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The Earthquake in South Asia: Humanitarian Assistance and Relief Operations

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Summary

On October 8, 2005, a powerful earthquake struck northern Pakistan and India, killing at least 74,000 people and injuring over 70,000 more. The earthquake damaged the homes of millions of people, forcing more than 2.8 million to search for alternative means of shelter. The full extent of the destruction is now being revealed as government authorities and relief organizations are able to access some of the remote locations. The United States government (USG) has pledged \$510 million toward the relief effort, almost all of it to assisting Pakistan, which remains a key U.S. ally in the war against terror. Because of the heavy USG military and development presence in neighboring Afghanistan, the logistics of bringing resources into Pakistan have been relatively straightforward. The USG, Government of Pakistan, and NATO, among others, operated daily relief flights to ferry supplies, personnel, and victims to and from the region.

The earthquake struck a region that lies along the southern reaches of the Himalayan Mountains. While delivering humanitarian assistance and gaining full access was critical, one of the main humanitarian priorities early on was ensuring that the estimated three million people who lost their homes had adequate protection from winter weather and diseases. Extensive preparation and coordinated relief efforts helped greatly to mitigate against the impact of winter. Aid agencies continue to provide much needed assistance and are now planning for the transition from relief to reconstruction, which is scheduled to take place in April.

A November public poll suggests that the USG's aid effort has improved ordinary Pakistanis' opinions of the United States, although apparent U.S. missile attacks on Pakistani territory in December 2005 and January 2006, and anger over the February publication in European newspapers of cartoons deemed offensive to Muslims, reinvigorated anti-Western and anti-American sentiments among some segments of the Pakistani populace. Some experts have raised concerns that the economic burden of the disaster could contribute toward long-term instability in an area perceived to be of critical importance to the United States in the war on terror. It remains to be seen what progress is made in the recovery and reconstruction phase and what impact this may have on public opinion.

Immediately following the disaster, legislative activity included the introduction of several resolutions expressing sympathy for those affected by the earthquake, pledging American support for the victims, and lauding the relief efforts of U.S. personnel. Additional funds were not added to the regular FY2006 Foreign Operations spending measure for earthquake relief, but the FY2006 supplemental request proposes \$126.3 million for Pakistan earthquake relief. The House-passed bill fully funds the request for Pakistan earthquake assistance in order to reimburse funds that were previously reprogrammed to meet emergency needs. A final update of this report will be completed once the relief operation comes to an end (scheduled for April 2006) and the recovery phase is officially launched.

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The Earthquake in South Asia: Humanitarian Assistance and Relief Operations

Background

Introduction

A powerful earthquake of magnitude 7.6 on the Richter scale struck northern Pakistan at 8:50 am local time on October 8, 2005. Its epicenter was near the city of Muzaffarabad, 65 miles north northeast of Islamabad, Pakistan, and near the frontier with India. The earthquake was felt as far away as New Delhi, India, and Kabul, Afghanistan.¹ The vast majority of the deaths — over 73,000 — occurred in Pakistan, most of them in the Pakistani-controlled portions of the disputed territory of Kashmir. The fatality count in India stands at 1,309. Afghanistan registered four deaths.²

The former princely state of Jammu and Kashmir, as it is called in India, or Azad (“Free”) Jammu and Kashmir, as it is known in Pakistan, has been a source of contention between India and Pakistan since the two countries gained their independence from Great Britain in 1947.³ Although the earthquake has led to a certain amount of rapprochement between New Delhi and Islamabad — including the

¹ United States Geological Survey (USGS), National Earthquake Information Center, [<http://earthquake.usgs.gov/eqinthenews/2005/usdya/>], accessed October 20, 2005.

² USAID South Asia Earthquake Fact Sheet #29, December 8, 2005.

³ See CRS Report IB93097, *India-U.S. Relations*, by Alan Kronstadt: “The problem is rooted in claims by both India and Pakistan to the former princely state, divided since 1948 by a military Line of Control (LOC) separating India’s Jammu and Kashmir and Pakistan-controlled Azad [Free] Kashmir (India and Pakistan fought full-scale wars over Kashmir in 1947 and 1965). Some Kashmiris seek independence from both countries. Spurred by a perception of rigged state elections that unfairly favored pro-New Delhi candidates in 1989, an ongoing separatist war between Islamic militants and their supporters and Indian security forces in Indian-held Kashmir has claimed 40,000-90,000 lives. India blames Pakistan for fanning the rebellion, as well as supplying arms, training, and fighters. Pakistan, for its part, claims to provide only diplomatic and moral support to what it calls ‘freedom fighters’ who resist Indian rule in the Muslim-majority region.” See also CRS Issue Brief IB94041, *Pakistan-U.S. Relations*, by Alan Kronstadt; and Haqqani, Husain, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military*, Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005. For a short summary, see BBC, “India and Pakistan: Tense Neighbors,” December 16, 2001. Available at [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south_asia/102201.stm]. For recent exchanges between Pakistan and India, see CRS Report RS21584, *Pakistan: Chronology of Recent Events*, by Alan Kronstadt.

opening of telephone exchanges and previously closed border crossings — its long-term political effects in the region remain to be seen. The domestic significance of the earthquake within Pakistan and India is taken up in subsequent sections of this report.

Comparisons to Past Disasters

The full extent of the damage caused by the earthquake in South Asia continues to unfold, but more in-depth assessments now provide clearer indicators of the overall disaster. Although its toll in human lives appears to be less than a third of that of the December 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, current reports indicate that damage to Pakistan's economy and infrastructure has been substantial. **Table 1** presents a list of the ten deadliest natural disasters of the past century, based principally on the Emergency Events Database (EM-DAT) maintained by the World Health Organization's (WHO) Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED). Although CRED makes efforts to ensure the reliability of its data, it must be cautioned that obtaining precise and accurate information about natural disasters, many of which occurred decades ago and in areas where political and environmental conditions made data collection difficult, is not possible. Thus casualty figures stemming from, for instance, the series of deadly floods in China that took place a half-century ago, must all be taken as very rough approximations. Even the figures for the recent tsunami vary to some degree from source to source, and must be considered estimates. On the whole, however, the EM-DAT, because of its explicit definitions and uniform criteria for event inclusion, provides the best means of comparing data across different disasters.⁴

Table 1. Deadliest Natural Disasters Since 1900

Date	Location	Event	Estimated Fatalities
July 1931	China (Huang He River)	Flood	3.7 million
July 1959	China (Northern areas)	Flood	2 million
July 1939	China (Honan Province)	Flood	500,000
Nov. 12, 1970	Bangladesh (Khulna, Chittagong)	Cyclone	300,000
July 27, 1976	China (Tangshan, Tientsin)	Earthquake (magnitude 7.6)	242,000 ^a
Dec. 26, 2004	Indian Ocean (esp. Indonesia, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Thailand)	Tsunami and Earthquake (9.0)	224,495 ^b
May 22, 1927	China (Jiangxi Province)	Earthquake (7.9)	200,000
Dec. 16, 1920	China (Kansu Province)	Earthquake (7.8)	180,000
Sep. 1, 1923	Japan (Kanto plain)	Earthquake (7.9)	143,000
1935 ^c	China (Yangtze river)	Flood	142,000

⁴ EM-DAT is at [<http://www.em-dat.net/index.htm>]. Criteria and definitions are at [<http://www.em-dat.net/criteria.htm>].

Sources: EM-DAT (op cit) and United States Geological Survey (USGS) at [<http://neic.usgs.gov/neis/eqlists/eqsmosde.html>]. This table does not include droughts, epidemics, and famines, the most significant of which have claimed as many as twenty million victims. The events are excluded because of the difficulty in pinpointing their locations and timing, and, more importantly, the extent to which they were exacerbated — or created — by humans. It would be difficult to argue, for instance, that the recent North Korean famines, which have likely claimed several hundred thousand lives over several years, are entirely “natural” in their origin.

- a. USGS lists official death toll at 255,000; some reports indicate toll as high as 655,000.
- b. The USGS lists death toll from earthquake and tsunami at 283,106.
- c. Month unknown.

Although its nearly 73,000 fatalities rank it as a truly major calamity, the recent earthquake in South Asia was not among the ten deadliest natural disasters of the last century.⁵

Relief Update⁶

Overview

Relief to Recovery. It is expected that the relief operation will come to an end in April — roughly six months after the October 8, 2005 earthquake — at which point the recovery and reconstruction phase will officially be launched. The U.N. system, in coordination with the GoP and others centrally involved in the relief effort, has developed “The Action Plan from Relief to Recovery,” (the Action Plan) which will propose a stronger coordination mechanism and concrete project proposals to support Pakistan in its recovery efforts. The Plan is scheduled to be released at the six-month point on April 8. The recovery stage is expected to cover one year.⁷ As

⁵ The December 2004 tsunami, however, was. The tsunami was unique in both the extent of its damage and the number of countries it affected. Unlike other disasters, which have been relatively more localized, the tsunami struck thousands of miles of populous coastline in nearly a dozen countries, affecting millions of people. Also, the deaths of thousands of tourists from the industrialized world vacationing in southern Thailand and Sri Lanka — mostly Europeans but also many Americans and Japanese — may have given the Indian Ocean tsunami a higher profile than the more recent South Asian earthquake. Indeed, there has been some concern that donors who contributed to the tsunami relief effort may be less enthusiastic about assisting victims of the second major South Asian natural disaster to strike in less than a year. The Pakistan Federal Relief Commission (FRC) also provides a comparison of the two natural disasters and specifically focuses on the number of people impacted; terrain and access of the areas affected; number of helicopters provided in the relief effort; and number of pledges realized as commitments.

⁶ Tom Coipuram, Information Research Specialist, contributed to the update of this section.

⁷ The United Nations Special Envoy for the South Asia Earthquake, former U.S. President George H.W. Bush, met in March with key representatives at the United Nations, including Jan Egeland, Emergency Relief Coordinator, and Kemal Dervis, Administrator of the U.N. Development Program (UNDP) to discuss the transition and critical need for continued support. United Nations News Service, “Former US President Bush, UN Envoy, Helps Plan Pakistan Quake Recovery,” March 24, 2006.

the relief operation winds down, the military side of the operation is also coming to an end — NATO completed its mission on February 1, 2006, and the phased withdrawal of U.S. forces will end on March 31.

Overall, the relief effort is seen as a success so far. Moreover, the fears of a second wave of deaths, massive population movements, malnutrition, and disease were not realized.⁸ Government agencies and humanitarian organizations have identified a number of critical needs to be addressed during the remainder of the relief operation. These include maintaining relief operations, improving camp sanitation, and preparing for the return of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).⁹ It is anticipated that cooperation between the GoP, provincial and local governments, and the aid community will continue in the transition to a recovery operation.

Numbers at a Glance. In addition to the 74,651 deaths recorded so far, over 69,000 injuries have been reported in Pakistan and 6,622 in India. The Federal Relief Commission (FRC) in Pakistan adds another 58,897 as “other injured.” The International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimates more than 2.8 million people were displaced as a result of the earthquake and most require alternative shelter.¹⁰ All of the figures could change as government authorities and humanitarian organizations continue to survey remote areas and reconcile their information. The onset of winter made access to these areas even more difficult.¹¹

Table 2 summarizes the number of people affected by the earthquake; updates are available on the Pakistan FRC website, cited below.

