

**PAKISTAN FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS  
UNITED STATES DURING TRUMP  
ADMINISTRATION: AN APPRAISAL**

**BY**

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**NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF MODERN LANGUAGES  
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## ABSTRACT

### **Title: Pakistan Foreign Policy towards United States During Trump Administration: An Appraisal**

This research thesis offers a comprehensive examination of Pakistan's foreign policy towards the United States during the Trump administration. Through a historical literature review analysis, the study reveals the intricate and adaptive dynamics inherent in the bilateral relationship, characterized by periods of cooperation, challenges, and strategic recalibrations. The "America First" policy significantly influenced economic ties, shaping trade dynamics, investment patterns, and aid relationships.

The analysis of Pakistan-U.S. relations during the Trump era reveals a nuanced interplay of geopolitical factors, military strategies, and regional dynamics. The Trump administration's reevaluation of U.S. engagement in Afghanistan, driven by concerns about a resilient Taliban insurgency allegedly supported by elements within Pakistan's deep state, led to a strategy combining pressure and incentives. This approach strained bilateral relations, culminating in a departure from a time-based to a condition-based strategy in Afghanistan.

Pakistan's response involved defending its strategic assets in Afghanistan, rejecting a military solution, and seeking diplomatic outreach to China and Russia. Despite growing anti-American sentiment, cautionary voices within Pakistan acknowledged the strategic unsustainability of supporting externally oriented terrorist organizations. The conclusion highlights the complexity of the evolving dynamics in Pakistan-U.S. relations and the limited options the U.S. faces in dealing with Pakistan.

The study concludes with implications for future research, suggesting avenues for exploring shifts in global politics post-U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan, analyzing emerging powers' roles, delving into the socio-cultural dimensions of the relationship, and examining economic ties beyond the Trump administration. The research landscape remains rich with possibilities, offering avenues for scholars to delve into the evolving complexities of international relations and bilateral partnerships, as this study lays the foundation for a profound comprehension of the intricate interplay between nations in an ever-changing global context.

## Contents

ABSTRACT .....	4
Theme of the study.....	9
Introduction.....	10
Context of the study .....	11
Statement of the Problem .....	13
Research Objectives.....	13
Research Questions .....	14
Conceptual Framework.....	14
Significance of the study.....	14
Methodology.....	15
Ethical Considerations.....	16
Limitations of the Study .....	16
Literature Review .....	17
Historical Background of Pak-US relation since 1947- 2022 .....	20
Early years (1947-1950): .....	22
SEATO and CENTO (1950s-1960s):.....	25
Stress and change (1970-1980s):.....	26
Post-Cold War (1990s): .....	28
Early Post-Cold War Period (1990-1997): .....	28
Nuclear Tests and Escalation (1998):.....	29
Impact on Bilateral Relations:.....	30
Broader Regional Implications:.....	30
Cooperation after 9/11 (2000s): .....	30
Post-9/11 Realignment: .....	31
Pakistan's Role in the War on Terror: .....	31
U.S. Assistance to Pakistan: .....	31
Challenges and Complexities: .....	32
Impact on Regional Dynamics:.....	32
Ongoing challenges (2010s to present): .....	33
Accusations of Pakistan's Support for Militant Groups: .....	33
The Conflict in Afghanistan: .....	33
U.S. Drone Strikes on Pakistani Territory:.....	34
Geopolitical Context and Political Issues: .....	34

Economic and Trade Relations:.....	34
Human Rights and Civil Society Concerns:.....	34
Recent Developments:.....	35
US withdrawal from Afghanistan.....	35
Cooperation and friction on other issues.....	36
Challenges and opportunities ahead.....	38
Change of government in Pakistan.....	39
Implications of cypher conspiracy on Pak-US relationship.....	40
Policy Shifts Under the Trump Administration and Impact on Bilateral Relations.....	41
Pakistan’s Strategic Pivot.....	44
Key Findings.....	46
Conclusion.....	52
Political Ties During Trump Administration.....	54
Introduction.....	54
Background and Contextualization.....	54
Key players and decision-makers in both Pakistan and the United States.....	56
Early Diplomatic Engagements and Statements.....	58
Initial statements and reactions from Pakistan.....	58
Timeline of Key Political Events (2017-2020).....	59
Impact of Trump's policies on Pakistan's political landscape.....	64
The role of Pakistan in facilitating peace talks.....	66
Overview of the political landscape in Pakistan during the Trump administration.....	68
Key findings.....	70
Military ties during Trump Administration.....	74
Historical Context of Military Relations Pre-Trump Era:.....	74
1947-1965: Formation and Alliance.....	74
1965-1979: Period of Discord and Strain.....	75
Late 1970s: Resurgence of Cooperation.....	76
1980-1990: Renewed Alliance in the Afghan Conflict.....	76
Post-Soviet Withdrawal and Growing Tensions (1990-2001).....	77
Military relations under Obama (2009-2017).....	78
Major U.S. Arms Sales and Grants to Pakistan Since 2001.....	79
2.30 Shifts in Military Policy under Trump:.....	82
Military Aid and Assistance Dynamics.....	83

Head wise breakdown of Aid in Trump Era (2017-2021) .....	85
Influence of Afghanistan Policy on Military Relations: .....	90
Joint Military Training and Exercises:.....	92
Trump’s views regarding Pakistan’s Nuclear Arsenal .....	93
Overview 2017-2021 .....	94
Key Findings .....	96
Economic ties between Pak-US during trump administration .....	97
Introduction .....	97
Significance of Examining Economic Ties during the Trump Administration.....	97
Envisaged outcomes .....	98
Historical Context of Economic Relations .....	99
Economic Cooperation and the Cold War (1950s-1970s):.....	100
Anti-Soviet front (1980s-1990s):.....	101
Post-9/11 Cooperation (2000s): .....	102
Trade and Investment (2010s):.....	105
Regional Dynamics and Geopolitical Influence (2020 onward): .....	105
Key points - Historical context to US economic aid to Pakistan .....	106
Trade and Investment .....	107
Trade Dynamics during the Trump Era: .....	108
Trade Balance and Key Export-Import Sectors: .....	108
Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and Economic Cooperation: .....	109
Bilateral Agreements and Policies .....	112
Agreements:.....	112
Tariff Structures and Trade Policies: .....	113
Economic Aid and Assistance.....	115
Economic Challenges and Frictions.....	117
Impact of U.S. Trade Policies .....	117
Multilateral Organizations and Economic Relations .....	119
Pakistan's Engagement in Multilateral Economic Organizations:.....	119
The United States' Role in Multilateral Economic Organizations: .....	120
Geopolitical Considerations .....	121
Key Findings .....	122
Conclusion.....	125
Finding, Conclusion and Recommendations.....	127



Findings .....	127
Conclusion.....	130
Recommendations .....	132
Implications for Future Research .....	132
Bibliography.....	134

### **Theme of the study**

The thesis starts with a broad introduction of the topic in the first chapter. It covers the study rationale, the problem statement, the research objectives, questions and conceptual framework. Further it describes the significance of the study, the methodology and charts the delimitations.

The study continues to Literature Review in second chapter. Here, detailed historical background is carried out era wise. Once the thesis has developed an understanding of the background, it delves deeper into individual topics of political, military and economic ties under the Trump era. A sub chapter is dedicated to each of these headings.

Once the thesis has developed a detailed understanding of above topics, it moves on the Analysis and Interpretation chapter. Here a detailed analysis of all above chapters is carried out, to synthesis key findings.

Lastly recommendations and conclusion is given along with implications for future research.

## Introduction

The realm of international relations is marked by the dynamic interplay of states, each navigating a complex web of political, economic, and strategic interests. In this intricate landscape, the bilateral relations between nations become crucial determinants of global stability and security<sup>1</sup>. The relationship between Pakistan and the United States, two nations with multifaceted histories and divergent geopolitical priorities, has been a subject of scholarly scrutiny and geopolitical significance. This thesis endeavors to conduct a comprehensive appraisal of Pakistan's foreign policy towards the United States during the tenure of the Trump administration, a period marked by heightened global uncertainties and shifting geopolitical paradigms.

Foreign policy operates within a complex web of environmental settings. States employ strategies to safeguard their internal and external interests, collaborating with other nations and non-state actors<sup>2</sup>. The primary objective is to protect national interests through diplomatic or other means. In this context, heads of state negotiate to prevent conflicts and promote stability. Pakistan's foreign policy vis-à-vis the United States has been multifaceted. As a frontline ally in the War on Terror, Pakistan faced mounting challenges related to militant extremism within its borders<sup>3</sup>. Balancing traditional rivalry with India—especially in economic, military, nuclear, and strategic capabilities—has been crucial for Pakistan's security<sup>4</sup>.

The election of Donald J. Trump as the 45th President of the United States in 2017<sup>5</sup> brought about a paradigm shift in the global political landscape. Trump's unconventional approach to diplomacy, characterized by a transactional and often unpredictable style, had far-reaching implications for international relations<sup>6</sup>. Against this backdrop, Pakistan's foreign policy towards the United States assumed a critical importance, as the South Asian nation sought to navigate the complexities of a

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<sup>1</sup> “Promotion of Relations with Other Countries,” Mofa.go.jp, 2024, <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/other/bluebook/1972/1972-2-2.htm>.

<sup>2</sup> Muhittin Ataman, “The Impact of Non-State Actors on World Politics: A Challenge to NationStates,” *Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations* 2, no. 1 (2003), [https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/olj/tjir/v2n1/tjir\\_v2n1atm01.pdf](https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/olj/tjir/v2n1/tjir_v2n1atm01.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Vinay Kaura, “Pakistan-Afghan Taliban Relations Face Mounting Challenges,” Middle East Institute, 2022, <https://www.mei.edu/publications/pakistan-afghan-taliban-relations-face-mounting-challenges>.

<sup>4</sup> Fahad Ahmed Misson, “Pakistan-India Relations: A Critical Appraisal of Power Politics,” *Winter Issue* 42, no. 2 (2022): 54–71, <https://doi.org/10.53532/ss.042.02.00131>.

<sup>5</sup> “Donald J. Trump – the White House,” Archives.gov (The White House, 2015), <https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/people/donald-j-trump/>.

<sup>6</sup> Brian Bennett, “This Is What Trump’s Impulsive Diplomacy Looks Like,” TIME.com, June 14, 2018, <https://time.com/magazine/us/5311954/june-25th-2018-vol-191-no-24-u-s/>.

rapidly evolving global order. The overarching objective of this thesis is to critically analyze and evaluate the key dimensions of Pakistan's foreign policy vis-à-vis the United States during the Trump administration. This appraisal will extend beyond a mere chronological examination of events, aiming to delve into the underlying motivations, strategic calculations, and the impact of policy decisions on the bilateral relationship. By employing a multidisciplinary approach that integrates political science, international relations, and strategic studies, this research seeks to provide a nuanced understanding of the intricacies that defined the diplomatic engagements between Pakistan and the United States during this pivotal period. The significance of this study lies not only in its potential to contribute to the academic discourse surrounding international relations but also in its practical implications for policymakers and analysts. As the global geopolitical landscape continues to evolve, a comprehensive assessment of the dynamics between nations becomes imperative for fostering informed and effective diplomatic strategies. Through a meticulous examination of Pakistan's foreign policy towards the United States under the Trump administration, this thesis aims to shed light on the complex interplay of national interests, regional dynamics, and global imperatives that shaped the bilateral relationship during this critical juncture in contemporary history.

### **Context of the study**

The background of the research provides a contextual foundation, outlining the historical and geopolitical factors that necessitate an in-depth examination of Pakistan's foreign policy towards the United States during the Trump administration. This section aims to elucidate the broader circumstances that influenced the bilateral relationship, setting the stage for a comprehensive appraisal.

Pakistan and the United States, despite being geographically distant, have shared a complex and multifaceted relationship since the early years of the Cold War<sup>7</sup>. Historically, the collaboration between the two nations has been shaped by strategic imperatives, security concerns, and shifting geopolitical alliances. The United States viewed Pakistan as a crucial partner during the Cold

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<sup>7</sup> Stephen P Cohen, "*Pakistan and the Cold War*," Brookings, December 10, 2009, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/pakistan-and-the-cold-war/>.

War era, especially in the context of containing the spread of communism in the region<sup>8</sup>. This alliance was exemplified by the United States providing substantial military and economic aid to Pakistan.

However, the dynamics of the relationship underwent significant transformations in the postCold War era, marked by a series of highs and lows. The 9/11 attacks in 2001 and the subsequent global War on Terror brought renewed attention to the region, leading to a period of close collaboration between Pakistan and the United States. The geopolitical landscape, however, continued to evolve, and the complexities of regional security, particularly in Afghanistan, introduced new challenges.

The Trump administration, inaugurated in January 2017, injected a distinctive and unconventional approach to foreign policy, marked by a focus on transactional engagements, skepticism of international agreements, and an "America First" ethos<sup>9</sup>. This shift in the U.S. approach to global affairs had significant ramifications for its relationships with key allies and partners, including Pakistan. The administration's emphasis on burden-sharing, counterterrorism cooperation, and recalibration of aid policies added a layer of complexity to the bilateral ties.

Against this backdrop, Pakistan's foreign policy maneuverings during the Trump administration assumed critical importance. The South Asian nation faced the challenge of aligning its national interests with the evolving priorities of the United States while simultaneously navigating its regional dynamics, especially in the context of Afghanistan and the broader South Asian security landscape.

This research recognizes that the nuances of Pakistan's foreign policy decisions during this period cannot be fully grasped without a meticulous examination of historical antecedents, regional power dynamics, and the specific policy measures implemented by the Trump administration. As such, the background of the research sets the stage for a comprehensive analysis, highlighting the

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<sup>8</sup> "Foreign Relations of the United States, 1958–1960, South and Southeast Asia, Volume XV - Office of the Historian," State.gov, 2024, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1958-60v15/d370>.

<sup>9</sup> Daniel J. Ikenson, "*'America First' Ethos Emboldens Boeing to Battle Bombardier, Benefiting White-Collar Washington*," Cato Institute, July 12, 2017, <https://www.cato.org/commentary/america-first-ethos-emboldensboeing-battle-bombardier-benefiting-white-collar>.

intricacies of the historical context and the shifting global and regional dynamics that shaped Pakistan's foreign policy towards the United States during the Trump administration.

### **Rationale of the Study**

The rationale of this study stems from the imperative to comprehensively understand and analyze the intricate dynamics of Pakistan's foreign policy towards the United States during the Trump administration. Given the unprecedented nature of the Trump presidency and its consequential impact on global affairs, an in-depth examination of Pakistan's responses becomes paramount. This research seeks to address the critical gap in scholarly literature by elucidating the underlying motivations, strategic considerations, and implications of Pakistan's foreign policy decisions within the context of the evolving geopolitical landscape during this pivotal period.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The study addresses the overarching problem of deciphering the complexities inherent in Pakistan's foreign policy towards the United States during the Trump administration. The challenges lie in navigating the intricacies of a shifting global order, characterized by an unconventional U.S. presidency and dynamic geopolitical forces. As such, this research aims to delineate the key issues, diplomatic challenges, and policy dilemmas faced by Pakistan in fostering and managing its relationship with the United States during this transformative period.

### **Research Objectives**

The primary objective of this research is to conduct a comprehensive appraisal of Pakistan's foreign policy towards the United States during the Trump administration. Specific objectives include analyzing the key factors influencing Pakistan's foreign policy decisions, assessing the impact of Trump's policies on bilateral relations, and discerning the strategic considerations that guided Pakistan's diplomatic maneuvers during this period.

## **Research Questions**

1. What were the key factors influencing Pakistan's foreign policy decisions towards the United States during the Trump administration?
2. How did the policies of the Trump administration impact the bilateral relations between Pakistan and the United States?
3. What strategic considerations guided Pakistan's diplomatic maneuvers in response to the evolving global and regional dynamics during this period?

## **Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework for this study draws on the interplay of key variables, including global and regional geopolitics, national interests, diplomatic strategies, and the policies of the Trump administration. These variables are interconnected, forming a comprehensive schema that elucidates the complex factors influencing Pakistan's foreign policy towards the United States during this critical period.

## **Significance of the study**

The significance of undertaking a comprehensive appraisal of Pakistan's foreign policy towards the United States during the Trump administration lies in its potential to offer invaluable insights into the intricate dynamics of contemporary international relations. The geopolitical landscape, marked by shifting power structures, evolving alliances, and global uncertainties, necessitates a nuanced understanding of the diplomatic engagements between nations. By focusing on a critical period characterized by an unconventional U.S. administration, this research contributes to the academic discourse by unraveling the complexities that influenced the bilateral relationship between Pakistan and the United States. Moreover, the findings of this study hold practical implications for policymakers and analysts, providing a foundation for informed decisionmaking in an ever-changing global environment. A thorough analysis of Pakistan's responses to the Trump administration's policies contributes not only to the understanding of specific bilateral relations but also enhances our broader comprehension of how nations navigate geopolitical challenges, align national interests, and adapt to the evolving contours of international diplomacy.

## Methodology

This research adopts a systematic approach centered around an extensive literature review, coupled with a rigorous analytical framework, to elucidate the dynamics of Pakistan's foreign policy towards the United States during the Trump administration. The methodological design is inherently qualitative, with a primary focus on synthesizing and critically evaluating existing academic and policy literature.

The foundation of this study rests upon a comprehensive literature review, encompassing scholarly articles, policy documents, diplomatic reports, and relevant academic texts. A systematic search and review of peer-reviewed journals, databases, and official publications will be conducted to gather a diverse range of perspectives on the subject matter.

The primary focus of the research involves an extensive review and analysis of existing secondary sources, including scholarly literature, government publications, policy documents, and media reports. The chapter outlines the approach taken to gather, assess, and synthesize secondary data in order to draw meaningful conclusions and insights into the subject matter.

- **Research Design**

The research design for this thesis is characterized by a comprehensive literature review and content analysis. The utilization of a desk-based approach, devoid of primary data collection, allows for an in-depth examination of historical perspectives, theoretical frameworks, and existing analyses pertaining to Pakistan's foreign policy towards the United States during the Trump administration.

- **Data Collection**

The primary source of data for this study is secondary in nature, sourced from a diverse range of scholarly works, government reports, official documents, and media coverage. The comprehensive literature review serves as the backbone of the research, offering a synthesis of existing knowledge, interpretations, and debates surrounding the subject. The selection of secondary sources was guided by relevance, credibility, and the need to capture diverse perspectives and interpretations.

Given the nature of the research design, there is no explicit sample selection process for primary data collection, as the study relies solely on existing secondary sources. The sample, in this context, encompasses a wide array of published materials and official



documents that have contributed to the discourse on Pakistan's foreign policy towards the United States.

- **Data Analysis**

Data analysis in this study predominantly involves a qualitative synthesis of information obtained from secondary sources. The literature review and content analysis were conducted systematically, with a focus on identifying key themes, historical trends, and evolving dynamics in Pakistan's foreign policy during the specified period. The analysis is rooted in a comparative approach, examining divergent perspectives and synthesizing findings to construct a comprehensive narrative.

- **Validity and Reliability**

Ensuring the validity and reliability of the research findings is paramount in the absence of primary data collection. Rigorous scrutiny of the selected secondary sources, reliance on reputable publications, and cross-referencing different perspectives contribute to the credibility of the study. Additionally, a transparent methodology, clearly delineated research objectives, and a systematic approach to data analysis enhance the overall validity and reliability of the research outcomes.

### **Ethical Considerations**

As this study exclusively relies on secondary data, ethical considerations are centered around the responsible use of existing literature and proper citation practices. Ensuring the accurate representation of authors' perspectives and avoiding misinterpretation are critical ethical considerations in this context.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The limitations of this research predominantly stem from its reliance on secondary data. The potential for bias in existing literature, limitations in the scope of available information, and the absence of real-time data collection may constrain the study's ability to capture the entirety of Pakistan's foreign policy dynamics during the Trump administration.

The study acknowledges certain limitations, including the constraint of a specific timeframe (the Trump administration) and a focus on the bilateral relationship with the

United States. The research does not aim to provide an exhaustive analysis of all aspects of Pakistan's foreign policy but rather a focused appraisal during this pivotal period.

