

A Dramatic Change of Public Opinion **In the Muslim World**

Results from a New Poll in Pakistan



**TERROR FREE
TOMORROW**

**BUILDING A NEW STRATEGIC
FRAMEWORK TO DEFEAT
GLOBAL TERRORISTS**

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Executive Summary

In the first poll in Pakistan since the earthquake of October 8, 2005, Pakistanis now hold a more favorable opinion of the United States than at any time since 9/11, while support for Al Qaeda in its home base has dropped to its lowest level since then. The direct cause for this dramatic shift in Muslim opinion is clear: American humanitarian assistance for Pakistani earthquake victims.

The second largest and only Muslim nation with nuclear weapons, Pakistan has long been a stronghold for Islamist radicals, and is the likely base for Bin Laden and other Al Qaeda leaders planning further attacks against the US.

The findings from Terror Free Tomorrow's survey document the most significant shift in Pakistani, indeed Muslim, public opinion since 9/11. The results follow Terror Free Tomorrow's poll in Indonesia after the tsunami.

Key Findings of the Poll:

- 73% of Pakistanis surveyed in November 2005 now believe suicide terrorist attacks are never justified, up from 46% just last May.
- Support for Osama Bin Laden has declined significantly (51% favorable in May 2005 to just 33% in November), while those who oppose him rose over the same period from 23% to 41%.
- US favorability among Pakistanis has doubled from 23% in May to more than 46% now, while the percentage of Pakistanis with very unfavorable views declined from 48% to 28%.
- For the first time since 9/11, more Pakistanis are now favorable to the United States than unfavorable.
- 78% of Pakistanis have a more favorable opinion of the United States because of the American response to the earthquake, with the strongest support among those under 35.
- 79% of those with confidence in Bin Laden now have a more favorable view of the US because of American earthquake aid.
- 81% said that earthquake relief was important for them in forming their overall opinion of the United States.
- The United States fared better in Pakistani public opinion than both other Western countries and radical Islamist groups.

- While opinion of the United States itself improved significantly, this did not translate into increased support for US-led efforts to fight terrorism. Tellingly, those who oppose US efforts against terrorism grew, from 52% in May to 64% now.

The public opinion survey was conducted by Terror Free Tomorrow, with fieldwork by the leading Pakistani pollster, ACNielsen Pakistan. The poll surveyed 1,450 Pakistani adults over November 14-28, 2005 and has a margin of error of 2.6%. Additional survey details follow.

Critical Implications

- The support base that empowers global terrorists has dramatically declined in Al Qaeda's home base. This is a major blow to Al Qaeda and other radical Islamists.
- American humanitarian assistance can make a significant and immediate difference in eroding the popular support base for global terrorists, but the US "war on terror" has not.
- The United States must sustain its relief and reconstruction efforts in Pakistan in order to prevent popular support for Islamist radicals from rebounding. Indeed, 78% of Pakistanis want continued American assistance.
- The poll follows similar findings from two previous Terror Free Tomorrow public opinion surveys in Indonesia and the Palestinian Territories. 65% of Indonesians had a more favorable opinion of the United States because of American tsunami relief. Similarly, a strong majority of Palestinians want the United States to become more involved in resolving the Palestinian/Israeli conflict.
- These public opinion surveys, in three distinct regions of the Muslim world, demonstrate for the first time that American policies based on humanitarian interventions result in substantial, favorable changes in Muslim opinion, while the declared US "war on terror," for the most part, does not.