⁸ UNOCHA, “United Nations — Pakistan Moves to Recovery and Reconstruction,” March 8, 2006.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ USAID South Asia Earthquake Fact Sheet #42, March 17, 2006, citing the government of India and IOM.

¹¹ WFP Emergency Report no. 44, October 28, 2005, available at [<http://www.wfp.org/english/?n=34>]; updates are provided regularly. For road clearance information, see government of Pakistan Summary of Relief Activity, November 5, 2005, available at [<http://www.earthquakepakistan.com/images/summary%20oct-nov.pdf>].

Table 2. Estimated Number of People Affected by the South Asia Earthquake

(Current as of March 17, 2006)

	Pakistan	India	Afghanistan	Total
<i>Killed</i>	73,338	1,309	4	74,644
<i>Injured</i>	128,309	6,622	n/a	134,931
<i>Displaced</i>	2.8 million	150,000	n/a	2.95 million

Sources: Pakistani casualty figures are from government of Pakistan Federal Relief Commission website at [http://earthquakepakistan.com/Press_Brief_latest.htm], which is updated regularly. Injury figures include 69,412 “seriously injured,” and 58,897 “other injured.” Other data reported USAID South Asia Earthquake Fact Sheet # 42, March 17, 2006, citing the government of India and IOM.

Access. The weather and terrain have presented major challenges in the relief operation and delayed or prevented access to many of the earthquake victims.¹² Three weeks after the earthquake, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) estimated that 30% of the affected areas of northern Pakistan were still inaccessible to relief workers, leaving as many as 200,000 people unable to receive assistance. In the days after the earthquake landslides blocked many key road links. Then winter conditions presented a potentially formidable challenge, although the U.N. recently declared that the battle to assist and sustain the millions of homeless survivors had gone well due to the mild winter, extensive preparation, and massive international aid.¹³ According to U.N. Deputy Humanitarian Aid Coordinator Jamie McGoldrick, “it was very kind weather, the number of helicopters we had at our disposal also helped and ... people didn’t come down from the mountains and overburden the towns.”¹⁴ Throughout the relief operation there has been a continuing reliance on aircraft to ferry in supplies and transport the wounded.

The World Food Program (WFP) reports that although the weather has improved, roads are still blocked. “The snow line has receded significantly since its maximum on the 19th of January 2006 and no significant further snowfall is forecast at this moment. However, heavy rains continued to hamper relief efforts in some areas and have caused fatal landslides for the local population and UN staff.”¹⁵ Melting snow is only adding to the problem.

¹² In the months following the earthquake, there have been more than 2,000 seismic aftershocks.

¹³ McGuirk, Rod, “U.N. Airlifts Save 3 Million Pakistan Quake Survivors,” *AP*, March 9, 2006.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ WFP *Emergency Report* No. 11, March 11, 2006 [<http://www.wfp.org/english/?ModuleID=78&Key=679#586>].

Road closures delay food dispatches and IDP returns. McGoldrick also said that “road accessibility will remain a major challenge and it is expected that there will be a continued need for a minimum of five or six helicopters until at least September.”¹⁶ UNOCHA reports that landslides and falling rock are expected through the July monsoon season and it will likely take months to repair and open roads.¹⁷ For example, in Muzaffarabad, rain has impeded WFP and other U.N. logistics and cargo services. In Neelum and Jhelum valleys, entrances are temporarily closed until further estimation of the damage is assessed.¹⁸

In February and early March strikes and demonstrations in Pakistan temporarily disrupted relief activities. However, the security situation has stabilized in the earthquake affected areas. By late March, the situation was reported to be relatively calm and relief operations are back to normal.

Coordination. With so many international and domestic actors and agencies on the ground, one of the most important issues is coordination of relief activity. Reportedly 70 local NGOs, 69 international NGOs and organizations, and 23 U.N. agencies have been providing relief assistance. As will be discussed in further detail later in the report, several sources indicated that the GoP was slow to organize its own response to the earthquake and to coordinate the host of international actors involved in the relief effort. According to assessments of the USAID Disaster Assessment and Response Team (DART), the GoP’s performance steadily improved and information was more effectively centralized at the macro-level by the FRC. The GoP’s performance at the regional level has varied from location to location, and has depended on local capacity and the assistance provided by international relief agencies.¹⁹

Humanitarian Relief Sectors

The primary locus of international coordination remains UNOCHA, which has established four regional coordination centers in Muzaffarabad, Mansehra, Bagh, and Batagram.²⁰ The major humanitarian actors initially divided the relief effort sectorally into ten relief sectors or clusters, with a different organization taking the lead for each sector, as follows: Emergency Shelter (lead: International Organization for Migration [IOM]), Logistics (lead: WFP), Nutrition (lead: WFP), Health (lead: WHO), Water and Sanitation (lead: UNICEF), Education (lead: UNICEF), Protection (lead: UNICEF), Camp Management (lead: UNHCR), IT and Communications (lead: WFP), and Early Recovery/Reconstruction (lead: United Nations Development

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ OCHA *Situation Report* No. 39, South Asia Earthquake, Pakistan, March 10, 2006, p. 5.

¹⁸ Ibid, p. 5.

¹⁹ Author’s interview with USAID DART members, November 22, 2005.

²⁰ The Humanitarian Information Centre (HIC) for Pakistan is an information service provided to the humanitarian community. It is managed by UNOCHA and operates in coordination with several partners. See [<http://www1.earthquake05.un.org.pk>].

Program [UNDP]).²¹ Each of the clusters is responsible for providing information to the FRC, OCHA, and each other. According to some reports, performance has varied significantly from cluster to cluster. A brief update of the progress in each cluster is provided below:²²

Recovery and Reconstruction. The Action Plan mentioned earlier in this report develops a process for the transition to recovery in the areas of education, health, livelihoods, water and sanitation, shelter and housing, camp management, support to vulnerable groups, governance, and coordination and common services. Developed in collaboration with the military and civil authorities, the hope is that the GoP's Earthquake and Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA) will continue to work with the humanitarian cluster system. The ERRA also plans to focus long term on the areas of housing, education, health, and livelihoods.

As of mid-March 2006, UNOCHA identified the following immediate priorities for humanitarian operations: 1) assisting IDP returns; 2) reviewing the Action Plan; 3) providing food and non-food assistance in IDP camps; 4) ensuring revitalization of primary health care services, increased access to health care and continued disease surveillance;²³ and 5) creating opportunities for education and teacher training.

IDP Returns, Protection, and Camp Management. In this report, the IDP returns, Protection, and Camp Management issues have been combined in one cluster because they are interrelated and now focus mostly on population returns. As the transition to a recovery phase takes shape, those displaced by the earthquake remain the central focus of relief activities but now with an emphasis on the return to their places of origin. The IDP returns are being coordinated and monitored to ensure a safe, voluntary, and dignified process in keeping with international standards. On March 11, the Returns Task Force (RTF) released policy guidelines for the returns process in a document entitled "The Framework and Operational Process for the Return or Resettlement of Persons Displaced by the October Earthquake." RTFs at the provincial level have been set up in coordination with humanitarian hubs.²⁴ Assisted returns began on March 10.

Protection largely involves monitoring and reporting on the returns process — whether it is voluntary, whether people are informed about the process and whether conditions in the areas of return are adequate. NGO personnel and U.N. and GoP agencies are coordinating these efforts. According to UNHCR, those IDPs returning

²¹ For cluster information, see the U.N. coordination website at [<http://earthquake05.un.org.pk/>] index.php.

²² For more detail on recent cluster activities, see UNOCHA *Situation Report* No. 40, South Asia Earthquake, Pakistan, March 24, 2006.

²³ OCHA *Situation Report* No. 39, South Asia — Earthquake: Pakistan, March 10, 2006. [<http://ochaonline.un.org/DocView.asp?DocID=4294>].

²⁴ United Nations Country Team in Pakistan, "Pakistan: Framework and Operational Process for the Return or Resettlement of Persons Displaced by the October Earthquake," March 11, 2006. A UNHCR-World Vision-UNICEF collaborative effort is underway to draft guidelines on the role of the humanitarian hubs in the IDP returns process.

home are concerned about basic needs — shelter, drinking water and food — and also the availability of land and the repair required for homes and roads. A public information campaign on the returns process is also being conducted by the FRC.

There are both planned and spontaneous camps in the earthquake-affected area and the estimated numbers vary. UNOCHA reports that “a total of 156 camps with a population of 142,940 people are in the earthquake-affected area.” The United Nations Country Team says that statistics indicate that over 297,000 displaced persons are living in camps.²⁵

Camp management now includes implementing check out procedures, monitoring the returns process at the camp departure stage, and preparing for camp closure. It is assumed that vulnerable people who are unable to return at present will be provided with continuing assistance. Initially, it was reported that the Pakistani government announced plans to close by the end of March the relief camps that housed more than 200,000 people through winter. According to USAID, contrary to these earlier reports of a March 31 deadline for camp closures, the GoP says that there is no deadline.²⁶

Emergency Shelter. With an estimated three million left homeless by the earthquake in the foothills of the Himalayas, provision of emergency shelter before the onset of winter was among the most pressing priorities facing humanitarian workers. UNOCHA reported that many residents of highland areas preferred to stay on their land through the winter rather than descend to emergency camps in the valleys. In response, the Pakistani military and the humanitarian community have been seeking to rebuild as many shelters as possible in these areas.²⁷

According to news sources, “about 2 million other quake survivors have been staying in tents elsewhere, and about 400,000 have lived in tin shacks in the mountains. They now face the daunting task of rebuilding their homes.”²⁸

Food Security. The general IDP camp feeding and general food distribution will end on March 31. Food for vulnerable people will be available. Targeted food-for-work and food-for-training will also continue. The WFP Executive Board recently approved the two-year Protracted Recovery and Relief Operation (PRRO), which will begin on April 1, 2006. The PRRO, which is a short term operation to move from a relief to a recovery operation, is

²⁵ United Nations Country Team in Pakistan, “Pakistan: Framework and Operational Process for the Return or Resettlement of Persons Displaced by the October Earthquake,” March 11, 2006.

²⁶ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, “Pakistan: Earthquake Camp Closures Start Today,” March 10, 2006.

²⁷ For updated information, please refer to OCHA’s situation reports, available at [<http://ochaonline.un.org/webpage.asp?MenuID=9839&Page=1385>].