## Literature Review

The foreign relations between Pakistan and the United States have been characterized by oscillation and complexity. During the Trump administration (2017-2021), this bilateral relationship faced considerable challenges and transformations. Various geopolitical interests, domestic political considerations, and emerging global dynamics led to a re-evaluation of the previously established order. This literature review aims to outline the existing research and analysis regarding Pakistan's foreign policy towards the United States during this period, highlighting key themes such as security cooperation, economic ties, regional interests, and the impact of domestic politics in both nations.

The historical context of Pakistan-US relations is characterized by a complex interplay of diplomatic, military, and economic ties that have evolved significantly since Pakistan's independence in 1947.<sup>10</sup> The relationship has oscillated between periods of close cooperation and strained interactions, influenced by geopolitical dynamics, regional conflicts, and domestic political changes in both countries. Initially, the United States viewed Pakistan as a strategic ally in the context of the Cold War, particularly against the backdrop of the Soviet Union's influence in the region.<sup>10</sup> This alliance was solidified through military and economic assistance, which positioned Pakistan as a key player in US foreign policy objectives in South Asia.<sup>11</sup>

In the early years following independence, Pakistan's strategic location made it an attractive partner for the US, especially during the Korean War and later during the Cold War.<sup>12</sup> The US provided

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<sup>10</sup> Amin, R., Awan, G., & Mahmood, A. (2020). Pak–us relations: paradoxes & enigmas during war on terror. *Sir Syed Journal of Education & Social Research (Sjesr)*, 3(3), 408-414. [https://doi.org/10.36902/sjesr-vol3-iss3-2020\(408-414\)](https://doi.org/10.36902/sjesr-vol3-iss3-2020(408-414))

<sup>11</sup> Nguyen, K. (2020). United states–pakistan relations in post-cold war era: a political–security perspective. *The Journal of Indian and Asian Studies*, 01(01), 2050001. <https://doi.org/10.1142/s2717541320500011>

<sup>12</sup> Ali, I. (2023). Pak-us relations: an overview in historical perspective (1947-2021). *Pakistan Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 11(4). <https://doi.org/10.52131/pjhss.2023.v11i4.1913><sup>14</sup>

Nguyen, K. (2020). United states–pakistan relations in post-cold war era: a political–security perspective. *The Journal of Indian and Asian Studies*, 01(01), 2050001. <https://doi.org/10.1142/s2717541320500011>

military aid and economic assistance, which helped Pakistan develop its military capabilities and infrastructure.<sup>14</sup> However, this relationship was not without its challenges. The

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<sup>10</sup> Ali, I. (2023). Pak-us relations: an overview in historical perspective (1947-2021). *Pakistan Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 11(4). <https://doi.org/10.52131/pjhss.2023.v11i4.1913>  
US's fluctuating interest in Pakistan often led to periods of neglect, particularly during the 1970s when Pakistan's alignment with China and the US's focus on India strained bilateral ties.<sup>15</sup>

The post-9/11 era marked a significant turning point in Pakistan-US relations, as the United States sought Pakistan's cooperation in its War on Terror. Following the attacks on September 11, 2001, Pakistan was designated as a frontline ally in the fight against terrorism<sup>13</sup>, leading to a substantial increase in military and economic aid from the US.<sup>17</sup> This partnership was characterized by a mutual dependence: the US relied on Pakistan for logistical support in Afghanistan, while Pakistan sought economic and military assistance to combat domestic terrorism and bolster its security.<sup>14</sup> However, this relationship was fraught with contradictions, as the US's military operations, including drone strikes<sup>15</sup>, often violated Pakistan's sovereignty and fueled anti-American sentiment within the country.<sup>20</sup>

The dynamics of the relationship further evolved during the Obama administration, which sought to recalibrate US engagement with Pakistan. The administration recognized the need for a more nuanced approach, balancing military assistance with diplomatic engagement aimed at addressing Pakistan's concerns regarding India and regional stability.<sup>16</sup> However, the relationship remained

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<sup>13</sup> Ahmad, F. (2023). Changing dynamics of bilateral relations between us and pakistan: sino-russia factor. *Annals of Human and Social Sciences*, 4(1). [https://doi.org/10.35484/ahss.2023\(4-i\)16](https://doi.org/10.35484/ahss.2023(4-i)16)<sup>17</sup>

Nguyen, K. (2020). United states–pakistan relations in post-cold war era: a political–security perspective. *The Journal of Indian and Asian Studies*, 01(01), 2050001.  
<https://doi.org/10.1142/s2717541320500011>

<sup>14</sup> Zaidi, S. and Ahmad, A. (2021). From friend to foe: post-9/11 pakistan–us relations; a realist perspective. *Asian Journal of Comparative Politics*, 7(4), 727-743.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/20578911211007936>

<sup>15</sup> Ahmad, F. (2023). Changing dynamics of bilateral relations between us and pakistan: sino-russia factor. *Annals of Human and Social Sciences*, 4(1). [https://doi.org/10.35484/ahss.2023\(4-i\)16](https://doi.org/10.35484/ahss.2023(4-i)16)<sup>20</sup>

Nguyen, K. (2020). United states–pakistan relations in post-cold war era: a political–security perspective. *The Journal of Indian and Asian Studies*, 01(01), 2050001.  
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<sup>16</sup> Ahmad, F. (2023). Changing dynamics of bilateral relations between us and pakistan: sino-russia factor. *Annals of Human and Social Sciences*, 4(1). [https://doi.org/10.35484/ahss.2023\(4-i\)16](https://doi.org/10.35484/ahss.2023(4-i)16)<sup>22</sup>

complicated by issues such as Pakistan's alleged support for militant groups<sup>22</sup> and its strategic partnership with China, which the US viewed with increasing apprehension.

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<sup>15</sup> Khan, M. (2020). Pakistan-us relations: rethinking the dependency relationship. *Strategic Studies*, 39(4), 55-72. <https://doi.org/10.53532/ss.039.04.0096>

In the lead-up to the Trump administration, Pakistan-US relations were characterized by a growing sense of disillusionment on both sides.<sup>23</sup> The US's increasing focus on India as a strategic partner in the region, coupled with Pakistan's pivot towards China, created an atmosphere of mistrust and competition.<sup>17</sup> The Trump administration's approach was marked by a more confrontational stance, with the US cutting military aid and publicly criticizing Pakistan for its alleged harboring of terrorists.<sup>18</sup> This shift in policy reflected a broader trend of diminishing US influence in Pakistan, as Islamabad sought to strengthen its ties with China and other regional powers.<sup>19</sup>

The historical context of Pakistan-US relations is also shaped by economic considerations.<sup>20</sup> Over the decades, economic aid has been a significant component of the bilateral relationship, with the US providing substantial assistance for development projects, military procurement, and economic stabilization efforts.<sup>21</sup> However, the effectiveness of this aid has often been questioned, as it has been perceived as conditional and tied to US strategic interests<sup>22</sup> rather than genuine developmental goals. This has led to a dependency dynamic, where Pakistan's economic stability has been closely linked to US foreign policy decisions.

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Khan, M. (2020). Pakistan-us relations: rethinking the dependency relationship. *Strategic Studies*, 39(4), 55-72. <https://doi.org/10.53532/ss.039.04.0096>

<sup>17</sup> Ahmad, F. (2023). Changing dynamics of bilateral relations between us and pakistan: sino-russia factor. *Annals of Human and Social Sciences*, 4(1). [https://doi.org/10.35484/ahss.2023\(4-i\)16](https://doi.org/10.35484/ahss.2023(4-i)16)

<sup>18</sup> Amin, R., Awan, G., & Mahmood, A. (2020). Pak-us relations: paradoxes & enigmas during war on terror. *Sir Syed Journal of Education & Social Research (Sjesr)*, 3(3), 408-414. [https://doi.org/10.36902/sjesr-vol3-iss3-2020\(408-414\)](https://doi.org/10.36902/sjesr-vol3-iss3-2020(408-414))

<sup>19</sup> Ahmad, F. (2023). Changing dynamics of bilateral relations between us and pakistan: sino-russia factor. *Annals of Human and Social Sciences*, 4(1). [https://doi.org/10.35484/ahss.2023\(4-i\)16](https://doi.org/10.35484/ahss.2023(4-i)16)

<sup>20</sup> Ali, I. (2023). Pak-us relations: an overview in historical perspective (1947-2021). *Pakistan Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 11(4). <https://doi.org/10.52131/pjhss.2023.v11i4.1913>

<sup>21</sup> Rasool, K. (2023). Pakistan strategic prospect with usa during pti government. *Journal of Development and Social Sciences*, 4(1). [https://doi.org/10.47205/jdss.2023\(4-i\)33](https://doi.org/10.47205/jdss.2023(4-i)33)

<sup>22</sup> Ali, I. (2023). Pak-us relations: an overview in historical perspective (1947-2021). *Pakistan Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 11(4). <https://doi.org/10.52131/pjhss.2023.v11i4.1913>

In conclusion, the historical context of Pakistan-US relations is marked by a series of complex interactions that have evolved in response to changing geopolitical landscapes, domestic political shifts, and mutual strategic interests.<sup>23</sup> The relationship has oscillated between cooperation and conflict, shaped by external pressures and internal dynamics within both countries.<sup>24</sup> As both

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<sup>23</sup> Khan, M. (2020). Pakistan-us relations: rethinking the dependency relationship. *Strategic Studies*, 39(4), 55-72. <https://doi.org/10.53532/ss.039.04.0096>  
nations navigate the challenges of the 21st century, the future of their relationship will likely depend on their ability to address mutual concerns while adapting to the shifting geopolitical environment.<sup>25</sup>

### Historical Background of Pak-US relation since 1947- 2022

In 1947, Pakistan emerged as an independent nation following the partition of British India.<sup>26</sup> This marked the beginning of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and the United States. United states of America remains one of the first countries to have established diplomatic ties with Pakistan.<sup>27</sup> The relationship between Pakistan and the United States has been complex and multifaceted since Pakistan's independence. This relationship has developed through various stages, influenced by geopolitical interests, regional dynamics and world events.

Initially, the U.S. provided economic and military assistance to Pakistan, viewing it as an important ally during the early years of the Cold War.<sup>28</sup> This support was part of the broader U.S. strategy to contain the spread of communism in South Asia.

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<sup>23</sup> Amin, R., Awan, G., & Mahmood, A. (2020). Pak–us relations: paradoxes & enigmas during war on terror. *Sir Syed Journal of Education & Social Research (Sjesr)*, 3(3), 408-414. [https://doi.org/10.36902/sjesr-vol3-iss3-2020\(408-414\)](https://doi.org/10.36902/sjesr-vol3-iss3-2020(408-414))

<sup>24</sup> Rasool, K. (2023). Pakistan strategic prospect with usa during pti government. *Journal of Development and Social Sciences*, 4(1). [https://doi.org/10.47205/jdss.2023\(4-i\)33](https://doi.org/10.47205/jdss.2023(4-i)33)

<sup>25</sup> Khan, M. (2020). Pakistan-us relations: rethinking the dependency relationship. *Strategic Studies*, 39(4), 55-72. <https://doi.org/10.53532/ss.039.04.0096>

<sup>26</sup> David Gilmartin, "Partition, Pakistan, and South Asian history: In search of a narrative," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 57, no. 4 (1998): 1068-1095.

<sup>27</sup> Umbreen Javaid and Imrana Mushtaq, "Historical perspective of Pakistan USA relations; lessons for Pakistan," *South Asian Studies* 29, no. 1 (2020).

<sup>28</sup> Robert J. McMahon, "United States Cold War Strategy in South Asia: Making a Military Commitment to Pakistan, 1947-1954," *The Journal of American History* 75, no. 3 (1988): 812-840.

The 1950s saw a significant strengthening of ties between the two nations. Pakistan joined several regional and international alliances backed by the U.S., including the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) and the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO).<sup>29</sup> These alliances aimed to counter the influence of the Soviet Union in the region.<sup>37</sup>

However, the relationship faced challenges during the 1960s. Tensions emerged over issues such as Pakistan's close ties with China and its pursuit of a nuclear weapons program.<sup>30</sup> In 1971, the

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U.S. suspended military aid to Pakistan during the Indo-Pakistani War and the subsequent breakup of Pakistan with the creation of Bangladesh.<sup>31</sup>

During the 1980s, Pakistan and the U.S. rekindled their alliance, primarily due to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.<sup>32</sup> The U.S. provided substantial military and financial support to Pakistan as it played a crucial role in supporting Afghan mujahideen fighters against the Soviets.<sup>33</sup> This period saw a significant convergence of interests.

However, the relationship faced a downturn in the post-Cold War era. Differences arose over Pakistan's nuclear program, human rights issues, and democracy concerns. Sanctions were imposed on Pakistan, which strained the bilateral ties.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Faiqa Mushtaq, "Prospects for Pak-China Relations," *Global Political Review* 4, no. 4 (2019): 49-58. <sup>37</sup> Damien Fenton, *To cage the red dragon: SEATO and the defence of Southeast Asia, 1955-1965* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2012).

<sup>30</sup> Samina Ahmed, "Pakistan's nuclear weapons program: Turning points and nuclear choices," *International Security* 23, no. 4 (1999): 178-204.

<sup>31</sup> "Milestones: 1969–1976 - Office of the Historian," State.gov, 2024, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1969-1976/south-asia>.

<sup>32</sup> A. Z. Hilali, *US-Pakistan relationship: Soviet invasion of Afghanistan* (Taylor & Francis, 2017).

<sup>33</sup> Nasreen Akhtar, "Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the Taliban," *International Journal on World Peace* (2008): 49-73.

<sup>34</sup> Mussarat Jabeen, Muhammad Saleem Mazhar, and Naheed S. Goraya, "Trends and challenges in Pak-US relations: Post September 11," *South Asian Studies* 25, no. 2 (2020).

The events of 9/11, when Pakistan became a frontline state in the U.S.-led war on terror, marked a significant shift in the relationship.<sup>35</sup> Pakistan cooperated with the U.S. in capturing key al-Qaeda leaders and played a pivotal role in facilitating the U.S. military campaign in Afghanistan.<sup>36</sup>

Despite cooperation in the war on terror, differences persisted over various issues, including Pakistan's alleged support for militant groups.<sup>37</sup> The relationship experienced periodic ups and downs, with moments of increased cooperation followed by periods of tension.

In recent years, the U.S.-Pakistan relationship has been characterized by a focus on counterterrorism efforts, economic cooperation, and regional stability.<sup>38</sup> The U.S. has sought Pakistan's support in bringing about a peaceful resolution to the conflict in Afghanistan.<sup>39</sup>

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Understated, is a brief overview of the historical context of the relationship between Pakistan and the United States, divided into logical categorization into different eras of cooperation.

### **Early years (1947-1950):**

In the early years of Pakistan's existence from 1947 to 1950, the relationship between Pakistan and the United States was characterized by optimism and cooperation.<sup>40</sup> Here is a more detailed look at this period:

1. **Independence and Recognition:** Pakistan gained independence from British colonial rule on August 14, 1947, and immediately sought international recognition. The United States

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<sup>35</sup> Lubna Sunawar, "Pakistan as a Frontline State in War Against Terrorism: Cost & Benefit Analysis," *Journal of Political Studies* 22, no. 1 (2015).

<sup>36</sup> Mark N. Katz, "Pakistan and the 'War on Terror'," in *9/11 Ten Years After*, ed. Mark N. Katz (Routledge, 2016), 107-117.

<sup>37</sup> Derek S. Reveron, "Old allies, new friends: intelligence-sharing in the war on terror," *Orbis* 50, no. 3 (2006): 453-468.

<sup>38</sup> Balwinder Singh, "Indo-US Strategic Relations in the 21st Century," *Journal of Political Studies* 25, no. 1 (2018): 245-256.

<sup>39</sup> Ghulam Mustafa, Zahid Yaseen, and Aamir Junaid, "Role of Pakistan in the Afghan peace process," *Palarch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology* 17, no. 12 (2020): 324-341.

<sup>40</sup> Muhammad Hatim, "The origin of the Pakistan-United States relations: A review of 1947-1958," *Competitive Social Science Research Journal* 1, no. 1 (2020): 60-64.

was among the first nations to recognize Pakistan as a sovereign state, doing so on August 15, 1947.<sup>41</sup>

2. **Economic Assistance:** The United States provided significant economic assistance to Pakistan during these early years.<sup>42</sup> This assistance was aimed at helping Pakistan establish its economic infrastructure and development projects. The U.S. recognized Pakistan's potential as a stable and democratic partner in South Asia.
3. **Military Assistance:** Military aid from the United States also played a crucial role in building Pakistan's armed forces.<sup>43</sup> This military assistance was driven by the U.S. strategy to contain the spread of communism during the early years of the Cold War.<sup>52</sup>
4. **Kashmir Conflict:** The issue of Kashmir, a region disputed between India and Pakistan, emerged as a source of tension during this period.<sup>44</sup> The U.S. attempted to mediate between India and Pakistan but was unable to broker a lasting solution.<sup>45</sup>
5. **Diplomatic Relations:** The establishment of diplomatic relations and exchange of ambassadors between Pakistan and the United States marked a commitment to maintaining a bilateral partnership.<sup>46</sup>
6. **Educational and Cultural Exchanges:** Educational and cultural exchanges between the two countries began to foster mutual understanding. Various exchange programs, including

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<sup>41</sup> Dennis Kux, *The United States and Pakistan, 1947-2000: Disenchanted Allies* (Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2001).

<sup>42</sup> Stephen Philip Cohen, "The nation and the state of Pakistan," *Washington Quarterly* 25, no. 3 (2002): 109-122.

<sup>43</sup> Ayesha Siddiqa, *Military Inc.: inside Pakistan's military economy* (Penguin Random House India, 2017).

<sup>52</sup> James Meernik, Eric L. Krueger, and Steven C. Poe, "Testing models of US foreign policy: Foreign aid during and after the Cold War," *The Journal of Politics* 60, no. 1 (1998): 63-85.

<sup>44</sup> Jean-Marc F. Blanchard, "Linking border disputes and war: An institutional-statist theory," *Geopolitics* 10, no. 4 (2005): 688-711.

<sup>45</sup> Peer Ghulam Nabi and Muhammad Ammad Khan, "Kashmir conflict: Tracing the history suggesting the solution," *Asian Journal of Humanity, Art and Literature* 1, no. 1 (2014): 30-40.

<sup>46</sup> McMahan, Robert J. "United States Cold War Strategy in South Asia: Making a Military Commitment to Pakistan, 1947-1954." *The Journal of American History* 75, no. 3 (1988): 812-840.



scholarships for Pakistani students to study in the U.S., helped strengthen people-to-people ties.<sup>47</sup>

The United States provided assistance to Pakistan in the era mentioned (1947-1950) for several strategic and geopolitical reasons:

1. **Containment of Communism:** One of the primary motivations for U.S. assistance to Pakistan was the broader Cold War context.<sup>57</sup> In the aftermath of World War II, the United States and the Soviet Union emerged as superpowers with competing ideologies.<sup>48</sup> The U.S. was committed to containing the spread of communism, and South Asia was seen as a region of strategic importance in this regard. By providing aid to Pakistan, the U.S. aimed to bolster a democratic and pro-Western ally in the region to counter potential Soviet influence.<sup>49</sup>
2. **Geopolitical Significance:** Pakistan's location in South Asia made it strategically significant.<sup>50</sup> It shared borders with the Soviet Union (through Afghanistan) and China, both of which were seen as important players in the global balance of power. Pakistan's proximity to these countries made it a valuable partner in U.S. efforts to monitor and influence developments in the region.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Gobind M. Herani, "Prospects of American Scholarship to Pakistani School Students" (2008): 29-35. <sup>57</sup> Robert J. McMahon, "United States Cold War Strategy in South Asia: Making a Military Commitment to Pakistan, 1947-1954," *The Journal of American History* 75, no. 3 (1988): 812-840.

<sup>48</sup> Jennifer Melton, "The Misunderstood Origins of the Cold War" (2019).

<sup>49</sup> Dennis Kux, *The United States and Pakistan, 1947-2000: Disenchanted Allies* (Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2001).

<sup>50</sup> Shahram Akbarzadeh, "India and Pakistan's geostrategic rivalry in Central Asia," *Contemporary South Asia* 12, no. 2 (2003): 219-228.

<sup>51</sup> A. Z. Hilali, *US-Pakistan relationship: Soviet invasion of Afghanistan* (Taylor & Francis, 2017).

