

Dean back he's been on the traveling around the country visiting and uh understanding the American people and uh
0:25
and we just uh appreciate uh his passion of service and uh and so Dean thank you
0:31
for coming back and and in indeed um congresswoman Kathy Manning did a really
0:37
good job as the substitute and so uh we're very fortunate and indeed it
0:43
indicates something that people the American people need to know and that is that um Republicans and Democrats can
0:49
work together and uh in fact on this issue I'm confident uh that Republicans and Democrats want what is best for the
0:56
people of Pakistan uh with that in mind since the catastrophic withdrawal from
1:03
Afghanistan in 2021 the region has been stuck in a cycle of instability now that
1:10
instability is further exacerbated by the domestic situation within Pakistan I
1:16
was born with an appreciation of the people of Pakistan and South Asia my father served in the Flying Tigers the
1:23
14th Air Force in World War II and he actually arrived in Karachi on his way
1:29
to ser serve in Kang shangu and seion in China during World War II but so he had
1:35
his beginning service right there in Pakistan he told me how hardworking the
1:41
people of South Asia are and when South Asians began buying uh purchasing uh
1:48
properties uh of hotels and motels across the state of South Carolina I let
1:54
them know that I knew who they were I knew their reputation of hard work and so I had the to represent people of
2:01
South Asia as they was bought a majority of the hotels and motels convenience stores uh across uh the United States
2:09
and they have achieved South Asians now have a per capita income twice that of
2:14
the average American uh this is just uh such a tribute to the hardworking talents of the people of South Asia and
2:22
then I also had the opportunity to uh see the uh military cooperation between
2:29
between the US Marines and uh the Pakistani military I had the opportunity to visit a field Hospital in
2:36
musaabad several years ago after the earthquake and it was so inspiring to
2:42
see uh female doctors working with women who would only go uh to a female
2:49
physician uh and while I was there one of the highlights of my service a young
2:54
Corporal salani came running up and said hey Congressman I'm here because of you
2:59
and I thought gosh what did I do wrong to send you to uh a earthquake trouble area well he identified himself uh
3:07
corpul salani and he said hey and I I realized I remember that our office had expedited his citizenship he was a
3:14
Pakistani American who uh could serve in the US Marine Corps be there uh in a US
3:20
Marine uniform speaking erdu uh how uh impressive that is but it it reinforced
3:25
to me again the uh positive relationship the beneficial relationship between the
3:32
United States and uh Pakistan and this was a young Marine who had been trained in the district I represent at Paris
3:38
Island South Carolina and then on my visits to Islam Abad I've been uh so uh
3:45
impressed and inspired by the people that have had the opportunity to meet government officials and Military sadly
3:51
uh part of my visit I have been very sad and that I visited a superstar and that
3:58
is bazer B uh it was so impressive to be at her home uh and then tragically uh
4:04
several weeks later she was assassinated which is a reminder over and over again
4:09
the destabilization that has been so catastrophic for the people of Pakistan
4:14
uh I know that the people of America want a stable positive and Democratic uh

4:20
Pakistan Pakistan currently is on the brink of uh economic catastrophe much of
4:26
which has been caused by the massive amounts of debt owed to a lone shark the
4:31
lone shark is the Chinese Communist party we are seeing a cautionary tale play out where the United States shifted
4:38
our attention away from Central Asia and South Asia from Pakistan the Chinese
4:43
Communist Party stepped in to fill the void and in doing so further destabilize the situation threats to democracy in
4:51
Pakistan extend beyond economic threat opposed by the Chinese Communist Party presidents just last month there were
4:58
widespread allegations of Fraud and interference in the Pakistani elections this is a critical point in defining the
5:05
history of Pakistan where the country must choose between respecting democracy
5:10
with rule of law or allow military establishment to continue to control direction of the government with rule of
5:17
gun the Pakistani people deserve to have their voices heard they deserve
5:22
democracy and strong institutions they deserve a government that protects their rights we have recently seen the threat
5:29
posed by dictators with rule of gun invading democracy's L of law war
5:35
criminal Putin into Ukraine the Iranian puppets uh into Israel the threats to
5:40
the people of Taiwan the actual uh Invasion sadly even of the United States
5:46
on the southern border we now have
5:51
recognized that consistently supporting the people of Ukraine and Israel fight back against the Mal malign influence of
5:58
waral Putin and the terrorist supported by the regime in Teran we must support
6:03
the people of Pakistan in their struggle for a strong Democratic institutions the same way to support the values and
6:11
American interests which are mutually beneficial to Pakistan and America I
6:17
thank secretary Lou for coming today to discuss the Biden administration's policy toward Pakistan I look forward to
6:24
hearing from ranking member Dean Phillips thank you Mr chairman and to
6:29
you assistant secretary Lou for joining us and to all of you who are joining us today for a robust discussion about the
6:36
recent election in Pakistan and also the future of the us Pakistan relationship
6:42
which is of great importance to this country and of course Pakistan on February 8th over 60 million pakistanis
6:49
voted in Countrywide elections these elections saw record numbers of women religious and ethnic minority groups and
6:56
young people running for seats in Parliament it resulted in a range of political parties winning seats in
7:01
National and provincial assemblies despite these successes the United States and international election
7:07
observers have expressed concerns related to both pre-election and day of election irregularities including the
7:14
undue restrictions on freedom of expression Association and assembly the
7:20
US and like-minded countries have also condemned electoral violence attacks on
7:25
media workers and restrictions on access to the internet and Telecom service Services it is important that any claims
7:32
of fraud or interference be fully and transparently investigated in accordance with Pakistan's own laws and procedures
7:39
and I'm eager to hear from the assistant secretary regarding his assessment of that election if the outcome was
7:45
credible and how the election fits into Pakistan's historical context it is also
7:50
important that the United States Pakistan relationship remain strong and rooted in our shared commitments to
7:55
strengthening Pakistan's Democratic institutions supporting Pakistan's economy cooperating with on
8:02
counterterrorism threats and bolstering respect for human rights in addition to promoting Democratic Values supporting
8:08

Pakistan's economy is a key strategic goal of our bilateral relationship after
8:13
facing one of the worst economic crisis in its history Pakistan and the international monetary fund just signed
8:19
a \$3 billion standby arrangement in 2023 that is set to end this April prior to
8:26
this agreement Pakistan's economy was marked by Soaring inflation a sharply depreciating currency dwindling foreign
8:32
exchange reserves and mounting overseas debt to achieve fiscal stability and secure longer term IMF bailout Pakistan
8:40
will have to make structural economic reforms that will include controlling inflation and expanding the collection
8:46
of the country's tax base I do hope to hear from assistant secretary Lou's perspective on the new Coalition
8:52
government's willingness to work with the IMF and Tackle Pakistan's very tough economic challenges in a serious
8:59
meaningful way terrorism and security challenges are also top of mind when it comes to the us Pakistan bilateral
9:06
relationship 12 militant organizations operating in Pakistan are designated fto foreign terrorist organizations under us
9:13
law most prominent of course being terq Taliban or the ttb The basan Liberation
9:19
Army Al-Qaeda and Isis Corone Province the United States has an interest in
9:25
working with Pakistan to ensure that these organizations are unable to destabilize the Reg or attacked the
9:30
United States Homeland particularly since the US withdrawal from Afghanistan in August of 2021 Pakistan has faced an
9:38
increased domestic threat from the TTP in 2023 TTP LED bombings and gun attacks
9:43
killed over 1,000 pakistanis Nationwide half of them Security Forces marking the
9:50
highest number of fatalities in six years and just yesterday the Pakistani government conducted Air Raids inside of
9:56
Afghanistan it claims targeting TT hideouts in the country this comes in direct response to a suicide bombing
10:03
targeting a Pakistani military checkpoint that killed at least seven Pakistani soldiers beyond the threat of
10:09
terrorism in Pakistan's approach to Afghanistan I hope that we will also examine Pakistan's Regional
10:14
relationships with Iran Russia and of course China I'm also deeply disappointed that the former Pakistani
10:21
government announced that it would expel all unregistered foreigners from the country Pakistan is home to an estimated
10:28
4 million Afghan citizens and approximately 1.7 million of those are undocumented this leaves almost 2
10:34
million 2 million people at risk of being deported back to a country under Taliban control that is facing prolonged
10:41
economic crisis that has left 2third of the entire population in need dire need
10:46
of humanitarian assistance what's more many of these individuals have lived in Pakistan for decades having originally
10:53
fled Afghanistan in the 1980s during the country's occupation by the Soviets credible claims at Pakistani authorities
10:59
have committed widespread abuse against Afghans living in Pakistan to compel their return to Afghanistan are
11:05
extremely alarming I recognize and am incredibly grateful for the important work that the state department and the
11:11
Pakistani government have done together to ensure that Afghans with a potential Pathway to the United States or other
11:17
International partner countries are able to remain in Pakistan while their cases are adjudicated I hope secretary Lou is
11:23
able to speak to this as well Pakistan and the US celebrated 75 years of bilateral diplomatic relations just in
11:31
2022 although it's important we continue to address the Urgent issues I've mentioned so far I Envision progress
11:37
towards more robust cooperation on global challenges such as health and climate technology and trade Pakistan
11:44
can consistently ranks among the top 10 most vulner vulnerable countries on the CRI the climate Risk Index with 10,000
11:52
annual fatalities due to climate related disasters and financial losses amounting to \$4 billion annually in July of 23
12:00
usaid announced over \$16 million in additional development and humanitarian assistance to support the resilience of
12:06
communities in Pakistan that experienced 2022 is historically devastating floods