²⁸ The Associated Press, “U.N. Claims Victory in Bid to Sustain Survivors of Pakistan Quake,” *The New York Times*, March 9, 2006.

comprised of two essential components: a) relief, returnees will be provided with food while they rebuild their homes and animal shelters and rehabilitate their land and agricultural infrastructure, and assistance to the people residing in the locations above the snow line, and those who have been made homeless; and b) recovery, comprised of two sub-components: i) sustainable livelihoods, environment and natural resources, ii) education and Food-for-Training (FFT).²⁹

About 670,000 homeless people will be provided with food as they return to rebuild their homes and community infrastructure. Food also will be provided to 450,000 school children to maintain attendance and address short-term hunger. The operational cost for the PRRO is \$67.8 million or 113,648 tons of food.³⁰

Water and Sanitation. According to the latest OCHA *Situation Report*, access to safe drinking water in IDP's living in camps has improved, including in Muzaffarabad, where 85.7% of the population in camps and 95% outside camps have access to drinking water. In Bagh, 100% of the population in camps and 10% outside camps have access to safe drinking water. In Shangla, 100% of the population in camps and 30% outside camps have access to drinking water, and in Battagram, 57% of the population in camps and 30% outside camps have access to safe drinking water.³¹ Access to sanitation facilities has also improved.

Health and Disease. The World Health Organization (WHO) opened field offices to coordinate medical response, disseminate health information, and provide disease surveillance. The organization has also been distributing medicine to clinics and hospitals and has hired health workers to carry out health promotion and consultation activities.³² In addition to shelter, WHO in November 2005 said there was an urgent need for more field hospitals, female paramedics, and improved water and sanitary conditions.³³

According to March 2006 WHO *Health Situation Reports*, the “return process of the earthquake affected population is taking place, and vaccinating centers and medical checkouts are being set up to minimize imminent health risks.”³⁴ Highlights

²⁹ WFP *Emergency Report* No. 11, March 11, 2006
[<http://www.wfp.org/english/?ModuleID=78&Key=679#586>].

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ UNOCHA *Situation Report* No. 39, South Asia Earthquake, Pakistan, March 10, 2006.

³² “South Asia Earthquake Situation Report #20,” WHO and Pakistan Ministry of Health, November 2-7, 2005. See also earlier reports, all available at [http://www.who.int/hac/crises/international/pakistan_earthquake/sitrep/en/index.html].

³³ “South Asia Earthquake Situation Report #24,” WHO and Pakistan Ministry of Health, November 20-25, 2005. See also earlier reports, particularly #18, on WHO website: [http://www.who.int/hac/crises/international/pakistan_earthquake/en/index.html]. Cholera report is in Naqash, Zeeshan, “Possible Cholera Outbreak in Pakistan Quake Camps,” AFP, November 6, 2005.

³⁴ World Health Organization *Health Situation Report* No. 35, March 1-15, 2006
[http://www.who.int/hac/crises/international/pakistan_earthquake/sitrep/WHO%20Pakistan%20earthquake%20situation%20report35%201-15Mar2006.pdf].

from the latest WHO Health *Situation Report* states that a total of 45 medical professionals currently taking care of the 740 spinal injured patients affected by the earthquake, were trained to improve their skills in physical rehabilitation, 20 out of the 35 confirmed prefabricated WHO basic health units have been completed, a total of 1,458,058 children up to five years of age were vaccinated against polio in the earthquake affected areas, and over 80% of the targeted population between 12 months and five years of age were covered.³⁵ The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) confirms that it immunized as many children as possible against polio as well as measles, tetanus, whooping cough, and diphtheria.³⁶ Health education is also being emphasized. The Ministry of Health and the WHO are working together to develop a disaster preparedness program for future disasters.

Education. UNOCHA reports that “of the 449,138 primary school-level children in the affected areas, 186,580 have been enrolled in 1,357 schools with support of U.N. agencies and NGOs.”³⁷ According to UNICEF, more than 17,000 Pakistani children died when their schools collapsed in the earthquake. Nearly 20,000 children may have physical impairments due to injuries and amputations. The current focus now is to provide psychological support to vulnerable children. “There is critical need for psychosocial support — people are reeling from the trauma the quake’s left behind,” says UNICEF Protection Officer Mannan Rana and that “they did not get a chance to grieve — they were rushed to pick up the pieces of their lives and have had to struggle to survive.”³⁸

Logistics and Telecommunications. According to the WFP *Emergency Report*, the U.N. Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) funding is due to run out in spring 2006, and \$24.0 million is needed to maintain the helicopter operation until August 2006.³⁹ Of the 20 UNHAS helicopters that was operational, by March seven were off contract. The WFP *Emergency Report* also stated that “military air support will also stop on March 31, 2006, leaving UNHAS with a total fleet of 13 aircrafts as of April 1st, as opposed to the fleet of 28 helicopters that was previously tasked by UNHAS...”⁴⁰ The United Nations Joint Logistics Center (UNJLC) is also conducting road assessments and gathering GPS data to improve maps and

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.; “Winter Trebles Illnesses in Pakistan Quake Zone,” AFP, November 30, 2005; “Deadly Pneumonia Hits Pakistan Quake Children,” AFP, November 29, 2005; and Haider, Zeeshan, “Immunisation Race Starts in Quake-Hit Pakistan,” Reuters, November 13, 2005.

³⁷ UNOCHA *Situation Report* No. 40, South Asia Earthquake, Pakistan, March 24, 2006.

³⁸ Spry-Leverton, Julia, “Protection Centres Offer Quake-Affected Children a Chance to Leave Trauma Behind,” UNICEF: Pakistan, January 20, 2006. Available at [http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/pakistan_30790.html].

³⁹ WFP *Emergency Report* No. 11, March 11, 2006 [<http://www.wfp.org/english/?ModuleID=78&Key=679#586>].

⁴⁰ Ibid; U.S. Embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan Press Release, “U.S. Provides \$6 Million in Equipment and Announces U.S. Military Departure Schedule,” February 4, 2006. Available online at [<http://islamabad.usembassy.gov/pakistan/h06020401.html>].

information about access. The UNJLC is due to end its operations on April 12, but a request has been filed to extend its mandate to the end of June.⁴¹

The Interagency radio room is scheduled to close at the end of March. Telecommunications installations and field-based radio training are ongoing.

National Response⁴²

The Pakistani response to the earthquake has come from many sectors of the state and society. Relief has come not only from the government and military, but also from nongovernmental groups — including militant organizations — as well as individual Pakistanis acting on their own. The GoP created a Federal Relief Commission (FRC) on October 10, 2006, to coordinate relief efforts. President Musharraf established the Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (ERRA) on October 12 to oversee reconstruction policies. According to UNOCHA, ERRA is putting together technical working groups at the federal and provincial levels which will monitor and coordinate reconstruction activities. ERRA is also examining building design and food security, agriculture, and livestock activities. Efforts are being made to include the GoP in recovery planning and implementation and representatives are involved in the humanitarian cluster meetings.⁴³

While the GoP has received credit from several sources for its efforts, it has also been criticized for responding too slowly to the disaster. Several media reports, discussed below, have contrasted this delayed reaction with the swift work of several Islamist political parties and militants, which were reported on several occasions to be the first to provide relief to victims. There has also been criticism of the military's control over relief coordination and the degree to which there may be duplication on relief and reconstruction efforts.

For its part, the government of India (GoI) has announced that it does not need outside assistance in dealing with the aftermath of the earthquake. This stance has been the subject of some criticism as domestic aid has at times been slow to reach victims.

Pakistan

The GoP reportedly has estimated that it will cost Pakistan \$5 billion to recover from the earthquake; the World Bank places the figure at \$5.2 billion⁴⁴ According to

⁴¹ United Nations Joint Logistics Centre, "UNJLC Bulletin No. 39 - Pakistan Earthquake," March 22, 2006.

⁴² This section updated with the assistance of Alan Kronstadt, Analyst in Asian Affairs.

⁴³ UNOCHA, "Pakistan — Earthquake: OCHA Situation Report No. 40," March 24, 2006.

⁴⁴ "Pakistan: Quake Cost about \$5 billion," Reuters, October 15, 2005. World Bank figure from [http://www.worldbank.org.pk/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/SOUTHASIAEXT/PAKISTANEXTN/0,,contentMDK:20723425~menuPK:293057~pagePK:141137~piPK:141127~theSitePK:293052,00.html].

the GoP, Pakistan has received \$330.86 million in grants and loans from the international community, in addition to \$1.1 billion in cash and in-kind contributions received earlier. The GoP reports that in addition to the international community's efforts, 70 local NGOs provided relief assistance.

The GoP has responded by mobilizing both civil and military personnel to provide health care, shelter, power, and road clearance. According to fact sheets, the GoP is operating 24 medical treatment centers and has fielded 39 treatment teams.⁴⁵ The GoP has also set up twelve medical relief camps and three hospital and convalescence centers, both of which are reported as having free space. (This appears to be a change from earlier reporting, which showed total occupancy in the camps of 13,128, well above the stated capacity of 10,575 individuals. According to these earlier reports, the GoP was operating seven hospitals and convalescence centers, with a capacity of 2,920 individuals and an occupancy of 1,874.⁴⁶)

Turning to infrastructure repairs, the GoP states that, as of March 15, 2006, it had opened all main road arteries except the Laswa Bypass and had restored 70% of lost electrical power, 75% of the water supply, and 96% of telecommunications. An earlier report stated that the GoP had cleared 10-15% of the earthquake debris; this data was not available on later reports.⁴⁷ While an explanation of how the government arrived at these percentages is not provided, an undated but earlier fact sheet from the same source shows more detail on the progress. According to this sheet, the GoP had restored all of the telecommunications linkages in the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) and 86% of the disrupted linkages in Azad Kashmir. Twenty telephone exchanges (of a total 67 disrupted) had not yet been restored. In the meantime, the government had established 103 free telephone centers for victims, as well as 110 satellite phone centers. Power had been restored, at least partially, to eight of nine affected areas. The government had restored 90% of the water supply to Muzaffarabad and 100% to Rawalkot, and was working to restore supply to Bagh and Balakot. Where the government has been unable to clear roads blocked by debris, it has constructed mule tracks in order to ferry in supplies.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Pakistan Federal Relief Commission Press Brief of March 24, 2006, [http://www.earthquakepakistan.com/Press_Brief_latest.htm]. Earlier press briefings divided the GoP response into civil and military components. According to these earlier reports, the Pakistani Army was operating four forward medical treatment centers and had fielded ten treatment teams. An additional 18 surgical teams and 21 health services teams had been fielded from civil sources.

⁴⁶ Pakistan Federal Relief Commission Press Release of November 14, 2005, op cit. The information on health teams comes from an undated press release: "Relief Operations, Details," previously available at [http://www.earthquakepakistan.com/images/foreign_medical_rescue_support.pdf].

⁴⁷ Pakistan Federal Relief Commission Press Release of November 21, 2005, op cit. Earlier report was accessed November 14.

⁴⁸ "Relief Operations, Details," op cit. A total of 13,902 of NWFP's 668,136 lines were disrupted; all have been restored. In AJ&K, 20,294 lines (of a total 105,592) were disrupted; 2,831 remain to be restored.