3. **Mutual Interests:** Both countries saw mutual benefits in their relationship. Pakistan sought economic and military aid to strengthen its newly established state, while the United States sought a reliable ally in the region.<sup>52</sup>

### **SEATO and CENTO (1950s-1960s):**

In the realm of international relations during the 1950s and 1960s, Pakistan emerged as a pivotal player within two significant state-led alliances, namely the Southeast Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO)<sup>53</sup> and the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO)<sup>54</sup>. This era in global politics marked a time of heightened tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union, commonly referred to as the Cold War<sup>55</sup>, where ideological and geopolitical rivalries manifested in alliances and power struggles across the world.

SEATO, initially established in 1954, and CENTO, formed in 1955, were instrumental in shaping the geopolitical landscape of South Asia and the broader region<sup>56</sup>. Their primary objective was to counter the expansion of Soviet influence in the Asia-Pacific and Middle East regions. Pakistan, situated at the crossroads of these two critical theaters of operation, played a significant and multifaceted role in these alliances.

Pakistan's participation in SEATO and CENTO was driven by a confluence of strategic, political, and economic considerations<sup>57</sup>. As a key player in these alliances, Pakistan found itself in a unique position to serve as a buffer against the spread of communism and to secure substantial military and economic aid from the United States, which aimed to bolster its regional allies in the face of

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<sup>52</sup> Robert J. McMahon, "United States Cold War Strategy in South Asia: Making a Military Commitment to Pakistan, 1947-1954," *The Journal of American History* 75, no. 3 (1988): 812-840.

<sup>53</sup> Huang Min Xing, "A Critical Examination of Pakistan-US Relations," *Dinasti International Journal of Digital Business Management* 2, no. 6 (2021): 1057-1062.

<sup>54</sup> Behçet Kemal Yeşilbursa, "CENTO: the forgotten alliance in the Middle East (1959-1979)," *Middle Eastern Studies* 56, no. 6 (2020): 854-877.

<sup>55</sup> Hal Brands and John Lewis Gaddis, "The new cold war: America, China, and the echoes of history," *Foreign Affairs* 100 (2021): 10.

<sup>56</sup> Umbreen Javaid and Imrana Mushtaq, "Historical perspective of Pakistan USA relations; lessons for Pakistan," *South Asian Studies* 29, no. 1 (2020).

<sup>57</sup> Zahid Anwar, Sajad Rasool, and Muhammad Ilyas Khan, "The non-aligned movement and Pakistan in historical perspective," *Pakistan Journal of Social Research* 4, no. 03 (2022): 335-340.

the Soviet threat<sup>58</sup>. The United States' support for Pakistan during this period was marked by a substantial infusion of military and economic assistance<sup>59</sup>. This aid not only bolstered Pakistan's military capabilities but also had far-reaching implications for its domestic and foreign policies. The provision of military hardware and financial support served to cement the U.S.-Pakistan partnership, shaping Pakistan's foreign policy orientation and its strategic calculus in the region. Furthermore, Pakistan's role in SEATO and CENTO had implications beyond the immediate geopolitical context. It influenced the dynamics of regional politics, contributing to the fluidity of alliances and alignments in a constantly evolving global landscape. Pakistan's involvement in these alliances intersected with its broader foreign policy objectives, including its engagement with neighboring countries and its quest for regional stability<sup>60</sup>. In conclusion, Pakistan's involvement in SEATO and CENTO during the 1950s and 1960s was emblematic of its strategic significance in the Cold War era. These alliances not only played a pivotal role in shaping Pakistan's foreign policy but also had far-reaching implications for regional and global dynamics. The influence of the United States, both in terms of military and economic aid, further underscored Pakistan's role as a key player in the containment of Soviet influence in the region. This chapter in Pakistan's history serves as a crucial backdrop for understanding its subsequent foreign policy choices and its enduring impact on the geopolitical landscape of South Asia and the Middle East.

### **Stress and change (1970-1980s):**

During the tumultuous period of the 1970s and 1980s, the relationship between Pakistan and the United States underwent significant fluctuations, reflecting the complex interplay of stress and change in their diplomatic ties. This epoch in their history was characterized by a series of events that reshaped their bilateral relations and had far-reaching consequences for the region.

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<sup>58</sup> Fareena Nazim, Sidra Kiran, Ajaz Shaheen, Quratul Ain, Muhammad Ibrar, Asghar Ullah Khan, Zain Ul Abiden Malik, and Hani Fatima, "A Critical Examination of Pakistan-US Relations," *Multicultural Education* 8, no. 1 (2022).

<sup>59</sup> Fareena Nazim, Sidra Kiran, Ajaz Shaheen, Quratul Ain, Muhammad Ibrar, Asghar Ullah Khan, Zain Ul Abiden Malik, and Hani Fatima, "A Critical Examination of Pakistan-US Relations," *Multicultural Education* 8, no. 1 (2022).

<sup>60</sup> Syed Hussain Shaheed Soherwordi, "US foreign policy shift towards Pakistan between 1965 & 1971 Pak-India wars," *South Asian Studies* 25, no. 1 (2020).

The early 1970s marked a challenging phase in Pakistan's relationship with the United States. The crisis in East Pakistan, which eventually led to the emergence of Bangladesh as an independent

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nation, cast a shadow over their alliance<sup>61</sup>. The Pakistani military regime, led by General Yahya Khan, resorted to a brutal crackdown to suppress dissidents in East Pakistan, resulting in a devastating humanitarian crisis<sup>62</sup>. This crackdown triggered international outrage and strained Pakistan's relations with the United States, as the U.S. administration grappled with the moral and ethical dimensions of its support for Pakistan<sup>63</sup>.

However, the late 1970s witnessed a significant shift in the dynamics of this relationship. In 1979, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan, setting the stage for a new geopolitical alignment in the region<sup>64</sup>. Pakistan, strategically located adjacent to Afghanistan, emerged as a crucial U.S. ally in the resistance against Soviet expansion in South Asia<sup>65</sup>. This realignment of interests brought about a marked improvement in Pakistan-U.S. relations.

The United States, in pursuit of its Cold War objectives, provided substantial military and financial support to Pakistan during this period<sup>66</sup>. This support played a pivotal role in bolstering Pakistan's capabilities and resilience in its role as a key player in the Afghan resistance. The assistance ranged from the provision of military hardware to economic aid, and it had profound implications not only for Pakistan's strategic posture but also for the broader dynamics of the Afghan conflict.

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<sup>61</sup> Javaid and Imrana Mushtaq, "Historical perspective of Pakistan USA relations; lessons for Pakistan," *South Asian Studies* 29, no. 1 (2020).

<sup>62</sup> Tulshi Kumar Das, Rituparna Bhattacharyya, and Pranjit Kumar Sarma, "Revisiting geographies of nationalism and national identity in Bangladesh," *GeoJournal* 87, no. 2 (2022): 1099-1120.

<sup>63</sup> Asfand Yar Khan, "Book Review: Creation of Bangladesh: Myths Exploded," *Margalla Papers* 25, no. 2 (2021): 132-133.

<sup>64</sup> John F. Shroder, "Afghanistan resources and Soviet policy in Central and South Asia," in *Afghanistan And The Soviet Union*, ed. John F. Shroder (Routledge, 2019), 101-119.

<sup>65</sup> Shirin Tahir-Kheli, "The Soviet Union in Afghanistan: Benefits and Costs," in *The Soviet Union in the Third World*, ed. Shirin Tahir-Kheli (Routledge, 2022), 218-231.

<sup>66</sup> Selina Adam Khan, "The Realist/Constructivist Paradigm: U.S. Foreign Policy towards Pakistan and India," <http://issi.org.pk/>, June 2014, [https://issi.org.pk/wpcontent/uploads/2014/06/1299745013\\_93221840.pdf](https://issi.org.pk/wpcontent/uploads/2014/06/1299745013_93221840.pdf).

The stress and change experienced by Pakistan-U.S. relations during the 1970s and 1980s exemplify the intricacies of international diplomacy and the role of geopolitics in shaping alliances. The transformation of Pakistan from a strained ally to a key partner in the Afghan resistance underscored the malleability of international relations in the face of evolving global dynamics. This period left an enduring imprint on Pakistan's foreign policy and its position as a regional player, with ramifications that reverberated well into the 21st century<sup>67</sup>.

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In conclusion, the 1970s and 1980s were marked by both stress and change in Pakistan-U.S. relations. The East Pakistan crisis strained their ties, but the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan led to a strategic realignment and renewed cooperation. The United States' significant military and financial support during this time was instrumental in shaping Pakistan's role in the Afghan conflict and had profound consequences for the broader geopolitical landscape of the region.

### **Post-Cold War (1990s):**

In the wake of the Cold War's conclusion, the diplomatic landscape between the United States and Pakistan witnessed a noticeable cooling of relations during the 1990s. This shift in their bilateral ties was primarily triggered by a series of events, most notably Pakistan's pursuit of a nuclear weapons program, which drew the ire of the United States and led to a succession of sanctions<sup>68</sup>.

### **Early Post-Cold War Period (1990-1997):**

- In the immediate aftermath of the Cold War, the United States was focused on maintaining regional stability and preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. Pakistan's nuclear program, which had been in development for some time, became a major point of contention<sup>69</sup>.
- In 1990, the United States imposed sanctions on Pakistan under the Pressler Amendment, citing concerns about its nuclear program. These sanctions included a

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<sup>67</sup> Wali Aslam, "United States Foreign Policy Approach Towards Pakistan (1947–2021)," in *The Routledge Handbook of US Foreign Policy in the Indo-Pacific* (2022).

<sup>68</sup> S. H. S. Soherwardi, "Pakistan's Foreign Policy Interaction with the US Foreign Policy Making Bodies (1947-2010): An Analysis," *IPRI Journal* 10, no. 2 (2010).

<sup>69</sup> Fida Bazai, Amjad Rashid, Muhamad Muzamil, Faiza Mir, Ruqia Rehman, and Ghulam Dasthagir, "The evolution of the roller coaster relationship between Pakistan and the United States," *Russian Law Journal* 11, no. 5 (2023).

suspension of military and economic assistance, signaling a significant shift in bilateral relations<sup>70</sup>.

- The sanctions were particularly damaging to Pakistan's economy and military capabilities, leading to a period of economic hardship and diplomatic isolation<sup>71</sup>.

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### **Nuclear Tests and Escalation (1998):**

- The situation escalated dramatically in May 1998 when India conducted a series of nuclear tests, followed swiftly by Pakistan<sup>72</sup>. These tests marked a significant turning point in South Asian security dynamics.
- The international community, including the United States, responded with condemnation and additional sanctions on both countries<sup>73</sup>. The fear of a nuclear arms race in the region heightened global concerns.
- U.S.-Pakistan relations deteriorated further as a result of these events. The United States was deeply disappointed by Pakistan's nuclear tests and expressed grave reservations about the potential for nuclear conflict in South Asia<sup>74</sup>.

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<sup>70</sup> Robert M. Hathaway and Lee Hamilton, *The Leverage Paradox: Pakistan and the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2017).

<sup>71</sup> Mohammad Umar, Amir Jan, Abdul Rab, and Muhammad Ramzan, "Pak-Afghan Relations after 9/11: Irritants and Prospects of Cooperation," *Multicultural Education* 8, no. 1 (2022): 205-210.

<sup>72</sup> Ramesh Thakur, "Japan and the nuclear weapons prohibition treaty: The wrong side of history, geography, legality, morality, and humanity," in *The 2017 Nuclear Ban Treaty*, ed. Ramesh Thakur (Routledge, 2020), 194-214.

<sup>73</sup> Owen B. Toon, Charles G. Bardeen, Alan Robock, Lili Xia, Hans Kristensen, Matthew McKinzie, R. J. Peterson, Cheryl S. Harrison, Nicole S. Lovenduski, and Richard P. Turco, "Rapidly expanding nuclear arsenals in Pakistan and India portend regional and global catastrophe," *Science Advances* 5, no. 10 (2019): eaay5478.

<sup>74</sup> Umbreen Javaid and Imrana Mushtaq, "Historical perspective of Pakistan USA relations; lessons for Pakistan," *South Asian Studies* 29, no. 1 (2020).

### **Impact on Bilateral Relations:**

- The post-nuclear test period was marked by strained relations between the United States and Pakistan<sup>75</sup>. The United States continued to apply pressure on Pakistan to curb its nuclear program and to exercise restraint in the security domain.
- Pakistan, on the other hand, defended its nuclear tests as a response to India's actions and argued that its nuclear capability was essential for national security<sup>76</sup>.
- The United States remained concerned about the stability of the region and sought to mediate between India and Pakistan to prevent further escalation.
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### **Broader Regional Implications:**

- The nuclearization of India and Pakistan had profound implications for regional security. It created a new paradigm in South Asian geopolitics, where nuclear deterrence became a central feature of the strategic landscape<sup>77</sup>.
- The United States continued to engage with both countries, recognizing their importance in the context of regional stability and counterterrorism efforts.

In summary, the post-Cold War period in U.S.-Pakistan relations during the 1990s was characterized by tensions and challenges stemming from Pakistan's nuclear program and the nuclear tests conducted by both India and Pakistan. These events had far-reaching consequences, not only for bilateral relations but also for the broader security dynamics of South Asia. The United States, while expressing concerns and imposing sanctions, remained engaged with both nations to mitigate the risk of further conflict and to promote regional stability.

### **Cooperation after 9/11 (2000s):**

The events of September 11, 2001, indeed marked a profound and transformative turning point in U.S.-Pakistan relations during the 2000s. This period witnessed a significant realignment of

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<sup>75</sup> Selina Adam Khan, "The Realist/Constructivist Paradigm: U.S. Foreign Policy towards Pakistan and India".

<sup>76</sup> Ejaz Hussain, "India–Pakistan relations: challenges and opportunities," *Journal of Asian Security and International Affairs* 6, no. 1 (2019): 82-95.

<sup>77</sup> Robert J. McMahon, "The Cold War in Asia: Toward a New Synthesis?," *Diplomatic History* 12, no. 3 (1988): 307–27.

interests and cooperation between the two nations, driven primarily by the exigencies of the global war on terror, and it had far-reaching implications for both countries and the broader South Asian region.

### **Post-9/11 Realignment:**

- Following the horrific terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the United States embarked on a global campaign to combat terrorism, with a particular focus on dismantling al-Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan<sup>78</sup>.
  - Recognizing Pakistan's strategic location as a neighboring country to Afghanistan, the United States sought Pakistan's cooperation in its efforts to counter these terrorist groups, including their leadership, sanctuaries, and logistical networks<sup>79</sup>.

### **Pakistan's Role in the War on Terror:**

- Pakistan, under the leadership of President Pervez Musharraf, agreed to cooperate with the United States in its fight against terrorism<sup>80</sup>. This cooperation included providing logistical support, intelligence sharing, and allowing the use of Pakistani airspace and military bases for U.S. operations in Afghanistan<sup>81</sup>.
- Pakistan also committed to cracking down on militants operating within its own borders, particularly in the tribal areas along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, which had become hotbeds of extremism<sup>82</sup>.

### **U.S. Assistance to Pakistan:**

- In recognition of Pakistan's pivotal role in the war on terror, the United States provided substantial military and economic aid to Pakistan during this period<sup>93</sup>.

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<sup>78</sup> Livia Peres Milani, "US foreign policy to South America since 9/11: Neglect or Militarization?" *Contexto Internacional* 43 (2021): 121-146.

<sup>79</sup> Qadar Bakhsh Baloch, "Engagement and Estrangement in U.S.-Pakistan Relations," *Qurtuba University of Science & IT, Pakistan*.

<sup>80</sup> Zahid Shahab Ahmed and Musharraf Zahoor, "Impacts of the 'war on terror' on the (de-) humanization of Christians in Pakistan: a critical discourse analysis of media reporting," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 31, no. 1 (2020): 85-103.

<sup>81</sup> Ghulam Mustafa, Muhammad Imran, Muhammad Ismail, and Muhammad Arslan, "Terrorism and War on Terror in South Asia: A Threat to National Sovereignty of Pakistan," *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan* 57, no. 2 (2020): 107.

<sup>82</sup> Ishrat Afshan Abbasi, Mukesh Kumar Khatwani, and Farida Yasmin Panhwar, "Social costs of war against terrorism in Pakistan," *Indian Journal of Science and Technology* 13, no. 02 (2020): 127-140. <sup>93</sup> Vasja Badalič, *The War Against Civilians: Victims of the "War on Terror" in Afghanistan and Pakistan* (Springer, 2019).



This assistance was aimed at bolstering Pakistan's capacity to combat terrorism, enhance its military capabilities, and support its economic development<sup>83</sup>.

- The military aid included weaponry, equipment, and training, while the economic aid aimed to strengthen Pakistan's institutions and promote stability<sup>84</sup>.

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#### **Challenges and Complexities:**

- The cooperation between the United States and Pakistan in the war on terror was not without its challenges and complexities. There were instances of mistrust and differences in strategic objectives. Pakistan's perceived dual policy of simultaneously cooperating with the United States while maintaining ties with certain militant groups raised concerns in Washington<sup>85</sup>.
- The U.S. drone strikes in Pakistan's tribal areas and the inadvertent loss of civilian lives in these operations created tensions between the two countries<sup>86</sup>.

#### **Impact on Regional Dynamics:**

- The post-9/11 era saw a recalibration of regional dynamics. Pakistan's role in the war on terror and its cooperation with the United States had implications for its relationships with neighboring countries, particularly Afghanistan and India<sup>87</sup>.
- The United States' engagement in the region had lasting effects on the political, security, and economic landscape of South Asia.

In conclusion, the period following the events of September 11, 2001, witnessed a significant and complex chapter in U.S.-Pakistan relations. Pakistan's pivotal role in the U.S.-led war on terror and its cooperation in countering extremism in Afghanistan underscored the evolving nature of their alliance. The substantial military and economic aid provided by the United States aimed to

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<sup>83</sup> Fazal Rabbi, "War against Terrorism and its Repercussions for Pakistan," *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture* 33, no. 2 (2012): 71-90.

<sup>84</sup> Asifa Khalid, "Impact of Terrorism on The Economy of Pakistan," *Pakistan Vision* 21, no. 1 (2020).

<sup>85</sup> Z. U. A. Malik and He Zhilong, "An appraisal of terrorism in Pakistan," *Journal of Social Sciences & Interdisciplinary Research* 8, no. 1 (2019): 64-68.

<sup>86</sup> Rafat Mahmood and Michael Jetter, "Gone with the wind: The consequences of US drone strikes in Pakistan," *The Economic Journal* 133, no. 650 (2023): 787-811.

<sup>87</sup> Faiza Bashir and Shahida Aman, "US security assistance to Pakistan in the post-9/11 period," *FWU Journal of Social Sciences* 15, no. 2 (2021): 96-116.

support Pakistan's efforts in this endeavor. However, this period was also marked by challenges and nuances, reflecting the intricate nature of international relations in the context of counterterrorism efforts and regional geopolitics<sup>88</sup>.

### **Ongoing challenges (2010s to present):**

The period from the 2010s to the present day has been characterized by a complex and often tumultuous phase in U.S.-Pakistan relations, marked by ongoing challenges and a delicate balance of cooperation and tension. Several key issues have continued to shape and define their bilateral ties during this period:

### **Accusations of Pakistan's Support for Militant Groups:**

- One of the persistent challenges in U.S.-Pakistan relations has been accusations and suspicions regarding Pakistan's alleged support for certain militant groups, particularly those with links to Afghanistan and India<sup>89</sup>. These accusations have strained trust between the two nations.
- The United States has, at various times, pressed Pakistan to take stronger action against such groups and ensure they do not operate from Pakistani soil. This issue has been a recurring source of tension in their relationship<sup>90</sup>.

### **The Conflict in Afghanistan:**

- The ongoing conflict in Afghanistan has been a central issue in U.S.-Pakistan relations. The United States has sought Pakistan's support in facilitating peace talks and stabilizing Afghanistan, while also emphasizing the need for Pakistan to prevent the Taliban and other militant groups from finding safe havens within its territory<sup>91</sup>.

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<sup>88</sup> Alamgir Khan and Muhammad Hanif, "Pakistan's Role in the Social Reconstruction of Afghanistan in the Post 9/11 Era," *Central Asia Journal* 85, no. 2 (2019): 79-93.

<sup>89</sup> Azmat Ullah, "Taliban's Government in Afghanistan and the Dilemmas of Pakistan," *FWU Journal of Social Sciences* 17, no. 2 (2023).