12:12
these areas of cooperation highlight the work that we can do together to strengthen our communities and combat
12:17
climate change uh as two peoples we also have the opportunity to deepen Our People to People ties strengthen
12:23
Pakistan's business environment and invest in innovative solutions to Global health and clean energy
12:29
the opportunities for cooperation are endless as we understand from elections both in the United States and Pakistan
12:36
also a government empowered by a strong Democratic mandate is critical to addressing long-standing challenges and
12:43
pursuing New Opportunities I look forward to hearing from assistant secretary Lou about all the ways in
12:48
which the us Pakistan relationship can advance our shared interests and continue to promote and strengthen
12:54
respect for democratic values and human rights with that Mr chair I yield back
12:59
thank you very much uh ranking member Dean Phillips and uh it's really unprecedented but to show how important
13:05
uh the relationship is between the United States in Pakistan we have an unprecedented number of members of
13:10
Congress who are not on the subcommittee who are requesting to have the opportunity to participate and so I ask
13:16
you's consent that the gentleman from Texas Mr casar and the gentleman from California Mr kanana be allowed to sit
13:22
at the Das and to participate following all other members at today's hearing without objection so ordered
13:29
additionally I ask you's consent that the gentleman from Texas Mr pluger be allowed to sit at the Das and to
13:36
participate in today's hearing without objection so ordered and most unprecedented uh to show how important
13:43
this hearing is uh and the relationship and appreciation and affection we have for the people of uh Pakistan I now will
13:50
be recognizing the chairman of the full committee commiss Mike Mcall of Texas for an opening
13:56
statement thank you Mr chairman rank member and I I agree with you there is a
14:02
tremendous amount of interest uh in this hearing I think uh I've never had so
14:08
many members on the house for come to me and say we need to have a hearing on Pakistan after the election and I know
14:15
the diasporas out in across the United States um have shown a lot of great
14:21
interest and have voice that to their members of Congress um I also want to thank
14:27
assistant secretary Lou for testifying here today um I've always thought Pakistan is
14:34
a very important country and i' been there many times it's a beautiful country but it's often uh Frau with
14:43
problems related to terrorism uh in other matters and today
14:48
they're facing many challenges just the same uh they just installed a new
14:53
government after this controversial election currently Pakistan is experiencing a massive economic crisis
15:01
including record inflation and an overwhelming foreign debt Pakistan's
15:07
domestic situation has a ripple effect throughout the region it is critical the
15:12
United States Works to promote economic prosperity and domestic stability within
15:19
Pakistan I think the people of Pakistan deserve a country where democracy and
15:25
rule of law are protected at the highest levels the voters have displayed their
15:31
commitment to participating in the process despite allegations of Fraud and
15:38
interference in the recent election the people of Pakistan showed up to vote in unprecedented numbers which is very
15:46
positive um however I was deeply concerned by well documented instances
15:52
of interference in the February elections including a terrorist attack
15:58
at a candidate's political offices uh hours before the polls opened um and
16:04

also a major internet and selfservice shut offs on Election Day these events
16:10
are serious and consequential I've called for full
16:15
investigation and any allegations of interference uh or corruption in their
16:21
recent elections and I'll be watching closely to see how these irregularities
16:27
are being addressed additionally human rights in Pakistan must be respected for democracy to
16:34
thrive the failure to recognize basic human rights will unquestionably lead to
16:41
a downward spiral if human rights are ignored the prospect of a Democratic Society will
16:48
evaporate meanwhile Pakistan's security is at risk as the TTP and other Terror
16:56
groups have become increasingly emboldened this is a direct result of the Biden
17:01
administration's disastrous withdrawal from Afghanistan in 20121 and we had a
17:08
hearing just yesterday with the chairman of the Joint Chiefs General Millie and ccom Commander General
17:16
McKenzie that deadly and chaotic withdrawal projected weakness on the
17:21
world stage and we see from history that weakness always invites aggression our
17:29
adversaries are now testing our resolve And when they see weakness they do
17:35
exploit it Pakistan has played an essential role in mitigating the effects
17:41
of the administration's withdrawal on Regional security it remains vitally
17:47
important that the United States and Pakistan continue to work together to counter
17:53
terrorism while challenges remain ahead the United States and Pakistan must continued to work
17:59
together to promote Regional stability we also know that if the United States pulls away from our relationship with
18:06
Pakistan the Chinese Communist party will gain even more
18:11
influence and while we seek to help Nations Thrive CCP is only interested in
18:17
a one-way relationship of debt trat diplomacy and Pakistan in their Ground
18:25
Zero for their uh belt and Road initiative
18:30
uh Pakistan is the ccp's ground zero uh for you know China's belt and
18:36
Road uh so anyway I look forward to working with my colleagues it's our in
18:42
our best interest to have a vibrant and healthy Pakistan one of democracy economic
18:50
prosperity and stability and I think working together we can work to make
18:56
Pakistan a success in its role as a key Regional security partner and so that
19:03
again Mr chairman thank you for holding this hearing I know there's immense interest in this Across the Nation and
19:09
of course in Pakistan itself and with that I yield back thank you very much Mr
19:15
chairman I want to thank you yesterday for the historic hearing that you conducted with General Mark Millie and
19:20
general Frank McKenzie uh revealing clearly that uh President Biden uh did
19:26
not uh abide by their recommendations that the withdrawal the uh surrender of the appeasement was solely the
19:32
responsibility of Mr Biden with that in mind we're pleased to have our distinguished witness today The Honorable Donald louu assistant
19:39
secretary for South and Central Asian Affairs at the state department thank you for being here today your full
19:45
statement will be made part of the record and I'll ask you to keep your spoken remarks to five minutes in order
19:50
to allow time for members to ask questions and they too will be held to a strict five minutes I now recognize
19:57
assistant secretary Lou for the opening statement chairman Wilson ranking member

