

NATIONAL NARRATIVE



PAKISTAN'S NATIONAL NARRATIVE AGAINST TERRORISM AND EXTREMISM

National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA)

www.nacta.gov.pk

+92 - 51 - 9216581



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Pakistan's National Narrative Against Terrorism and Extremism

Background:

- 1- Islamic Republic of Pakistan is a federal parliamentary democracy under Constitution of Pakistan 1973. Elected representatives of people form governments at national and provincial levels. All citizens have been granted fundamental rights in the Constitution.
- 2- Pakistan has been facing scourge of terrorism for last more than 20 years. From 2001 to 2022, Pakistan lost 83 thousand lives and incurred financial loss of more than 35 trillion rupees. Consequently, violence, extremism and intolerance have increased in society. Hence, holistic policy and comprehensive strategy are needed to meet this challenge on permanent basis. For attaining sustainable success, formation and propagation of a national narrative against terrorism and extremism is of vital importance in this age of digital communication. It needs to become foundation of counter terrorist and counter extremist measures.

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- 3- National narrative against terrorism and extremism contains salient features of Paigham-i-Pakistan. The Paigham-i-Pakistan is a consensus decree (*fatwa*) issued in 2018 and signed by more than 1800 religious scholars belonging to all Muslim sects in Pakistan. At international level, it has been endorsed by Imam-i-Kaaba and Al Azhar University of Cairo. It reflects teachings of Quran and Sunnah, precepts of Constitution of Pakistan and collective thought of the people of Pakistan.

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- 4- Armed resistance, called with whatever name including Jihad, against the State of Pakistan, any of its provinces or units, is strictly forbidden (*haram*). No individual or group can declare war (*Jihad*) against the State of Pakistan. No one can declare functionaries of the Government of Pakistan, personnel of armed forces and Law Enforcement Agencies as non-Muslims and hence liable to be killed. There is no justification of attacks on such persons and institutions. Such attacks are heinous crimes in Islamic Sharia too. Use of force, armed resistance against the State, spreading violence, committing terrorism, promoting extremism in the name of enforcing Sharia are strictly forbidden and fall in category of mischief on earth. Such acts are crimes against the State and it is duty of the Law Enforcement Agencies to bring such offenders to justice. Those who fight against Pakistan are outlaws, rebels and terrorists who are liable to be punished in accordance with law.
- 5- Whole of Pakistani nation firmly stands with its Armed Forces, Police and other Law Enforcement Agencies in their lawful duties to curb terrorism and extremism. These institutions are integral parts of the Pakistani nation. No decree or *fatwa* can be issued against them for their role & duties which include protecting life and property of the people of Pakistan.
- 6- Suicide bombing is strictly forbidden (*haram*) in Islam. It is a heinous crime according to law of the land and Sharia. Suicide bombers go to hell according to teachings of Quran and Sunnah. Those who prepare young people to become suicide bombers also go to hell. Killing of one innocent human being is tantamount to killing the whole of humanity, according to Quran. Suicide bombing does not become justified even when named as *fidai* attack. Change of name does not change its nature and consequences.

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- 7- All public and private educational and training institutions are strictly forbidden from promoting militancy, hatred, violence, extremism, or terrorism. These acts are crimes according to law of the land. If any institute or individual associated with such institute, religious or non-religious, is found involved, he will be punished in accordance with law.
- 8- As the Muslim majority population has religious freedom, the non-Muslim minorities too have religious freedom in Pakistan granted in the Constitution. State gives importance to religious minorities and their religious and cultural rights. Constitutionally guaranteed religious rights are available to all without any discrimination. Religious and non-religious extremism is condemned by the State in all its manifestations. No sect is allowed to impose its views on other sects using force and violence. No sect or religion is allowed to abuse sacred personalities of any other sect or religion. No sect can declare any other sect as non-believer (*kafir*). *Takfeer* (declaring other Muslims as non-Muslims) is strictly prohibited. Any violations are punishable under relevant laws. No individual or group is allowed take law into their own hands to inflict punishment on any person accused of a religious offence including offence of blasphemy. Only courts shall punish such accused after due process of law. Strict legal action will be taken against such lawlessness and violence.
- 9- Armed resistance and terrorism committed by non-religious armed organizations, based on sub-nationalism, language, color, creed, ethnicity, regionalism, etc, are totally unlawful and hence strictly forbidden. Armed resistance against the State, any province or unit, in any name or ideology, fall in categories of rebellion and insurgency. Such crimes shall be punished according to law. Territorial integrity of Pakistan shall be protected at all costs and rebels and insurgents will be punished for treason and other serious crimes.
- 10- Operations shall be conducted against religiously motivated and non-religious terrorist groups and their facilitators without discrimination to bring them to justice. The National Action Plan shall be implemented in

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letter and spirit by all stakeholders. To achieve this objective, the LEAs will be strengthened with provision of all necessary resources. The LEAs will be provided training in latest intelligence collection and counter terrorism techniques. They will be equipped to defeat terrorism this time on sustainable and permanent basis. Investment in peace and security is in fact indirectly an investment in economy of the country. Peace will bring dividends in shape of economic progress and prosperity.

- 11- All necessary steps shall be taken to prevent and counter extremism in society. Extremist propaganda will be suppressed through use of modern technology. Extremist elements active in physical and cyber domain, including Social Media and internet, to spread extremism will be stopped and brought to justice. Extremist ideologies and online hate will be suppressed and countered effectively. Space in cyber and physical domains will be denied to all kinds of extremism including religious, linguistic, ethnic, separatist or regional. Propaganda to malign national institutions will be countered and punished in accordance with law. Battle of narratives will be fought and won by the State using all means possible. Pakistan's national narrative shall be promoted and propagated in physical and cyber domain. A comprehensive strategy will be made and implemented in this regard by relevant national institutions dealing with counter extremism. All necessary resources will be provided to achieve the above objectives.
- 12- Misuse of loud speaker and sound systems will be effectively monitored and checked. Hate speech and other violations will be prosecuted in court of law. All types of religious competitions (*manaazra*) are strictly prohibited under law of the land. Robust prosecutions will be ensured to punish the offenders who spread hate and intolerance.

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- 13- Above mentioned national narrative against terrorism and extremism is now the permanent national policy in this domain. Under this policy, all kinds of terrorism and extremism shall be routed out from society. Pakistan will be made a fully peaceful country wherein its citizens lead their lives peacefully and without fear of any kind.
- 14- Pakistani way of life shall be protected and promoted as it is based on Pakistani values of hard work, hospitality, charity, tolerance, pluralism and pursuit of happiness. Pakistani people are God-fearing. They are known for their generosity and large-heartedness. Father of the nation, Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, had advised the nation to work, work and work. Laborer is a friend of Allah, according to Islamic teachings. In the light of above, the Pakistani nation shall work hard to make a living in pursuit of happiness. Poverty, illiteracy, violence, terrorism and extremism shall be defeated with concerted efforts of all segments of society. Nation will focus on education for all to produce useful citizens. At international level, peace, tolerance, education and progress are aimed to become symbols of Pakistani identity. In Shaa Allah.