Criticism of Government Response. President Pervez Musharraf and his government have been criticized by some for not responding more swiftly to the earthquake. It has been reported that the Pakistani Army did not begin bringing supplies into affected areas until October 12, four days after the earthquake struck, and even then, according to some sources, the Army appeared thin on the ground.⁴⁹ Ayaz Amir, a columnist for the influential — and generally perceived as pro-government — Pakistani newspaper *Dawn*, stated,

From Hazara to Azad Kashmir voices arising from the deepest recesses of the heart will tell you how grateful they are to the people of Pakistan who came unbidden in their hour of need. I heard this in Balakot amidst the ruins and I heard this in Muzaffarabad. But as God is my witness in all this wide arc of disaster not one word, not a single one, did I hear in praise of the government or the army.⁵⁰

Pakistan's opposition parties also criticized President Musharraf and the army for a slow response and alleged mismanagement of the relief operation. They launched a motion shortly after the earthquake calling on the government to "give a full accounting of the relief efforts to Pakistan's parliament. 'The government has failed to organize the crisis management,' their motion stated. 'The matter is very serious and needs to be discussed on the floor of the house.'" Some opposition members have accused General Musharraf of using the crisis to aggrandize his own power: "Everything from the relief to the foreign donations is being controlled by the Army, and it is not accountable to anyone," said Sherry Rehman, a member of Parliament from the opposition Pakistan People's Party.⁵¹

In response to such charges, President Musharraf has asserted that the government and the military have "done a good, if not a very good, job."⁵² He compared the Pakistani response to that of the US government in the wake of Hurricane Katrina: "In this type of calamity, no country can have 100 percent success. Even the United States cannot do it."⁵³ Musharraf also criticized the international community for its "double standard" by comparing the earthquake to the Katrina response in another way: "I know that the contributions to Katrina were much more. Did the U.S. need more aid than Pakistan?"⁵⁴ On the issue of

⁴⁹ Lancaster, John, "Pakistanis Vent Anger About Pace of Relief," *Washington Post*, October 13, 2005.

⁵⁰ Amir, Ayaz, "The Best and the Worst," *Dawn*, October 28, 2005. See also Roedad Khan, "A President in Crisis," *The Nation*, October 23, 2005.

⁵¹ Hussain, Zahid, "'We Do Not Need Them'; Islamist Groups Take a High Profile in the Kashmir Relief Effort, and Decry an Influx of Western Troops," *Newsweek*, November 7, 2005.

⁵² Bokhari, Farhan and Jo Johnson, "Musharraf Defends his Response to Earthquake," *Financial Times*, October 26, 2005.

⁵³ "Musharraf Defends Quake Response, Pledges 500,000 Tents for Survivors," AP, November 1, 2005.

⁵⁴ Haven, Paul, "A Month After Monster South Asian Earthquake, Fears that the Tragedy May Just be Beginning," AP, November 8, 2005.

parliamentary oversight of earthquake relief, the government appears not to have responded in detail to the charges by the Pakistani opposition that it is cutting Parliament out of the relief effort. Continued disagreement means that some see the situation as “unfortunate ... in the backdrop of a national tragedy, a humanitarian issue is being used to twist the ruling party’s arm,” and running the risk that prolonged negotiations may well be outpaced by progress on the ground.⁵⁵ It is also worth noting that President Musharraf has decided to postpone a planned purchase of F-16 fighters from the United States in order to concentrate on earthquake relief efforts. The deal is still on hold but expected in 2006. The opposition Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) has demanded that the government defer a \$1 billion weapons deal with Sweden.⁵⁶

Militant Groups Provide Aid. While the GoP was criticized by some observers for a slow reaction, it was stated by many sources that some militant groups acted very quickly to provide aid to victims. Jamaat-ul-Dawa, an “Islamic extremist” group with alleged ties to Al-Qaida, has been playing an active role in relief operations in Muzaffarabad, where it is reportedly operating a field hospital that performs twenty surgeries a day. Jamaat-ul-Dawa is an affiliate of Lashkar-e-Taiba, a U.S.-designated foreign terrorist organization.⁵⁷ The *Gulf Times* reports that banned Pakistani militant groups have not only played an active role in providing immediate aid after the earthquake, but are also soliciting and collecting funds for further relief efforts.⁵⁸ The Islamic militant group Hizbul Mujahideen — which has condemned recent violence against civilians in Kashmir — is also active in the relief effort.⁵⁹ Many of those receiving assistance appear to see the involvement of militant groups as a positive development. Some experts acknowledge these groups have played an important role in the relief effort and hope that by seeing the benefits of relief work, they will relinquish violence for more peaceful, mainstream political ambitions. Others fear that the involvement of these groups only empowers them. Provision of relief does not mean they have given up their ideology and may only

⁵⁵ “Parliamentary Oversight of Earthquake Relief,” *Business Recorder*, December 19, 2005.

⁵⁶ See CRS Report RS21584, *Pakistan: Chronology of Recent Events*, by Alan Kronstadt, and “Makdoom Amin Fahim Wants Deferring of Plane Purchases, GHQ Shifting,” Pakistan Press International, November 8, 2005.

⁵⁷ Philp, Catherine, “Terror Groups Move into Quake Vacuum,” *The Times* (London), October 17, 2005; Hussain, Zahid, “Still No Help for 40 Villages: Pakistan Death Toll Jumps to 73,000,” *Ottawa Citizen*, November 3, 2005. See also Lancaster and Khan, op cit.

⁵⁸ Hyat, Kamila, “Banned Groups Back with a Vengeance,” *Gulf News*, November 4, 2005. She writes, “The comments by President Pervez Musharraf that banned groups were free to carry out relief work have brought them out into the open and proved that these forces are entrenched in the country. Some groups like the Jaish-e-Mohammad are reported to have been the first to arrive on the scene in some parts of Pakistan-controlled Kashmir and to have swiftly initiated relief work.”

⁵⁹ Huggler, Justin, “Pakistan Failures on the Road to Disaster,” *The Independent*, November 10, 2005.

increase their presence in the affected areas. In the long run this could infringe on democracy and tolerance.⁶⁰

The same *Washington Post* reporter who observed very few army vehicles on the roads four days after the earthquake noticed that a road he was on, “was crowded with private relief convoys, many belonging to the social service arm of Jamaat-e-Islami, Pakistan’s largest and best-organized Islamic party,”⁶¹ which reportedly has ties to the Palestinian militant group Hamas.⁶² Although there is some evidence that the United States is receiving positive feedback in Pakistan for its role in assisting relief efforts (see below), some have speculated that the high visibility of Islamist groups may bode badly for both President Musharraf and the United States: “Musharraf, already seen as a Western stooge by Islamist groups, has been criticized for the pace of the operations... That, many worry, is going to affect the popularity of an already unpopular United States and public opinion about Musharraf.”⁶³

To some extent, the efforts by Islamist groups to aid victims may be seen as part of a larger outpouring of support by ordinary Pakistanis, who may have found a sense of unity in the crisis that many felt has been lacking in the past. Pakistan has long been a country divided by ethnicity, class, and even, to some extent, religion. A recent survey conducted by the Pew Research Global Attitudes Project found that, of six Muslim countries surveyed, Pakistanis are far more likely to see themselves as “Muslims first” (79%), than they are as “national citizens first” (7%).⁶⁴ According to Husain Haqqani, an expert on Pakistan at the Carnegie Endowment, Pakistan’s disparate elements have been held together for many years with a self-consciously constructed official ideology characterized by the belief that “Pakistan’s success depend[s] on an Islamic nationalism, confrontation with India, and external alliances” with the West.⁶⁵ These bonds have worked with varying success over the years, as Pakistani opinions about the West and its relationship to Islam have changed. It is against this backdrop, some experts believe, that the outpouring of support from

⁶⁰ “Quake Aid Gives Radical Islam a Stage,” *The Christian Science Monitor*, March 10, 2006. For a more in-depth discussion of this issue, see International Crisis Group, “Pakistan: Political Impact of the Earthquake,” *Policy Briefing*, March 15, 2006.

⁶¹ Lancaster, John, op cit.

⁶² Lancaster, John and Kamran Khan, “Hard-line Islamists Lead in Pakistan Relief Effort,” *The Washington Post*, October 16, 2005.

⁶³ Calamur, Krishnadev, “Pace of Quake Aid May Help Militants,” UPI, October 24, 2005.

⁶⁴ Pew Research Center, “Islamic Extremism: Common Concern for Muslim and Western Publics,” released July 14, 2005, at [<http://pewglobal.org/reports/display.php?ReportID=248>]. The six Muslim countries surveyed were Pakistan, Jordan, Morocco, Turkey, Indonesia, and Lebanon.

⁶⁵ Haqqani, Husain, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military*, Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005, p. 50.

ordinary Pakistanis may have provided something of a boost to national feeling.⁶⁶ Others, however, have questioned how long this sentiment will last.⁶⁷

India

As it did after the December 2004 tsunami, the GoI has declared that it does not need foreign assistance in dealing with the October earthquake. “‘We ourselves are taking care of our victims,’ said Navtej Sarna, the Foreign Ministry spokesman. ‘When there are offers by friendly countries and anything is needed, these offers are considered.’” The GoI has responded to the earthquake by moving thousands of tents, blankets, tarpaulins, and woollen garments, as well as tons of medicine, water, and food to the affected area.⁶⁸

As noted above, the earthquake caused far less damage in India than it did in Pakistan. There is a sense, however, that the Indian official response has at least as much to do with political posturing as it does with perceived needs on the ground. The decision to go it alone has attracted some criticism amidst complaints that crucial supplies, such as tents, are failing to reach victims.⁶⁹

U.S. Humanitarian Assistance

Shortly after the earthquake, the United States pledged \$50 million to assist victims; at the donors conference on November 19 in Islamabad, the United States pledged a total of \$510 million for earthquake relief and reconstruction to be funded over a four-year period (FY2006-2009), of which \$300 million would come from U.S. economic and humanitarian assistance programs. The balance of the pledge was made up of Defense Department in-kind support for relief operations (\$110 million) and assumed U.S. private donations (\$100 million).⁷⁰ The total package included both financial and in-kind contributions to humanitarian agencies, logistical and transportation support, and direct assistance to affected populations, including the provision of food and non-food items. The FY2006 Supplemental request for Pakistan includes \$126.3 million for humanitarian assistance and reconstruction (discussed in detail later in the report.) A breakdown of USG assistance is provided in **Table 3**.

⁶⁶ See, e.g., Ali Khan, Asif, “Quake Unites the Nation,” *Business Recorder* (Pakistan), October 22, 2005.

⁶⁷ Inayatullah, “Fault Lines of Another Kind,” *The Nation*, October 26, 2005.

⁶⁸ Data are available in Government of India Ministry of Home Affairs, National Disaster Management Division, Situation Report, October 26, 2005.

⁶⁹ Sengupta, Somini, “Pride and Politics: India Rejects Aid,” *The New York Times*, October 20, 2005.

⁷⁰ The full pledge as announced by USAID Administrator Andrew Natsios, including anticipated private donations, was thus \$510 million. See USAID South Asia Earthquake Fact Sheet #26, November 22, 2005.