20:03
Phillips chairman Mall colleagues when I was a junior officer in Pasa Pakistan 31
20:10
years ago I got to see a Pakistani election of close I got to see the irregularities in that election but also
20:18
the courage of the Pakistani people to come out and vote despite threats of
20:23
intimidation and threats of violence if you'll allow me today I propose to say a
20:29
few words about where the election on February 8th fell short where we saw
20:34
positive elements and what lies ahead for US policy in Pakistan the day after the elections the
20:40
state department issued a clear statement we noted undue restrictions on
20:45
the freedoms of expression Association and peaceful assembly we condemn the
20:51
Electoral violence and restrictions on human rights and fundamental freedoms we condemned attacks on media workers and
20:58
restrictions on the access to the internet and Telecom services and we express concern about allegations of
21:04
interference in the electoral process and stated that claims of interference and fraud should be fully
21:11
investigated if you'll allow me I'll drill down a bit deeper into these observations we were particularly
21:17
concerned about electoral abuses and violence that happened in the weeks leading up to the polls first there were
21:23
attacks against police politicians and political Gatherings by terrorist groups
21:30
second many journalists particularly female journalists were harassed and abused by party supporters and third
21:37
several political leaders were disadvantaged by the inability to register specific candidates and
21:43
political parties on the day of Elections an internationally respected local election monitoring organization
21:50
said they were barred from observing vote tabulation in more than half of the
21:55
constituencies across the country and despite a high court order not to interrupt internet service on Election
22:02
Day authorities shut down mobile data services the principal means by which pakistanis access social media and
22:09
messaging apps there were positive elements to this election as well despite the threat
22:15
of violence over 60 million pakistanis voted including over 21 million Women
22:21
Voters elected 50% more women to Parliament than they had in 2018 in addition to record number of
22:29
female candidates there were also a record number of members of religious and minority groups and young people
22:36
running for seats in their Parliament Pakistani voters had a choice
22:41
a range of political parties won seats in the National and provincial assemblies three different political
22:47
parties now lead Pakistan's four provinces more than 5,000 independent
22:53
election observers were in the field their organization's conclusion was that the conduct of the election was largely
23:01
competitive and orderly while noting some irregularities in the compilation
23:06
of results Pakistan is an important partner of the us we share a commitment to
23:13
strengthening Pakistan's Democratic institutions supporting the us Pakistan green Alliance framework cooperating to
23:20
counterterrorist threats from groups like Al-Qaeda and Isis and bolstering respect for human rights including the
23:27
right of Rel religious freedom most importantly the United States plays a critical role in promoting economic
23:34
stability in Pakistan we are the top destination for Pakistan's exports we
23:39
have been one of the most important investors in critical infrastructure over 76 years of our partnership for
23:46
example the US government is refurbishing now the mongala and tarella dams which provide electricity to tens
23:54
of millions of pakistanis our support for Pakistan over these decades ades has been in the form of development grants
24:01

private sector investment and humanitarian assistance during the periods of its greatest need including
24:08
the recent catastrophic flooding unfortunately Pakistan is facing
24:13
mounting a mounting debt challenge after the past decade of elevated borrowing
24:19
including from the PRC this year nearly 70% of the federal government's revenue
24:24
is expected to go to payments to service this massive debt Pakistan needs
24:30
economic reforms and it needs private sector-led investment that will deliver economic growth for the Pakistani people
24:37
and not dig their government deeper into debt finally Pakistani people deserve a
24:44
country that is peaceful that is democratic and that is prosperous we are working every day to support that Vision
24:51
I think the subcommittee for I thank the subcommittee for its leadership on
24:57
developing our relations of Pakistan and I pledge to work with its members as we
25:02
execute our policy thank you Mr secretary you were
25:09
precisely on time and so and Alexis is going to make sure that we're all five minutes and I I want to commend ter mall
25:16
again we now have H clocks that are large enough for people of age to read so this is a really startling Discovery
25:24
here the um we we've really come hey we've come a long way to have boxes you can read um but no this is so serious
25:32
and I I the 70% debt U payment is just um just uh so horrific but um not not
25:38
only is it catastrophic to the people of Pakistan but it's a message to other countries uh that um think that they're
25:44
working uh with uh people that they can trust they're not they're there for a purpose and the time needs to begin on M
25:51
now please and so um the uh as we begin
25:56
after the disastrous us withdrawal from Afghanistan and with the 13 murdered Marines at abig gate uh in 2021 where
26:04
does the administration see the future of the us Pakistan relationship what are
26:10
the administration's top priorities for Pakistan Mr chairman thank you very much
26:16
uh and again thank you for holding this hearing it's obviously of great interest
26:22
uh for Americans generally clearly uh in the audience today we have lots of people who care deeply about Pakistan
26:29
uh we are at an inflection point in our relationship with Pakistan as you suggest uh p uh Afghanistan has been in
26:36
Conflict for 40 years and Pakistan has been a country that has been caught up
26:42
in that conflict the end of the war in Afghanistan provides us all an
26:48
opportunity an opportunity to have a relationship with Pakistan on its own terms and we are committed to doing that
26:56
one of the major goals that we have with Pakistan now is to support the Pakistani people as they face this
27:03
terrible threat of terrorism many of the members have discussed this but this is
27:09
a country where the people have suffered um under the threat of terrorism in a way that I I think no one on the planet
27:17
has had to suffer the attacks particularly in the provinces of kyber Pak tuna and beluchistan over the past
27:24
three years have grown exponentially we we continue to see
27:30
attacks being uh launched from Afghan territory and you saw uh major attack on
27:37
Saturday in which seven uh policemen were killed uh by the TTP the Pakistani
27:43
Taliban and we call on The Afghan Taliban to ensure that its territory is
27:49
not used as a launching pad for terrorist groups second we're very
27:54
focused on economic um stability for Pak for Pakistan to deal with its social
28:00
terrorism and political issues it needs a functioning economy and we want

28:06 private sector-led growth there growth that benefits the Pakistani people not
28:12 growth which fuels um profits by uh lender countries like the
28:18 PRC and lastly we have a long partnership people to people with
28:24 Pakistan we want to see that grow we want to see business to business relations improve we want to see the
28:30 ease of Pakistani Americans to travel to Pakistan and Pakistanis to travel to the
28:36 United States those ties are critical uh I have two children in University right
28:41 now we have many many Pakistani friends as they've grown up but also in
28:46 University we want to see those numbers expand thank you and indeed I'm glad you
28:52 uh the Pakistani American diaspora is so important and they've been so successful as entrepreneurs uh here in our country
28:59 and we want that them to send a message back of how free market capitalism uh
29:04 has such a positive consequence uh for for the people of Pakistan Mr secretary
29:09 there have been unsubstantiated allegations that the US government has conspired to remove prime
29:17 minister Imran Khan from Power what is your assessment of these untrue uh
29:23 speculations Mr chairman I want to be very clear on this point the these
29:29 allegations these this conspiracy theory is a lie it is a complete falsehood I
29:36 have reviewed the Press reporting related to this what it's called the cipher in Pakistan the alleged leak
29:44 diplomatic cable from the embassy here it is not
29:50 accurate it at no point at no point does it accuse the
29:58 United States government or me personally of taking steps against Imran
30:05 Khan and thirdly the other person in the meeting the then ambassador of Pakistan
30:11 to the United States has testified to his own government that there was no conspiracy we respect the sovereignty of
30:18 Pakistan we respect the principle that Pakistan Pakistani people should be the
30:24 only ones choosing their own leaders through a democratic process Mr chairman we are grateful that you are holding
30:30 this hearing today for us to talk about that process thank you and hey your response is so good because it's so
30:37 clear that you're correct and we appreciate so much uh your Clarity on the issue and good people indeed you
30:44 make a difference so God bless you thank you and with that I now recognize the ranking member uh Dean
30:53 [Music] Phillips
30:58 [Music] pick up your
31:04 [Music]
31:22 sound the chair notes a disturbance of the committee proceedings the room will be in order and we now proceed with C
31:29 Dean philli thank you Mr chairman uh secretary Lou I I appreciate your
31:35 observations on the recent election both the positive elements and also the challenges uh in the state Department's
31:41 post-election statement uh the indication was the United States is going to work with the next Pakistani
31:48 government regardless of the party I just want to clarify that that has always been the case
31:54 correct yes sir and the department has also EXP expressed concerns about human rights and democracy in Pakistan were
32:01 appropriate but has never taken a position on who should lead an elected government in Pakistan is that correct
32:08 that is correct and the department statement also noted that claims of interference or fraud should be fully
32:13

