

## Executive Summary

In December 2009 the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung published a booklet on a country which is currently considered as “the most dangerous country in the world”: *Pakistan - Reality, Denial and the Complexity of its State*. The publication gave the incentive to hold an expert round table for in-depth discussions about the country’s political, economic, historical and cultural challenges as well as its role on peace resolution, security and stability issues in the region. The Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung has invited two Pakistani representatives in order to discuss these challenges and complexities with German experts.

The main focus of the first session was on the current crisis in Pakistan and more importantly on the complexities of possible regional peace and stability solutions. At present, Pakistan faces a complex situation which is closely connected to the situation in Afghanistan. In regard to cross border activities of extremists the only solution has always been a military solution. The general perception is that peace and stability in Afghanistan can only be achieved with a regional approach because if the interests of those states involved in Afghanistan are not addressed these states are in a position to undermine any possible settlement in Afghanistan. In this regard, the Pakistan-India relations are crucial for peace and stability in the region. Once there is a minimum level of trust resulting from some sort of settlement over the Kashmir conflict, both countries may be able to contribute towards peace in Afghanistan. A regional approach was also argued against since after decades of conflict and war a solution has still not been found for the conflicts Kashmir and Afghanistan. Thus, it is unlikely that a regional approach could now contribute towards a solution. Furthermore, possible actors who may contribute towards a regional framework for peace and security were discussed as well as an institutional framework needed to find a regional solution. The *South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation* (SAARC) may possibly be an alternative. Nevertheless, it remains unclear under whose aegis the participating countries would come together.

In regard to the inner political complexities, the *National Reconciliation Ordinance* (NRO) was of certain interest. The Supreme Court’s decision has put President Asif Ali Zardari on notice. This can easily lead to a political crisis with aspirations of the opposition parties to ouster the present government or to hold midterm elections. Another political hotspot is the tense relationship between Pakistan’s President, the Army Chief and the Prime Minister, which became clearly visible at the time when the *Kerry-Lugar Bill* was fiercely debated. Another point was related to General Kayani, who as one of the most important figures, will retire in November this year. This raises the crucial question of who will be his successor?

The emphasis of the second session was placed on the successful Lawyers’ Movement, the judicial history of Pakistan, the role of civil society as well as the media and other stakeholders. For the first time in the short history of Pakistan, a large number of Pakistani people stood up to the executive demanding rule of law and freedom of the judiciary. Since independence the judiciary and the legislative have been exploited by military but also civilian regimes and over time a strong but invisible alliance between the judiciary, army and the bureaucracy has developed. The crisis began when Chief Justice Chaudhry resisted the order of Musharraf to resign. Although Chaudhry was not the first Chief Justice to be removed by a military dictator he was in fact the first who had strong support and who fought for his case. Although the movement has lost its momentum and is disintegrating after achieving the common goal of restoring the Chief Justice, it still represents the demands of the people. With regards to the institutional or political legacy of the movement it was stated that its success created a certain kind of awareness among the people that it is possible to achieve change if they work together. Thus, it might not be unlikely that a new movement will emerge if the demands of the people are not met or even ignored.

During the Lawyers’ Movement media and civil society played an important role for the success of the movement despite some weaknesses. Although the media in Pakistan is free, its main shortcoming is unbiased and unrestrained news coverage. Therefore, there is a need to develop a certain “code of conduct” for media since it plays a role in educating and enlightening people on certain issues including social, ethnic and religious affairs. The civil-military imbalance and the frequency of military take-overs have hampered the development and undermined the activities of civil society. However, the imbalance cannot be corrected immediately but gradually by reducing and revealing the budget of the military and raising the budget for institutional development. This also reveals one of the main problems of Pakistan which is the supremacy of the military in various areas. Most likely only a multipronged approach of the political parties, the judiciary and also the power of the people would be able to challenge the supremacy of the military.