
Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the United States Agree: Cooperation is the Key to Success Along Border Pass

**By
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Since the fall of the Taliban in late 2001, Pakistan and Afghanistan have shared not only a border, but also a common threat. Using early breakdowns in communication along that border to their advantage, insurgents would often attack in one country, only to flee into the other with little or no resistance. To prevent this, both countries, along with members of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), established regular border meetings, such as the one held at Nawa Pass in Kunar province, Afghanistan July 5.



Pakistani army Captain speaks with U.S. Army Captain about continued cooperation and information sharing along the Nawa Pass separating Afghanistan's Kunar province and Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas in order to help stop the flow of insurgent and smuggling along the shared border during a border meeting at the high mountain pass July 5. (Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Matthew C. Moeller, 5th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)

Taking place on the Afghan side of the border, the high mountain pass separating Afghanistan's Kunar province and Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas, the meeting is far removed from the metropolitan capitals of Islamabad and Kabul. Here the three parties sit across from each other outside on plastic lawn chairs talking of family; shared culture; and, most importantly, security.

We are fighting the same enemy, exclaimed Pakistani army Capt. Fahad, who like many people in the region has only one name. They attack on one side and flee to the other.

Nodding in agreement with his Afghan and Pakistani counterparts, U.S. Army Capt. Michael Harrison said, "That's why we need to work together to stop them." Separated by only a waist-high barbed wire fence, the area around the Nawa Pass was historically a safe haven for insurgents and smugglers. The area now serves as a crucial example of how cooperation among the three parties can lead to success along the border.

"The place is really a measuring stick of the success of what can happen when you have each side sharing security, sharing intelligence, and really understanding what the other is doing," said Harrison, Commander of Company A, 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, 10th Mountain Division, based out of Fort Drum, New York. According to Harrison, the success in security has allowed success in development, with the completion of a Provincial Reconstruction Team funded road improvement

project, opening the remote region to the rest of the province. “The ability to do road construction is a direct result of that increased security,” he said.

Although Harrison admits not every border pass has reached the same level of cooperation as the two checkpoints along the Nawa Pass, he says there has been progress.

Overall they’ve been very receptive, he said. We’ve seen a great improvement over the past six months we’ve been here; and if we continue to have leaders like we do in the Nawa Pass, we’ll continue to improve.