investigated and since that aspect of the statement has gotten a lot of play in the Pakistani press and on social
32:19
media could you elaborate on what was intended by that
32:25
statement representative Phillips um the Pakistan people through their
32:32
constitution have created a system by which um the election Commissioner of
32:37
Pakistan hears the complaints of Pakistani people of candidates and
32:42
political parties to render judgments about election irregularities we as a
32:48
partner of Pakistan have called for that to be done transparently and fully and for the account for those held found
32:56
responsible for irregular to be held held accountable we can see a process whereby that's happening the election
33:02
commission of Pakistan has formed a highlevel committee which is now sifting through thousands of petitions from
33:08
people across Pakistan who have complained about the very same things that we have noted in our statement we
33:15
will be monitoring that process very closely we will be encouraging the government and the election commission
33:21
to make sure that that is a fully transparent process with the Pakistani
33:26
public do not yes m m Mr Lou if Mr Lou if you if you
33:34
might if you just might move your microphone just a little clo it's a little hard for some of us to hear too
33:39
thank you uh this is not Pakistan related per se but it is your area of responsibility so I want to ask also
33:45
about India um I know the administration is looking at accountability uh for the alarming allegations that a government
33:51
of India official was connected to a murder for higher plot targeting a seek American here on American soil in New
33:57
York City uh the administration of course recently placed sanctions on more than 500 individuals relating to the
34:04
killing of Lexi naali in Russia on Russian soil so my question is are any similar sanctions on tra or travel banss
34:11
being considered for those who we believe may be responsible for the attempted murder of Mr panan thank you
34:17
representative Phillips uh this is a serious issue a serious issue between the United States and India uh the
34:24
Department of Justice has alleged that um an Indian citizen at the behest of
34:31
someone working in the Indian government has attempted to kill an American citizen American soil we we take this in
34:38
the administration uh at incredibly seriously and have raised it at the
34:44
highest levels with India we are at the moment um working with India to
34:52
encourage India to hold accountable those responsible for this um this
34:58
terrible crime what we can see is that India itself has announced that they
35:03
have created a committee of inquiry to look into this matter and we ask them to
35:09
work quickly and transparently to make sure Justice is done thank you uh with
35:15
the remainder of my time I'd like to talk about economic issues uh if you could give an assessment of the current
35:20
economic situation in Pakistan of course a growing economy is good for stability it's good for this partnership and trade
35:25
uh I know it's still early but uh if you could provide an assessment of how you see things right now I appreciate it no
35:31
not only is it really important for the Pakistani people that they have economic stability and economic growth it's
35:37
important for America we have lots of investments in Pakistan there are lots of franchises and American businesses
35:44
working throughout Pakistan their success is our success one of the issues
35:50
I think that we Face uh with the Pakistani economy is a real difficulty
35:56
to invest and to trade there we are calling on Pakistan to reform many of
36:03
the ways it does business with foreign partners and in doing that they will attract American Investment but they'll

36:09
also attract investment from the Pakistani private sector Pakistani investors are smart they want to work in
36:15
a place where they can make money and so some of the things that we're calling for are reform of the regulations that
36:23
will allow repatriation of profits out of the country um uh cutting down a
36:29
bureaucratic red tape and more predictable regulations if Pakistan is willing to do that I think you'll see
36:35
large numbers of American investors flocking to Pakistan it's a really interesting place to invest if it had
36:42
the right conditions thank you sir and with that I yield back thank you very much ranking member Dean Phillips we now
36:48
proceed to Congressman Rich McCormack of Georgia Thank you Mr
36:53
chair I would like to uh point out that we in Congress uh have a job to do this is an
37:03
incredibly important topic and I think out of respect for those people who are interested in this topic the people who
37:09
want to be disruptive should be gabbled out and removed from this hearing I think
37:16
anybody who's earned this place whether you be in Congress or be a military member or be somebody from Pakistan or
37:22
be somebody who's interested in this topic should be respected and those people who break the rules
37:28
should be removed from and not be allowed back in in future because this continues to waste our time and with
37:34
that I'm going to uh move with your permission chair to have these people removed before I I
37:43
continue so ordered thank
37:49
you all three that were speaking out thank you they're wearing red in case you
37:56
can't figure out who they are
38:05
[Music]
38:13
the committee will suspend while the capital police restore
38:22
order a great Democratic leader in Pakistan
38:33
pistan and com mccormic will continue with his full five minutes thank you Mr
38:39
chair I've been interrupted in the previous uh hearings and I just want to make sure we we have some order uh thank
38:45
you Mr chairman I appreciate you and I thank you secretary Lou for your testimony today today's topic is very
38:51
important to me whether we like it or not the US future cannot include isolationism from the rest of the world
38:57
American leadership will be required for our country's future success and to ensure America remains first in the
39:03
world we must remain robust par Partnerships and Alliance alliances with
39:08
Nations that share our interests and values as Nations like China and Russia
39:14
and violent extremist organizations threaten global stability it is critical for us interests for South Central asan
39:20
countries such as Pakistan and India to continue developing stable and transparent democracies that's why
39:27
introduced house resolution 901 with my esteemed colleague from Michigan representative Dan kildy the resolution
39:33
affirms us support for democracy and human rights in Pakistan I'm looking forward to H re's 901's consideration
39:41
later this afternoon as the house Foreign Affairs committee marks it up as I am sure you're aware Pakistan recently
39:47
conducted the largest election in its history but these were unfortunately marred by allegations of fraudulent
39:53
activity and electoral VI violence Watch Dog groups raed the alarm over reports
39:58
of political repression suspension of Interest access on Election Day delays in election results and more currently
40:05
the election commission of Pakistan is reviewing many of the election results in individual parliamentary
40:11
constituencies and the Pakistani judicial system is investigating and adducting adjudicating irregularities in
40:19

fact the Ambassador from Pakistan came to my office yesterday and talked about what they were going to try to do to mitigate these problems with all this
40:26
being said there must be full credible and independent audit of these election results secretary Lou do you think and
40:34
the stat State Department have confidence in Pakistan's judicial process and its ability to adjudicate
40:40
claims of wrongdoing thank you representative McCormack um if I might just before I
40:48
answer that question just say a word about uh protest we have just tremendous respect for the Pakistani American
40:55
Community um we we uh pride ourselves in the state department and in my office
41:01
about talking to um Pakistani Americans because they are the people in our vast
41:06
country who care the most about this relationship they have something genuine to offer because of their deep knowledge
41:13
and and the Deep concern they have with the future of the country and so I I want to join the voices of this
41:19
committee to say how important their involvement is how much we respect them we try to listen to them at every
41:25
opportunity I hope they also listening to all of you and to those of us who are
41:30
trying to guide this policy absolutely and I will say respectful conversation is always Paramount for me I admit which
41:36
constituencies I have people who've come here from all over the United States I've met with in my own District on this
41:42
topic there is a time in a place for everyone to speak and that's order that's something that we worked hard for one of the things that I have
faced over
41:48
these last two years is some of these allegations unfounded allegations have resulted in regular death threats
41:55
against me threats against my family involvement of local police there is a line of acceptability and I do think at
42:02
times some of the Free Speech has verged into threats of violence which is not
42:08
acceptable in our society sir if I could answer your important question um the
42:14
election commission of Pakistan in past elections has rerun elections where
42:20
there have been a finding of uh electoral abuse we have seen that over and over in fact in this election they
42:27
have already ordered the rerun of Elections where there has been violence as we know there have been candidates who've been killed in
this election
42:33
there have been some terrible um violence that proceeded the election we call on the election commission to
42:40
fulfill its constitutional role in Pakistan to be the Watchdog over these elections and to act in a nonpartisan
42:48
way we all will be watching this process very very closely as to whether they
42:53
will do it it's up to the Pakistani people to make sure their Institution are functional and that are upholding
42:59
their constitution thank you and do you think that the Pakistani government has the ability to continue to improve and
43:05
be accountable and be a good partner going forward uh as the United States needs them to be in that
43:12
region Pakistan is such an important partner of ours they are a major non-n
43:18
Ally we have deep National Security interests with Pakistan not least of
43:23
which is the fight against terrorism not only terrorism that affects pakistanis but terrorism that affects Americans and
43:31
Pakistan has been a partner in our resettling of Afghan refugees to whom we
43:36
owe a debt and we are grateful to the people and the government of Pakistan for that cooperation thank you sir how
43:42
are you thank you very much uh Dr Congressman Rich McCormack of Georgia we now proceed to congresswoman Kathy
43:48
Manning of North Carolina thank thank you Mr chairman welcome back to my good friend Dean Phillips and thank you
43:55
assistant secretary Lou for your service to our country I want to focus on the
44:00
plight of women in Pakistan for a few minutes I am very concerned about the
44:05

