minister briefed the participants on his last visit to Kabul. The Finance Minister gave a brief overview of the economic situation of the country.<sup>24</sup>

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting: April 17, 2014**

The third meeting of the Committee was held at the Prime Minister's House on April 17, 2014. The meeting was chaired by the Prime Minister and was attended by Ministers of Defence, Finance, Interior, Information, Adviser on Nation Security and Foreign Affairs, Chairman Joint Chief of Staff Committee, Chief of Army Staff, Chief of Naval Staff, Chief of Air Staff and other senior officials.

23. National Security Division, Government of Pakistan

24. Ibid

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The Committee discussed a number of issues related to internal and external security with long term implications for the country. The Prime Minister said that the National Security Committee is an apex forum where every state institution gets an opportunity to provide inputs so that all National Security related decisions are taken through collective thinking.

The Committee agreed that National Security was of paramount importance for consolidating the economic gains that the Government had achieved through sound macro economic policies and hard work of the economic team, the trust shown by the international community especially the international financial institutions (IFIs) in the Government's efforts to kick-start the economy, requiring an enabling security environment to achieve sustainable economic growth in the coming years.

The Committee was briefed on the Prime Minister's visit to China especially in the Pak-China economic corridor and \$35 billion worth of early harvest projects in energy, road infrastructure and railways. The Minister of Finance, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, briefed the Committee on improving economic indicators and Pakistan's re-entry into the International Bond Market through successful launch of \$ 2 billion Euro Bond.

The Committee reaffirmed the Government's resolve to improve relations with the neighbouring countries making Pakistan an anchor of peace and stability in the region. Pakistan-Afghanistan relations were discussed in light of the recently held Presidential elections in Afghanistan. The Committee congratulated the Afghan people on successful elections and resolve to strengthen democratic institutions in Afghanistan. The Pakistan-India relations with special reference to the forthcoming Indian elections were also discussed.

The Interior Minister, Chaudry Nisar Ali Khan briefed the participants on internal security situation. Various aspects of the internal security were discussed threadbare including talks with TTP, situation in Balochistan and the situation on the Western border.

The Committee reiterated the Government's resolve to improve the internal security situation that is critical to economic and social development. It was resolved that all policy options will be explored and all available resources will be utilised to ensure peace and security. The Committee endorsed the vision to put Pakistan on

the crossroads of opportunity rather than conflict and to spur growth for prosperity of the people.<sup>25</sup>

25. Ibid

### Comparative Analysis of NSC with past five-year performance of the DCC

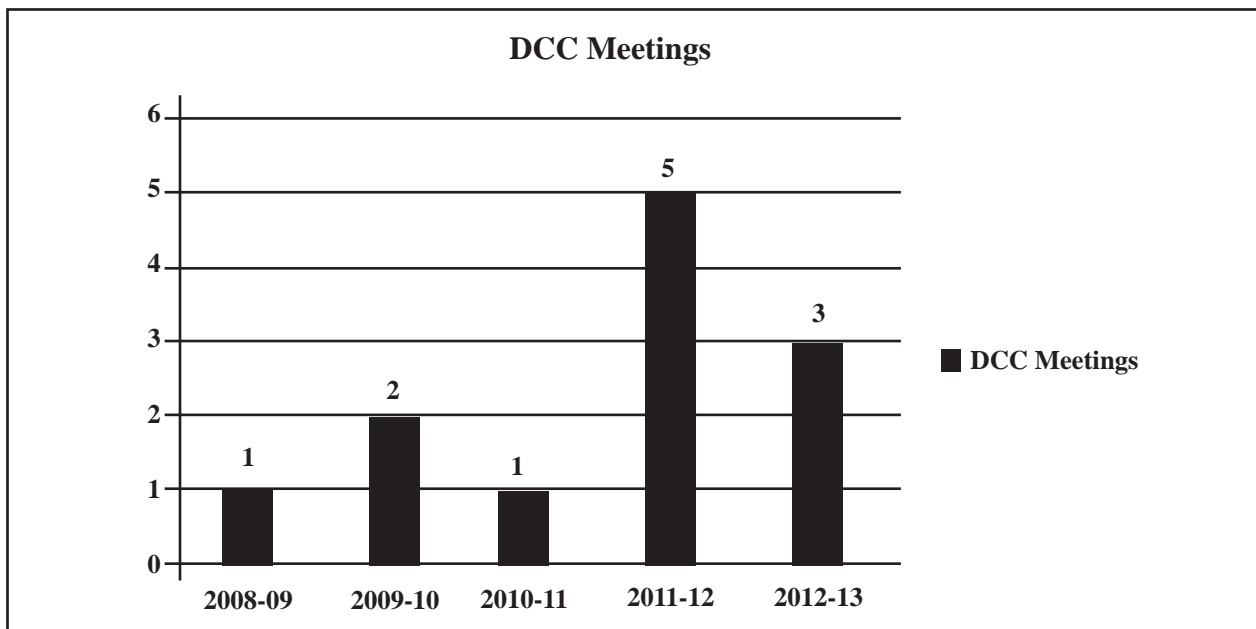
The Defence Committee of Cabinet was mostly inactive during the past five year (2008-2013) tenure and a total of twelve (12) DCC meetings were held with an average of merely over 2 meetings a year during 2008-2013.