Table 3. USG Assistance
(As of March 17, 2006)

Agency	Pledge	Value
USAID/OFDA	assistance to Pakistan	\$61,195,689
	assistance to India	\$600,662
USAID/FFP	in-kind contributions to WFP	\$8,981,200
USAID/GDA	partnership with Procter and Gamble to provide safe drinking water	\$300,000
State/PRM	contribution to UNHCR (part of appeal)	\$4,100,000
USDA	46,000 tons of Title I wheat	\$12,000,000
Department of Defense	transport, relief supplies (tents, blankets, plastic sheeting, etc.)	\$106,600,000
TOTAL		\$193,777,551

Sources: USAID South Asia Earthquake Fact Sheet #42, March 17, 2006. A more detailed breakdown of DoD efforts is forthcoming.

Assistance by Source

USAID. USAID sent a Disaster Assessment and Response Team (DART) to Pakistan on October 10. According to USAID, the “mission of the USAID/DART is to assess humanitarian needs, assist with targeting and coordination of USG assistance in conjunction with USAID/Pakistan, and provide technical assistance as required.” The DART is headquartered in Islamabad and has field offices in Mansehra and Muzaffarabad.⁷¹ It has issued regular field reports (many cited in this report) and cables assessing the progress of relief operations. The USAID/DART is scheduled to depart on March 31, although USAID/OFDA personnel will remain on the ground.

DoD. The United State military also began its relief operations on October 10, 2005, when it dispatched a transport jet from Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan with twelve pallets of food, water, medicine, and blankets for earthquake victims. The U.S. military continued to fly in food and supplies, while also airlifting injured Pakistanis to areas where they could get medical help.⁷² Three weeks after the earthquake there were 993 U.S. military personnel and 24 helicopters supporting relief operations in Pakistan, with nine additional CH-47s positioned at Bagram for deployment to Pakistan when space became available. As of March 2, DoD had

⁷¹ USAID website, [http://www.usaid.gov/locations/asia_near_east/south_asia_quake/].

⁷² Cunningham, James H., “First U.S. Earthquake Relief Supplies Arrive in Pakistan,” American Forces Press Service, Oct. 10, 2005; Garamone, Jim, “U.S. Helicopters, Personnel Helping Pakistan Recovery,” American Forces Press Service, Oct. 21, 2005.

flown nearly 4,853 helicopter missions delivering over 13,582 tons of relief supplies, and transported nearly 20,200 evacuees and relief workers.

In addition, DoD has set up a Mobile Army Surgical Hospital (MASH) in Muzaffarabad, equipped with 96 beds and two operating rooms. The MASH has performed 276 surgeries and treated 4,937 patients.⁷³ Although many of the supplies being sent to Pakistan come from U.S. positions in Afghanistan, the relief effort is not reportedly having a discernable effect on U.S. military activities in Afghanistan. According to USAID, DOD has obligated \$106.6 million for earthquake relief operations.

On February 4, 2006, the U.S. Disaster Assistance Center announced that U.S. forces will provide Pakistan over \$6 million in military medical and construction equipment and outlined the phased withdrawal of U.S. forces, which began in mid-February and is scheduled to end on March 31, 2006.⁷⁴

State/PRM. The Department of State's Bureau for Population, Refugees, and Migration has donated \$4.1 million toward UNHCR's earthquake appeal.

USDA. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has provided 46,000 metric tons of Title I wheat to Pakistan.

NGOs. U.S.-based NGOs have played a very active role in the relief and recovery effort in Pakistan, several of them with USG funding, including Catholic Relief Services, International Rescue Committee, Mercy Corps International, and Save the Children.⁷⁵ Many more organizations than these have been active, however.⁷⁶

Private Sector. On October 27, President Bush announced that a group of five CEOs from major American corporations were joining to encourage private sector support for victims of the earthquake. The group has inaugurated a website, organized through The Committee to Encourage Corporate Philanthropy. According to USAID, the South Asia Relief Fund, administered by the Committee, announced on February 27, 2006, that the U.S. private sector had pledged more than \$100 million in cash and in-kind contributions.⁷⁷

⁷³ USAID South Asia Earthquake Fact Sheet #42, March 17, 2006; DoD Support to Pakistan Earthquake Executive Summary, November 1, 2005 (as of 0800).

⁷⁴ U.S. Embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan Press Release, "U.S. Provides \$6 million in Equipment and Announces U.S. Military Departure Schedule," February 4, 2006. Available at [<http://islamabad.usembassy.gov/pakistan/h06020401.html>].

⁷⁵ The full list of supported NGOs is available in the USAID South Asia Earthquake Fact sheets, op cit.

⁷⁶ A list of U.S. NGOs that are active in the relief and recovery efforts in Pakistan can be obtained from a variety of sources, including Interaction, which is an alliance of U.S. based international development and humanitarian NGOs at [<http://www.interaction.org>].

⁷⁷ USAID, South Asia Earthquake, Update, March 3, 2006.

FY2006 Supplemental Funding⁷⁸

Without additional funds added to the regular FY2006 Foreign Operations spending measure for earthquake relief, USAID has been drawing on contingency funds and reallocating existing appropriations to meet emergency requirements for earthquake victims. The \$126.3 million supplemental proposal would replenish some of these diverted funds, plus provide resources for continuing reconstruction efforts.⁷⁹ The Administration says because of the sizable drawdown — estimated to be \$70 million — from the International Disaster and Famine Assistance account, the ability of the United States to respond to other global disasters in FY2006 would be seriously undermined. The \$70 million allocation for Pakistan earthquake relief represents about 17% of USAID's worldwide emergency disaster budget.

Congressional Action. The House-passed bill fully funds the request for Pakistan earthquake assistance in order to reimburse funds that were previously reprogrammed to meet emergency needs.

U.S. Response to Other International Natural Disasters

In financial terms, the U.S. government response to the South Asian earthquake falls somewhere in the middle when compared to the amount of aid it has provided in past international natural disasters. **Table 4** presents USG relief assistance for the seven international natural disasters of the past ten years that caused more than 10,000 fatalities.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ This section provided by Larry Nowels. For more information on the FY2006 supplemental, see CRS Report RL33298 *FY2006 Supplemental Appropriations: Iraq and Other International Activities; Additional Katrina Hurricane Relief* by Paul M. Irwin, Specialist in Social Legislation and Larry Nowels, Specialist in Foreign Affairs.

⁷⁹ The FY2006 Supplemental Request includes \$70 million for International Disaster and Famine Assistance (IDFA); \$40.5 million for Economic Support Fund (ESF); \$5.3 million for child Survival and Health (CSH); and \$10.5 million for Development Assistance (DA).

⁸⁰ This list does not include the European heat wave of 2003, which was responsible for as many as 45,000 deaths, nor the repeated food shortages in North Korea, which are arguably at least as man-made as they are natural.

Table 4. USG Aid in Past International Natural Disasters

Date	Country	Disaster	Casualties	Total damage	USG assistance ^a
Oct., 1998	Honduras, Nicaragua	Hurricane Mitch	18,799 dead 3,240,000 affected	\$6.04 billion	\$882.9 million
Dec., 2004	Indian Ocean (12 countries)	Earthquake (9.0), tsunami	224,495 dead over 2 million affected	\$7.71 billion	\$882.5 million
Oct., 2005	Pakistan, India	Earthquake (7.6)	74,644 dead 130,000 injured 3 million homeless	\$5.2 billion	\$510 million
Aug., 1999	Turkey	Earthquake (7.4)	15,000 dead 24,000 injured 250,000 homeless	\$10 billion	\$24.46 million
Jan., 2001	India	Earthquake (7.7)	20,005 dead 166,812 injured 4,365,000 affected	\$2.62 billion	\$13.1 million
Dec., 1999	Venezuela	Flood	30,000 killed 2,700 injured 366,547 affected	\$3.16 billion	\$11.05 million
Dec., 2003	Iran	Earthquake (6.6)	26,796 dead 22,628 injured 45,000 homeless	\$1.0 billion	\$5.7 million

Sources: All data, unless noted otherwise, are from EM-DAT Emergency Disasters Database, (<http://www.em-dat.net>). Due to the difficulty of obtaining reliable information, all data should be taken as approximate, especially estimates of “affected” population. See notes for Table 1 and text box below for more qualifications about data.

- a. Data sources for USG assistance: **Hurricane Mitch:** CRS Report RL30083, *Supplemental Appropriations for FY1999: Central America Disaster Aid, Middle East Peace, and Other Initiatives*, by Larry Nowels. **Tsunami:** CRS Report RL32783, *FY2005 Supplemental Appropriations for Iraq and Afghanistan, Tsunami Relief, and Other Activities*, by Amy Belasco and Larry Nowels. A total of \$656 million was approved for the Tsunami Recovery and Reconstruction Fund, but \$25 million was committed to avian flu. **S. Asia earthquake:** USAID South Asia Earthquake Fact Sheet #27, November 29, 2005. **Turkey earthquake:** CRS Report RS20328, *Turkey: After the Earthquake*, by Carol Migdolovitz. Total includes \$14.46 million in OFDA aid plus \$10 million in assistance from the DoD. The DoD aid was omitted from the OFDA Annual Report, which lists the USG total as \$14.39m. **India Earthquake:** OFDA Annual Report FY2001, p. 49. **Venezuela flood:** OFDA Annual Report FY2000, p. 82. **Iran earthquake:** USAID, [<http://www.usaid.gov/iran/>].

Difficulties in Comparing Disaster Assistance

Comparing USG aid figures across disasters is a speculative undertaking. Authority, definitions, and categories of services are not necessarily equivalent across events. Each agency has its own budget, with its own criteria, accounting detail, and regional specificity. The fact that an urgent response to humanitarian crises is often required only compounds the problem. Budgets may reflect regional support, a certain area, specific countries, or a combination thereof over time and with changing events.

Even if we accept that USG aid is comparable across disasters, the disasters themselves are not equivalent: the areas in which they occur differ dramatically in terrain, underlying economic conditions, and governmental capacity. It thus makes little sense to compare, for example, the amount of USG aid delivered per casualty. Even the decision to look at fatalities as the measure of a disaster's severity can be questioned, in part because of the difficulty of obtaining accurate figures. In assessing the amount of aid provided to disasters, it may make more sense to look at the economic damage each has caused. Measured in this way, the seven greatest international natural disasters of the last ten years are: (1) the 1995 earthquake in Kobe, Japan (\$95 billion in damage); (2) the 1998 flood in China (\$30 billion); (3) the 2004 earthquake in Niigata, Japan (\$24 billion); (4) the 1997 wildfires in Indonesia (\$17 billion); (5) the 1995 flood in North Korea (\$15 billion); (6) the 1995 earthquake in Taiwan (\$14.1 billion), and (7) the 1996 flooding in China (\$12.6 billion). (The United States, if included in this list, would garner a spot for Hurricane Katrina, which caused \$25 billion in damage.)⁸¹

Once again, however, such a comparison may conceal more than it reveals: a major factor affecting the economic severity of a natural disaster is clearly the economic prosperity of the area in which it occurs. The Kobe earthquake was expensive because Japan was so well off. Furthermore, obtaining reliable and consistent figures for the cost of recovering from a natural disaster is notoriously difficult. Estimates range tremendously depending upon the criteria used — for instance, replacement cost vs. auction cost vs. assessed value of damaged property — and the organization doing the estimate.