treatment of women in Pakistan including female journalists and women harassed
44:12
and AR and arrested at protests and rallies leading up to the election as you as you know Pakistan is routinely
44:19
raided near the bottom of the world in terms of women's inclusion Justice
44:26
safety and security so can you talk to us about how the state department is working to address gender-based violence
44:34
and highlight and improve the safety the rights the inclusion and representation
44:39
of women in Pakistan's democracy representative Manning such an important question I wish I had my wife
44:47
here sitting next to me I met my wife in Pakistan she's was an American Refugee
44:52
worker working with Afghans but her um her academic subject matter of specialty
44:59
is gender-based violence and she has worked in Pakistan on this very issue what I would say about Pakistan its
45:06
human rights um the rights of women I say about many countries but I I really
45:11
mean it which is we as foreign partners aren't going to be able to change
45:16
Pakistan who will change Pakistan Pakistani people will and we see that
45:22
very strong desire of women across Pakistan to be heard to be represented
45:28
and to have their rights respected by the institutions of government as well as by the rest of society I I see great
45:37
victories in Pakistan every day um there have as I mentioned double the number of
45:43
women elected to this Parliament and do you do you see that as a as a positive
45:48
um moment that will actually give hope and perhaps achieve new things for women
45:54
in Pakistan I I see the emergence of of female leaders in Pakistan at every
46:00
level as being the examples that will lead their society forward you you are
46:06
entirely right at the Village level in Pakistan lives for women are incredibly diff difficult I see more women today in
46:14
senior positions in business I see them on the high court I see them in Parliament I see them as ministers uh
46:22
honestly some days pakistanis are doing better than Americans on some some of these questions it is a struggle for all
46:30
of us but I do credit the very brave women and young girls who are leading
46:35
this path uh in Pakistan I think as foreign Partners we need to put our resources our public statements and our
46:44
activism behind Pakistani female leaders and can you give us some idea of the
46:49
percentage of participation of Pakistani women in the economy and are there
46:55
hurdles to greater participation and is there anything we can do to encourage greater participation one of the real
47:02
issues for every business in Pakistan but particularly for women-owned businesses is access to financing and so
47:10
one of the things that I've seen over the course of my career uh and and particularly in Pakistan is the
47:16
emergence of these micro Finance projects because largely women-owned interest uh businesses are not the
47:23
massive textile mills or the steel plant they're small businesses their
47:28
businesses run out of homes or small shops in local communities if women have
47:34
access to that financing women will succeed in business usaid the EU the
47:41
United Kingdom Japan Australia many many of Pakistan's donor friends are
47:47
investing in those types of businesses while the PRC and other countries are investing in literally roads to Nowhere
47:56
that bleed the Pakistani people of their resources year after year so we've
48:01
certainly talked about giving women access to more uh Financial
48:06
opportunities in this committee I hope we will continue to do that in the future because you've mentioned China

48:12
let me walk into this question with a little time I have left um Pakistan faces a a grave challenge has faced grave
48:20
challenges in recent years from flooding from indebtedness to creditors like China um what more can we do um to
48:28
counterbalance what China is doing um and the debt that they're helping create
48:34
in Pakistan we can compete where we fail overseas we are not present where we
48:41
compete we always win because we have a better offer we offer private sector-led
48:47
investment for profit making Enterprises that benefit local people and not just
48:53
the lender countries thank you my time has expired I yield back thank you very much uh congresswoman
48:59
Kathy Manning of North Carolina we will be proceeding to congresswoman Mike Lawler in one second and uh even before
49:05
I want to uh thank you for pointing out the different uh allies uh working with Pakistan and one that you left out uh
49:12
which is so significant that is South Korea uh to go from ashes 60 years ago to be one of the wealthiest countries on
49:18
Earth uh is an example uh throughout the indopacific and the uh South Asia of um
49:25
achieving a pro capit income of \$44,000 for each citizen who would ever imagine uh and I know that Korea has
49:32
been vitally interested in developing economic ties with the people of Pakistan with that we now proceed to con
49:38
Mike Lawler uh thank you Mr Lou I know many of my colleagues touched on uh the
49:45
election irregularities and some of the concerns about it so I want to segue uh
49:50
a little bit uh just a few weeks ago the government of Pakistan approved plans to begin construction on a pipeline to
49:57
transport natural gas from Iran to Pakistan Iran constructed uh constructed
50:03
its side of the pipeline years ago and now Pakistan has finally decided to move forward uh Mr Lou do you view this
50:09
pipeline as Pakistan aligning itself with Iran I mean it's a really interesting
50:16
question representative Lawler because Pakistan and Iran just traded missile and drone strikes a few weeks ago so um
50:24
it is um been true over time that Pakistan and Iran have had ups and downs
50:31
in their relationship they're had a pretty low point today we are tracking this uh planned pipeline between Iran
50:38
and Pakistan honestly I don't know where the financing for such a project would come from I don't think many
50:44
International um donors would be interested in funding such an Endeavor we've also not heard from the government
50:50
of Pakistan a desire for um any waiver of American sanctions that would
50:56
certainly result from such a project instead what we are undertaking in the administration is to have a conversation
51:02
with Pakistan what are Pakistan's other Alternatives how can we compete for that business where can they find other non
51:10
Iranian sources of natural gas and how can we help Pakistan think about the transition to clean energy Pakistan's
51:18
very interested in uh providing energy through solar through Wind Through Hydro
51:24
how can that begin to replace their uh dependence on coal and other
51:29
hydrocarbons okay um so have you expressed direct concern with the
51:34
Pakistani government on this issue we are in consultation with the Pakistani government on this issue yes sir okay um
51:42
I mean my concern is that Iran is the greatest State sponsor of Terror they use the illicit Iranian petroleum oil
51:50
trade uh to finance terrorism uh since Joe Biden took office
51:57
nearly 88 billion in increased Revenue uh has resulted because of lack
52:04
enforcement on sanctions uh it's why I introduced the ship act uh to increase
52:09
secondary sanctions on uh the purchase of Iranian petroleum uh it passed through the house
52:17

overwhelmingly with bipartisan support and has since stalled in the Senate uh because the White House doesn't want it
52:24
uh so from my vantage point when we talk about other Alternatives that Pakistan
52:31
may be able uh to engage on why don't we start by cracking down on the illicit
52:37
oil trade why is the administration taking a very LAX approach to cracking
52:43
down on Iranian petroleum sir um the administration will
52:49
uphold both the letter and the spirit of all sanction laws particularly those related to IR you think an increase of
52:55
88 billion in revenue is upholding the letter and spirit of the law sir I I I
53:02
am not an expert in Iranian energy exports but what I know as a person who
53:08
has a car that's fueled by gasoline is all of us have paid for higher gasoline after Putin's all fullscale invasion of
53:16
Ukraine and I well that's also a result in this country of us
53:22
limiting uh production of oil and natural gas in this country that's why
53:27
we're dealing with our own energy challenges across the GL if I could answer your question I I across the well
53:33
you went in a total nonse I fully support the um efforts by the US
53:41
government to prevent this pipeline from happening we are working towards that goal sir
53:47
okay how does the administration view Pakistan's relationship with the
53:53
Taliban with suspicion sir and so what are we doing uh based on
53:59
that suspicion so I think it is well known
54:04
that um previous governments of Pakistan have had close relations with the
54:11
Taliban currently the greatest terrorist threat faced by the people of Pakistan
54:17
emanates from Afghanistan and the relationship between Pakistan and the
54:23
Taliban is about the same as the relationship between the United States and the Taliban it is very strain and
54:31
difficult we have a very important dialogue with the Pakistanian government about the Taliban how to help shape Its
54:38
Behavior how to help make sure that Taliban upholds its commitments last
54:43
question why was the why was Pakistan excluded from the administration's indopacific
54:49
strategy so it's um a way that we Define the Indo Pacific and it's not only only
54:57
this Administration it's the last Administration as well for whatever reason I suspect it has to do with cocom
55:03
authority between the indopacific command and Central Command the dividing line of the indopacific is the line
55:10
between Pakistan and India well time is up can't have to cut
55:16
you off Mr Lou there's a new sheriff in town it's me I recognize the sheriff's Authority Brad Sherman from California
55:23
recognized sir we have substantial beverage in Pakistan in two ways first
55:29
the IMF where we have a loud voice and we should use it more often and second
55:35
we could deny visas uh to high-ranking Pakistani
55:40
officials uh we need to focus on human rights in Pakistan uh I'm particularly focused on
55:47
on sin and the disappearances there the forced conversions uh young girls forced
55:53
to convert and then marry old men and uh uh we've seen uh uh the throughout
56:01
Pakistan a blasphemy law that uh allows a person to complain and all of a sudden
56:06
someone who's not Muslim usually is subject to detention and even execution uh but the greatest problem is
56:14
Dr afredi that is something we discussed in this room last decade again and

