

Confidential

MEMORANDUM

To: H.E. Omar Zakhiwal, Minister of Finance

From: Said Tayeb Jawad

Date: April 21, 2009

Re: **Lobbying & Advocacy Funding for Afghanistan**

I. Introduction

Following on my previous discussions with Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Finance on the importance of operationalizing the US-Afghan Strategic Partnership, I would like to bring to your attention the urgent need for allocation of annual funding to contract a professional lobbying firm to help us achieve our national objectives based on the US-Afghan Strategic Partnership. Our immediate neighbors Pakistan, India, and China are contracting over a dozen prominent lobbyists to represent and look after these countries' national interests. For example, China alone is employing 19 firms, Pakistan 9, and India more than 5 different firms to represent these countries' and their various government institutional interests in Washington.

Pakistan and India are regularly spending millions of dollars a year to employ professional lobbyists in Washington. This excludes tens of millions of dollars that these countries occasionally spend on large foreign aid packages or military sales deals that they wish to push through the US Congress and Administration. In addition, these countries have employed public relations firms before and amid political events to lobby for more specific agendas. They are also assisted by scores of organizations and associations led by professionals of Pakistani, Indian, or Chinese descent.

By contrast, Afghanistan is lagging far behind these countries in all the above areas to advocate for pro-Afghanistan policy and legislation in Washington, in spite of our country's diverse short- and long-term political, social, and economic needs and the US goodwill for Afghanistan. Needless to say, our Embassy has gone above and beyond our limited resources to advocate for Afghanistan's interests and our national objectives. However, there is no doubt that the government and people of Afghanistan would greatly benefit from the services of a well-connected professional lobbying firm.

Thus, I propose that the Ministry of Finance consider allocating annual funding that is at least roughly one tenth of what Pakistan spends on lobbying in Washington every year. Below is a brief snap shot of the lobbying expenditure by Pakistan and India, as well as the various



additional lobby vehicles they are utilizing to promote their national interests in Washington. Should you require more information, please do not hesitate to let me know.

II. Pakistan: Lobbying Expenditure

A. Present Contracts

- The government of Pakistan and the country's senior officials are employing some nine lobbying firms in the United States to look after and promote their personal and/or national interests in the US policy and law-making processes. This includes two firms that alone represent and promote President Asif Ali Zardari's interests in Washington.
- According to the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA), the Government of Pakistan has contracted **Locke Lord Strategies-LP (LLS-LLP)** since May 2008 to lobby for the country in the US legislative and executive branches. Pakistan pays LLS-LLP over \$100,000.00 per month, often exceeding one million a year. LLS-P is also registered to lobby for the **Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP)** co-chaired by President Asif Ali Zardari, promoting both democracy in Pakistan and to promote better relations between the PPP and the U.S. government. LLS-LLP also registered on March 7, 2008, for the Pakistan International Airlines Corporation, to facilitate landing rights in the U.S., for a one-time payment of \$150,000.00.
- In addition, **Dewey & LeBoeuf LLP** registered to represent the Pakistani Ministry of Commerce on October 31, 2007. Their contract, which extends through June 14, 2009, provides for a monthly fee of \$50,000.00. Moreover, **JWT Asiatic**, a division of **WPP Marketing Communications (Pvt.) Ltd.**, is registered for the government of Pakistan, in conjunction with the firm **Hill & Knowlton**, which may be paid as much as \$100,000.00 a month to promote the country's interests.

B. Previous Contracts

- In 2007, President Musharraf was paying **Van Scoyoc Associates** \$55,000.00 a month to contain the fallout from the President's destabilizing actions, as the congressional Democrats and the Bush administration sought a review of the country's foreign aid.
- The Pakistani Embassy also contracted **Cassidy & Associates** for \$1.2 million for one year to lobby for President Musharraf. The lobby effort was to be lead by Robin Raphel, a former assistant secretary of state for South Asian affairs in the Clinton administration. However, the contract was cancelled after undemocratic actions taken by the President.



- Meantime, Pakistan’s People Party (PPP) contracted well-known public relations firms including **Burson-Marsteller**, **BKSH & Associates**, **Penn Schoen and Berland Associates**, paying \$75,000.00 a month to promote PPP’s agenda to boost late Benazir Bhutto’s bid for presidential elections and other related interests in Washington.

C. Additional Lobby Vehicles

- In addition to legal and public relations firms that Pakistan frequently employs to lobby for its interests in Washington, an increasing number of associations and organizations—including the following lost—led by Pakistani-Americans actively promote Pakistani interests in alliance with the Pakistani Embassy and its various lobbyist groups in Washington.

1. Pakistani American Public Affairs Committee
2. Association of Physicians of Pakistani Descent of North America
3. Pakistani American Congress
4. Association of Pakistani Professionals
5. Pakistani American Leadership Center
6. Association of Pakistani Scientists and Engineers of North America
7. Council of Pakistan American Affairs
8. Pakistan American Chamber of Commerce Council
9. Friends of Pakistan
10. The Pakistani American Council of Texas
11. Pakistani American Association of Connecticut
12. National Association of Pakistani Americans

III India: Lobbying Expenditure

A. Present Contracts

- The Indian government has also contracted a number of prominent Washington lobbyists to look after and promote its national interests. The Indian Embassy is currently working with the following lobbyists, lobbying for the Indian agenda in the US Congress and Administration:
 1. Barbour, Griffith & Rogers (Republican leaning)
 2. Westin Rinehart
 3. Patton Boggs (Democrat leaning)
 4. Venable (Democrat leaning)



- India is spending millions of dollars a year to pay the above Democrat and Republican lobbyists to advocate for pro-India legislation and policy in the US government. Through these efforts, India succeeded when Kashmir was dropped from special envoy Richard Holbrooke's mandate under pressure from the Indian lobby in Washington. **According to Washington Post, India managed to "prune the portfolio of the Obama administration's top envoy to Pakistan and Afghanistan, Richard C. Holbrooke -- basically eliminating the contested region of Kashmir from his job description".**

B. Additional Lobby Vehicles

- Like Pakistan, India has drawn on the support and influence of an increasing number of Indian-American professional organizations and associations across the United States to lobby for pro-Indian policy and legislation in the US Congress and Administration. Below is only a small list of such organizations in the lobby arsenal of India.
 1. US-India Political Action Committee
 2. Asian American Hotel Owners Association
 3. Indian Community Center
 4. Indian American Task Force

IV. Conclusion

Afghanistan and the United States are facing many threats that must be addressed based on the US-Afghan Strategic Partnership. The Obama Administration is as much committed to the stabilization of Afghanistan as it deems US domestic issues including a receding economy as its major priorities. This mixed picture provides Afghanistan with many opportunities on the short term, particularly in capitalizing on the still goodwill of the American people and the bi-partisan support for Afghanistan. To translate the existing US support into effective packages of assistance to Afghanistan, we need to give serious consideration to allocating financial resources on an annual basis so that—like Pakistan and India and so many other countries—we are also able to effect pro-Afghanistan policy and legislation in Washington.