Comparing USG and international aid is even more difficult, because of the often dramatically different forms the assistance takes (in-kind contributions vs. cash, for instance). Finally, it is not always evident whether figures represent pledges of support or more specific obligations.

⁸¹ Estimates are once again from EM-DAT, op cit.

The U.S. Emergency Response Mechanism

The United States is generally a leader and major contributor to relief efforts in humanitarian disasters.⁸² In 2004 the United States contributed more than \$2.4 billion to disaster relief worldwide.⁸³ In the case of both the South Asian earthquake and the Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami, some say that the response will require a major long-term effort beyond the relief and recovery operation currently underway.⁸⁴

The President has broad authority to provide emergency assistance for foreign disasters and the United States government provides disaster assistance through several United States agencies. The very nature of humanitarian disasters — the need to respond quickly in order to save lives and provide relief — has resulted in a rather unrestricted definition of what this type of assistance consists of at both a policy and an operational level. While humanitarian assistance is assumed to provide for urgent food, shelter, and medical needs, the agencies within the U.S. government providing this support typically expand or contract the definition in response to circumstances. Funds may be used for U.S. agencies to deliver the services required or to provide grants to international organizations (IOs), international governmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), as well as private or religious voluntary organizations (PVOs). USAID is the U.S. agency charged with coordinating U.S. government and private sector assistance. It also coordinates with international organizations, the governments of countries suffering disasters, and other governments.

The Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) in USAID's Bureau of Humanitarian Response can respond immediately with relief materials and personnel, many of whom are already abroad on mission.⁸⁵ It is responsible for the provision of non-food humanitarian assistance and can quickly assemble Disaster Area Response Teams (DARTs) to conduct assessments. OFDA has wide authority to borrow funds, equipment, and personnel from other parts of USAID and other federal agencies. USAID has two other offices that administer U.S. humanitarian aid: Food For Peace (FFP) and the Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI). USAID administers Title II of the FFP under P.L. 480 and provides relief and development food aid that does not have to be repaid. OTI provides post-disaster transition assistance, which includes mainly short-term peace and democratization projects with some attention to humanitarian elements but not emergency relief.

The Department of Defense (DoD) Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster and Civic Aid (OHDACA) appropriation funds three DoD humanitarian programs: the

⁸² For background information see CRS Report RL32714, *International Disasters and Humanitarian Assistance: U.S. Governmental Response*, by Rhoda Margesson.

⁸³ This total is based on FY2004 appropriations for International Disaster and Famine Assistance (IDFA), the Refugee and Migration Account (MRA), and the Emergency Refugee and Migration Account (ERMA), as well as the "emergency" program level for food assistance (PL480 title II).

⁸⁴ See text box above, "Difficulties in Comparing Disaster Assistance."

⁸⁵ Authorized in Sec. 491-493 of P.L. 87-195, the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

Humanitarian Assistance Program (HAP), the Humanitarian Mine Action (HMA) Program, and Foreign Disaster Relief and Emergency Response (FDR/ER). The office provides humanitarian support to stabilize emergency situations and deals with a range of tasks including the provision of food, shelter and supplies, and medical evacuations. In addition the President has the authority to draw down defense equipment and direct military personnel to respond to disasters. The President may also use the Denton program to provide space-available transportation on military aircraft and ships to private donors who wish to transport humanitarian goods and equipment in response to a disaster.⁸⁶

Generally, OFDA provides emergency from thirty to ninety days after a disaster. The same is true for Department of Defense humanitarian assistance. After the initial emergency is over, assistance is provided through other channels, such as the regular country development programs of USAID.

The State Department also administers programs for humanitarian relief with a focus on refugees and the displaced. The Emergency Refugee and Migration Account (ERMA) is a contingency fund⁸⁷ that provides wide latitude to the President in responding to refugee emergencies. Emergencies lasting more than a year come out of the regular Migration and Refugee Account (MRA) through the Population, Migration and Refugees (PRM) bureau.⁸⁸ PRM covers refugees worldwide, conflict victims, and populations of concern to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), often extended to include internally displaced people (IDPs). Humanitarian assistance includes a range of services from basic needs to community services.

International Assistance

In addition to the United States, a great many international actors are also providing relief to the earthquake-affected region, either through financial contributions to the Pakistani government or aid organizations, or by directly providing relief supplies and emergency personnel. Reportedly 70 local NGOs, 69 international NGOs and organizations, and 23 U.N. agencies provided relief assistance. Obtaining an exact up-to-date record of all international contributions is not possible — in part because some assistance is not reported to governments or

⁸⁶ Section 402 of Title 10, named after former Senator Jeremiah Denton, authorizes shipment of privately donated humanitarian goods on U.S. military aircraft provided there is space and they are certified as appropriate for the disaster by USAID/OFDA. The goods can be bumped from the transport if other U.S. government aid must be transported.

⁸⁷ Governed by P.L. 103-326, the maximum amount is \$100 million. Authorized in sections 2 and 3 or P.L. 87-510 of the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962.

⁸⁸ When there is functional or programmatic overlap between USAID and PRM, they coordinate with each other and define partners. Traditionally PRM funds UNHCR and other multilateral actors while USAID creates bilateral arrangements with NGOs. This is not a hard and fast rule, however, and both organizations exercise a degree of latitude in their response to crises.

coordinating agencies — and in part because of the delay in their recording.⁸⁹ The vast majority of the funding is going to Pakistan. The government of India has, for the most part, declined offers of assistance, stating that it is capable of handling the relief operation on its territory.

Donors' Conference

The total amount of funds pledged for relief and reconstruction at the November donors' conference in Islamabad stands at \$6.9 billion to Pakistan to assist in relief and recovery efforts, exceeding the GoP's goal of \$5.2 billion. Major contributors include the Asian Development Bank (\$1 billion), the Islamic Development Bank (\$501 million) and the European Union (\$270 million).⁹⁰ It is not clear how much has been received to date.

Flash Appeal

On October 11, 2005, UNOCHA released a multi-agency appeal for \$312 million in urgent humanitarian assistance to earthquake-affected areas of Pakistan. The appeal was revised to \$550 million at a donors meeting on October 26. Despite the higher-than-expected pledge totals announced at the November 19 meeting in Islamabad, the U.N. flash appeal was initially underfunded. As of mid-February 2006, the total amount pledged towards the U.N. Flash Appeal was \$371 million.⁹¹ A breakdown of the appeal by receiving organization is provided in Appendix B. According to the United Nations, the USG has so far contributed approximately \$28.8 million toward the appeal (see **Table 3**).

The disparity between overall funding of the relief effort and contributions toward the U.N. appeal is due to several factors. Many countries, including the USG, are providing assistance in the form of direct contributions of items such as blankets, food, and tents, or through the operation of relief flights and logistics support. Much of this assistance is coordinated directly with the GoP or the Pakistani military. In addition to direct bilateral assistance, a good deal of funding has been provided to NGOs operating outside of the U.N. appeal.

While the U.N. Flash Appeal focuses on early recovery efforts (in the initial six months after the earthquake) the majority of funding pledged by the donor community is towards longer-term reconstruction efforts and will be addressed in the Action Plan. There will not be a new appeal as such to fund the activities under the

⁸⁹ For the latest pledge numbers, see ReliefWeb's site: [<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/dbc.nsf/doc105?OpenForm&rc=3&emid=EQ-2005-000174-PAK>]. Note that ReliefWeb's tally does not necessarily match that of any given contributing organization, including the United States, presumably because of delays in recording pledges.

⁹⁰ Ahmad, Munir, "Pakistan Says \$5.4 Billion in Quake Aid Raised, Surpassing Target at Donor Conference," AP, November 19, 2005.

⁹¹ UNOCHA, *Consolidated Appeal for South Asia Earthquake Flash Appeal 2005*, available at [http://ocha.unog.ch/fts/reports/daily/ocha_R1_A688__05112221.pdf]. Appeal numbers are still being revised. UNHCR, for instance, has recently reduced its goal from \$30 million to \$17 million.

Action Plan. Rather, concrete proposals will be used to mobilize funding from the pledges that have not yet translated into real funding by the donors. Consultations are currently underway with the GoP and various partners, both national and international. The total funding needs under the Action Plan (targeted for the next 12 months) are yet to be finalized. The needs assessments and programme formulation are being discussed among the various stakeholders.⁹²

NATO

On October 10, 2005 the Pakistani Government requested NATO's assistance with the relief operation. The North Atlantic Council approved the air operation on October 11 and the mission began on October 13. In response to an additional request from Pakistan on October 21, NATO agreed to send engineers and medical personnel. NATO's mission ended on February 1, 2006.⁹³

In its first purely humanitarian mission, NATO contributed to the relief effort by operating two "airbridges" from Germany and Turkey to fly relief supplies into Pakistan. NATO flew over 169 relief flights from these two bases, providing nearly 3,500 tons of relief supplies, including blankets, stoves, tents, and food. NATO also deployed specialist troops (engineers and medical units) from the NATO Response Force. Teams began to arrive on October 29.⁹⁴ NATO helicopters lifted more than 1,700 tons of relief supplies in country and evacuated more than 7,600 people; medical teams treated more than 8,000 patients. Engineers cleared roads, built shelters and schools, and set up medical centers. In total, the operation involved approximately 1,000 engineers and supporting staff and 200 medical personnel. NATO also contributed to the Pakistani Army's efforts towards "Operation Winter Race" to assist with the construction of shelters.

NATO's relief operation had five main elements: 1) coordination of donations from NATO and partner countries through the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Relief Coordination Centre (EADRCC); 2) operation of air bridges; 3) operation of helicopters in country for relief supplies, transportation and evacuation; 4) provision of medical support; and 5) provision of engineering expertise for rebuilding roads, schools, medical facilities, etc. The NATO land component in Pakistan was lead by the Spanish; the NATO air Component in Pakistan came from the French Air Defense and Operation Command; and NATO Headquarters drew on personnel from the Joint Force Command Lisbon with staff from NATO's Supreme Headquarters, Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE).

⁹² UNDP February 24, 2006.

⁹³ For information on the NATO mission in Pakistan, see [http://www.nato.int/issues/pakistan_earthquake/index.html]

⁹⁴ NATO Relief Mission in Pakistan Fact Sheet ([http://www.nato.int/issues/pakistan_earthquake/051207-factsheet.htm]) and NATO Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Center (EADRCC) Situation Reports. Precise details about each NATO flight are provided at [<http://www.nato.int/shape/news/2005/10/statistics.htm>]. See also [http://www.nato.int/issues/pakistan_earthquake/in_practice.htm].