56:21
again he's in jail for 14 years we released Victor about to get an
56:28
American back and the message to everyone in the world and this is a national security risk is don't
56:35
cooperate with the CIA because if you're an American National we'll move Heaven and Earth to get you out but if you're
56:42
the one foreign National who did the most for America of anyone this Century
56:47
you will rot in jail the Pakistanis have said that they will uh do a sadiki for a
56:54
Frey trade uh Miss sadiki uh didn't kill any Americans tried to ought to be in jail
57:03
is is now perhaps uh in incapacitated anyway will we trade sadiki for a Frey
57:10
and if not will we uh uh ban from entry into this country those who are holding
57:17
her hostage the Dr Frey hostage or do we just turn our back on any foreign National the man who is responsible for
57:24
getting Ben Laden is in a Pakistani jail Sherman um I I um first want to
57:31
thank you personally but also thank this committee and the Congress sir I have one I will yield 10 seconds to say
57:38
sadiki for Frei yes or no um Mr chairman I have been in this
57:44
job for more than two and a half years I have never had pox official raised
57:50
they've told me they've told your predecessor they've told the state department a Fred's in jail you haven't
57:55
done anything about it and he's the man that helped us get Bin Laden but let's let let's move on Sir Sir got sir I only
58:04
get five minutes go ahead you um we have the exit control list where
58:11
hundreds of American citizens are prohibited from leaving Pakistan will we treat them the same way we deal with
58:19
everyone else who's wrongfully detained in Russia and elsewhere what are we doing to get American citizens who have
58:25
not been even charged with a crime out of Pakistan if they want to leave representative Sherman we work
58:33
every day on behalf of American citizens in Pakistan as you note there are some laws that have put undue restrictions on
58:41
Americans we have had a very positive record h i mean hundreds are still there
58:47
and the IMF loan goes forward and the we allow the top uh Generals in Pakistan to
58:55
visit the United States when American citizens can't leave Pakistan and come to the United States we then have the
59:01
vote tabulation system um and they have banned the
59:07
bat the symbol of the PTI then they banned the batsman and uh this is uh uh I mean
59:19
there have been flaws in other Pakistani elections but this is uh perhaps uh the greatest
59:24
flaw uh and were told and the Pakistani ambassadors told me well this is just the ordinary working of the Pakistani
59:32
Judicial System that's the same judicial system that has Dr afredi in jail for 14
59:39
years for getting Ben Laden do we have faith that um Imran Khan has not been
59:47
the victim of selective prosecution or is it apparent that he has
59:53
been sir following the rioting on May 9th the day Imran Khan was arrested the
1:00:00
United States government has raised our concerns about the mass Detention of members of the opposition to include the
1:00:06
PTI we have raised concerns about the use of military courts if I can
1:00:11
interrupt there's one thing you need to do the American ambassador needs to visit Imran Khan in prison and make
1:00:20
sure that he lives to tell the tale of how he was wrongfully imprisoned uh
1:00:26
through selective prosecution I yield back thank you Mr chairman excellent
1:00:33
questions um represent be is not here so I'm the next in line um secretary Lou
1:00:40

could you provide insight in the involvement of the military and the politics of
1:00:46
Pakistan hold on y'all don't need to clap for me I'm good I'm good we're good
1:00:52
thank y'all go ahead brother um the Pakistan military is the sixth largest military in the world the largest of any
1:01:00
um majority Muslim country the US military has historically had very close
1:01:06
relations with the Pakistanian military our generals and their generals have trained together decade after
1:01:14
decade it is an important part of Pakistanian culture I have lived in
1:01:20
Pakistan I have seen that for myself the Pakistani military is an important institution we respect respect in this
1:01:26
Administration and all past American administrations the constitutional principle that the Pakistanian military
1:01:33
must be kept under civilian control it must be answerable to the president it
1:01:38
is it answerable to the president sir who is the commander-in Chief and responsible to civilian control okay
1:01:47
does do y'all at the state department intend to conduct a review of the most recent elections in
1:01:53
Pakistan sir we have conducted that review and we have found the uh a number
1:02:01
of election irregularities that I've detailed today right what we are undertaking right now is a monitoring of
1:02:08
how the Democratic institutions of Pakistan will address those irregularities I would I would suggest
1:02:14
to you that that a strong letter is not doing a whole heck of a lot I would tell
1:02:20
you that this country needs to start using its economic might
1:02:26
to correct some of these wrongs these people are being mistreated I you know I I'm not much on
1:02:33
bureaucrats I don't like writing letters I like delivering it personally and I think that's something we could do um
1:02:40
did the US ask for former prime minister Imran Khan's removal after he visited
1:02:46
Russia that we did not sir okay there are people who believe you
1:02:53
were involved in the regime change in Pakistan stand can you speak on
1:03:00
that sir I was absolutely not involved nor were any Americans involved with
1:03:05
that process none whatsoever none whatsoever
1:03:10
sir not not contractors not none not one okay in Aid to Pakistan being withheld
1:03:19
is Aid to Pakistan being withheld um because Pakistan refused to vote against the Russian invasion of Ukraine at the
1:03:26
United Nations General Assembly no sir all right um I have a little more
1:03:34
time left do I have any members um I tell you what um
1:03:41
okay hang on for a second y I'm not used to this all right well I'll end mine
1:03:47
then um I'll representative Schneider from Illinois uh thank you uh uh chair member
1:03:54
Chon wait I'm sorry it's not you it's alos I'm sorry do You' all want to fight it out or can I go ahead okay I
1:04:01
apologized I'm I'm new at this that's why they don't let me do this very often well you're doing a great job Mr
1:04:07
chairman that's just because I recognized you go ahead uh thank you Mr chairman and uh thank you to uh ranking
1:04:13
member Phillips and greetings uh assistant secretary Lou I know we've touched on uh some of the election
1:04:21
issues before but like many other uh members of this committee concerned uh
1:04:26
concerned by the trends but also concerned by the elections specifically as we know in early
1:04:33
February uh the elections were held after a nearly three-month delay that raised serious concerns about the
1:04:40
Democratic process in Pakistan I I also know that the state department joined
1:04:45
other International election observers in expressing concern that the election

