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Global Politician

Iran extends its influence in Afghanistan and Pakistan

By Reza Hossein Borr

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The Islamic Republic of Iran is taking advantage of a lapse in American politics when President Obama is formulating his new Middle East policies to actualize its expansionist policies in the Middle East. Just a few days after the summit meeting of American president with the presidents of Afghanistan and Pakistan, president Ahmadinejad invited the presidents of both countries to Iran in a comprehensive show of unity. The president of Iran was able to emphasize the strategy of regional peace and security by the governments of the region while both Pakistan and Afghanistan are heavily dependent on America for their survival.

Iran and Pakistan signed several agreements with the unannounced consent of American. The most important one was about launching the peace pipeline which transfers Iranian gas to Pakistan and then India. This agreement was signed after 15 years of delaying when different American administrations discouraged Pakistani governments from signing it. It seems that Pakistan government signed this agreement with Iran with the prior consent of United States. The Pakistani petroleum ministry said that power generation and usage of imported Iranian gas by heavy industries would result in annual saving of up to \$1 billion in furnace oil imports, if the crude oil prices are at \$50 per barrel. If the price of oil goes up, Pakistan will benefit even more.

Annual saving of up to 1 billion dollars for Pakistan will make this country organically depend on Iran. This is even more valuable to Pakistan than the \$10 billion the United States of America gave to Pakistan in nearly eight years. There is no any accountability attached to it. The Iranian officials had already announced that the price of the gas that

will be sold to Pakistan will be at 65 percent discount of the marketplace.

In another agreement that was signed between Iran and Pakistan, president Ahmadinejad committed Iran to provide free electricity to the great and new Pakistani port of Gwadar which is located in Baluchistan. The Iranian port of Chabahar is considered to be a competitor of Gwadar and yet why Iran wants to grant free electricity to it, poses a mysterious question. Such an agreement will make Pakistan very dependent to Iranian expansionist policies.

When the American and European analysts predicted that Pakistan may collapse in the near future, the Islamic Republic of Iran transferred and deployed its Revolutionary Guard Corp at the borders of Pakistan. Some analysts believe that the Islamic Republic of Iran was planning to occupy the mine-rich Baluchistan and Gwadar port after the collapse of Pakistan. There was no any other justifiable reason to deploy the Iranian army in Baluchistan at the borders of Pakistan.

As the influence of the United States of America has begun to dwindle in the Middle East, the state of Oman on the south side of straight of Hormoz began moving away from the liberal governments of the Middle East towards the Islamic Republic of Iran. The state of Oman has experienced changed in balance of power in favour of Iran.

After the Islamic revolution in Iran, the Islamic Republic of Iran was completely isolated and surrounded by hostile governments. The most powerful enemies of Iran were the governments of Taleban in Afghanistan on the Eastern side of Iran and the government of Saddam Hussein to the West of Iran. The Bush administration invested more than \$500 billion dollars to destroy the enemies of the Islamic Republic of Iran and practically transform it into a major power and allowed it to extend its influence in Syria, Lebanon and Palestine.

As the influence of the Islamic Republic of Iran rises in neighbouring countries, governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan also are joining hands with Iran. The declaration that was published after the trilateral summit, the presidents of three countries promised to focus on regional solutions for establishing stability and security and fighting the common enemies. The amazing thing is that the Islamic Republic of Iran has definitively interfered in the affairs of Afghanistan by supporting Taleban and Alqaedah. Iran has also supported sectarian violence also between Sunnis and Shias in Pakistan. Yet, in a very complicated dual policy, Iran has been able to extend its influence in both countries while supporting the enemies of both governments.

It is clear that the government of Afghanistan cannot last without military, financial and international support of the United States of America and NATO forces. It is also clear that Pakistan cannot survive without the financial support of America as Americans promised to donate nearly two billion dollars to Pakistan in this year. The big question is how the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United States of America can agree on working together closely to manage the affairs of both Pakistan and Afghanistan as they did in Iraq and as they are doing in Lebanon now?

It is a very complicated game but what is clear is that the Islamic Republic of Iran is increasing its influence in the Middle East at the cost of the moderate governments of the region; while the Americans claim that they will not arrange a great bargain with Iran at their cost.