<sup>90</sup> Karl Kaltenthaler and C. Christine Fair, "The Psychological Roots of Public Opinion toward a Militant Group: The Case of Pakistani Lashkar-e-Tayyaba," *Political Science Quarterly* 136, no. 4 (2021): 689-714.

<sup>91</sup> Elizabeth Threlkeld and Grace Easterly, *Afghanistan-Pakistan Ties and Future Stability in Afghanistan*, Vol. 175 (United States Institute of Peace, 2021).

- The relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan has also been a factor in these dynamics, with both countries accusing each other of harboring militants and interfering in their internal affairs<sup>92</sup>.

### **U.S. Drone Strikes on Pakistani Territory:**

- U.S. drone strikes on Pakistani territory, targeting militants and terrorist leaders, have been a source of contention. Pakistan has expressed strong objections to these strikes on sovereignty grounds and due to concerns about civilian casualties<sup>93</sup>.
- While the frequency of drone strikes has decreased over the years, this issue continues to be a point of tension in bilateral relations.

### **Geopolitical Context and Political Issues:**

- Bilateral relations have experienced fluctuations, often tied to the broader geopolitical context and specific political issues<sup>94</sup>. Periods of improvement have been observed when both countries have shared interests or objectives, such as counterterrorism cooperation.
- Conversely, periods of tension have arisen when differences in strategic priorities, divergent regional interests, or domestic political factors have come into play.

### **Economic and Trade Relations:**

- Economic and trade relations have also been a component of the U.S.-Pakistan relationship. These ties have fluctuated depending on various factors, including trade disputes, market access, and economic assistance.

### **Human Rights and Civil Society Concerns:**

- Human rights and civil society concerns have occasionally surfaced as issues in the bilateral relationship. These concerns have been raised by international actors,

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<sup>92</sup> Safdar Hussain and Dr. Muhammad Ijaz Latif, "Issues and challenges in Pakistan-Afghanistan relations after 9/11," *South Asian Studies* 27, no. 1 (2020).

<sup>93</sup> Brandon Shapiro and Andrew Crooks, "Drone strikes and radicalization: an exploration utilizing agentbased modeling and data applied to Pakistan," *Computational and Mathematical Organization Theory* 29, no. 3 (2023): 415-433.

<sup>94</sup> Robert M. Hathaway and Lee Hamilton, *The Leverage Paradox: Pakistan and the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2017).

including the United States, leading to discussions and diplomatic exchanges on topics such as freedom of expression and civil liberties in Pakistan<sup>95</sup>.

In conclusion, the period from the 2010s to the present has been marked by ongoing challenges and a nuanced relationship between the United States and Pakistan. Cooperation in counterterrorism efforts has been juxtaposed with tensions over various issues, including Pakistan's alleged support for militant groups, the Afghan conflict, and drone strikes. The trajectory of bilateral relations has often been influenced by the geopolitical context and specific political considerations, reflecting the complex nature of this important partnership in South Asia.

### **Recent Developments:**

#### **US withdrawal from Afghanistan**

One of the most significant events that affected US-Pakistan relations in 2021 was the US withdrawal from Afghanistan, which was completed by August 31<sup>96</sup>. The withdrawal marked the end of a 20-year military intervention that aimed to defeat the Taliban and stabilize the country. However, the withdrawal also resulted in a swift takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban, who captured Kabul on August 15 and declared the establishment of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan<sup>97</sup>.

The US withdrawal from Afghanistan had mixed implications for Pakistan. On one hand, Pakistan welcomed the end of foreign military presence in its neighbor, which it viewed as a source of instability and violence<sup>98</sup>. Pakistan also hoped to play a constructive role in facilitating peace talks between the Taliban and other Afghan factions, as well as in providing humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people<sup>99</sup>. On the other hand, Pakistan faced several challenges and risks arising from the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan, such as:

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<sup>95</sup> Fazal Rabbi, "War against Terrorism and its Repercussions for Pakistan," *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture* 33, no. 2 (2012): 71-90.

<sup>96</sup> Muhammad Tariq, Muhammad Rizwan, and Manzoor Ahmad, "US Withdrawal from Afghanistan: Latest Development and Security Situation (2020)," *sjesr* 3, no. 2 (2020): 290-297.

<sup>97</sup> James Dobbins, Jason H. Campbell, Sean Mann, and Laurel E. Miller, *Consequences of a Precipitous US Withdrawal from Afghanistan* (RAND, 2019).

<sup>98</sup> Madiha Afzal, "An uneasy limbo for US-Pakistan relations amidst the withdrawal from Afghanistan" (2021).

<sup>99</sup> Farrukh Faheem, Sajjad Hussain, and Muhammad Tariq Rasheed Qmar, "The US withdrawal from Afghanistan and its impacts on the Pak-Afghan relationship," *Journal of Humanities, Social and Management Sciences (JHSMS)* 3, no. 1 (2022): 540-553.

- The possibility of increased cross-border terrorism and militancy, especially from groups such as the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), which is opposed to the Pakistani state and has links with the Afghan Taliban<sup>100</sup>.
- The influx of refugees and displaced persons from Afghanistan, which could strain Pakistan's already limited resources and infrastructure<sup>101</sup>.
- The deterioration of human rights and women's rights in Afghanistan, which could undermine Pakistan's efforts to promote democracy and moderation in the region<sup>102</sup>.
- The potential loss of trade and economic opportunities with Afghanistan, which could affect Pakistan's growth and development prospects<sup>103</sup>.
- The uncertainty and volatility of regional geopolitics, especially regarding the role and influence of other actors such as China, Russia, India, Iran, and Turkey in Afghanistan<sup>104</sup>.

### **Cooperation and friction on other issues**

Apart from Afghanistan, US-Pakistan relations also involved cooperation and friction on other issues in 2021. Some of the areas where the two countries worked together included:

- Counter-terrorism: The US and Pakistan continued to cooperate on counter-terrorism efforts, especially against groups such as al-Qaeda, ISIS-Khorasan, and TTP<sup>105</sup>. The US also acknowledged Pakistan's sacrifices and contributions in fighting terrorism over the years.
- COVID-19: The US provided assistance to Pakistan in combating the COVID-19 pandemic, including donating vaccines, ventilators, personal protective equipment, and

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<sup>100</sup> Antonio Giustozzi, "Afghanistan after the US Withdrawal: Trends and Scenarios for the Future," *Asia Policy* 28, no. 3 (2021): 57-74.

<sup>101</sup> Philip Loft, "Afghanistan: Refugees and displaced people in 2021," *House of Commons Library* (2021).

<sup>102</sup> John R. Allen and Vanda Felbab-Brown, "The fate of women's rights in Afghanistan" (2020).

<sup>103</sup> Safiullah Taye and Zahid Shahab Ahmed, "Dynamics of trust and mistrust in the Afghanistan–Pakistan relationship," *Asian Studies Review* 45, no. 4 (2021): 557-575.

<sup>104</sup> Ahmad Khalid Azizi, "Afghanistan–Pakistan Relation and Its Implication on Regional Geopolitics," Available at SSRN 3419449 (2019).

<sup>105</sup> Balinder Singh, Jagmeet Bawa, Bawa Singh, and Sandeep Singh, "Unraveling The Aftermath: How The US-Taliban Deal Impacted Pakistan's Security Landscape–Analysis."

testing kits<sup>106</sup>. The US also supported Pakistan's participation in the COVAX facility, which aims to ensure equitable access to vaccines for low- and middle-income countries.

- Climate change: The US and Pakistan agreed to cooperate on addressing climate change challenges, such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions, enhancing resilience, and promoting clean energy. The US also invited Pakistan to participate in the Leaders Summit on Climate in April 2021, where Prime Minister Imran Khan announced several initiatives to combat climate change<sup>107</sup>.
- Trade and investment: The US and Pakistan explored ways to enhance trade and investment ties between them, especially in sectors such as energy, agriculture, technology, and education<sup>108</sup>. The US also supported Pakistan's efforts to improve its business environment and economic reforms.

However, there were also areas where the two countries faced disagreements or tensions, such as:

- Human rights: The US expressed concerns over human rights violations in Pakistan, especially regarding freedom of expression, religious freedom, minority rights, and women's rights<sup>109</sup>. The US also criticized Pakistan for its use of blasphemy laws and its treatment of journalists and activists<sup>110</sup>.
- Nuclear issues: The US urged Pakistan to restrain its nuclear weapons program and to adhere to international norms and standards on nuclear security and non-proliferation<sup>111</sup>.

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<sup>106</sup> Jawad Ahmed, Farheen Malik, Taha Bin Arif, Zainab Majid, Muhammad A. Chaudhary, Junaid Ahmad, Mehreen Malik, Taj M. Khan, and Muhammad Khalid, "Availability of personal protective equipment (PPE) among US and Pakistani doctors in COVID-19 pandemic," *Cureus* 12, no. 6 (2020).

<sup>107</sup> M. Hussain, A. R. Butt, F. Uzma, R. Ahmed, S. Irshad, A. Rehman, & B. Yousaf, "A comprehensive review of climate change impacts, adaptation, and mitigation on environmental and natural calamities in Pakistan," *Environmental Monitoring and Assessment* 192 (2020): 1-20.

<sup>108</sup> Muhammad Nouman Shafiq, Hua Liu, Muhammad Azhar Bhatti, and Seemab Gillani, "Impact of taxation on foreign direct investment: empirical evidence from Pakistan," *Pakistan Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* 9, no. 1 (2021): 10-18.

<sup>109</sup> Umbreen Javaid and Imrana Mushtaq, "Historical perspective of Pakistan USA relations; lessons for Pakistan," *South Asian Studies* 29, no. 1 (2020).

<sup>110</sup> Muhammad Bilal, "The field site as a religious frontier: Negotiating blasphemy accusations and reflexive tensions in Pakistan," *Ethnography* (2023).

<sup>111</sup> Jacob Darwin Hamblin, "Aligning missions: nuclear technical assistance, the IAEA, and national ambitions in Pakistan," *History and Technology* 36, no. 3-4 (2020): 437-451.

The US also opposed Pakistan's development of tactical nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles.

- Regional security: The US accused Pakistan of supporting or tolerating militant groups that operate in Afghanistan or India, such as the Haqqani network or Lashkar-e-Taiba. The US also urged Pakistan to play a positive role in reducing tensions with India over Kashmir and other issues<sup>112</sup>.

### **Challenges and opportunities ahead**

Looking ahead, US-Pakistan relations face several challenges and opportunities in 2022 and beyond. Some of the factors that could shape the future trajectory of the relationship include:

- The situation in Afghanistan: The situation in Afghanistan remains uncertain and fluid, which could have significant implications for US-Pakistan relations. The US and Pakistan will need to coordinate and cooperate on supporting a peaceful and inclusive political settlement in Afghanistan, as well as on providing humanitarian and economic assistance to the Afghan people<sup>113</sup>. The US and Pakistan will also need to manage their respective interests and relations with the Taliban and other regional actors in Afghanistan.
- The role of China: China is a major strategic partner and ally of Pakistan, which could pose challenges for US-Pakistan relations. The US and Pakistan will need to balance their ties with China, especially regarding the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which is a flagship project of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)<sup>114</sup>. The US and Pakistan will also need to address their differences and concerns over China's role and influence in the region, particularly in Afghanistan<sup>115</sup>.

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<sup>112</sup> Joshua T. White, "After the foundational agreements: An agenda for US-India defense and security cooperation," *Brookings Institution* (2021).

<sup>113</sup> Ernesto Lee, Furqan Rustam, Imran Ashraf, Patrick Bernard Washington, Manideep Narra, and Rahman Shafique, "Inquest of current situation in Afghanistan under Taliban rule using sentiment analysis and volume analysis," *IEEE Access* 10 (2022): 10333-10348.

<sup>114</sup> Noraiz Arshad and Iftikhar Ali, "Understanding the Decline of Pakistan-US Alliance and the Growing Influence of China in Pakistan," *Intellectual Discourse* 31, no. 1 (2023).

<sup>115</sup> Ghulam Ali, "China–Pakistan cooperation on Afghanistan: assessing key interests and implementing strategies," *The Pacific Review* 35, no. 3 (2022): 506-528.

- The prospects of dialogue with India: The prospects of dialogue and normalization of relations between Pakistan and India could also affect US-Pakistan relations. The US and Pakistan will need to support and facilitate confidence-building measures and dialogue between the two nuclear-armed neighbors, which could help reduce tensions and violence in the region<sup>116</sup>. The US and Pakistan will also need to respect each other's interests and sensitivities regarding Kashmir and other issues.

### **Change of government in Pakistan**

Imran Khan, the former cricketer and the leader of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), was removed from his position as the prime minister of Pakistan on October 2, 2023, after a vote of noconfidence in the National Assembly<sup>117</sup>. The opposition parties, led by Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), accused Khan of corruption, mismanagement, and incompetence. They also alleged that he was a puppet of the United States, which had a hidden agenda to destabilize Pakistan and undermine its sovereignty<sup>118</sup>. The document surrounding all this controversy is a cypher recently leaked online by an US based investigative journalism agency 'The Intercept'<sup>130</sup>. In a confidential document obtained by The Intercept, it is revealed that during a meeting on March 7, 2022, the United States Department of State urged the Pakistani government to consider the removal of Imran Khan from the position of Prime Minister. This recommendation stemmed from concerns regarding Mr. Khan's perceived lack of neutrality in response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The encounter, which transpired between the Pakistani Ambassador to the United States and two high-ranking officials from the State Department, has remained a focal point of intense examination, debate, and conjecture within Pakistan for the past eighteen months<sup>119</sup>. This period has witnessed a relentless power struggle involving supporters of Mr. Khan, as well as his military and civilian adversaries,

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<sup>116</sup> Sumit Ganguly and S. Paul Kapur, "Reframing the US-Pakistan Strategic Renaissance," *The Washington Quarterly* 46, no. 2 (2023): 183-199.

<sup>117</sup> Secunder Kermani, "Imran Khan Ousted as Pakistan's PM after Vote," *BBC News*, April 10, 2022, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-61055210>.

<sup>118</sup> Samra Hameed and Gulshan Majeed, "Civil-Military Relations in Pakistan: Reasons of Imran Khan's Downfall," *Pakistan Languages and Humanities Review* 7, no. 3 (2023): 583-593.

Ryan Grim and Murtaza Hussain, "Secret Pakistan Cable Documents U.S. Pressure to Remove Imran Khan," *The Intercept*, August 9, 2023, <https://theintercept.com/2023/08/09/imran-khan-pakistan-cypherukraine-russia>.

<sup>119</sup> Rabia Noor and Noshina Nazir, "Dicing With Death: Analyzing the Killings of Pakistani Journalists With a Focus on Arshad Sharif Case," *Journal of ISOSS* 9, no. 2 (2023): 631-642.



ying for control<sup>120</sup>. The political contest reached a critical juncture on August 5 when Mr. Khan received a three-year prison sentence on corruption charges and was subsequently detained for the second time since his removal from office<sup>121</sup>. It's worth noting that Khan's advocates vehemently reject these allegations, considering them devoid of merit. Additionally, this verdict not only sidelines Khan, who is widely regarded as Pakistan's most popular political figure, but also bars him from participating in the upcoming elections anticipated to be held in Pakistan later this year<sup>122</sup>.

**Implications of cypher conspiracy on Pak-US relationship** The developments surrounding the meeting between the Pakistani ambassador to the United States, the State Department officials, and the subsequent events involving Imran Khan have had a significant impact on Pakistan-U.S. relations<sup>123</sup>. Firstly, the controversy and speculation surrounding the meeting have strained diplomatic ties between the two countries. The fact that such discussions took place regarding the leadership of Pakistan's Prime Minister raised eyebrows and led to questions about the nature of U.S. involvement in Pakistan's internal affairs<sup>124</sup>. This has generated a level of mistrust and suspicion on the Pakistani side. Secondly, the imprisonment of Imran Khan on corruption charges has further complicated the relationship. Khan's supporters view his legal troubles as politically motivated and allege foreign interference in Pakistan's domestic affairs<sup>125</sup>. This perception has contributed to a negative sentiment towards the U.S. within certain segments of the Pakistani population. Thirdly, the removal of Imran Khan from the political scene and his inability to contest upcoming elections have altered the dynamics of

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<sup>120</sup> "How Imran Khan Became the Man Who Divided Pakistan," *The Guardian*, May 9, 2023, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/may/09/how-imran-khan-became-the-man-who-divided-pakistan>.

<sup>121</sup> "Pakistan Ex-PM Khan's Custody Extended by Two Weeks," *Al Jazeera*, August 30, 2023, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/8/30/pakistan-ex-pm-imran-khan-sent-to-two-week-judicial-remand-in-cypher-case>.

<sup>122</sup> Cyril Almeida, "What Led to Leader Imran Khan's Downfall in Pakistan?" *Al Jazeera*, April 10, 2022, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/4/9/analysis-end-of-imran-khans-term>.

<sup>123</sup> Christina Goldbaum and Salman Masood, "Pakistan Parliament Ousts Imran Khan as Prime Minister," *The New York Times*, April 9, 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/09/world/asia/imran-khan-pakistan-ousted.html>.

<sup>124</sup> Muhammad Tarique and Lubna Shaheen, "They Kill the Truth: WhatsApp Propaganda by Pakistan Tahreek e Insaaf during No Confidence Motion against Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan," *Communication Studies* 3, no. 1 (2023).

<sup>125</sup> Samina Bashir, Ammara Farukh, and Maria Khursheed, "Discourse Analysis of Speeches and Interviews of Imran Khan in the Context of Alleged Regime Change Operation and Political Turmoil of Pakistan," *Pakistan Languages and Humanities Review* 6, no. 4 (2022): 296-308.

Pakistan's political landscape<sup>126</sup>. This change could potentially impact U.S. interests in the region, as Pakistan is a key player in regional stability, particularly in relation to Afghanistan and its role in counterterrorism efforts<sup>127</sup>. Overall, the events surrounding the meeting and subsequent developments have introduced uncertainties and tensions into the Pakistan-U.S. relationship. Diplomatic efforts will be required to navigate these challenges and maintain a productive partnership between the two countries<sup>128</sup>.

### Policy Shifts Under the Trump Administration and Impact on Bilateral Relations

The foreign policy of the Trump administration towards Pakistan marked a significant shift from previous U.S. approaches, characterized by a more confrontational stance and a reevaluation of the bilateral relationship. One of the most notable aspects of this policy was the suspension of military aid to Pakistan, which was officially announced in January 2018. This decision was predicated on the U.S. government's perception that Pakistan was not doing enough to combat terrorism and was providing sanctuary to terrorist groups that targeted U.S. interests in Afghanistan.<sup>129</sup> The Trump administration's rhetoric emphasized a "do more" approach, demanding that Pakistan take a tougher stance against terrorism, particularly regarding groups like the Taliban and Haqqani Network, which were seen as undermining U.S. efforts in Afghanistan.<sup>130</sup>

The suspension of military aid was not merely a financial decision; it was also a strategic maneuver aimed at recalibrating U.S. leverage over Pakistan. Historically, military assistance has been a cornerstone of U.S.-Pakistan relations, with the U.S. providing substantial military aid to Pakistan since the 1980s. However, the Trump administration's approach reflected a broader

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<sup>126</sup> Sanallah Khan, "Copy of Cipher 'missing' from PM House Records, Cabinet Told," *DAWN.COM*, October 4, 2022, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1712744>.

<sup>127</sup> Vivek Mishra and Sarraj Sharma, "Why's US silent on Pak turmoil?" (2023).

<sup>128</sup> Samra Hameed and Gulshan Majeed, "Civil-Military Relations in Pakistan: Reasons of Imran Khan's Downfall," *Pakistan Languages and Humanities Review* 7, no. 3 (2023): 583-593.