Chart I: Dramatic Change in Pakistani Public Opinion After Earthquake

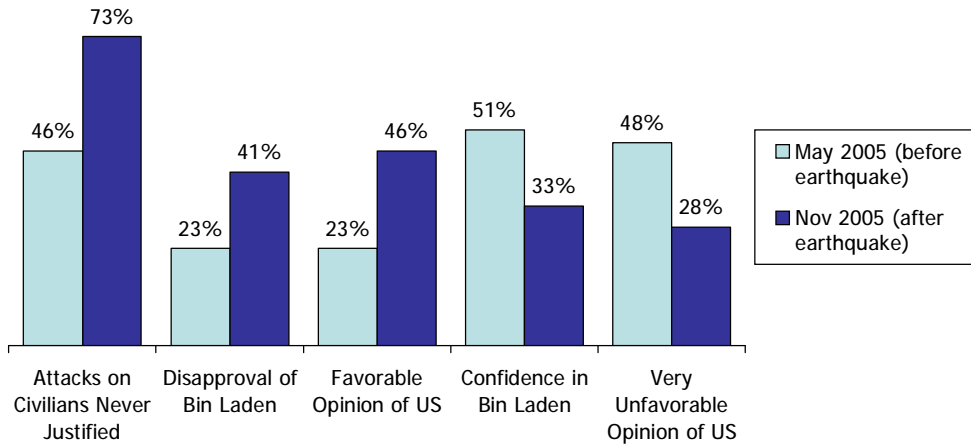
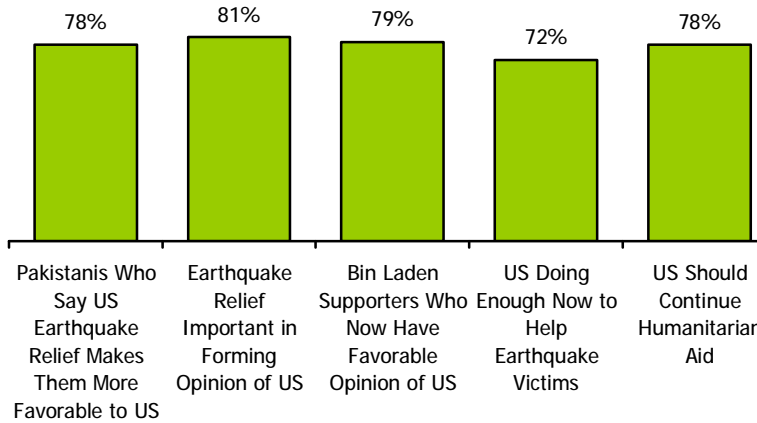


Chart II: American Earthquake Relief Causes More Favorable Views Of the United States in Pakistan



Analysis

The percentage of Pakistanis who feel terrorist attacks against civilians are never justified has risen from less than half in May 2005 to 73% in November 2005, while the small minority who still support terrorist attacks has also shrunk significantly. At the same time, Bin Laden's disapproval among Pakistanis has nearly doubled as well, from only 23% in May 2005 to 41% in November, while those who voiced confidence in Bin Laden dropped from a majority of 51% in May to just 33% now. Most strikingly, Pakistanis with a favorable opinion of the United States have doubled from 23% in May 2005 to more than 46% in November, while the percentage of Pakistanis with very unfavorable views declined from 48% to 28% over the same period. For the first time since 9/11, more Pakistanis are now favorable to the United States than unfavorable.

The reason for this sea change in opinion: American assistance to Pakistani earthquake victims. 78% of Pakistanis surveyed said that American aid has made them feel more favorable to the United States—a number even higher than Indonesians after the tsunami—with the strongest support among those under 35. At the same time, 81% said that earthquake relief was important for them in forming their overall opinion of the United States. Indeed, a striking 79% of Pakistanis with confidence in Bin Laden now have a more favorable view of the United States because of American earthquake aid. The United States also fared much better in the opinion of Pakistanis than either other Western countries who provided aid, or local radical Islamist groups who have made a much-publicized effort to provide earthquake relief.

In fact, 72% of Pakistanis feel that current American aid is enough for now. There is, however, an important caveat for both the Bush Administration and Congress: 78% of the Pakistani people want the aid to continue, so the United States must maintain its humanitarian assistance or risk squandering the substantial goodwill it has recently acquired.

The new poll from Pakistan proves for the first time something even more extraordinary: Muslim opinion towards Bin Laden and terrorism itself is directly linked to opinion of the United States. At the same time significant American aid to Pakistani earthquake victims results in a surge of pro-American sentiment, more unexpectedly, it also leads to a concomitant and dramatic drop in support for Bin Laden and terrorism. Interestingly, Pakistanis who disapproved of Bin Laden doubled in tandem at almost the exact same percentage as those who became favorable to the United States (23% to 41% disapproval of Bin Laden; 23% to 46% approval of the US).