Opinion surrounding NATO's involvement in the relief operation is discussed below. Issues outstanding include the lessons learned from NATO's involvement in this relief operation — for example, what precedent the operation in Pakistan might have set, whether NATO should provide humanitarian assistance; and whether this mission was an effective use of resources.⁹⁵

Issues for Congress

U.S. Image in Pakistan; Effects on War Against Terror

There has been some discussion in the media about the effects of the U.S. relief effort on Pakistani perceptions of the United States and, more specifically, the U.S. government. This issue is seen as important because President Musharraf's government is a key U.S. ally in the global war on terror. Many high-ranking members of Al Qaeda and the Taliban are believed to remain in the rugged regions of northwest Pakistan, and the ability of the United States to locate and capture them likely depends on Pakistan's cooperation. At the same time, Musharraf's relationship with the United States is not supported by a large portion of the Pakistani population. A widely-cited survey taken by the Pew Center before the earthquake found that 23% of the Pakistani public had a favorable view of the United States, while 51% had a favorable impression of Osama bin Laden.⁹⁶

A more recent systematic public polling of Pakistani opinion on this issue by Terror Free Tomorrow's survey conducted between November 14-28, 2005, showed a significant shift in public opinion. Favorable views of the United States jumped to 46% and support for Osama bin Laden dropped to 33%. Those conducting the poll believe the shift is a direct result of the provision of U.S. humanitarian assistance to earthquake victims.⁹⁷ Some argue that sustaining relief and reconstruction assistance may prove to be important in creating support for the United States while at the same time undermining support for global terrorists. The degree to which the United States receives positive press for its contributions to the earthquake relief effort may also make it easier for Musharraf to support U.S. anti-terror activity in the region.

However, apparent U.S. missile attacks on Pakistani territory in December 2005 and January 2006, and anger over the February publication in European newspapers of cartoons deemed offensive to Muslims, reinvigorated anti-Western and anti-American sentiments among some segments of the Pakistani populace. Violent public protests in February appeared to have strong anti-American and anti-

⁹⁵ For further information see NATO, "Lessons Learned in Pakistan: NATO Providing Humanitarian Aid," March 8, 2006, Stopwatch 3, Debate 2. See [<http://www.nato.int/multi/video/stopwatch/060308/v060308e.htm>]

⁹⁶ Pew Research Center, "Islamic Extremism: Common Concern for Muslim and Western Publics," released July 14, 2005, at [<http://pewglobal.org/reports/display.php?ReportID=248>]. Only Jordan had higher approval ratings of Osama bin Laden (60%) and lower ratings of the United States (21%).

⁹⁷ Terror Free Tomorrow, "Poll: Dramatic Change of Public Opinion in the Muslim World,"

Musharraf components, and many analysts believe that Islamist leaders are manipulating public sentiments to forward their own political goals. Further disappointment with the United States arose in March with a widespread perception among Pakistanis that President Bush's visit to the region made stark their country's subordinate position to India with regard to U.S. policy making.⁹⁸

Late in 2005, several reporters presented anecdotal evidence suggesting that the United States is reaping something of a "public relations" dividend because of its involvement. It was reported that U.S. relief efforts in Pakistan had been quite visible on Pakistani television news broadcasts and thus reached a fairly broad cross-section of the population.⁹⁹ Reporters' encounters with Pakistanis living and working in affected areas also support this. Several individuals made a point of telling the journalist that they were grateful for Western aid.¹⁰⁰ Academics and commentators as well reported a perceptible change in Pakistani attitudes toward the United States.¹⁰¹ There were some positive reports in Pakistani media as well, although they are perhaps thinner than in the American press. *The Nation*, for instance, printed an opinion piece praising the United States for its efforts in saving Pakistani lives and excoriating critics of the United States.¹⁰² This latter sentiment, however, appeared to indicate that a sizable number of Pakistanis remained critical of the United States. Indeed, "Pakistani officials and political analysts" cautioned that any change in perceptions might be limited to moderate, urban Pakistanis, and "unlikely to sway the country's small core of militants who support Al Qaeda."¹⁰³

As noted earlier, some commentators have speculated that the pace of Pakistan's response could by implication affect public opinion about the United States, which is widely seen as supporting the rule of General-cum-President Pervez Musharraf. The greatest criticism of U.S. involvement appears to come from the Pakistani political opposition, especially from Islamist parties, one of whose leaders has said that Pakistan does not need any foreign — including American and NATO — support.¹⁰⁴ Similar complaints about NATO were expressed by the leader of the opposition party Pakistan Muslim League-N, who worried about the presence of foreign soldiers on Pakistani territory if "tomorrow we have to fight a war with India

⁹⁸ See, for example, Somini Sengupta, "U.S. Gives India Applause, Pakistan a Pat on the Back," *New York Times*, Mar. 5, 2006; "A Dull Affair," *News* (Karachi), Mar. 5, 2006.

⁹⁹ Lancaster, John, "Quake Aid Helps U.S. Alter Image in Pakistan," *The Washington Post*, October 22, 2005.

¹⁰⁰ Rhode, David, "For Devout Pakistani Muslims, Aid Muddles Loyalties," *The New York Times*, October 26, 2005.

¹⁰¹ King, Ledyard, "U.S. Response to Pakistan Quake Could Help Image among Muslims," Gannett News Service, October 21, 2005.

¹⁰² Khan, A. R., "It is not Charity but a Duty," *The Nation* (Pakistan), October 27, 2005.

¹⁰³ Rhode, David, op cit.

¹⁰⁴ MMA Secretary General and Leader of Opposition in the National Assembly Maulana Fazlur Rehman, quoted in Raja Asghar, "MMA Opposes Nato, US Forces for Quake Relief," *Dawn*, October 29, 2005. It was not clear whether Rehman was speaking on behalf of the entire opposition or only his own coalition of six Islamic parties.

or any other country.”¹⁰⁵ In response to such concerns, Pakistani Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz has gone on record saying that NATO poses no security threat: “They are here to help us. Even if they are in uniform, it should not be a cause of concern.”¹⁰⁶ Other experts focus on objections to President Musharraf’s decision to authorize NATO’s relief mission without consultation or approval by the parliament. This may have led opposition groups to disagree with NATO’s involvement even if they might otherwise have supported it.¹⁰⁷

Burdensharing and Donor Fatigue

Although the United States is the world’s largest provider of foreign assistance in absolute terms, it is often one of the lowest contributors when measured as a percentage of its economic capacity. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the United States provided 0.16% of its Gross National Income (GNI) in 2004 for Overseas Disaster Assistance (ODA). By comparison the average of major donors is 0.25%. The percentages for other major donors are as follows: Japan (0.19%), the United Kingdom (0.36%), France (0.42%) and Germany (0.28%).

In previous disasters, pledges made by governments have not always resulted in actual contributions; the earthquake of December 2003 in Bam, Iran, is but one example raised by the United Nations. Concerning the billions of dollars pledged to help the victims of the tsunami disaster, there is skepticism whether all these pledges will be honored. It also cannot be assumed that the funds committed to relief actually represent new contributions, since the money may previously have been allocated elsewhere. It will take time for a more complete picture to reveal how the actual costs of the tsunami disaster will be shared among international donors.¹⁰⁸ In the case of the October South Asia earthquake, Amir Abdulla, WFP Regional Director for the Middle East, Central Asia and Eastern Europe commented early on that “it is extremely worrying that the international community — which was so generous after the Indian Ocean tsunami — has so far failed to come up with an adequate response to this crisis.” After a slow start, as of mid-February, the United Nations had received two-thirds of its flash appeal of \$550 million.¹⁰⁹

Some experts are concerned about funding priorities and resources for other disaster areas and a real possibility of international donor fatigue. Finding a balance between burdensharing on the one hand and donor fatigue on the other often results

¹⁰⁵ Acting parliamentary leader of the Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan, quoted in Amir Wasim, “Govt Criticized for Accepting Nato Forces,” *Dawn*, October 26, 2005.

¹⁰⁶ Khan, Iftikhar, “Nato Forces Posing no Security Threat: PM,” *Dawn*, November 1, 2005.

¹⁰⁷ International Crisis Group, “Pakistan: Political Impact of the Earthquake,” *Policy Briefing*, March 15, 2006.

¹⁰⁸ James Darcy, “The Indian Ocean Tsunami Crisis: Humanitarian Dimensions,” *Overseas Development Institute*, January 11, 2005.

¹⁰⁹ United Nations Humanitarian Information Centre, “Beyond Relief: Transition to Recovery and Reconstruction,” Country Team, Islamabad, Pakistan, February 24, 2006.

in delay and can negatively impact U.N. operations during emergencies when immediate funds are required for a response. This question was raised at the U.N. World Summit in September. Key donor countries pledged \$150 million for an emergency fund to allow the United Nations to respond more quickly to natural disasters and humanitarian emergencies. The Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) is seen by proponents as a way to enable the United Nations to respond more efficiently, effectively, and consistently to humanitarian crises worldwide.

Competing Aid and Budget Priorities.¹¹⁰ Amid efforts to tackle rising budget deficits by, among other measures, slowing or reducing discretionary spending, finding the resources to sustain U.S. aid pledges may be difficult. After the tsunami disaster, some Members of Congress publicly expressed concern that funding for tsunami relief and reconstruction, which depleted most worldwide disaster contingency accounts, could jeopardize resources for subsequent international disasters or for other aid priorities from which tsunami emergency aid had been transferred.¹¹¹ These accounts were fully restored through supplemental appropriations. At the time, others noted the substantial size of American private donations for tsunami victims and argued that because of other budget pressures, the United States did not need to transfer additional aid. The point remains, however, that when disasters require immediate emergency relief, the Administration may fund pledges by depleting most worldwide disaster accounts. In order to respond to future humanitarian crises, however, these resources would need to be replenished or it could curtail U.S. capacity to respond to other emergencies.

From Relief to Recovery: The Cost of Rebuilding. The earthquake's effect on Pakistan's economy remains to be seen. The majority of the country's industry is located in the south, well away from the earthquake zone. For this reason, some observers believe that the disaster will not have a serious impact on the Pakistani economy's impressive growth rate. The World Bank, for instance, has slightly revised its prediction for Pakistan's FY2006 growth in Gross Domestic Product (GDP), from 6.5% to 6.1%.¹¹² Nevertheless, the costs of rebuilding the damaged infrastructure in the north as well as caring for the millions of affected Pakistanis are expected to seriously strain the Pakistan government's capacity. Some observers have cautioned against overly optimistic projections.¹¹³

Transparency. Some Members of Congress have also raised concerns about transparency of donor contributions, allocation of monies, and monitoring of projects by the United Nations. The United Nations has said it will improve its financial tracking and reporting system and Pricewaterhouse Coopers is reportedly assisting

¹¹⁰ Prepared by Larry Nowels, Foreign Affairs Specialist.

¹¹¹ Elizabeth Becker, "No New Funds Needed For Relief, Bush Aides Say," *New York Times*, January 4, 2005.

¹¹² The GoP's initial projection of 7.0% had already been reduced to 6.5% because of lower than anticipated crop yields. See Asian Development Bank and World Bank, *Pakistan 2005 Earthquake Preliminary Damage and Needs Assessment*, November 12, 2005, Islamabad, Pakistan, p. 12.