A year wise analysis of DCC meetings is provided in Figure 1.

In comparison, the NSC held 3 meetings during the first Parliamentary year, which shows a slight improvement in terms of meetings average alone.

However, the real success of the Forum lies in its restructuring with a formal secretariat. Replacing the Defence Committee of the Cabinet (DCC), which had no independent secretariat, staff or support infrastructure,<sup>26</sup> the new Committee was formed by creation of an independent Secretariat and two subsidiaries, the Planning Committee and an Advisory Board.

**Figure 1: Year-wise DCC meetings 2008-2013**



26. For details, please see PILDAT Citizens Report on Performance of Cabinet Committee on Defence: March 2012-March 2013 can be accessed at: [http://www.pildat.org/Publications/publication/CMR/PerformanceoftheDefenceCommitteeoftheCabinet\\_Mar2012toMar2013.pdf](http://www.pildat.org/Publications/publication/CMR/PerformanceoftheDefenceCommitteeoftheCabinet_Mar2012toMar2013.pdf)



## Need for Reforms

Analysis of the performance of the NSC necessitates many key areas of reform, which are as below:

- i. The Committee can only be effective if it holds regular meetings on Security Challenges facing the country (at least once a month).
- ii. It will be appropriate that the rules of business of the NSC should clearly stipulate the periodicity of its meetings.
- iii. The Terms of Reference (TORs) of the NSC should focus on the national security agenda, with an aim to formulate a national security policy that will become the guiding framework for its subsidiary policies - Defence policy, foreign policy, economic policy and a comprehensive Counter-Terrorism strategy.
- iv. The NSC should prepare a National Security and Defence Policy of Pakistan by drawing on the input of all stakeholders
- v. The NSC should develop and make available for public discussion a periodic Defence and Security Review of Pakistan based on the National Security and Defence Policy of Pakistan.
- vi. Issues such as the question of release of prisoners, dialogue with the TTP, the emerging situation in Afghanistan, the situation in Balochistan and the PPO, etc. are some of the questions that should be discussed regularly in the NSC.

## Comparative Examples: India, UK & Turkey

While in Pakistan the Military high command has a seat at the table, in **India**, the National Security Council, set up since 1998, the Military has no representation at the top-most tier of the National Security Council.

The 3-tiered structure in India includes, at the apex, a six-member body, chaired by the Prime Minister and includes the Union Ministers of Home, Defence, External Affairs, Finance, and the Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission.

The second tier is labelled as the Strategic Planning Group (SPG). It is headed by the Cabinet Secretary and includes the chiefs of the Army, Navy and the Air Force, the Governor of Reserve Bank of India, Secretaries of

the ministries of Home, Defence, External Affairs, Finance, Secretary Department of Defence Production and Supplies, Scientific Adviser to the Defence Minister, and several other secretaries of union ministries and Director Intelligence Bureau.

The third tier is the National Security Advisory Board (NSAB), which comprises eminent persons from outside the government with expertise in external and internal security, foreign affairs, defence and military affairs, science and technology and economics. It acts as a think tank for the policy makers and recommends policy options on the issues under its purview. It is supposed to meet at least once a month.

These arrangements show the primacy of the civil and political institutions and leaders over the military. It is inconceivable in a military dominated political system that the Services Chiefs would be relegated to a junior committee and placed at par with senior civil servants - <sup>27</sup> as indeed evident in the restructured NSC in Pakistan.

In **United Kingdom**, another Parliamentary democracy whose system Pakistan follows, the National Security Council, set up includes:

- i. Prime Minister
- ii. Deputy Prime Minister
- iii. Chancellor of the Exchequer
- iv. Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs
- v. Home Secretary
- vi. Secretary of State for Defence
- vii. Secretary of State for International Development
- viii. Security Minister

Other Cabinet Ministers, including the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, attend as required. The Chief of the Defence Staff, Heads of Intelligence Agencies and other Senior Officials also attend as required.

The NSC in UK has been set up to “oversee all aspects of Britain's security.”<sup>28</sup> It has been placed within the Cabinet Office. A National Security Advisor has also been appointed as a new role based in the Cabinet Office and his job is to coordinate and deliver the Government's international security agenda.

There are currently three ministerial sub- committees

27. For details, please see National Security Council: A Debate on Institutions and Processes for Decision-Making on Security Issues, PILDAT Publication, April, 2012: <http://www.pildat.org/publications/publication/CMR/NationalSecurityCouncil-debateonInstitutionsandprocessesforddecisionmakingonsecurityissues.pdf>

28. For details, please see Establishment of a National Security Council, May 12, 2010: <http://www.number10.gov.uk/news/establishment-of-a-national-security-council/>

of the Council:

- i. To consider Threats, Hazards, Resilience and Contingencies including a restricted group to consider intelligence matters
- ii. To consider Nuclear Deterrence and Security and
- iii. The UK's relationship with emerging international powers

Additionally there are associated cross-Government senior official groups that support and inform these ministerial level structures. Principal amongst these is the Permanent Secretaries Group chaired by the National Security Adviser. The National Security Adviser also acts as secretary to the NSC.