<sup>129</sup> Jadoon, A. (2020). Conflict aggravation or alleviation? a cross-national examination of u.s. military aid's effect on conflict dynamics with insights from pakistan. *Political Science Quarterly*, 135(4), 665-695. <https://doi.org/10.1002/polq.13128>

<sup>130</sup> Amin, R., Awan, G., & Mahmood, A. (2020). Pak-us relations: paradoxes & enigmas during war on terror. *Sir Syed Journal of Education & Social Research (Sjesr)*, 3(3), 408-414. [https://doi.org/10.36902/sjesr-vol3-iss3-2020\(408-414\)](https://doi.org/10.36902/sjesr-vol3-iss3-2020(408-414))

skepticism about the efficacy of such aid in achieving U.S. foreign policy objectives.<sup>131</sup> The administration's narrative framed Pakistan as a "duplicitous" partner, suggesting that U.S. support had been misused and that Pakistan had not fulfilled its commitments to combat terrorism effectively.<sup>132</sup> This shift in policy was indicative of a larger trend within the Trump

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administration, which sought to reassess and redefine U.S. relationships with traditional allies<sup>133</sup> based on perceived performance and outcomes rather than historical ties.<sup>134</sup>

In the context of Afghanistan, the Trump administration's foreign policy placed significant emphasis on Pakistan's role as a facilitator of peace talks and stability in the region. The U.S. sought to engage Pakistan in negotiations aimed at resolving the Afghan conflict, recognizing that Pakistan's influence over the Taliban was crucial for any potential peace agreement.<sup>135</sup> However, the U.S. demands for Pakistan to exert more control over these groups were met with resistance, as Pakistan viewed its relationship with the Taliban as a strategic necessity for its own security interests.<sup>136</sup> This dynamic created a complex interplay between U.S. expectations and Pakistan's geopolitical calculations, leading to a deterioration of diplomatic ties, particularly concerning Afghanistan.

The impact of these policy shifts on bilateral relations was profound. The suspension of military aid and the public denunciation of Pakistan's counterterrorism efforts led to a significant cooling of diplomatic relations.<sup>137</sup> Pakistan's response to U.S. pressure was multifaceted; while it publicly

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<sup>131</sup> Jadoon, A. (2020). Conflict aggravation or alleviation? a cross-national examination of u.s. military aid's effect on conflict dynamics with insights from pakistan. *Political Science Quarterly*, 135(4), 665-695. <https://doi.org/10.1002/polq.13128>

<sup>132</sup> Amin, R., Awan, G., & Mahmood, A. (2020). Pak–us relations: paradoxes & enigmas during war on terror. *Sir Syed Journal of Education & Social Research (Sjesr)*, 3(3), 408-414. [https://doi.org/10.36902/sjesr-vol3-iss3-2020\(408-414\)](https://doi.org/10.36902/sjesr-vol3-iss3-2020(408-414))

<sup>133</sup> Chughtai, Y. and Iqbal, K. (2018). Future of rebalancing policy under trump: a case for continuity. *Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 57(1), 127-139. <https://doi.org/10.46568/jssh.v57i1.109>

<sup>134</sup> Biegon, R. (2019). A populist grand strategy? trump and the framing of american decline. *International Relations*, 33(4), 517-539. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047117819852399>

<sup>135</sup> Jadoon, A. (2020). Conflict aggravation or alleviation? a cross-national examination of u.s. military aid's effect on conflict dynamics with insights from pakistan. *Political Science Quarterly*, 135(4), 665-695. <https://doi.org/10.1002/polq.13128>

<sup>136</sup> Amin, R., Awan, G., & Mahmood, A. (2020). Pak–us relations: paradoxes & enigmas during war on terror. *Sir Syed Journal of Education & Social Research (Sjesr)*, 3(3), 408-414. [https://doi.org/10.36902/sjesr-vol3-iss3-2020\(408-414\)](https://doi.org/10.36902/sjesr-vol3-iss3-2020(408-414))

<sup>137</sup> Shahzad, U., Farooq, M., & Qin, F. (2019). Impacts of usaid and development assistance toward counterterrorism efforts: empirical evidence in context of pakistan. *Asian Social Work and Policy Review*, 13(3), 320-333. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aswp.12184>

condemned the U.S. actions, it also sought to recalibrate its foreign policy by strengthening ties with other regional powers, notably China and Russia. This pivot was seen as an attempt by Pakistan to diversify its strategic partnerships in light of diminishing U.S. support.<sup>138</sup> Furthermore, Pakistan's military leadership maintained that the country had already made substantial sacrifices in the fight against terrorism, citing the loss of civilian lives and military personnel in counterterrorism operations.<sup>139</sup> Despite the tensions, there remained areas of cooperation between the U.S. and Pakistan, particularly in the realm of counterterrorism and regional stability. However, the relationship was increasingly characterized by conflict, with economic sanctions and military aid suspensions serving as tools of U.S.<sup>140</sup> policy to compel compliance from Pakistan. The Trump administration's approach highlighted a broader trend of using economic leverage to influence foreign policy outcomes, which often led to increased tensions rather than constructive dialogue.<sup>153</sup> This situation underscored the complexities of U.S.-Pakistan relations, where historical ties were increasingly overshadowed by immediate geopolitical concerns and strategic calculations. In summary, the Trump administration's foreign policy towards Pakistan was marked by a significant shift characterized by the suspension of military aid, a demand for a tougher stance on terrorism, and a reevaluation of Pakistan's role in Afghanistan. These changes led to a deterioration of diplomatic ties, prompting Pakistan to seek alternative partnerships while navigating the pressures exerted by the U.S. The evolving dynamics of this relationship illustrate the complexities of international diplomacy, where historical alliances are tested against the backdrop of contemporary geopolitical realities.

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<sup>138</sup> Amin, R., Awan, G., & Mahmood, A. (2020). Pak–us relations: paradoxes & enigmas during war on terror. *Sir Syed Journal of Education & Social Research (Sjesr)*, 3(3), 408-414. [https://doi.org/10.36902/sjesr-vol3-iss3-2020\(408-414\)](https://doi.org/10.36902/sjesr-vol3-iss3-2020(408-414))

<sup>139</sup> Jadoon, A. (2020). Conflict aggravation or alleviation? a cross-national examination of u.s. military aid's effect on conflict dynamics with insights from pakistan. *Political Science Quarterly*, 135(4), 665-695. <https://doi.org/10.1002/polq.13128>

<sup>140</sup> Chughtai, Y. and Iqbal, K. (2018). Future of rebalancing policy under trump: a case for continuity. *Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 57(1), 127-139. <https://doi.org/10.46568/jssh.v57i1.109> <sup>153</sup>

Jadoon, A. (2020). Conflict aggravation or alleviation? a cross-national examination of U.S. military aid's effect on conflict dynamics with insights from Pakistan. *Political Science Quarterly*, 135(4), 665-695. <https://doi.org/10.1002/polq.13128>

## Pakistan's Strategic Pivot

During the Trump administration, Pakistan's foreign policy underwent a significant realignment, pivoting towards China and, to a lesser extent, Russia. This shift was largely driven by the perceived deterioration of Pakistan's relations with the United States, particularly in light of the growing strategic partnership between the U.S. and India.<sup>141</sup> The Trump administration's "America First" doctrine and its overt support for India as a counterbalance to China exacerbated Pakistan's strategic vulnerabilities,<sup>155</sup> prompting Islamabad to seek deeper ties with Beijing as a counterweight to both U.S. and Indian influence in the region.<sup>156</sup>

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a flagship project of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), epitomizes this strategic pivot.<sup>142</sup> CPEC is not merely an economic initiative; it represents a comprehensive framework for cooperation that encompasses infrastructure development, energy projects, and enhanced connectivity between the two nations.<sup>158</sup> The investments associated with CPEC, estimated at around \$62 billion, have positioned Pakistan as a critical player in regional geopolitics, allowing it to leverage its strategic location for economic gain while simultaneously enhancing its security ties with China.<sup>143</sup>

Moreover, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) has emerged as another platform for Pakistan to strengthen its ties with China and Russia.<sup>144</sup> The SCO serves as a multilateral forum that fosters cooperation on security, economic, and cultural issues, providing Pakistan with a platform to engage with both regional powers and counterbalance U.S. influence.<sup>145</sup> This

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<sup>141</sup> Jahangir, A. and Khan, F. (2020). Us strategic propensity towards india in perspective of nuclear bonding: security apprehensions for south asian region and pakistan. *Nust Journal of International Peace and Stability*. <https://doi.org/10.37540/njips.v3i1.45>

<sup>142</sup> Gill, D. (2019). The geopolitics of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor(CPEC) and its security implications for india. *The Korean Journal of International Studies*, 17(3), 337-353.

<sup>158</sup> Ittefaq, M., Ahmed, Z., & Pantoja, Y. (2021). China's belt and road initiative and soft power in pakistan: an examination of the local english-language press. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 19(1), 1-14.

<https://doi.org/10.1057/s41254-021-00212-8>

<sup>143</sup> Kosar, F. (2021). Pak-china relations: an analysis. *Pakistan Journal of International Affairs*, 4(2). <https://doi.org/10.52337/pjia.v4i2.289>

<sup>144</sup> Gul, A., Munir, M., Hussain, M., & Hussain, M. (2021). Revisiting us–china strategic competition in central asia and its impact on pakistan. *Journal of Public Affairs*, 22(S1). <https://doi.org/10.1002/pa.2764>

<sup>145</sup> Hussain, I. (2023). The indo-us strategic nexus: policy options for pakistan. *Journal of Globalization Studies*, 14(2), 129-142. <https://doi.org/10.30884/jogs/2023.02.08>

alignment with China and Russia reflects a broader trend of alternative alliances<sup>146</sup> forming in response to the shifting geopolitical landscape, particularly in the context of U.S.-China strategic competition.<sup>163</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> Kakar, A. (2021). The role of small powers in great power politics: a case study of Pakistan. *Pakistan Journal of International Affairs*, 4(2). <https://doi.org/10.52337/pjia.v4i2.165>

<sup>156</sup> Rogers, R. (2023). Understanding the decline of Pakistan-US alliance and the growing influence of China in Pakistan. *Intellectual Discourse*, 31(1). <https://doi.org/10.31436/id.v31i1.1936>  
The implications of Pakistan's strategic pivot extend beyond the Trump era. As the geopolitical dynamics in South Asia continue to evolve, Pakistan's reliance on China is likely to deepen, particularly in the face of ongoing U.S.-India cooperation.<sup>164</sup> This relationship is not without its challenges, as Pakistan must navigate the complexities of its domestic politics, including issues related to governance and economic stability, which have been exacerbated by the rapid influx of Chinese investments. Furthermore, the potential for over-reliance on China poses risks for Pakistan's sovereignty and long-term strategic autonomy.<sup>165</sup>

In the post-Trump era, Pakistan's foreign policy is expected to continue prioritizing its relationship with China while also exploring avenues for engagement with Russia and other regional players.<sup>166</sup> This approach may involve a recalibration of its foreign policy to address the challenges posed by the Indo-U.S. strategic partnership,<sup>147</sup> which has implications for regional security and stability.<sup>148</sup> The evolving geopolitical landscape necessitates that Pakistan adopt a more nuanced approach,<sup>149</sup> balancing its ties with China while also seeking to maintain a degree of flexibility in its foreign relations.<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> Jain, R. and Lee, J. (2021). Geopolitical implications of China's rise in Asia. *Social Transformations in Chinese Societies*, 17(1), 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.1108/stics-07-2020-0021> <sup>163</sup> Thoker, P. and Singh, B. (2017). The emerging China, Pakistan, and Russia strategic triangle: India's new Gordian knot. *Jadavpur Journal of International Relations*, 21(1), 61-83. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0973598417712873>

<sup>147</sup> Hussain, I. (2023). The Indo-US strategic nexus: Policy options for Pakistan. *Journal of Globalization Studies*, 14(2), 129-142. <https://doi.org/10.30884/jogs/2023.02.08>

<sup>148</sup> Farooq, S., Kazmi, S., & Javed, J. (2018). Indo-US strategic partnership: implications for Pakistan. *Policy Perspectives*, 15(1). <https://doi.org/10.13169/polipers.15.1.0003>

<sup>149</sup> Naseer, A. (2021). From strategic partnership to strategic interdependence: the Pak-China duo. *Pakistan Journal of International Affairs*, 4(1). <https://doi.org/10.52337/pjia.v4i1.35>

<sup>150</sup> Denisov, I., Парамонов, О., Арапова, Е., & Сафранчук, И. (2021). Russia, China, and the concept of Indo-Pacific. *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, 12(1), 72-85. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1879366521999899> <sup>171</sup> Hussain, F. (2021). China-Pak strategic entente with respect to search for reciprocated security through

The strategic partnership with China is likely to remain a cornerstone of Pakistan's foreign policy, particularly as both nations face similar challenges from the U.S. and its allies.<sup>171</sup> The mutual interests in countering Indian influence and ensuring regional stability will continue to drive the Sino-Pak relationship forward.<sup>151</sup> Additionally, as China seeks to expand its influence

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<sup>164</sup> Akhtar, N. (2021). China pakistan economic corridor: explaining u.s-india strategic concerns. *Journal of Development and Social Sciences*, 2(IV), 637-649. [https://doi.org/10.47205/jdss.2021\(2-iv\)52](https://doi.org/10.47205/jdss.2021(2-iv)52) <sup>165</sup> Shah, A. (2018). How does china–pakistan economic corridor show the limitations of china's 'one belt one road' model. *Asia & the Pacific Policy Studies*, 5(2), 378-385. <https://doi.org/10.1002/app5.224> <sup>166</sup> Hussain, F. (2021). China-pak strategic entente with respect to search for reciprocated security through gwadar port. *Psychology and Education Journal*, 58(1), 3320-3333. <https://doi.org/10.17762/pae.v58i1.1271>

through initiatives like the BRI, Pakistan's role as a key partner will be further solidified,<sup>152</sup> making it an integral part of China's broader strategic ambitions in South Asia.<sup>153</sup>

In conclusion, Pakistan's strategic pivot towards China during the Trump era has profound implications for its foreign policy trajectory. The alignment with China and the potential for collaboration with Russia signify a shift away from traditional alliances, reflecting the complexities of contemporary geopolitics. As Pakistan navigates this new landscape, it will need to carefully balance its relationships to safeguard its national interests while addressing the multifaceted challenges that arise from its deepening ties with China and the evolving dynamics of U.S.-India relations.

## Key Findings

This chapter gives a historical trajectory of Pakistan-United States relations from 1947 to 2022. The analysis presented is segmented into distinct periods, each characterized by its unique dynamics and defining moments. Key findings of the chapter are as summarized below:

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gwadar port. *Psychology and Education Journal*, 58(1), 3320-3333. <https://doi.org/10.17762/pae.v58i1.1271>

<sup>151</sup> Parkes, A. (2019). Pakistan's strategic culture and its gordian knot in afghanistan. *Journal of Asian Security and International Affairs*, 6(3), 254-274. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2347797019885728>

<sup>152</sup> Jain, R. and Lee, J. (2021). Geopolitical implications of china's rise in asia. *Social Transformations in Chinese Societies*, 17(1), 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.1108/stics-07-2020-0021>

<sup>153</sup> Gill, D. (2019). The geopolitics of the china-pakistan economic corridor(cpec) and its security implications for india. *The Korean Journal of International Studies*, 17(3), 337-353. <https://doi.org/10.14731/kjis.2019.12.17.3.337>

- **Early Years (1947-1950):**
  - **Independence and Recognition:** The United States was among the first to recognize Pakistan as a sovereign state in 1947<sup>154</sup>.
  - **Economic and Military Assistance:** The U.S. provided substantial aid to help Pakistan establish its economic infrastructure and military capabilities, aligning with U.S. anti-communism strategies during the Cold War<sup>155</sup>.
- **SEATO and CENTO (1950s-1960s):**
  - **Strategic Alliances:** Pakistan's participation in SEATO and CENTO underscored its geopolitical significance during the Cold War, serving as a buffer against communism<sup>156</sup>.
- **Stress and Change (1970-1980s):**
  - **East Pakistan Crisis:** The 1971 crisis strained U.S.-Pakistan relations due to the humanitarian issues in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh)<sup>157</sup>.
  - **Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan:** The 1980s saw renewed U.S.-Pakistan collaboration, with Pakistan becoming a pivotal ally against Soviet expansion in Afghanistan<sup>158</sup>.
- **Post-Cold War (1990s):**
  - **Nuclear Tensions:** Relations cooled due to Pakistan's pursuit of nuclear capabilities, leading to U.S. sanctions<sup>159</sup>.

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<sup>154</sup> Umbreen Javaid and Imrana Mushtaq, "Historical perspective of Pakistan USA relations; lessons for Pakistan," *South Asian Studies* 29, no. 1 (2020).

<sup>155</sup> Robert J. McMahon, "United States Cold War Strategy in South Asia: Making a Military Commitment to Pakistan, 1947-1954," *The Journal of American History* 75, no. 3 (1988): 812-840.

<sup>156</sup> Faiqa Mushtaq, "Prospects for Pak-China Relations," *Global Political Review* 4, no. 4 (2019): 49-58.

<sup>157</sup> Milestones: 1969–1976 - Office of the Historian," State.gov, 2024, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1969-1976/south-asia>

<sup>158</sup> Nasreen Akhtar, "Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the Taliban," *International Journal on World Peace* (2008): 49-73.

<sup>159</sup> Mussarat Jabeen, Muhammad Saleem Mazhar, and Naheed S. Goraya, "Trends and challenges in Pak-US relations: Post September 11," *South Asian Studies* 25, no. 2 (2020).



- **Cooperation after 9/11 (2000s):**
  - **Global War on Terror:** Post-9/11, Pakistan became a strategic partner in the U.S.-led war on terror, receiving military and economic aid<sup>160</sup>.
  - **Challenges:** The relationship was complex, marked by cooperation in counterterrorism and tensions over Pakistan's alleged support for certain militant groups<sup>161</sup>.
  
- **Ongoing Challenges (2010s-Present):**
  - **Militant Groups and Afghanistan:** The U.S. has pressured Pakistan over its alleged support for militant groups (Haqqani network, Quetta shora) and sought cooperation on Afghan stability<sup>162</sup>.
  - **Drone Strikes:** U.S. drone strikes in Pakistan and immense collateral damage has influenced the relationship<sup>163</sup>.
  
- **Recent Developments:**
  - **US Withdrawal from Afghanistan (2021):** This event impacted the dynamics of U.S.-Pakistan relations, with concerns over regional stability, refugee influx, and the Taliban's role<sup>164</sup>.
  - **Cooperation and Friction:** Continued collaboration in counter-terrorism and health (COVID-19 response)<sup>165</sup>, but disagreements over the mess US left in Afghanistan continues.

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<sup>160</sup> Lubna Sunawar, "Pakistan as a Frontline State in War Against Terrorism: Cost & Benefit Analysis," *Journal of Political Studies* 22, no. 1 (2015)

<sup>161</sup> Derek S. Reveron, "Old allies, new friends: intelligence-sharing in the war on terror," *Orbis* 50, no. 3 (2006): 453-468.

<sup>162</sup> Z. U. A. Malik and He Zhilong, "An appraisal of terrorism in Pakistan," *Journal of Social Sciences & Interdisciplinary Research* 8, no. 1 (2019): 64-68.

<sup>163</sup> Rafat Mahmood and Michael Jetter, "Gone with the wind: The consequences of US drone strikes in Pakistan," *The Economic Journal* 133, no. 650 (2023): 787-811

<sup>164</sup> Muhammad Tariq, Muhammad Rizwan, and Manzoor Ahmad, "US Withdrawal from Afghanistan: Latest Development and Security Situation (2020)," *sjesr* 3, no. 2 (2020): 290-297.

<sup>165</sup> Jawad Ahmed, Farheen Malik, Taha Bin Arif, Zainab Majid, Muhammad A. Chaudhary, Junaid Ahmad, Mehreen Malik, Taj M. Khan, and Muhammad Khalid, "Availability of personal protective equipment (PPE) among US and Pakistani doctors in COVID-19 pandemic," *Cureus* 12, no. 6 (2020).

- **Cypher Conspiracy and Political Change:**
  - **Imran Khan's Removal:** The controversy over U.S. involvement in internal Pakistani politics following the leak of a confidential document and the subsequent political upheaval in Pakistan, including the imprisonment of Imran Khan, has significantly impacted bilateral relations<sup>166</sup>.

## Theoretical Framework

In analyzing Pakistan-U.S. relations during the Trump administration, several international relations theories provide a robust framework to understand the dynamics and key events that shaped this bilateral relationship. These include Realism, Neo-Realism, and Constructivism, which offer various perspectives on how states behave within the international system, driven by either power, structure, or identities.

