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HOWARD B. SCHAFFER

# THE LIMITS OF INFLUENCE

AMERICA'S ROLE IN KASHMIR

THE LIMITS OF INFLUENCE

BROOKINGS



**THE LIMITS  
OF INFLUENCE**

For Dr. Vijay Sazawal

With admiration for his  
unceasing efforts to bring  
the plight of Kashmiri Pandits  
to the attention of those of us  
concerned about "America's  
Role in Kashmir."

From the author

Howard Schaffer

May, 2009

Pacific, March 12, 1997 ([http://commdocs.house.gov/committees/intlrel/hfa43264.000/hfa43264\\_of.htm](http://commdocs.house.gov/committees/intlrel/hfa43264.000/hfa43264_of.htm)).

51. Full disclosure: I am a charter member of the KSG.

52. Long led by Dr. Fai, its energetic executive director, the council actively seeks the support of U.S. officials, senators and representatives, the media, and influential private Americans for Kashmiri self-determination. It sponsors seminars, meetings, and studies built around the self-determination cause and a demand for an improvement in the Indian government's human rights performance in the parts of Kashmir New Delhi controls. The high point in its annual calendar of events is a much-publicized meeting and roundtable in a congressional office building on Capitol Hill that draws members of Congress, Kashmiri political leaders (all of an anti-Indian flavor), American and South Asian academic specialists, Kashmiri-Americans, ethnic journalists, and Pakistan Embassy officers ([www.iakf.org/main/](http://www.iakf.org/main/)).

At the seventh annual session, in July 2007, a half-dozen legislators spoke briefly in support of the Kashmiri cause. Dr. Fai maintains ties with some of the Hurriyet leaders and often sponsors their public appearances when they come to the United States. The council is widely believed to receive financial backing from the Pakistan Embassy. Fai also has links with European-based Kashmiri organizations.

53. The Indo-American Kashmir Forum was established in 1991, soon after the Pandit community was expelled from the Valley. Its main purpose is to win sympathetic American attention to the plight of the Kashmiri Pandits as "victims of Islamic fundamentalists and terrorists," an accurate description. It also supports the rehabilitation of the community throughout the world through financial grants and by enlisting backing from national and international relief organizations. The end goal of its advocacy is "(1) to promote the safety and security of Kashmiri Pandits living in the Valley and to create conditions acceptable for the return of displaced Pandits outside the Valley . . . with dignity and (2) to create a society in which Kashmiri Pandits are integral members with a proportionate representation and voice in the affairs of the state" (<http://www.iakf.org/main/>).

Dr. Sazawal, its energetic overseas coordinator and past president, has become a well-known figure to U.S. government officials and influential private Americans interested in the Kashmir issue. In an August 2007 interview, he told me that the forum enjoyed some support in Congress, but its ability to expand this is inhibited by the lack of interest on the part of the Indian Embassy in Washington in promoting the Pandits' cause among pro-Indian senators and representatives. He dismissed as unrealistic the call of some Kashmir Pandits for a state of their own inside the Valley. According to Dr. Sazawal, 350,000 Pandits left the Valley and only 5,000 remain there. He estimates that there are 1,300 to 1,500 Pandit families in the United States, mostly in New York, New Jersey, northern California, Houston, Chicago, and Washington, D.C. They easily outnumber the Kashmiri Muslims resident in this country, he says ([www.kashmirforum.org](http://www.kashmirforum.org)).

# BROOKINGS

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**THE LIMITS OF INFLUENCE: AMERICA'S ROLE IN KASHMIR**  
A Discussion with Ambassador Howard B. Schaffer  
Director of Studies, Institute for the Study of Diplomacy  
Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University

Thursday, June 4, 2008 | 3:00-5:00 pm  
St. Louis Room, The Brookings Institution  
1775 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Washington DC

Dear Colleague:

The Brookings Institution Press has just published Ambassador Howard Schaffer's unique and valuable study of American engagement on the Kashmir dispute, *The Limits of Influence: America's Role in Kashmir*, as part of the ADST-DACOR Diplomats and Diplomacy book series.

Given the usefulness of the study and salience of its subject matter, I would like to organize an informal private discussion on the relevance of the book for current and future American policy concerning Kashmir. To this end, we will host a small seminar at Brookings from 3:00 to 5:00 pm on Thursday, June 5. Following a summary of Ambassador Schaffer's major arguments, we will explore the utility of a fresh American approach, the problems it might cause, and other options.

I hope you can join us for this session. Please let my research assistant Dhruva Jaishankar (202-797-6023 | [djaishankar@brookings.edu](mailto:djaishankar@brookings.edu)) know whether you plan on attending. We regret that this invitation is non-transferrable. Copies of the book are available for purchase at the Brookings book store, if you have not acquired one already.

Sincerely,



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### *Attendees*

John Ashworth, U.S. State Department  
Stephen Cohen, Brookings Institution  
Wolf Gross, Northrop Grumman  
Selig Harrison, Center for International Policy  
Robert Hathaway, Woodrow Wilson Center  
Dhruva Jaishankar, Brookings Institution  
Farooq Kathwari, Ethan Allen  
Alan Kronstadt, Congressional Research Service  
Shuja Nawaz, Atlantic Council  
Habeeb Noor, Atlantic Council  
Robin Raphel, Cassidy & Associates  
Vijay Sazawal, Indo-American Kashmir Forum  
John Schmidt, George Washington University  
Pavneet Singh, World Bank  
Allison Smith, Stimson Center  
Grant Smith, Johns Hopkins-SAIS  
T.P. Sreenivasan, Brookings Institution  
Alex Thier, United States Institute of Peace  
Marvin Weinbaum, Middle East Institute