1:04:50 included undue restrictions on freedoms of expression Association uh and assembly so you know I want to reiterate
1:04:58 my personal concern uh the incoming that I've received has uh really been uh
1:05:04 Illuminating and suggested that there's more that we can do I could share uh the the the chair's urging in in uh his uh
1:05:12 recent remarks that our country uses uh its levers uh to to ensure that uh
1:05:18 democracy uh is upheld um that's also why uh I'm proud to co-sponsor house
1:05:23 resolution 901 uh this resolution reaffirms the House of Representatives strong support for democracy in Pakistan
1:05:31 and urges the government of Pakistan to uphold democracy and protect uh fundamental rights but as we you know
1:05:37 look more broadly uh at human rights in in Pakistan uh the the state department
1:05:43 uh your your agency's most re recent human rights report highlighted significant uh human rights challenges
1:05:50 in Pakistan including restrictions on freedom of expression and freedom of the press credible threats of violence
1:05:58 harassment abductions and killings by Security Forces political parties and
1:06:03 other groups have led citizens and journalists to self-censor uh their speech for their own safety the state
1:06:09 department found that the Pakistani government's failure to investigate and prosecute attacks on free speech and the
1:06:16 Press have effectively led to restrictions on on on free speech on the press in a very dramatic way you know
1:06:24 really what I want to hear is how can and how will the United States work with the Pakistani government to support
1:06:30 meaningful change to promote freedom of speech and freedom of the press sir I I have the pleasure and
1:06:39 responsibility of reading the Pakistani media on a daily basis um and I will
1:06:45 confirm what is in our human rights report is there is both self- sensorship and occasionally active censorship in
1:06:53 Pakistan today at the same time what I read in the Pakistani press is a
1:06:58 cacophony of voices there is actually competition in the media with respect to
1:07:04 things that are said and not said as well as in social media and so one of
1:07:09 the most damaging things that we see today are restrictions on social media
1:07:15 because like the rest of the world pakistanis are getting a lot of their news and information through um the
1:07:22 internet and so when internet get the internet gets pulled down or x uh gets
1:07:27 throttled as it has been now for several weeks it denies the Pakistani people
1:07:33 from getting the kind of diversity of reporting information that they deserve we are talking to the Pakistani
1:07:39 government at the highest level about these issues we're also working year after year in the trenches with
1:07:46 Pakistani Civil Society to help to train journalist about factchecking about
1:07:52 responsible um sourcing of their information about journalistic standards and what I
1:07:58 can also see is while there is censorship both self and active we can also see the development of some truly
1:08:06 excellent journalism coming out of Pakistan and some very brave journalists who
1:08:11 defy um these sensors and still produce um uh things that call into question the
1:08:18 government or the military or the Americans or any number of other um
1:08:24 institutions of authority if I may sir what what exactly have those
1:08:30 conversations yielded uh W with the government because I I mean it's one thing to have them but it's another to
1:08:35 be pursuing you know some outcomes that are beneficial to the values that we uphold here and we want to see in a real
1:08:43 active Democratic Society I do think it's important for both the administration and the Congress to say
1:08:49

loud and clear that we are watching what happens in Pakistan we're watching closely its human rights record
1:08:56
what it does with respect to religious freedom and what it's doing on Free Speech I grant you I don't know that
1:09:03
what we say today affects exactly what they're going to do tomorrow but over time if we let up on these values it's
1:09:10
going to be worse because they can see that there are no consequences for these violations well my time is expiring the
1:09:17
only thing that I want to leave you with is I I think we we have a responsibility to make that concern uh clear more
1:09:26
active uh and and seek the outcomes that that we believe in in maintaining our
1:09:31
democracy my time has expired back to the chair thank you very much and uh it we
1:09:40
now proceed to Congressman Brad Schneider of uh Illinois and of course it's really easy to get confused between
1:09:46
Gabe Amo and ammo and uh Brad Schnider uh they both come from assorted northern
1:09:52
states uh Rhode Island and now Illinois uh thank you chairman Wilson and no good
1:09:59
deed going unpunished Gabe asked the question I wanted to ask uh and thank you for your answer I'm going to build
1:10:04
on that you know in your written testimony you concluded that the Pakistani people deserve a country that is peaceful Democratic and
prosperous
1:10:12
quotes and I I we just talked a little bit about what the United States can do but let me just say here that a peaceful
1:10:18
Democratic and prosperous Pakistan is not just important to the pakistanis it's in the interest of the United
1:10:23
States as well and and that's why we were having this hearing and I thank the chairman for for uh calling it and we're
1:10:29
addressing what has been discussed very real concerns about the election but also recognizing as you noted in your
1:10:34
testimony the positive elements seen in the election and how we build upon them and I hope we continue uh those
1:10:40
conversations I want to shift gears a little bit and touch on uh Afghan deportations though uh I share among
1:10:46
other with others the Deep concern of these mass deportations of undocumented undocumented Afghans back to Afghanistan
1:10:53
where they're going to live in horrible humanitarian conditions under the T Taliban uh Human Rights Watch claims
1:11:00
that Pakistani authorities have committed widespread abuses against Afghans living in Pakistan to compel the
1:11:06
return to Afghanistan including by confiscating property destroying documents and physically abusing
1:11:11
individuals has us raised these concerns with the government at all and how is us working with the International Community
1:11:18
to push back against this policy thank you sir U we have had discussions with
1:11:24
the Pakistani government government at the highest levels about these deportations as you know as has been
1:11:29
well documented over half a million Afghans have returned to Afghanistan following this effort by the Pakistanian
1:11:37
government to remove uh illegal foreigners from the first day of that
1:11:42
process we have been in touch with the Pakistanian government both about the humanitarian consequences of this Mass
1:11:49
deportation but also to try to protect those Afghans who have a path way to
1:11:56
coming to the United States there are thousands of Afghans who worked with us who worked with our Embassy or our
1:12:03
military who have fled to Pakistan and sought Sanctuary there we have been very
1:12:10
keen that those Afghans are allowed to stay so we can process them and they're still in processing so and they are and
1:12:16
the Pakistani government has actually on this one issue been very supportive we are grateful for that on the broader
1:12:23
issue we are talking with the new government now about trying to make sure that the the rights of Afghan refugees
1:12:32
are respected we are thankful right that Pakistani people have hosted over 3
1:12:38
million Afghan refugees now for over 40 years it is historic in proportion um
1:12:46
that that sacrifice does not go unnoticed at the same time we very much
1:12:51

hope they work with the unhcr as they enter this next pH phase where they're trying to figure out whether more people
1:12:59
are returning whether some of those who have returned are able to come back to Pakistan and that those the needs of
1:13:05
those refugees are being met right uh thank you and I've raised this previously with the Ambassador uh
1:13:11
Pakistani ambassador as well and uh look forward to working with you uh to make sure that that happens uh I'll shift
1:13:17
gears again uh we touched on this I'll I'll pick up where Mr Lawler left off uh
1:13:24
Pakistan Iranian relations you mentioned the escalation uh the recent escalatory
1:13:29
environment the strikes in January um where do you see that moving do you
1:13:36
think the strikes were uh one-off uh occurrences or something that uh could
1:13:43
continue to escalate in the future sir as you know uh the strikes uh were not
1:13:48
only against Pakistan they were against three countries simultaneously by Iran it is reprehensible and irresponsible
1:13:56
for Iran to lash out against its neighbors for terrorism that exists in
1:14:02
Iran itself so as you may be tracking those three U missile and drone
1:14:10
strikes that happened uh in January followed a really terrible terrorist
1:14:16
attack that occurred within uh Iran and the government of Iran clearly felt like
1:14:22
it had to respond in some way they responded in the worst way possible by firing missiles at Targets that they
1:14:29
probably didn't well understand which for our information ended up killing
1:14:34
lots of civilians in three countries including in Pakistan we have strongly condemned
1:14:40
Iran's actions my La last few seconds can you just uh touch on the the US
1:14:45
messaging to the Pakistani Pakistani government regarding their direct engagement with Tran on security man
1:14:51
matters especially in the context of our concerns our m Mutual concerns of
1:14:56
nuclear proliferation and Iran's nuclear program sir we have warned them about our red lines legislative but also in
1:15:03
terms of how we cooperate with Pakistan if they get into bed with Iran it'll be very serious for our relationship okay
1:15:10
we need to reiterate that again and again and again with that I yield
1:15:16
back thank you very much con Brad Schneider of Illinois we now proceed to Congressman Corey kasar Greg Cur of
1:15:24
Texas thank you chair and thanks also to the ranking member for having me here today
1:15:31
uh Mr L I'm sure you're aware I led a letter alongside 30 of my colleagues here in Congress to the state department
1:15:38
as well as to the president you've got it right there uh talking about credible allegations of election rigging in the
1:15:44
Pakistani elections and we urged that the administration withhold recognition of the new government in Pakistan until
1:15:51
a credible and transparent investigation on Election interference had been conducted I know that the US Embassy
1:15:58
congratulated Mr shareif quote on his Assumption of the Office of Prime Minister but I haven't seen a statement
1:16:04
yet from the state department itself so just so we're clear at this point yes or no has the US officially recognized the
1:16:11
new government in Pakistan uh representative kesar I would like to answer with the yes or no the
1:16:18
the actual answer is a little more complicated if you allow me um the the government of the United States we we
1:16:25
don't actually go around recognizing or withholding recognition of new governments that's not something we do
1:16:31
anywhere around the world what we do do is we decide whether we're going to
1:16:36
engage with a government um and so yes you have seen um actions by our
1:16:42
ambassador our Embassy uh we are in every interaction with this government
1:16:48
stressing the importance of accountability for election irregularities sir can I just also add