### 1. Realism

Realism is a dominant theory in international relations that posits that states are primarily driven by the desire for power and security in an anarchic international system.<sup>167</sup> Realists believe that states act in their self-interest, seeking to maximize power relative to other states. This framework can be used to analyze several aspects of Pakistan-U.S. relations:

- **Security Concerns:** The U.S. suspension of security assistance to Pakistan in 2018 and accusations of "lies and deceit" fit into the Realist narrative,<sup>168</sup> where the U.S. was trying to secure its strategic interests in Afghanistan by pressuring Pakistan to eliminate safe havens for militants.
- **Transactional Diplomacy:** The Realist perspective also explains the transactional approach adopted by the Trump administration, where U.S.-Pakistan relations were primarily driven by strategic and security concerns, particularly in the context of Afghanistan.

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<sup>166</sup> Ryan Grim and Murtaza Hussain, "Secret Pakistan Cable Documents U.S. Pressure to Remove Imran Khan," *The Intercept*, August 9, 2023, <https://theintercept.com/2023/08/09/imran-khan-pakistan-cypher-ukraine-russia>.

<sup>167</sup> Sørensen, Georg, Jørgen Møller, and Robert H. Jackson. *Introduction to international relations: theories and approaches*. Oxford university press, 2022.

<sup>168</sup> Bashir, Faiza, and Shahida Aman. "US security assistance to Pakistan in post 9/11 period." *FWU Journal of Social Sciences* 15, no. 2 (2021): 96-116.

## 2. Neo-Realism (Structural Realism)

Neo-Realism, developed by Kenneth Waltz, focuses on the structure of the international system, arguing that the distribution of power among states determines their behavior.<sup>169</sup> In this context, Pakistan's geopolitical position plays a crucial role in shaping its relations with the U.S.

- **Geopolitical Importance:** Neo-Realism explains how Pakistan's strategic location, bordering Afghanistan and being a key ally in the region, has historically made it an important player in U.S. foreign policy, particularly during the Cold War and post-9/11 eras.
- **Power Shifts:** The rise of China and its deepening ties with Pakistan through the ChinaPakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) added another layer of complexity to U.S.-Pakistan relations. From a Neo-Realist perspective, the U.S. sees China's influence in Pakistan as a threat to its hegemony in the region, which affected its relations with Pakistan during Trump's tenure.

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## 3. Constructivism

Constructivism argues that international relations are not just shaped by material power but also by ideas, norms, and identities.<sup>170</sup> This theory can be used to understand how the historical narratives and perceptions of Pakistan-U.S. relations have influenced their interactions.

- **Historical Narratives:** The historical mistrust between the two nations, rooted in past alliances and betrayals (e.g., U.S. sanctions on Pakistan following its nuclear tests<sup>171</sup>), plays a significant role in shaping diplomatic discourse.
- **Identity and Ideology:** Constructivist theory can also explain how the ideological positions of leaders, like Trump's "America First" approach and Pakistan's need for respect and equality in bilateral relations, influenced the diplomatic ties between the two nations.

## 4. Dependency Theory

This theory, which originates from Marxist thought, posits that developing countries like Pakistan are often in a state of dependency on more powerful nations like the U.S. for economic

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<sup>169</sup> Lomia, Ekaterine. "Political Realism in International Relations: Classical Realism, Neo-realism, and NeoClassical Realism." *International Journal of Social, Political and Economic Research* 7, no. 3 (2020): 591-600.

<sup>170</sup> Kratochwil, Friedrich, and Hannes Peltonen. *Constructivism*. Oxford University Press, 2022.

<sup>171</sup> Bekaj, Armend, and Rishika Chauhan. "Between a rock and a hard place: Pakistan's nuclear weapons and sanctions." In *Sanctions for Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation*, pp. 113-129. Routledge, 2024.

and military aid.<sup>172</sup> Dependency theory provides a lens to understand Pakistan’s reliance on U.S. military aid and financial assistance throughout much of the 20th and 21st centuries.

- **Economic Aid and Military Assistance:** The U.S.’s economic and military aid, which fluctuated depending on the geopolitical situation, kept Pakistan in a state of dependency. This dynamic was particularly evident during the Cold War and the post-9/11 period, as discussed in your thesis.

## 5. Liberalism

Liberalism emphasizes cooperation, trade, and the role of international institutions in fostering peaceful relations between states.<sup>173</sup> Though Trump’s administration was largely Realist, there were elements of Liberalism in Pakistan-U.S. relations.

- **Bilateral Trade and Aid:** Despite the focus on security, economic ties and aid packages, such as the U.S. support for humanitarian efforts and COVID-19 assistance, illustrate how cooperation remained a part of the bilateral relationship.
- **Multilateralism:** Pakistan’s participation in multilateral institutions like the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) during the Trump administration<sup>174</sup>, as well as the role of the U.S. in these organizations, reflects the liberal international order, although Trump’s approach was skeptical of these institutions.

• Theory	Key Concepts	Application to Pakistan-U.S. Relations (Trump Era)
<b>Realism</b>	- Power and security in an anarchic system - Self-interest and competition	- U.S. suspension of security assistance to Pakistan due to strategic concerns over Afghanistan. - Transactional diplomacy driven by security interests.
<b>Neo-Realism</b>	- Structure of the international system - Distribution of power influences state behavior	- Pakistan’s geopolitical importance due to its proximity to Afghanistan. - U.S. concerns over China’s growing influence through CPEC.

<sup>172</sup> Katz, Claudio. *Dependency theory after fifty years: the continuing relevance of Latin American Critical Thought*. Vol. 207. Brill, 2022.

<sup>173</sup> Lake, David A., Lisa L. Martin, and Thomas Risse. "Challenges to the liberal order: Reflections on international organization." *International organization* 75, no. 2 (2021): 225-257.

<sup>174</sup> Corsi, Marco. "Pakistan 2021: In pursuit of a pivotal role in post-pandemic South Asia." *Asia Maior* 32 (2021).

<b>Constructivism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Role of ideas, norms, and identities</li> <li>- Influence of historical narratives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Historical mistrust based on past alliances and sanctions.</li> <li>- Ideological influences like Trump's "America First" and Pakistan's need for equal partnership.</li> </ul>
<b>Dependency Theory</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Developing nations' reliance on powerful countries</li> <li>- Economic and military dependency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pakistan's reliance on U.S. military aid and financial support, fluctuating with geopolitical dynamics like the War on Terror.</li> </ul>
<b>Liberalism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cooperation, trade, and international institutions</li> <li>- Role of economic interdependence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continued economic aid and cooperation in areas like trade and humanitarian efforts (e.g., COVID-19 assistance).</li> <li>- Pakistan's engagement with multilateral institutions like WTO and IMF.</li> </ul>

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Above table provides a concise overview of the theoretical framework, highlighting key theories and how they apply to the context of Pakistan-U.S. relations during the Trump administration.

This theoretical framework integrates various theories of international relations to provide a multi-faceted understanding of Pakistan-U.S. relations during the Trump administration. Realism and Neo-Realism explain the security-driven and power-balancing aspects of the relationship,

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while Constructivism sheds light on the historical and ideological factors that shaped diplomatic interactions. Dependency theory and Liberalism help to frame the economic and cooperative elements of the relationship, illustrating that despite a dominant focus on security, other aspects of diplomacy, such as trade and development, played significant roles.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the relationship between the United States and Pakistan is currently marked by a mixture of cooperation, challenges, and complexities. The events surrounding the meeting between the Pakistani ambassador to the United States, State Department officials, and the

subsequent developments involving Imran Khan have added a layer of uncertainty and tension to this relationship<sup>175</sup>.

The issues related to the meeting and the imprisonment of Imran Khan have strained diplomatic ties, leading to questions about the nature of U.S. involvement in Pakistan's internal affairs and generating mistrust on the Pakistani side<sup>176</sup>. However, it's essential to recognize that the U.S. and Pakistan have a history of a multifaceted relationship that encompasses security cooperation, economic ties, and diplomatic engagement.

The United States continues to view Pakistan as an important partner in the region, especially in matters related to counterterrorism, regional stability, and Afghanistan. On the other hand, Pakistan seeks to balance its relationships with various global powers, including China and Russia, while maintaining its traditional ties with the United States<sup>177</sup>.

Therefore, the state of U.S.-Pakistan relations is dynamic and influenced by a wide range of factors, including geopolitical considerations, regional developments, and the leadership and policies of both countries. Effective diplomacy and dialogue will be crucial in managing challenges and nurturing cooperation between these two nations in the future.

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<sup>175</sup> Muhammad Tarique and Lubna Shaheen, "They Kill the Truth: WhatsApp Propaganda by Pakistan Tahreek e Insaaf during No Confidence Motion against Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan," *COMMUNICATION STUDIES* 3, no. 1 (2023).

<sup>176</sup> Samina Bashir, Ammara Farukh, and Maria Khursheed, "Discourse Analysis of Speeches and Interviews of Imran Khan in the Context of Alleged Regime Change Operation and Political Turmoil of Pakistan," *Pakistan Languages and Humanities Review* 6, no. 4 (2022): 296-308.

<sup>177</sup> Muhammad Shahbaz, "Revisiting Friends & Foes: US-Pak Relation's Turbulent History and Future," *Open Journal of Political Science* 13, no. 1 (2023): 88-118.

## Political Ties During Trump Administration

### Introduction

In examining the political ties between Pakistan and the United States during the Trump administration, it is imperative to delve into the intricate fabric of the political landscapes in both nations. This chapter aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics that shaped the course of political relations between Pakistan and the U.S. during this critical period.

Pak-US political ties during the Trump administration were marked by a shift from a strained bilateral relationship to a more transactional one, driven by the US need for Pakistan's cooperation in the Afghan peace process<sup>178</sup>. The Trump administration accused Pakistan of "lies and deceit" and suspended \$1.3 billion in security assistance in 2018, citing Pakistan's alleged support for the Taliban and other militant groups<sup>179</sup>. Pakistan denied the allegations and expressed its frustration with the US disregard for its sacrifices and interests in the region. However, in 2019, the US sought Pakistan's help in facilitating talks with the Taliban, and praised Pakistan's role in advancing the peace negotiations<sup>180</sup>. The US also attempted to improve ties with Pakistan on other fronts, such as trade, investment, and energy, but with limited success. The US-India relationship remained a source of concern for Pakistan, especially after the US signed a strategic partnership agreement with India in 2020. Pakistan hoped that the Trump administration would adopt a more balanced approach towards South Asia, but felt that the US tilted towards India on key issues such as Kashmir and nuclear proliferation<sup>202</sup>.

### Background and Contextualization

In the intricate geopolitical landscape of 2016, the political relationship between Pakistan and the United States was characterized by a complex tapestry of strained ties and divergent interests, particularly in the context of the Afghan peace process. As a longstanding major non-NATO ally

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<sup>178</sup> Madiha Afzal, "Evaluating the Trump Administration's Pakistan Reset," *Brookings*, October 26, 2020, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/evaluating-the-trump-administrations-pakistan-reset/>.

<sup>179</sup> Qamar Cheema, "Pak-US Ties during Trump Presidency," *The News International*, January 31, 2021, <https://www.thenews.com.pk/tns/detail/782460-pak-us-ties-during-trump-presidency>.

<sup>180</sup> *The Express Tribune*, "Pak-US Ties under Biden Administration," January 24, 2021, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2281200/pak-us-ties-under-biden-administration>.<sup>202</sup>  
Federation of American Scientists, "Pakistan-U.S. Relations (IF11270)," 2021, <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/row/IF11270.pdf>

of the United States since 2002, Pakistan found itself under scrutiny from the Obama administration. Criticism was leveled at Islamabad for its alleged support to the Taliban and

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other militant groups operating in Afghanistan, setting the tone for a challenging prelude to the forthcoming Trump era<sup>181</sup>.

The Obama administration's decision to suspend certain military and economic aid to Pakistan underscored the tensions between the two nations<sup>204</sup>. The concerns raised encompassed not only Pakistan's regional strategic maneuvers but also touched upon sensitive issues like its nuclear program and human rights record. This period became emblematic of a diplomatic ebb that was, in part, fueled by Pakistan's perceived tilt towards militant groups that ran contrary to U.S. interests<sup>182</sup>.

Simultaneously, Pakistan nursed a sense of betrayal stemming from the United States' burgeoning strategic partnership with India, its regional archrival. This alignment heightened Pakistan's apprehensions about the evolving power dynamics in South Asia, prompting a reassessment of its diplomatic priorities. The aftermath of the 2011 unilateral U.S. raid that resulted in the demise of Osama bin Laden in Abbottabad and the recurrent drone strikes targeting suspected terrorists in Pakistan's tribal areas further strained the bilateral relationship, creating a backdrop of historical grievances<sup>183</sup>.

Nevertheless, amidst these tensions, both nations managed to sustain a level of cooperation, particularly in critical realms such as counterterrorism and regional security. This nuanced collaboration gained momentum with the establishment of the Quadrilateral Coordination Group (QCG) in 2016<sup>184</sup>. The QCG aimed to act as a facilitator for dialogue between the Afghan

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<sup>181</sup> Madiha Afzal, "Evaluating the Trump Administration's Pakistan Reset," *Brookings*, October 26, 2020, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/evaluating-the-trump-administrations-pakistan-reset/>. <sup>204</sup> "U.S. Suspends \$800 Million in Aid to Pakistan." 2011. NPR. July 10, 2011. <https://www.npr.org/2011/07/10/137746664/u-s-to-suspend-800-million-in-aid-to-pakistan>.

<sup>182</sup> Richard Armitage, Samuel Berger, and Daniel Markey, "Independent Task Force Report No. 65," n.d., [https://cdn.cfr.org/sites/default/files/report\\_pdf/Pakistan\\_Afghanistan\\_TFR65.pdf](https://cdn.cfr.org/sites/default/files/report_pdf/Pakistan_Afghanistan_TFR65.pdf).

<sup>183</sup> Savita Pande, "Pakistan after Abbottabad," *Indian Foreign Affairs Journal* 6, no. 2 (2011): 165–86, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45340884>.

<sup>184</sup> Amina Khan, "Afghanistan-Pakistan-US-China Quadrilateral Coordination Group | Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad," *Issi.org.pk*, January 22, 2016, <https://issi.org.pk/pakistan-united-states-china-quadrilateral-coordinationgroup-qcg/>.



government and the Taliban, showcasing a shared interest in stabilizing the volatile Afghan region.

During this tumultuous period, Pakistan played host to several high-profile visits from U.S. officials, including Secretary of State John Kerry<sup>185</sup> and Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan Richard Olson<sup>186</sup>. These engagements served as forums for in-depth discussions on bilateral and regional matters, underscoring a pragmatic acknowledgment of the need for dialogue despite the underlying tensions.

The multifaceted nature of these interactions highlighted the delicate dance between estrangement and collaboration that defined the political backdrop of Pakistan and the United States in the pivotal year of 2016, setting the stage for the uncertainties and recalibrations that awaited with the inauguration of Donald Trump.

### **Key players and decision-makers in both Pakistan and the United States.**

Before we move on to the political landscape during Trump's era, following are the key political players and decision-makers in both Pakistan and the United States in the year 2017 to 2021:

- Donald Trump, the 45th president of the United States, who pursued a hardline policy towards Pakistan, accusing it of harboring terrorists and cutting off aid. He also initiated peace talks with the Taliban in Afghanistan, which involved Pakistan as a mediator.
- Nawaz Sharif: Nawaz Sharif, a prominent political figure in Pakistan, held the office of Prime Minister during pivotal periods, including the years spanning from 2013 to 2017. As a seasoned leader, Sharif navigated the complex terrain of Pakistan's relations with the U.S. His tenure saw challenges and opportunities, including addressing issues of regional stability, counter-terrorism, and economic cooperation. Sharif's strategic decisions and diplomatic engagements played a crucial role in shaping the trajectory of U.S.-Pakistan relations during his tenure.
- Imran Khan, the prime minister of Pakistan from Aug 2018 to April 2022<sup>187</sup>, tried to balance the relations with the US and China, Pakistan's main ally. He also faced domestic challenges such as economic crisis, political opposition, and social unrest.

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<sup>185</sup> U.S. Mission Pakistan, "Secretary of State John Kerry Travel to Pakistan," U.S. Embassy & Consulates in Pakistan, January 12, 2015, <https://pk.usembassy.gov/secretary-of-state-john-kerry-travel-to-pakistan-2/>.

<sup>186</sup> Agencies. 2012. "Richard Olson Arrives in Pakistan to Take up Duties as New US Envoy." *DAWN.COM*. October 27, 2012. <https://www.dawn.com/news/759814/richard-olson-arrives-in-pakistan-to-take-up-duties-as-new-us-envoy>.

<sup>187</sup> "National Assembly of Pakistan." 2017. Na.gov.pk. 2017. [https://na.gov.pk/en/priminister\\_list.php](https://na.gov.pk/en/priminister_list.php).

- General Qamar Javed Bajwa: As the Chief of Army Staff of Pakistan (Nov 2016 to Nov 2022)<sup>188</sup>, General Qamar Javed Bajwa emerged as a key figure in the nation's security and strategic landscape during the years under consideration. General Qamar Javed Bajwa garnered considerable attention when he secured an extension in his tenure as the Chief of Army Staff of Pakistan. This development had far-reaching implications, not only in shaping the Pakistan's political strategy but also influencing the broader dynamics of U.S.-Pakistan relations till start of Ukraine war.
- Mike Pompeo, the secretary of state of the US from 2018 to 2021<sup>189</sup>, who oversaw the implementation of Trump's foreign policy agenda, including pressuring Pakistan to do more against terrorism and supporting India's role in the region.
- Shah Mahmood Qureshi, the foreign minister of Pakistan (2018-2022)<sup>190</sup>, who led the diplomatic efforts to improve ties with the US and other countries, as well as to facilitate the Afghan peace process. He also advocated for Pakistan's interests on issues such as Kashmir and human rights.
- Joe Biden, the 46th president of the United States since 2021, who inherited a strained relationship with Pakistan from his predecessor. He has signaled a more pragmatic approach towards Pakistan, while also maintaining a strong partnership with India.
- Moeed Yusuf, the national security adviser of Pakistan (2019-2022)<sup>214</sup>, who is responsible for coordinating the security and strategic policies of Pakistan. He has played a key role in engaging with the US on various issues, such as counter-terrorism, regional stability, and economic cooperation.

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<sup>188</sup> *Dawn.com*. 2022. "The Era of Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa, the 16th Army Chief." *DAWN.COM*. November 24, 2022. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1718608>.

<sup>189</sup> "The Secretary of State - United States Department of State." 2021. United States Department of State. January 12, 2021. <https://2017-2021.state.gov/secretary/>.

<sup>190</sup> "National Assembly of Pakistan." 2017. *Na.gov.pk*. 2017. <https://na.gov.pk/en/profile.php?uid=818>. <sup>214</sup> "Moeed Yusuf – GSTAR 2022." 2022. *Casstt.com*. 2022. <https://gstar2022.casstt.com/dr-moeed-yusuf/>.

## Early Diplomatic Engagements and Statements

The early months of the Trump administration witnessed a flurry of diplomatic engagements between Pakistani officials and their counterparts in the United States. High-level meetings and diplomatic statements played a crucial role in setting the tone for the evolving relationship.

These interactions served as a platform for both nations to articulate their priorities and expectations. Examining the content and tenor of these initial engagements provides valuable insights into the early sentiments and strategic visions of the leadership in Islamabad and Washington.

### **Initial statements and reactions from Pakistan.**

The election of Donald Trump as the president of the United States in 2016 was met with mixed reactions from Pakistan's political leaders and analysts. Some expressed hope for a better bilateral relationship, while others expressed concern over Trump's unpredictable and confrontational style. Some expressed hope for improved relations between the two countries, while others criticized Trump's anti-Muslim rhetoric and policies. Here are some of the initial statements and reactions from Pakistan after Trump's victory:

- Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif congratulated Trump on his victory and invited him to visit Pakistan. He also claimed that Trump had praised Pakistan as a "fantastic country" and a "terrific place of fantastic people" in a phone call with him<sup>191</sup>. However, Trump's transition team later released a readout of the call that did not mention any such compliments<sup>192</sup>.
- Other Pakistani leaders were less enthusiastic about Trump's election. Imran Khan, the leader of the opposition party Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), said that Trump's "shocking victory" was a consequence of the failure of liberal democracy and globalization. He also warned that

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<sup>191</sup> Max Bearak, "Pakistan's Surprisingly Candid Readout of Trump's Phone Call with Prime Minister," *The Washington Post*, November 30, 2016.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2016/11/30/pakistans-surprisingly-candid-readout-oftrumps-phone-call-with-prime-minister/>.