But the Pakistani public is discerning and subtle. While directly tying terrorism and Bin Laden to the pivotal role of the United States, it is American humanitarian assistance that results in this change of opinion, and not the specific American policies in the war on terrorism. In fact, the Pakistani public continues to strongly oppose US-led efforts against terrorism by an even larger majority than in last May (64% now to 52% in May).

We can also confirm, for the first time, that these findings in Pakistan are indeed part of a larger trend. 65% of Indonesians had a more favorable opinion of the United States while support for Bin Laden dropped in half because of American tsunami relief, according to another Terror Free Tomorrow poll after the tsunami. Yet this phenomenon is not restricted to US intervention in humanitarian disasters. A similar poll in the Palestinian Territories this summer by Terror Free

Tomorrow showed that an overwhelming majority of Palestinians want the United States to become more involved in resolving the Palestinian/Israeli conflict, which would also make their opinion towards America significantly more favorable.

Background and Methodology

Terror Free Tomorrow is a non-partisan, not-for-profit organization, whose mission is to understand and undermine the popular support base that empowers global terrorists. Senator John McCain (R-AZ) and 9/11 Commission Chairs Thomas Kean and Lee Hamilton lead our distinguished Advisory Board. Other members include former Speaker/Ambassador Thomas Foley, former Senator and 9/11 Commissioner Slade Gorton, Dean Stephen Bosworth of the Fletcher School, former Army Secretary Louis Caldera, leading Pakistani commentator and scholar Husain Haqqani, Indonesian commentator and pollster Muhammad Qodari, Iraqi attorney Mohammed Al-Rehaief, and Robin Wiener from the Families of September 11.

President Bush, and former Presidents Bush and Clinton, have all publicly recognized Terror Free Tomorrow's prior polling in Indonesia. Our work has also been cited by State Department officials and in both House and Senate testimony, as well as on the floor of the US Senate. Lastly, Terror Free Tomorrow's past work has been prominently featured in the news media, including *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, *Roll Call*, *Associated Press*, *Reuters*, CNN, ABC News, MSNBC, FOX News, to name but a few, and internationally from South America to South Asia, from the Middle East to Southeast Asia.

The last publicly released poll from Pakistan on some of the topics covered in the current Terror Free Tomorrow poll occurred in May 2005, commissioned by the highly respected Pew Research Center. Pew has set the acknowledged standard for general international polling. The current Terror Free Tomorrow poll and the prior Pew poll both have utilized the same leading Pakistani pollster (ACNielsen Pakistan) for fieldwork in Pakistan, with identical sample design (probability random sample), mode (face-to-face interviews with adults 18 and over), conducted in local language(s), and similar sample sizes, representatives (disproportionately urban covering all Pakistani provinces), and margins of error. The TFT sample size (1450) was slightly higher than Pew (1225), while the margin of error for TFT was 2.6% and for the Pew poll 3%.

ACNielsen is a global leader in market research, offering measurement and analysis of marketplace dynamics as well as public attitudes and behavior in more than 100 countries. ACNielsen has developed a universal reputation for providing survey research throughout the world. In conducting this poll, ACNielsen employed extensive quality control measures and field design methodology. Additional information is available at www.terrorfreetomorrow.org and from Terror Free Tomorrow.

Fieldwork for the Terror Free Tomorrow poll occurred from November 14 to November 28, 2005 throughout Pakistan. Detailed results of the poll with exact questions and answers, along with two sets of comparisons to comparable prior public opinion surveys, follow.

Detailed Results

Part I: The following charts show the results from the Terror Free Tomorrow poll, along with comparisons (where they exist) with the results from identical questions asked in polling commissioned by the Pew Research Center and also conducted by ACNielsen Pakistan in May 2005.

Q1: Some people think that suicide bombing and other forms of violence against civilian targets are justified in order to defend Islam from its enemies. Other people believe that, no matter what the reason, this kind of violence is never justified. Do you personally feel that this kind of violence is often justified to defend Islam, sometimes justified, rarely justified or never justified?