1:16:55
your letter is incredibly important it's important that the Pakistani people the Pakistani government hear not only from
1:17:01
the administration but from members of Congress and having so many of them speak together uh has real influence the
1:17:08
administration largely agrees with your recommendations we have done many of the things that you have um have proposed we
1:17:16
have uh said publicly and privately that we want to see transparent and credible
1:17:22
investigation of election irregularities we have called for accountability
1:17:28
for Mass detentions of people in the opposition and we have said loudly and
1:17:33
clearly that military trials for civilians accused of crimes after May
1:17:38
9th is not in keeping with International Norms I appreciate that and so in other
1:17:44
cases for example in the case of Venezuela or some other countries where the state department has spoken out very
1:17:49
clearly about election rigging and we can talk about on you know separately about how it is that we treat those
1:17:56
governments or treat those countries but it seems that when we have had allegations of election rigging that
1:18:01
we've spoken out much more much more clearly than than in this case and
1:18:06
I would urge that we continue to speak with the level of moral clarity that we have um in other situations my uh but I
1:18:14
appreciate your your recognition and speaking out here today about how it's not okay for us to be having journalists
1:18:22
jailed for Twitter to get shut down there to be um this continued uh very
1:18:28
clear uh to me um interference in democracy given the credible allegations
1:18:34
of fraud and rigging what gives you confidence that this government will have the Democratic legitimacy necessary
1:18:40
not only for the interests of the Pakistani people but for the interests of the United
1:18:47
States sir um the political and economic stability of Pakistan is important for
1:18:53
the United States is important that the Pakistan I'm short on time is it just is it your sense right now that there is
1:19:00
going to be that Democratic legitimacy or is that or do we have real concerns I'm sorry I have one more question for
1:19:05
you so just give me your sir I think that's up to the process ongoing now in the Electoral Commission of Pakistan one
1:19:12
more question most security assistance to Pakistan's been suspended since 2018 recently the Pakistani ambassador said
1:19:19
Pakistan's awaiting a decision from the US on increasing military sales and financing yes or no are there ongoing
1:19:25
conversations about increasing military assistance to Pakistan uh no uh ongoing
1:19:31
conversation about large scale increases no that's good to hear given that the US has already sent hundreds of millions of
1:19:37
dollars in Aid are there any steps the state department is taking to ensure that the aid we send is not used for any
1:19:44
of these abuses that you've identified sir absolutely there is very
1:19:50
close monitoring of where our military assistance goes around the world including to Pakistan for example the
1:19:56
F-16 sold to Pakistan over 40 years ago have active us technical security teams
1:20:03
monitoring their use every day thank you for that has the US identified any units
1:20:08
of military or security forces that would not be eligible for Aid yes we have identified those thank
1:20:15
you thank you for your clear answers thank you for um for being here through this hearing and I hope that we can uh
1:20:23
after this hearing continue the work of making sure that we actually fully investigate the election and that we
1:20:28
actually make sure people are let out of jail that we're put in there that um unfairly because democracy in Pakistan
1:20:36
of course will serve the people of Pakistan but it is so clearly in the United States interest I started out on
1:20:41
this seeing the failures we had in Latin America of prioritizing military relationships over Democratic
1:20:47

relationships and it never served us there and it won't serve Us in Pakistan any well so thank you so much Mr thank you
1:20:53
sir I thank you very much con Greg casar of Texas and now proof that we've got
1:20:59
really good people from Texas uh we on both sides Congressman August fluger of
1:21:05
Texas thank you Mr chairman and thank you for letting me wave on to this committee I know that we've been having
1:21:11
this discussion uh between uh several members bipartisan uh discussions on on
1:21:17
this very important issue so I very much appreciate the ability to wave on today um and uh obviously have uh some
1:21:25
concerns uh about what has happened in in the past uh few weeks and months um
1:21:31
and uh appreciate uh uh you being here Mr Lou thank you for uh your time today
1:21:37
um these questions have probably been asked but but I want to ask him again um
1:21:43
as a as an interested citizen as somebody who believes in free and fair elections um and really just want to get
1:21:48
a general assessment regarding the fairness of the elections in in Pakistan um what your your general thought is
1:21:54
before I go into some deeper questions sir we we uh share the view of local
1:22:00
election observers who have in summary said um this was a competitive and Order
1:22:06
orderly election but they note irregularities in the compilation of the results that should be fully
1:22:13
investigated do you believe that the recent election was free and fair um sir we have never used the term
1:22:20
free and fair in the characterization of this election to to what level then
1:22:25
would you say interference happened we sir we have expressed and I've said this multiple times
1:22:33
today serious concerns about the pre-election environment violence that
1:22:38
occurred terrorism and political violence we have expressed concern about the failure to uh register individual
1:22:45
candidates and political parties the mass arrests of those in opposition the
1:22:51
shutdown of internet and the uh censorship and pressure placed on
1:22:57
journalists do you believe that those without those specific examples and
1:23:04
would um definitely like to hear more examples but without those examples of
1:23:11
interference uh I'm not sure if if you're going to use that term um but please tell me what what adjective you
1:23:17
would use to describe it and without those things having happened would the
1:23:22
election results be different sir um you asked an important question
1:23:32
and I think the answer to your question is the election commission of Pakistan should it find that these irregularities
1:23:39
are substantiated should rerun elections where there's been interference and
1:23:45
that's the way the Pakistanian people will know it's probably unlikely that an American Diplomat will know whether or
1:23:51
how the results would turn out but they'll turn out out the way they should if the election commission reruns um
1:23:59
constituencies what is the Department of State doing to urge Pakistan the government of Pakistan the those that
1:24:06
govern the elections to do just that sir we have made very clear public and private statements we have said so
1:24:13
clearly to Pakistan's uh leaders but also to election officials that is an
1:24:19
expectation of all of Pakistan's Partners not only the United States that they conduct
1:24:24
elections with Integrity so you believe these should be fully investigated and adjudicated yes sir tell me what this
1:24:31
does to the relationship between the United States and Pakistan if they are not investigated if they are not
1:24:37
adjudicated if they do not decide to rerun their elections we have enjoyed 76
1:24:44
years of partnership with this country it will be an impediment to our relationship if Pakistan does not have a

1:24:53
democratic process that upholds its own Constitution it will re our
1:24:58
ability to have the type of relationship we want in security matters on business
1:25:03
fronts and people to people all of that suffers if Pakistan is not a full democracy recently I marked up uh in the
1:25:11
committee of Homeland Security a bill that will soon go to the full committee and the Homeland uh committee on
1:25:17
transnational repression uh is the state department monitoring reports of
1:25:22
transnational repression made by by Pakistani Americans and if so what is what steps are the state department taking to address these
1:25:29
topics sir we are tracking transnational repression around the world including
1:25:34
with respect to allegations made about Pakistan uh we are looking very closely
1:25:41
at the examples offered if we find that they are substantiated we will address them directly with the Pakistani
1:25:46
government I think the witness Mr chairman once again thank you for letting me wave on y back thank you very much con August fluger of
Texas and I
1:25:54
want to thank the witness for the valuable testimony and the members for their questions the members of the subcommittee may have some
additional
1:26:01
questions for the witness and we will ask you to respond to these in writing pursuant to committee rules all members
1:26:08
have five days to submit statements questions and extraneous materials for the record subject to the length
1:26:14
limitations without objection the subcommittee stands
1:26:23
adjourn
1:26:53
e
1:27:23
e
English (auto-generated)