<sup>192</sup> BBC News, "That 'Tremendous' Call between Trump and Pakistan's PM Nawaz Sharif," *BBC News*, December 2016. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-38165878>.

Trump's "anti-Muslim policies" would fuel more radicalization and violence in the Muslim world<sup>193</sup>.

- Khawaja Asif, the defense minister at the time, said that Pakistan was ready to work with Trump, but also cautioned that his presidency would bring "new challenges" for the

region. He said that Pakistan would not be a "scapegoat" for the US failures in Afghanistan and would not compromise on its national interests<sup>194</sup>.

Some Pakistani politicians also expressed concern about Trump's close ties with India, Pakistan's rival neighbor. Sartaj Aziz, the foreign affairs adviser at the time, said that Trump's pro-India stance could disturb the strategic balance in South Asia. He also said that Pakistan would lobby with the US Congress and the new administration to safeguard its interests<sup>195</sup>.

### **Timeline of Key Political Events (2017-2020)**

Following is the chronological order of major political events in between the two countries during the presidency of Mr Trump from 2017 till 2020. This will only cover the actual events that happened during the said period. Analysis on these events will be provided in the next sub heading, at the end of this chapter.

#### **2017**

- In August 2017, President Trump announced a new South Asia strategy<sup>196</sup> that called for Pakistan to take decisive and irreversible action against terrorist groups operating from its territory.

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<sup>193</sup> hamila N. Chaudhary, "Imran Khan Is Pakistan's Donald Trump. Here's What That Means for Relations between Their Countries," *Time*, July 27, 2018. <https://time.com/5351022/imran-khan-donald-trump-us-pakistan-relations/>.

<sup>194</sup> Syed Raza Hassan, "Pakistan Rejects Role of 'Scapegoat for U.S. Failures' in Afghanistan," *Reuters*, August 23, 2017. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trump-pakistan-idUSKCN1B3125/>.

<sup>195</sup> Tribune, "A Trump Presidency Doesn't Worry Pakistan: Sartaj Aziz," *The Express Tribune, Tribune*, March 9, 2016. <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1062140/a-trump-presidency-doesnt-worry-pakistan-sartaj-aziz>.

<sup>196</sup> Ashley J Tellis and Ashley J Tellis, "Review of President Trump's South Asia Strategy: The Way Ahead, One Year In," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2018.

- In October 2017, Pakistan helped secure the release of American citizen Caitlan Coleman and her family<sup>197</sup> after five years of captivity by the Haqqani network, a Taliban-affiliated group.

## 2018

- In January 2018, the U.S. government announced that it was suspending security assistance to Pakistan<sup>198</sup>, citing its failure to take decisive action against terrorist groups operating from its territory.
- In July 2018, Pakistan held general elections that resulted in the victory of Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party, which formed a coalition government with smaller

parties. The U.S. State Department congratulated the people of Pakistan for exercising their democratic rights and expressed its willingness to work with the new government<sup>199</sup>.

- In September 2018, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo visited Islamabad<sup>200</sup> and met with Prime Minister Khan, Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi, and Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa. They discussed bilateral cooperation on counterterrorism, regional stability, and the Afghan peace process.
- In September 2018, the U.S. government announced that it was cutting further security assistance to Pakistan, including \$300 million in Coalition Support Funds (CSF)<sup>225</sup>.
- In October 2018, Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad, the Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation, wrapped up his visit to Islamabad<sup>226</sup>. This was his first trip to Pakistan since Secretary of State Pompeo nominated him to the position. Throughout his visit, Special Representative Khalilzad held discussions with important Pakistani government figures, concentrating on strategies for reaching a long-term political

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<sup>197</sup> Barbara Starr and Ryan Browne, “Family Held Hostage by Taliban Freed after 5 Years,” *CNN* (CNN, October 12, 2017).

<sup>198</sup> Hannah Bloch, “U.S. Suspends Most Security Assistance to Pakistan,” NPR, January 4, 2018.

<sup>199</sup> “Daily Press Briefing by the Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General | *UN Press*,” Un.org, July 27, 2018.

<sup>200</sup> Ayaz Gul, “Pompeo in Pakistan as US Ties Reach Low Point,” *Voice of America* (*Voice of America* (VOA News), September 5, 2018). <sup>225</sup> “U.S. Cuts \$300 Million in Aid to Pakistan; Says It’s Failing to Fight Militants,” NPR, September 2, 2018. <sup>226</sup> U.S. Mission Pakistan, “Statement on the Conclusion of Special Representative Khalilzad’s Visit to Pakistan,” U.S. Embassy & Consulates in Pakistan, October 10, 2018.

agreement in Afghanistan. He emphasized the need for peace in Afghanistan and how crucial it is to maintaining Pakistan's and the region's long-term stability. In November 2018, President Donald Trump accused Pakistan of not doing "a damn thing" for the U.S.<sup>201</sup>. and alleged that it had harbored Osama bin Laden. Prime Minister Khan responded by saying that Pakistan had suffered huge losses in the war on terror and that it would no longer be a "scapegoat" for U.S. failures in Afghanistan.

## 2019

- In February 2019, a suicide attack by a Pakistan-based militant group killed 40 Indian paramilitary personnel in Kashmir<sup>202</sup>, triggering a military escalation between India and Pakistan. The U.S. urged both sides to exercise restraint and avoid further escalation,

while also calling on Pakistan to take action against terrorist groups operating from its soil.

- In March 2019, Prime Minister Khan announced that Pakistan would release an Indian pilot who had been captured after his fighter jet was shot down by Pakistani forces during an aerial engagement. The move was welcomed by the U.S. as a positive step to deescalate tensions between India and Pakistan<sup>203</sup>.
- In June 2019, U.S. Special Representative Khalilzad visited Islamabad again and met with Prime Minister Khan, Foreign Minister Qureshi, and Army Chief Bajwa. They discussed the progress of the Afghan peace talks and the role of Pakistan in supporting an inclusive and sustainable political settlement.
- In July 2019, Prime Minister Khan made his first official visit to Washington and met with President Trump at the White House<sup>204</sup>. They discussed various issues of mutual

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<sup>201</sup> RFE/RL, "Trump: Pakistan Has Not Done 'a Damn Thing for Us,'" RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty (RFE/RL, November 19, 2018).

<sup>202</sup> NCTC, "National Counterterrorism Center | FTOs," Dni.gov, 2023.

<sup>203</sup> BBC News, "Abhinandan: Captured Indian Pilot Handed Back by Pakistan," *BBC News* (BBC News, March 2019),

<sup>204</sup> Shaiq Hussain and Jon Gerberg, "Imran Khan Visits Trump's White House amid Hopes for a Reset in U.S.-Pakistan Ties," *Washington Post* (*The Washington Post*, July 20, 2019).

interest, including trade, investment, energy, defense, counterterrorism, and regional peace and security. President Trump also offered to mediate the Kashmir dispute between India and Pakistan, which India rejected.

- In Aug 2019, U.S. Special Representative Khalilzad visited Islamabad again engaged in discussions with Pakistani leadership concerning developments in the Afghan peace process. As was mentioned in both Afghanistan and Pakistan, Ambassador Khalilzad underlined that maintaining peace necessitates trustworthy guarantees from both nations, guaranteeing that neither uses the other's territory as a means of aggression. Increased regional economic integration, connectivity, and development are expected to be facilitated by these assurances in conjunction with a comprehensive peace agreement within Afghanistan<sup>205</sup>.
- In August 2019, India revoked the special status of Jammu and Kashmir, its Muslimmajority state that is claimed by both India and Pakistan, and imposed a lockdown and communications blackout in the region. Pakistan strongly condemned the move and appealed to the international community, including the U.S., to intervene and prevent a

humanitarian crisis and a potential war. The US State Department said that “broader implications” of India’s revoking of Jammu and Kashmir’s special status and bifurcation of the state into two union territories, “including the potential for increased instability in the region.”<sup>206</sup>

- In September 2019, Prime Minister Khan addressed the United Nations General Assembly in New York and warned of the dire consequences of a possible nuclear conflict between India and Pakistan over Kashmir<sup>233</sup>. He also met with President Trump on the sidelines of the UNGA and discussed bilateral relations and regional issues.

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<sup>205</sup> U.S. Mission Pakistan, “Statement on Ambassador Khalilzad’s Visit to Pakistan,” U.S. Embassy & Consulates in Pakistan, August 2, 2019.

<sup>206</sup> “US Says Revoking of Article 370 in Kashmir Has ‘Potential for Increased Instability,’” *The Wire*, 2018. <sup>233</sup> “Pakistan’s Khan Warns of All-out Conflict amid Rising Tensions over Kashmir; Demands India Lift ‘Inhuman’ Curfew,” *UN News*, September 27, 2019.

- In October 2019, U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad visited Islamabad<sup>207</sup> and held talks with Pakistani officials on the ongoing efforts to end the conflict in Afghanistan. He thanked Pakistan for facilitating the direct talks between the U.S. and the Taliban that had begun in Qatar in October 2018.
- In November 2019, Pakistan opened a visa-free corridor for Sikh pilgrims from India to visit one of their holiest shrines in Kartarpur, Punjab. The initiative was hailed by both countries as a confidence-building measure and a gesture of goodwill. The US welcomed this initiative to increase ties between India and Pakistan<sup>208</sup>.

## 2020

- On January 17, 2020, U.S. Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo met with Foreign Minister Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi in Washington, D.C. The topics of conversation included regional concerns and bilateral relations. Minister Qureshi highlighted the U.S.-Pakistan relationship's mutual benefits and its significance for the stability of South Asia. In order to achieve President Donald Trump and Prime Minister Imran Khan's shared goal of a long-term partnership, he emphasized the necessity of a more robust trade and investment relationship<sup>236</sup>.
- In January, 2020, U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad undertook a visit to Islamabad. During his discussions with Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa, and other government officials, Ambassador Khalilzad delved into U.S. initiatives aimed at facilitating a political settlement to conclude the war in Afghanistan.
- In February, 2020, U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation Zalmay Khalilzad visited Islamabad<sup>209</sup>. During his stay, he addressed a UNHCR-sponsored

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<sup>207</sup> U.S. Mission Pakistan, "Statement on Ambassador Khalilzad's Visit to Pakistan," U.S. Embassy & Consulates in Pakistan, October 30, 2019.

<sup>208</sup> Tejinder Singh, "US Welcomes Kartarpur Corridor for Sikhs," *The America Times*, November 30, 2018, . <sup>236</sup> Spokesperson Office, "Foreign Minister Meets U.S. Secretary of State - Ministry of Foreign Affairs," Ministry of Foreign Affairs, January 17, 2020.

<sup>209</sup> U.S. Mission Pakistan, "STATEMENT on AMBASSADOR KHALILZAD'S VISIT to PAKISTAN," U.S. Embassy & Consulates in Pakistan, February 18, 2020.



conference commemorating 40 years of Pakistan's support to Afghan refugees.

Ambassador Khalilzad engaged in discussions with UN Secretary General Guterres on the Afghan peace process. Additionally, he held meetings with Prime Minister Khan, Foreign Minister Qureshi, Chief of Army Staff General Bajwa, and other senior officials to deliberate on U.S. efforts aimed at facilitating a political settlement to end the war in Afghanistan.

- The third round of the bilateral Political-Military Dialogue between the US and Pakistan in November 2020 fostered discussions on regional security, counterterrorism, defense trade, and military cooperation.

### **Impact of Trump's policies on Pakistan's political landscape.**

The presidency of Donald Trump had significant implications for the political landscape of Pakistan, a key ally of the United States in South Asia. Trump's policies on trade, security, human rights, and regional stability affected the domestic and foreign affairs of Pakistan in various ways. This paragraph will analyze some of the major impacts of Trump's policies on Pakistan's political landscape.

One of the most controversial aspects of Trump's policy towards Pakistan was his decision to suspend security assistance and military aid to the country in 2018, accusing it of harboring terrorists and not doing enough to fight extremism. This move was seen by many in Pakistan as a betrayal and a sign of disrespect, especially since Pakistan had suffered thousands of casualties and billions of dollars in losses due to its involvement in the US-led war on terror. The suspension of aid also strained the relations between the civilian and military leaderships in

Pakistan, as the latter had more influence over the security and defense policies of the country. The civilian government, led by Prime Minister Imran Khan, tried to maintain a balanced and pragmatic approach towards the US, while also seeking closer ties with other regional powers such as China, Russia, and Iran.

Another impact of Trump's policy towards Pakistan was his role in facilitating the peace talks between the Taliban and the Afghan government, which aimed to end the long-running conflict in Afghanistan. Trump was eager to withdraw US troops from Afghanistan and reach a deal with

the Taliban before his term ended, but his haste and unpredictability also created challenges and uncertainties for Pakistan. On one hand, Pakistan welcomed the peace process and supported the intra-Afghan dialogue, as it hoped for a stable and friendly neighbor that would not pose a security threat or a refugee crisis. On the other hand, Pakistan also faced pressure from the US and other countries to use its leverage over the Taliban and persuade them to agree to a ceasefire and a power-sharing arrangement with the Afghan government. Moreover, Pakistan had to deal with the implications of a possible resurgence of violence and extremism in Afghanistan, which could spill over into its own territory and undermine its efforts to counter terrorism.

Furthermore, Trump's policies on immigration also had indirect consequences for Pakistan. The administration's strict immigration measures impacted the Pakistani diaspora in the United States. Changes in visa regulations and restrictions affected not only the Pakistani community but also the cultural and educational exchanges that had been a cornerstone of people-to-people diplomacy.

In the realm of regional stability, Trump's administration's tilt towards India in the context of the U.S.-India strategic partnership had implications for the delicate balance in South Asia. The strengthening ties between the U.S. and India, particularly in the military and economic domains, were closely watched in Islamabad. This development raised concerns about the potential to tip the regional power dynamics and exacerbate longstanding issues, such as the Kashmir dispute.

The unpredictable nature of Trump's foreign policy decisions added a layer of uncertainty for Pakistan's strategic planners. The abrupt shifts in U.S. positions on various international issues, coupled with an "America First" approach, forced Pakistan to recalibrate its diplomatic strategies continually. Navigating the complex web of global politics required a nimble and adaptive foreign policy approach from Islamabad.

Additionally, Trump's withdrawal from international agreements and organizations, such as the Paris Agreement on climate change and the World Health Organization, had indirect repercussions for Pakistan. As a country grappling with environmental challenges and public health issues, Pakistan found itself in a global landscape where collective efforts on these fronts were less prioritized.

In conclusion, Trump's presidency left an indelible mark on Pakistan's political landscape, affecting not only security and military aid but also trade, immigration, regional stability, and

global cooperation. The dynamics established during this period would continue to shape Pakistan's approach to international relations in the post-Trump era.

### **The role of Pakistan in facilitating peace talks**

Pakistan had played a crucial role in facilitating the peace talks between the United States and the Taliban, which had aimed to end the 20-year-long war in Afghanistan. Pakistan's involvement in the process had been motivated by its strategic interests, its desire to improve its relations with the US, and its concern about the security and stability of the region. Pakistan had made several efforts to persuade the Taliban to engage in dialogue, such as hosting several rounds of negotiations, providing intelligence and logistical support, and coordinating with other regional and international actors. Pakistan had also faced several challenges and dilemmas in its role as a facilitator, such as balancing its ties with different Afghan factions, managing its rivalry with India, and dealing with the domestic backlash from some religious and political groups<sup>210</sup>. Despite the uncertainties and complexities of the situation, Pakistan had remained committed to supporting the peace process and achieving a peaceful and inclusive political settlement in Afghanistan. Some of the outcomes of Pakistan's role were the signing of the US-Taliban agreement in February 2020, the initiation of the intra-Afghan dialogue in September 2020, and the reduction of violence and escalation of humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan<sup>211</sup>. Following is a chronological order of events from Doha agreement till the end of Trump era in January 2021.

#### **1. February 29, 2020: Doha Agreement**

- The United States and the Taliban signed the Doha Agreement in Qatar<sup>212</sup>.
- Pakistan played a crucial role in facilitating these talks, contributing to the agreement's success.

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<sup>210</sup> Raj Verma. "The Afghan peace process: Domestic fault lines." *Middle East Policy* 28, no. 3-4 (2021): 172-185.

<sup>211</sup> Michael Semple. "Alternative paths to peace-Restoring the local in Afghan peace-making." (2022).

<sup>212</sup> "Doha Agreement." US Department of State, February 29, 2020.

<https://www.state.gov/wpcontent/uploads/2020/02/Agreement-For-Bringing-Peace-to-Afghanistan-02.29.20.pdf>.

- The agreement outlined the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan and commitments from the Taliban to prevent terrorist activities.

## 2. July 7, 2020: Trilateral Vice Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue

- Pakistan, China, and Afghanistan conducted the 3rd round of Trilateral Vice Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue<sup>213</sup>.
- The discussions included cooperation on the Afghan peace and reconciliation process, showcasing Pakistan's commitment to regional stability.

## 3. September 2020: Start of Intra-Afghan Dialogue

- After the United States and the Taliban signed a historic agreement in Doha, Qatar, on February 29, the talks were scheduled to begin in March<sup>214</sup>
- Negotiations were put on hold for six months as the insurgents and the Afghan government argued over the terms of a nationwide ceasefire and the release of Taliban prisoners
- To keep pressure on President Ashraf Ghani's administration, the Taliban persisted in attacking Afghan forces during this period
- Pakistan supported and encouraged the start of intra-Afghan dialogue<sup>215</sup>.
- The dialogue involved direct negotiations between the Afghan government and the Taliban.

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<sup>213</sup> Spokesperson Office, "Joint Press Release of the 3rd Round China -Afghanistan-Pakistan Trilateral Vice Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue - Ministry of Foreign Affairs," Ministry of Foreign Affairs, July 7, 2020.

<sup>214</sup> Shamil Shams and Masood Saifullah, "Intra-Afghan Talks: A Long, Complicated Process," *dw.com (Deutsche Welle*, September 11, 2020).

<sup>215</sup> Associated Press and Kathy Gannon, "Taliban Negotiators Visit Pakistan to Talk Afghan Peace Push," *The Diplomat.com (The Diplomat*, August 24, 2020), .

- Islamabad's diplomatic efforts were geared towards fostering understanding and cooperation between the Afghan factions.

#### 4. **September 2020: Intra-Afghan Talks Commence**

- Intra-Afghan talks officially commenced in Doha, marking a historic step towards political reconciliation<sup>216</sup>.
- Pakistan's role in encouraging and facilitating these talks was pivotal for the peace process<sup>217</sup>.

#### 5. **January 2021: Regional and International Support**

- Pakistan actively engaged with regional and international partners, highlighting the importance of collective support for Afghan peace<sup>218</sup>.
- The diplomatic outreach aimed to build consensus and garner backing for a stable and secure Afghanistan.

### **Overview of the political landscape in Pakistan during the Trump administration.**

The geopolitical landscape that defined the political relationship between Pakistan and the United States from 2017 to 2021 was marked by a profound sense of uncertainty, deep-seated mistrust, and a volatility that echoed the shifting sands of global politics. The inauguration of Donald Trump as the President of the United States in January 2017 served as a seismic event, signaling a transformative shift in U.S. foreign policy, particularly concerning Pakistan—a nation that had stood as a key ally in the war on terror since the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks in 2001.

Under President Trump's administration, the bilateral ties between Pakistan and the U.S.

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<sup>216</sup> Shereena Qazi, “Qatar to Host Long-Awaited Intra-Afghan Talks from Saturday,” *Al Jazeera (Al Jazeera, September 10, 2020)*.

<sup>217</sup> hopes, “Pakistan Welcomes Intra-Afghan Talks, Hopes for Debate on ‘Substantive Issues,’” *Arab News PK (Arabnews, January 6, 2021)*, .

<sup>218</sup> “Pakistan: Shoring up Afghanistan’s Peace Process,” *Crisisgroup.org, June 29, 2021*, .

experienced a paradigm shift. Accusations of Pakistan harboring terrorists and providing safe havens to groups such as the Taliban reverberated through diplomatic channels<sup>219</sup>. This led to the

suspension of significant security and economic aid, an aid that had amounted to billions of dollars over the years<sup>220</sup>. Pakistan vehemently denied these allegations, expressing disappointment over the U.S. decision and highlighting its substantial sacrifices in the fight against terrorism. In response, Pakistan sought to diversify its foreign relations, fostering stronger ties with countries such as China, Russia, Turkey, and other regional powers.