¹¹³ "Global Economic Prospects," *Business Recorder (Pakistan)*, November 23, 2005.

in that effort. In responding to international disasters, many contributions are also made directly to international organizations and non-governmental organizations, which could raise the same questions about transparency requirements. Moreover, while earmarks and time limits may ensure greater accountability, they can also add pressure for organizations to spend contributed funds, sometimes leading to unnecessary spending, waste and duplicated efforts. Restrictions on funds also often do not allow flexibility to adapt projects to better meet the changing needs on the ground.¹¹⁴

Assessing U.N. Performance

As noted above, the United Nations flash appeal for earthquake relief and reconstruction remains seriously underfunded. By contrast, an international donors' conference in Islamabad garnered more pledges than expected. To a certain extent, this reflects some donors' preference for providing bilateral rather than multilateral funding. According to some reports, however, the initial response of some United Nations agencies to the earthquake was confused and inadequate, prompting donors to commit their resources to other agencies. More recent reporting indicated that many U.N. agencies greatly improved their performance and that the overall relief operation was a success.

The USAID DART has been critical of some U.N. agencies for an inadequate initial response to the earthquake. Some of the criticism has been structural: it is not clear, DART members say, that the United Nations' "cluster approach" (see above) is the most effective method of disaster management. A problem may stem from the sometimes competing demands placed on the cluster leaders: liaising with the host government and gathering and disseminating data, as well as responding to immediate needs and coordinating relief activity. There has been some question about the ability of individual agencies to fulfill all of these functions with limited staffing under emergency conditions.¹¹⁵ The cluster system is being discussed at the United Nations.

Some of the DART's criticism, however, reflected a more specific concern that several U.N. agencies were inadequate in their response to the earthquake, prompting USAID, in some cases, to look to NGOs instead of the U.N. system to carry out relief activities. According to the DART, some U.N. agencies were slow to realize the severity of the disaster and to allocate sufficient human and financial resources to the relief effort. The DART singled out UNHCR, the WFP, UNJLC, and IOM (not part of the U.N. system but a close collaborator) for particular criticism. The following paragraph summarizes some of the DART's reporting early on in the relief operation.

UNHCR has been thin on the ground and remains uncertain about its mandate as head of the camp management cluster. DART members reported visiting camps with no visible UNHCR presence. The WFP, which has performed adequately in its role as head of the logistics cluster, has done a worse job in the food cluster. The

¹¹⁴ Edward Clay, "Lessons for Life," *The Guardian Review*, January 12, 2005.

¹¹⁵ Author's interview with members of USAID DART, November 22, 2005.

agency's staff were slow to gather information on NGO activities, leading at times to a duplication of aid delivery efforts. The UNJLC, charged with coordinating transportation, was also slow to ramp up its operations, leading again to a duplication of aid deliveries. Finally, IOM has failed to provide effective leadership of the shelter cluster. Like UNHCR, its staff have appeared unsure of its mandate, and have adopted a facilitative, rather than a leadership, role.¹¹⁶

The DART team spoke more favorably of UNICEF and the WHO, both of which, despite rocky starts, quickly built up capacity and assumed leadership of their respective clusters. Both agencies were singled out for effective coordination and implementation.¹¹⁷

The DART itself points out that some of its concerns cannot be attributed to U.N. underperformance. To begin with, the DART notes that the best-performing agencies are also the better-funded ones, and states that better funding of the other agencies might positively affect their performance. Beyond this, some concerns have reflected the constraints of the United Nations' particular operational mandate rather than failure on its part. Unlike some NGOs, which may operate more informally, the United Nations must carefully coordinate all of its activities with the Pakistani government. Thus, to the extent that the GoP's initial response to the earthquake was slow and confused, this may have affected U.N. performance as well.¹¹⁸ Sources familiar with U.N. operations, including members of the DART, later reported that the United Nations' performance improved markedly, demonstrated in part by the success of relief efforts over the winter.

There does not appear to have been much public criticism of the United Nations' response in the media. The DART's concerns have largely aired within the USG. Perhaps for this reason, the United Nations has not issued any public response to such charges. Privately, however, UNHCR officials have acknowledged some missteps, especially in the early days of the relief effort. They were slow to mobilize some assets and reorganize their staff in the field. They have pointed out, however, that most organizations operating in Pakistan faced difficulties at that time. The GoP's initial disorganization had a ripple effect through the humanitarian community. Despite such difficulties, UNHCR officials note that they immediately opened up their warehouses, releasing thousands of tents and other supplies to the GoP.¹¹⁹ UNHCR also reminds visitors to its website that its mandate is to care for refugees and other victims of "man-made" disasters. Its involvement in the earthquake relief operation is a function of its logistical and operational capabilities in Pakistan, not its legal or organizational mandate.¹²⁰ UNHCR as well as many of

¹¹⁶ "Six Weeks after Pakistan's Earthquake: Assessing the UN's Performance," Department of State unclassified cable, Islamabad 17311, November 22, 2005.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Author's interview with DART members, November 22, 2005, and with staff at Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, November 22, 2005.

¹¹⁹ Author's November 23, 2005, interview with officials at Department of State's PRM Bureau, who are in daily contact with UNHCR officials.

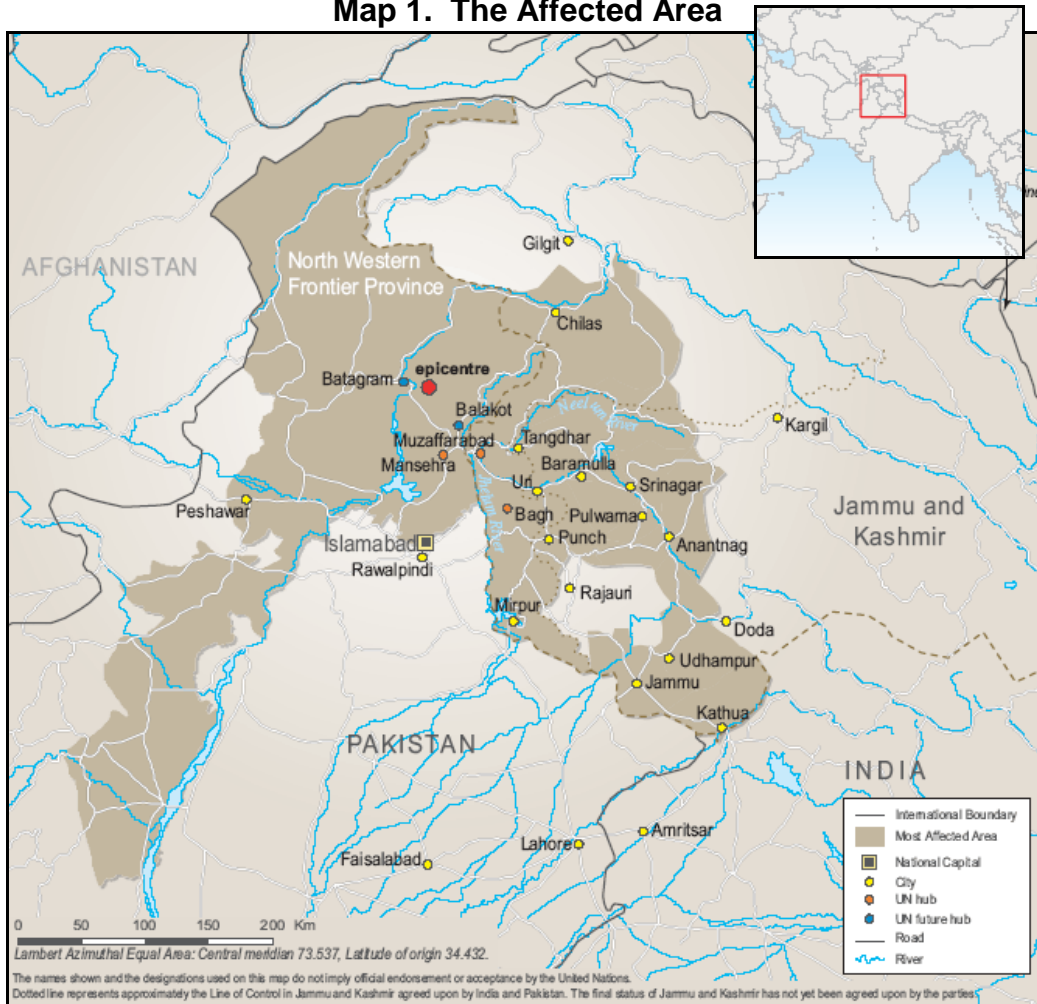
¹²⁰ See [<http://www.unhcr.ch/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/earthquake?page=intro>].

its sister agencies have also argued that they have been hamstrung by poor funding.¹²¹ With the conclusion of the relief operations and launch of the recovery phase scheduled to take place in mid-April 2006, the final update of this report will include a review of lessons learned.

¹²¹ Details are at [<http://www.reliefweb.int>].

Appendix A: Maps of Disaster Area

Map 1. The Affected Area



Source: OCHA Situation Report No. 13, available at [[http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/fullMaps_Sa.nsf/luFullMap/0CCCDBD73C013DD3852570A000658E55/\\$File/rw_EQ_pak201005.pdf?OpenElement](http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/fullMaps_Sa.nsf/luFullMap/0CCCDBD73C013DD3852570A000658E55/$File/rw_EQ_pak201005.pdf?OpenElement)]

Map 2. The Epicenter and Political Boundaries



Source: USAID, October 13, 2005, available at [[http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/fullMaps_Sa.nsf/1uFullMap/6571D95BC2D4E2A88525709900761C3B/\\$File/usaid_EQ_southasia131005.pdf?OpenElement](http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/fullMaps_Sa.nsf/1uFullMap/6571D95BC2D4E2A88525709900761C3B/$File/usaid_EQ_southasia131005.pdf?OpenElement)]

Appendix B: U.N. Flash Appeal

Organization	Appeal
Australian Aid International	\$850,000
Action Contre la Faim/USA	\$1,000,000
Aga Khan Foundation	\$110,000
Catholic Relief Svcs	\$800,000
Food and Agriculture Organization	\$25,000,000
Greenstar Marketing	\$1,000,000
Int'l Labor Organization	\$3,000,000
Int'l Organization for Migration	\$60,500,000
Int'l Rescue Committee	\$1,500,000
ISCOS (Trade Union Institute for Development Cooperation)	\$850,000
ISDR (Int'l Strategy for Disaster Reduction)	\$1,000,000
Mercy Corps Int'l	\$500,000
MDM (Medecins du Monde)	\$500,000
Merlin (UK)	\$850,000
OCHA	\$4,900,000
Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)	\$200,000
Save the Children Alliance	\$8,030,000
Joint U.N. Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)	\$500,000
UNDP	\$90,750,000
UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS)	\$1,180,000
UN Environment Program (UNEP)	\$500,000
UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)	\$1,300,000
UN Population Fund (UNFPA)	\$9,300,000
UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT)	\$650,000
UNHCR	\$30,000,000
UNICEF	\$92,564,274
WFP	\$181,901,667
WHO	\$27,750,000
World Vision	\$1,100,000
TOTAL	\$549,585,941

Source: U.N. Consolidated Appeal (available at [<http://www.reliefweb.int>]).