	May 2005	November 2005
Often Justified	12%	6.5%
Sometimes Justified	13	9.6
Rarely Justified	19	7.4
Never Justified	46	72.7
Don't Know/Don't Answer	10	3.7

Q2: How much confidence do you have in Osama Bin Laden to do the right thing regarding world affairs?

	May 2005	November 2005
A Lot of Confidence	29%	10.8%
Some Confidence	22	22.7
Not Too Much Confidence	11	10.2
No Confidence At All	12	30.4
Don't Know/Don't Answer	26	26.0
Total Confident	51	33.5
Total Not Confident	23	40.6

Q3: Please tell me if you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or very unfavorable opinion of the United States?

	May 2005	November 2005
Very Favorable	6%	9.5%
Somewhat Favorable	17	36.7
Somewhat Unfavorable	12	16.7
Very Unfavorable	48	28.0
Don't Know/Don't Answer	17	9.1
Total Favorable	23	46.2
Total Unfavorable	60	44.7

Q4: Which of the following phrases come closer to your view? I favor the U.S.-led efforts to fight terrorism, OR I oppose the U.S.-led efforts to fight terrorism?

	May 2005	November 2005
Oppose	52%	64.0%
Favor	22	24.6
Don't Know/Don't Answer	26	11.4

Q5: The United States is providing aid to help Pakistani earthquake victims. Please tell me if this makes your opinion of the United States much more favorable, somewhat more favorable, somewhat less favorable, or much less favorable?

	2005
Much More Favorable	25.9%
Somewhat More Favorable	52.4
Somewhat Less Favorable	8.5
Much Less Favorable	6.1
Don't Know/Don't Answer	7.2
Total More Favorable	78.3
Total Less Favorable	14.5

Q5: Cross Tabulation with Views on Osama Bin Laden

	All	Confidence in Bin Laden	No Confidence in Bin Laden
Total More Favorable	78.3	79.2	80.3
Total Less Favorable	14.5	16.5	14.8

Q5: Age Breakdown

	All	Under 35	35- 55Years	56& Over
Total More Favorable	78.3%	81.6%	75.0%	61.2%
Total Less Favorable	14.5	13.7	14.8	23.5

Q6: In forming your overall opinion of the United States, how important is American assistance for the earthquake victims?

	2005
Very Important	40.9%
Somewhat Important	40.3
Somewhat Not Important	8.1
Not Important At All	6.5
Don't Know/Don't Answer	4.2
Total Important	81.2
Total Not Important	14.6

Q7: Do you think the United States is doing enough to help victims of the earthquake in Pakistan?

	2005
Yes	72.0%
No	20.4
Don't Know/Don't Answer	7.6

Q8: The United States has provided immediate aid to earthquake victims in Pakistan. If Pakistan still seeks assistance, do you think the United States should continue to provide assistance to Pakistan in the future?

	2005
Yes	78.0%
No	16.6
Don't Know/Don't Answer	5.4

Q9: In your opinion, which of the following has been the most helpful in providing assistance to the earthquake victims? Please rank from most helpful to least helpful.

- a. The United States
- b. Western countries (United Kingdom and France)
- c. Islamic countries (Saudi Arabia and Kuwait)
- d. Islamist groups in Pakistan (Jamaat ul-Dawa, the Al-Rasheed Trust, and the Jamaat-i-Islami)
- e. The Government of Pakistan

	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4	Rank 5	Don't Know
The United States	21.8%	20.2%	19.5%	19.4%	17.2%	1.8%
Western countries (United Kingdom and France)	5.1	10.9	17.7	29.9	34.6	1.9
Islamic countries (Saudi Arabia and Kuwait)	23.9	23.9	26.0	15.2	9.2	1.9
Islamist groups in Pakistan (Jamaat ul-Dawa, the Al-Rasheed Trust, and the Jamaat-i-Islami)	15.2	22.8	18.0	21.3	21.0	1.7
The Government of Pakistan	32.5	20.7	17.0	12.3	16.1	1.5

Part II: The following charts show the results from the Terror Free Tomorrow poll in Pakistan in November 2005 (after the earthquake), compared with the results from identical questions asked from the Terror Free Tomorrow poll in Indonesia in February 2005 (after the tsunami).