The NSC in UK meets weekly with a one-hour meeting on the average. The National Security Advisor chairs the preparation committee meeting a week before the NSC meeting. Two deputies serve under the National Security Advisor, one dealing with foreign policy and the other on defence. The NSC has a team of about 190 persons divided in 5 groups. Two Parliamentary committees deal with the work of the NSC namely the Joint Committee of UK Parliament on National Security Strategy and the Intelligence and Security Committee.<sup>29</sup>

In **Turkey**, the AKP Government since 2003 has been asserting civilian control over the Turkish military. The NSC (MÝLLÝ GÜVENLÝK KURULU - MGK) in Turkey, which had been the primary channel through which the Turkish military influenced Turkish politics, has gone through fundamental changes under the AKP government.

The NSC has been turned into a civilian-headed advisory body on defence and military issues from being an executive body dominated by the military. The AKP reduced the number of military officers on the NSC from five to one (chief of staff), a civilian holds the office of MGK secretary-general, a position previously reserved for a military officer who reported directly to the chief of staff. The council's budget has also been placed under the Prime Minister's control.<sup>30</sup>

Earlier in the Turkish NSC, security thinking was more predominant but now there is an absolute majority of

civilians, not just in numbers but in thinking also. If the Government needs advice, the NSC is useful.

The Constitutional amendment of 2001 brought about a change in the composition of the NSC to include Deputies to Prime Minister and Minister of Justice as members of the NSC. Previously the membership included 5 military & 4 civilians (except the President in the Chair), which has been changed to 5 military and 9 civilians (excluding the President). Through a further amendments of law in 2003, the scope of the NSC has been narrowed. Earlier, the NSC had enormous powers listed in the law but the change has resulted in this authority defined in general terms. The frequency of ordinary meetings was monthly earlier but has now been changed to bi-monthly meetings. The competence or scope of the Secretariat General have also been limited. Now there are two sets of competencies: (1) to do the secretariat work of the council, (2) to do any jobs given by law or by the NSC. Follow-up of the NSC decisions was transferred from the Secretariat General to a designated Deputy Prime Minister. That removed superior powers (of trusteeship) of the Secretariat General over other government departments. Earlier, it was also obligatory for any institution, whether public or private, to provide the NSC Secretariat General with any document or information, including confidential ones, upon request, a power which was removed through the change in law.<sup>31</sup>

29. For details, please see Pakistani Parliamentarians and Intellectuals Study Visit on Democratic Oversight on Defence and National Security in the UK, July 2012, PILDAT Publication: <http://www.pildat.org/Publications/publication/Publications.asp>

30. For details, please see The Weakening of Turkey's Military, Expert Brief, Council on Foreign Relations, Steven A. Cook, March 1, 2010: <http://www.cfr.org/turkey/weakening-turkeys-military/p21548>

31. For details, please see Democratic Consolidation in Turkey, Study Visit Report, PILDAT Publication, December 2013: <http://www.pildat.org/publications/publication/CMR/Civil-MilitaryRelationsandDemocraticConsolidationinTurkey-StudyVisitReport.pdf>



## **Conclusions**

Progress related to the working of NSC can be seen on various fronts. A Secretariat has been setup by the Government and strengthened the Committee with new Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure. A new National Security Division of the Government of Pakistan has been established with clear-cut tasks to function as the secretariat of the NSC.

The restructuring of NSC is indeed a much needed and a laudable step by the Government. Unfortunately the committee has met only thrice in 8 months since its formation despite the fact that a pressing agenda on national security demanded much more frequent meetings. The NSC can only be effective if it holds regular meetings – at least once a month - on security challenges facing the country. It will be appropriate that the rules of business of the NSC should clearly stipulate the periodicity of its meetings. It is also pertinent to mention here that the UK NSC meets on a weekly basis, chaired by the Prime Minister while the Turkish NSC meets on a bi-monthly basis.

Policy making in democratic and especially in parliamentary system involves a host of institutions, individuals and processes. No single institution can dominate the whole process, although all institutions do not carry equal clout. The military is an important player in policy making on security issues. However, a good policy requires a good blending of civilian and military input within a democratic framework that emphasizes the primacy of the civil. All institutions must play their rightful role, as there is no substitute to informed consultative process.

The highest institution charged with issues of National Security has to be made an effective channel of communication and both civil and the military should use this forum and refrain from making public statements. The NSC should start meeting regularly to discuss the enormous challenges facing the country and to make sure that all the stakeholders are on the same page on issues of national security. Informal one-on-one meetings between the Prime Minister and the COAS are not a substitute for structured meetings of the NSC. Issues such as the question of release of prisoners, dialogue with the TTP, the emerging situation in Afghanistan, the situation in Balochistan and the PPO, etc. are some of the questions that should be discussed regularly in the NSC.



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