Q1: Some people think that suicide bombing and other forms of violence against civilian targets are justified in order to defend Islam from its enemies. Other people believe that, no matter what the reason, this kind of violence is never justified. Do you personally feel that this kind of violence is often justified to defend Islam, sometimes justified, rarely justified or never justified?

	Pakistan	Indonesia
Often Justified	6.5%	3.1%
Sometimes Justified	9.6	5.9
Rarely Justified	7.4	13.5
Never Justified	72.7	62.0
Don't Know/Don't Answer	3.7	15.6
Total Justified	16.1	9.0
Total Not Justified	80.1	75.5

Q2: How much confidence do you have in Osama Bin Laden to do the right thing regarding world affairs?

	Pakistan	Indonesia
A Lot of Confidence	10.8%	3.2%
Some Confidence	22.7	20.0
Not Too Much Confidence	10.2	31.7
No Confidence At All	30.4	10.5
Don't Know/Don't Answer	26.0	34.6
Total Confident	33.5	23.2
Total Not Confident	40.6	42.2

Q3: Please tell me if you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or very unfavorable opinion of the United States?

	Pakistan	Indonesia
Very Favorable	9.5%	3.9%
Somewhat Favorable	36.7	29.8
Somewhat Unfavorable	16.7	32.5
Very Unfavorable	28.0	21.2
Don't Know/Don't Answer	9.1	12.6
Total Favorable	46.2	33.7
Total Unfavorable	44.7	53.7

Q4: Which of the following phrases come closer to your view? I favor the U.S.-led efforts to fight terrorism, OR I oppose the U.S.-led efforts to fight terrorism?

	Pakistan	Indonesia
Oppose	64.0%	35.8%
Favor	24.6	40.1
Don't Know/Don't Answer	11.4	24.1

Q5: The United States is providing aid to help Pakistani earthquake victims/ Indonesian tsunami victims. Please tell me if this makes your opinion of the United States much more favorable, somewhat more favorable, somewhat less favorable, or much less favorable?

	Pakistan	Indonesia
Much More Favorable	25.9%	17.4%
Somewhat More Favorable	52.4	47.6
Somewhat Less Favorable	8.5	12.7
Much Less Favorable	6.1	5.0
Don't Know/Don't Answer	7.2	17.3
Total More Favorable	78.3	65.0
Total Less Favorable	14.5	17.7

Q6: In forming your overall opinion of the United States, how important is American assistance for the earthquake/ tsunami victims?

	Pakistan	Indonesia
Very Important	40.9%	23.6%
Somewhat Important	40.3	39.6
Not Important At All	14.6*	21.1
Don't Know/Don't Answer	4.2	15.7
Total Important	81.2	63.2
Total Not Important	15.0	21.1
	*(Somewhat not important + not at all important combined for comparison purposes only)	

Q7: Do you think the United States is doing enough to help victims of the earthquake in Pakistan/ the tsunami in Indonesia?

	Pakistan	Indonesia
Yes	72.0%	74.6%
No	20.4	11.7
Don't Know/Don't Answer	7.6	13.6

Q8: The United States has provided immediate aid to earthquake victims in Pakistan/ tsunami victims in Indonesia. If Pakistan/Indonesia still seeks assistance, do you think the United States should continue to provide assistance to Pakistan/Indonesia in the future? *

	Pakistan	Indonesia
Yes	78.0%	51.7%
No	16.6	34.7
Don't Know/Don't Answer	5.4	13.5

* The second sentence in this question had a slightly different wording in the Indonesian poll. Rather than: "If Pakistan still seeks assistance," the question in the Indonesian poll was phrased: "If Indonesia still needs support...."

Please note that **Question #9**, comparing American aid to other parties in Pakistan, was not asked in Indonesia, so there is no comparison.