The year 2019 marked a noteworthy turn of events when the U.S. sought Pakistan's assistance in facilitating peace talks with the Taliban in Afghanistan<sup>249</sup>. Pakistan played a pivotal role in bringing the Taliban to the negotiating table, aligning itself with U.S. efforts to bring an end to the protracted conflict. This positive momentum saw a resumption of high-level dialogues and military-to-military contacts between Pakistan and the U.S. The two nations found common ground on various fronts, including counter-terrorism initiatives, trade, energy cooperation, and regional stability.

Yet, this period of amicable collaboration existed within the broader context of a fragile and unpredictable political relationship. Divergent interests and perspectives on numerous regional and global issues remained a constant challenge. The U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021 injected new complexities into the equation, demanding both nations to grapple with the implications of the Taliban's ascendancy and the ensuing humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan<sup>221</sup>. The U.S. expected Pakistan to exercise its influence over the Taliban, ensuring an inclusive and representative government in Kabul, upholding human rights, particularly women's rights, and preventing any terrorist activities emanating from Afghan soil. Pakistan maintained that it lacked

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<sup>219</sup> "Double Game: Why Pakistan Supports Militants and Resists U.S. Pressure to Stop." 2018. *Cato Institute*. September 20, 2018. <https://www.cato.org/policy-analysis/double-game-why-pakistan-supports-militants-resists-uspressure-stop>.

<sup>220</sup> Mohammed, Arshad, and Jonathan Landay. 2018. "U.S. Suspends at Least \$900 Million in Security Aid to Pakistan." *Reuters*. January 5, 2018. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-pakistan-aid-idUSKBN1ET2DX/>. <sup>249</sup> "U.S., Pakistan at 'Convergence' on Afghanistan, Says Pakistani Envoy." 2021. United States Institute of Peace. September 17, 2021. <https://www.usip.org/publications/2021/07/us-pakistan-convergence-afghanistan-sayspakistani-envoy>.

<sup>221</sup> "U.S. Withdrawal from Afghanistan - The White House." White House. Accessed November 26, 2023. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/US-Withdrawal-from-Afghanistan.pdf>.

control over the Taliban<sup>222</sup> and advocated for a peaceful, negotiated settlement to the Afghan conflict. It also urged the U.S. and the international community to engage with the Taliban and provide much-needed humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan.

The political relationship between Pakistan and the U.S. during this period unfolded as a complex and dynamic interplay of changing geopolitical realities, strategic interests, and domestic factors. While moments of cooperation and confrontation punctuated their diplomatic interactions, common goals and shared challenges also underscored their engagements. The future trajectory of this relationship hinges on how both nations navigate their differences, leverage convergences, and adapt to the evolving landscape of a rapidly changing world.

Overall, Pakistani politicians reacted to Trump's election with a mixture of optimism and apprehension, depending on their political affiliation and perspective. They also recognized that Trump's presidency would have significant implications for Pakistan-US relations and regional stability.

### Key findings

#### Key Findings of Chapter Three: Political Ties Between Pakistan and the United States During the Trump Administration

- **Shift to a Transactional Relationship:** The Pak-US political ties during the Trump era transitioned to a more transactional nature, driven by U.S. needs in the Afghan peace process<sup>223</sup>.
- **Suspension of U.S. Aid:** In 2018, the U.S. suspended \$1.3 billion in security assistance to Pakistan over allegations of supporting Taliban and other militant groups, which Pakistan denied<sup>224</sup>.

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<sup>222</sup> "Afghanistan's Security Challenges under the Taliban," Crisisgroup.org, August 11, 2022, .

<sup>223</sup> Madiha Afzal, "Evaluating the Trump Administration's Pakistan Reset," *Brookings*, October 26, 2020, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/evaluating-the-trump-administrations-pakistan-reset/>.

<sup>224</sup> Qamar Cheema, "Pak-US Ties during Trump Presidency," *The News International*, January 31, 2021, <https://www.thenews.com.pk/tns/detail/782460-pak-us-ties-during-trump-presidency>.

<sup>254</sup> The Express Tribune, "Pak-US Ties under Biden Administration," January 24, 2021, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2281200/pak-us-ties-under-biden-administration>. <sup>255</sup> Federation of American Scientists, "Pakistan-U.S. Relations (IF11270)," 2021, <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/row/IF11270.pdf>

- **Pakistan's Role in Afghan Peace Talks:** In 2019, the U.S. recognized Pakistan's crucial role in facilitating the Afghan peace negotiations, marking a positive shift in relations<sup>254</sup>.
- **Concerns over US-India Relationship:** Pakistan viewed the U.S.-India strategic partnership agreement in 2020 as a challenge, particularly concerning issues like Kashmir and nuclear proliferation<sup>255</sup>.
  - **Facilitation of Peace Talks:** Pakistan played a key role in mediating peace talks between the U.S. and Taliban, striving for a stable and inclusive political settlement in Afghanistan<sup>256</sup>.
- **Diversification of Foreign Relations:** Pakistan sought to strengthen ties with other regional powers like China, Russia, and Turkey, in response to changing U.S. policies.
- **Challenges in Balancing Regional Interests:** Pakistan faced challenges in managing its relationships with neighboring countries and regional powers. The U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan and the strengthening of U.S.-India ties presented Pakistan with strategic dilemmas, particularly in maintaining regional balance and addressing concerns over security and territorial disputes<sup>257</sup>.
- **Domestic Political Implications:** The Trump administration's policies had significant repercussions within Pakistan's domestic politics. Issues such as economic dependence on U.S. aid, the handling of the Afghan peace process, and balancing relations with other global powers became crucial aspects of Pakistan's internal political discourse.
- **Influence on Pakistan's Security Policies:** The U.S. suspension of aid and pressure on counterterrorism efforts influenced Pakistan's security and defense policies. Pakistan had to recalibrate its military strategies, particularly concerning its operations against militant groups and its broader security posture in the region. This was compounded by the ever powerful Taliban next doors<sup>258</sup>.
- **Public Perception and Diplomatic Relations:** The Trump administration's approach towards Pakistan affected public perception and diplomatic relations. The frequent policy shifts and statements from the U.S. administration led to skepticism and a reassessment of the bilateral relationship among the Pakistani public and policymakers.



- **Humanitarian and Developmental Aspects:** The dynamics of Pak-U.S. relations during this period also impacted humanitarian and developmental projects in Pakistan. The

<sup>256</sup> <sup>256</sup> Raj Verma. "The Afghan peace process: Domestic fault lines." *Middle East Policy* 28, no. 3-4 (2021): 172185.

<sup>257</sup> "U.S. Withdrawal from Afghanistan - The White House." White House. Accessed November 26, 2023. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/US-Withdrawal-from-Afghanistan.pdf>.

<sup>258</sup> "Afghanistan's Security Challenges under the Taliban," Crisisgroup.org, August 11, 2022, reduction in U.S. aid prompted Pakistan to seek alternative sources of funding and partnerships for its developmental needs<sup>225</sup>.

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<sup>225</sup> Mohammed, Arshad, and Jonathan Landay. 2018. "U.S. Suspends at Least \$900 Million in Security Aid to Pakistan." *Reuters*. January 5, 2018. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-pakistan-aid-idUSKBN1ET2DX/>.



## **Military ties during Trump Administration**

Since diplomatic relations were established in 1947, the forces of the United States and Pakistan have maintained military relations. President Nixon once referred to this alliance as "America's most allied ally in Asia."<sup>226</sup> This description emphasised how both countries have an interest in the stability and security of South Asia, Central Asia, and Eastern Europe. This alliance has changed over time as a result of navigating different geopolitical environments and adjusting to the shifting demands and difficulties in these areas.

During the mid-1950s, when the United States first dispatched military advisors to Pakistan, Pakistani cadets have been regularly attending prestigious American military institutions and war colleges<sup>227</sup>. Regular combined military training between the Pakistani Army and Air Force<sup>262</sup> and their American counterparts are conducted. Similarly, the Pakistan Navy and Marines have participated with US navy in several patrol missions<sup>228</sup>. The strategic significance of the relationship in preserving regional stability and advancing mutual security objectives is demonstrated by the partnership's critical role in tackling a variety of crises, from regional conflicts to the worldwide fight on terrorism.

### **Historical Context of Military Relations Pre-Trump Era:**

Before we move on to the trump era, it is imperative to understand the broad history of Pakistan US military relations. These are given as under, divided into broad era's.

#### **1947-1965: Formation and Alliance**

- Initial Relations and Cooperation: Shortly after Pakistan's independence, the US and Pakistan established a partnership based on shared interests rather than concerns about external threats, mainly communism.

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<sup>226</sup> Mohammed Ayub Khan, "The Pakistan-American Alliance," Foreign Affairs, 1964, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/asia/1964-01-01/pakistan-american-alliance>.

<sup>227</sup> U.S. Mission Pakistan, "Elite Pakistani Cadets Compete for Admission to Prestigious U.S. Military Academies," U.S. Embassy & Consulates in Pakistan, February 24, 2017, <https://pk.usembassy.gov/elite-pakistani-cadetscompete-admission-prestigious-u-s-military-academies/>.<sup>262</sup> U.S. Mission Pakistan, "U.S. And Pakistan Air Force Carry out Joint Training Exercise in Pakistan," U.S. Embassy & Consulates in Pakistan, March 7, 2022, <https://pk.usembassy.gov/u-s-and-pakistan-air-force-carry-outjoint-training-exercise-in-pakistan/>.

<sup>228</sup> U.S. Mission Pakistan, "U.S. Naval Forces Participate in Exercise AMAN 17," U.S. Embassy & Consulates in Pakistan, February 14, 2017, <https://pk.usembassy.gov/u-s-naval-forces-participate-exercise-aman-17/>.

- Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement (1954)<sup>229</sup>: The summit of the alliance was reached with this agreement and Pakistan's alignment with the West through the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO)<sup>230</sup> and the South East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO)<sup>231</sup>.

Pakistan received both military and economic assistance from the US during this time.

### 1965-1979: Period of Discord and Strain

- 1965 Indo-Pak War: After the Indo-Pak war in 1965, ties between the US and Pakistan drastically worsened. Pakistan's use of military hardware against India was seen by the US as a breach of the mutual defence pact, which resulted in the suspension of security cooperation and a reduction in economic support<sup>232</sup>.
- 1971 War: During the 1971 Indo-Pak War, the United States, under President Nixon's administration, primarily played a diplomatic role, leaning towards supporting Pakistan. The U.S. decision was influenced by its strategic interest in countering Soviet influence in South Asia and maintaining its relationship with Pakistan, which was considered a key ally<sup>268</sup>.
- Nuclear Ambitions: The relationship was further strained by Pakistan's pursuit of a nuclear weapons programme, particularly following India's nuclear explosion in 1974<sup>233</sup> and the consequent enforcement of US non-proliferation regulations such as the

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<sup>229</sup> Mohammed Ayub Khan, "The Pakistan-American Alliance," Foreign Affairs, 1964, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/asia/1964-01-01/pakistan-americanalliance#:~:text=By%20Mohammed%20Ayub%20Khan&text=In%20May%201954%2C%20Pakistan%20Signed,P hilippines%2C%20Australia%20and%20New%20Zealand.>

<sup>230</sup> "The Baghdad Pact (1955) and the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO)," State.gov, 2023, <https://20012009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/time/lw/98683.htm>.

<sup>231</sup> "Milestones: 1953–1960 - Office of the Historian," State.gov, 2023, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/19531960/seato>.

<sup>232</sup> "Milestones: 1961–1968 - Office of the Historian," State.gov, 2023, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/19611968/india-pakistan-war>.

<sup>268</sup>

<sup>233</sup> "Strategic Analysis: Indian Nuclear Tests, Then and Now," Columbia.edu, 2023, [https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/olj/sa/sa\\_99kap02.html](https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/olj/sa/sa_99kap02.html).

Symington Amendment<sup>234</sup>. In response, the US offered little assistance and imposed sanctions during these turbulent times.

### **Late 1970s: Resurgence of Cooperation**

- Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan (1979): A turning moment was the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. In order to aid Pakistan in its insurgency against the Soviet Union, the US extended a large package of military and economic assistance<sup>235</sup>. The Pressler Amendment was changed to require the US president to certify that Pakistan did not possess a nuclear weapon, which made this assistance possible<sup>236</sup>.

### **1980-1990: Renewed Alliance in the Afghan Conflict**

- Strategic Cooperation: After the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in 1979, the United States acknowledged Pakistan's pivotal role in bolstering the insurgency against the Soviet Union. A substantial \$3.2 billion aid package, comprising both military and economic components, was negotiated by the Reagan administration with Pakistan in 1981<sup>237</sup>.
- Pressler Amendment (1985): The US kept up a sizable aid programme even after learning that Pakistan was actively pursuing a weapons of mass destruction (WMD) programme. According to the Pressler Amendment, Pakistan had to certify every year that it did not have any nuclear weapons. This accreditation was given on a regular basis between 1985 and 1990<sup>238</sup>.

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<sup>234</sup> “Confrontation and Retreat: The U.S. Congress and the South Asian Nuclear Tests - Key Legislation | Arms Control Association,” Armscontrol.org, 2019, <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2000-01/confrontation-retreat-uscongress-south-asian-nuclear-tests-key-legislation>.

<sup>235</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/profile/claire-provost>, “Sixty Years of US Aid to Pakistan: Get the Data,” the *Guardian* (*The Guardian*, July 11, 2011), <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/povertymatters/2011/jul/11/us-aid-to-pakistan>.

<sup>236</sup> “Pakistan - U.s. Legislation on Pakistan (1990-2004) | Return of the Taliban | *FRONTLINE* / *PBS*,” Pbs.org, 2023, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/taliban/pakistan/uspolicychart.html>.

<sup>237</sup> “U.S. To Speed F16s as Pakistan Approves Aid,” *Washington Post* (*The Washington Post*, September 16, 1981), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1981/09/16/us-to-speed-f16s-as-pakistan-approvesaid/9f0b76ad-2a8b-4394-964f-15784a1e452f/>.

<sup>238</sup> “Chinese Nuclear Missiles in Pakistan,” Fas.org, 2023, [https://irp.fas.org/congress/1996\\_cr/s960612c.htm](https://irp.fas.org/congress/1996_cr/s960612c.htm).

- Afghan Mujahedeen Support: The Afghan Mujahedeen were financed, armed, and trained in cooperation between the US and Pakistan<sup>239</sup>. This collaboration played a pivotal role in compelling the Soviet Union to evacuate Afghanistan and ultimately aided in the disintegration of the Soviet Union<sup>240</sup>.

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### **Post-Soviet Withdrawal and Growing Tensions (1990-2001)**

- Shift in US Focus: The US's strategic interest in the region declined after the conclusion of the Cold War and the fall of the Soviet Union. Under the Pressler Amendment, the majority of military and financial assistance to Pakistan was suspended in 1990 after President George H. W. Bush declined to certify that the country did not possess nuclear weapons<sup>241</sup>.
- Sanctions and Diplomatic Strains: Following Pakistan's nuclear tests in 1998<sup>242</sup> and the military takeover in 1999, the relationship further worsened. The United States withdrew almost all remaining economic support and implemented further sanctions. Pakistan became more isolated internationally during this period as the US started to fortify its relations with India.
- Transactional Nature of the Alliance: Most people viewed the US-Pakistan relationship as transactional, and the US's commitment was frequently thought to be dishonest. The US withholding military hardware, such as F-16 fighter planes, which Pakistan had contracted and paid for before 1990, exacerbated these feelings<sup>243</sup>. Although efforts to

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<sup>239</sup> Michael Rubin, "WHO IS RESPONSIBLE for the TALIBAN?," *Middle East Review of International Affairs* 6, no. 1 (2002): 1, [https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/olj/meria/rum02\\_01.pdf](https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/olj/meria/rum02_01.pdf).

<sup>240</sup> "Dissolution of the USSR and the Establishment of Independent Republics, 1991," State.gov, 2023, <https://20012009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/time/pcw/108229.htm>.

<sup>241</sup> Gary Clyde Hufbauer et al., "Case 79-2," PIIE, April 16, 2016, <https://www.piie.com/commentary/speechpapers/case-79-2>.

<sup>242</sup> "Pakistan Nuclear Overview," The Nuclear Threat Initiative, October 9, 2021, <https://www.nti.org/analysis/articles/pakistan-nuclear/>.

<sup>243</sup> "U.S. PAYS PAKISTAN for F-16S WITHHELD over NUCLEAR ISSUE," *Washington Post (The Washington Post, 1999)*, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1999/01/01/us-pays-pakistan-for-f-16s-withheldover-nuclear-issue/a996312e-fc47-4818-80c8-c428aa14bde7/>.

relax sanctions in 1995 helped to some extent to reduce this tension, the relationship as a whole remained tense.

- **Post-9/11 Rekindled Alliance:** The relationship between the US and Pakistan experienced a revival after the 9/11 attacks. The US required Pakistan's assistance to dismantle the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, bring Al-Qaeda to justice, and prevent the country from being a safe haven for further terrorist activities. Pakistan offered several military bases<sup>244</sup>, and all out support to US operations in Afghanistan.

### **Military relations under Obama (2009-2017)**

The military relations between the United States and Pakistan during the Obama administration were multifaceted, marked by collaborative efforts in counter-terrorism, strategic realignments, and underlying tensions. Key aspects of this relationship include:

- **Af-Pak Policy Implementation:** The Obama administration's Af-Pak policy emphasized Pakistan's strategic importance in regional stability. This policy aimed to address issues in Pakistan as a key to resolving broader regional challenges<sup>245</sup>.
- **Pivot to Asia Policy and Regional Dynamics:** The Obama administration's Pivot to Asia strategy, aimed at countering Chinese influence, indirectly impacted US-Pakistan military relations. The US's growing ties with India as part of this policy led to apprehensions in Pakistan about the regional balance of power and potential implications for military strategy<sup>282</sup>.
- **Kerry Lugar Bill and Military Funding:** The Obama administration's Kerry Lugar Bill, providing \$7.5 billion in civilian assistance to Pakistan<sup>246</sup>, had indirect military implications. The aid came with conditions that Pakistan perceived as intrusions on its sovereignty, affecting the military aspect of bilateral relations.

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<sup>244</sup> Tughral Yamin, "Examining Pakistan's Strategic Decision to Support the US War on Terror," n.d., <https://www.issi.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Tughral-Yamin-35-No.2.pdf>.

<sup>245</sup> "Obama's AF-PAK Strategy: The Change and the Continuing Challenge," Wilson Center, 2023, <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/article/obamas-af-pak-strategy-the-change-and-the-continuing-challenge>.<sup>282</sup> Muhammad Munir and Muhammad Ahsan, "US STRATEGIC POLICY towards INDIA and PAKISTAN in POST 9/11," n.d., <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/845005>.

<sup>246</sup> "Senate Unanimously Passes Kerry-Lugar Pakistan Aid Package | United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations," Senate.gov (United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, September 24, 2009), <https://www.foreign.senate.gov/press/rep/release/senate-unanimously-passes-kerry-lugar-pakistan-aidpackage>.

- Counter-Terrorism Efforts: Pakistan's actions against terrorist groups like Lashkar-e-Taiba and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi post-9/11 were part of its counter-terrorism commitment<sup>247</sup>. However, the US expressed concerns about Pakistan's use of aid funds, alleging they were diverted for military build-up against India, which created friction in military cooperation.
- Mistrust and Bilateral Criticism: The Obama administration's demand for increased Pakistani action against terrorism contributed to a trust deficit<sup>248</sup>. This mistrust was compounded by disagreements over counter-terrorism strategies and perceptions of each other's commitment to regional security.
- Significant Bilateral Incidents:
  - Raymond Davis Incident (2011): The arrest of a CIA contractor in Pakistan strained military and diplomatic ties<sup>249</sup>.
  - Abbottabad Operation (2011): The unilateral US operation to kill Osama bin Laden on Pakistani soil without Islamabad's knowledge deeply strained military relations.
  - Salala Check Post Incident (2011): NATO's attack on a Pakistani military post, resulting in soldier casualties, significantly affected military relations<sup>250</sup>. An apology from the White House and the reopening of NATO supply routes partially mitigated this tension.

### **Major U.S. Arms Sales and Grants to Pakistan Since 2001**

A brief summary of major US arms sales and military grants to Pakistan since 2001 till start of trump era are as given. Majorly, the data is taken from a ‘Congressional Research’<sup>251</sup> conducted

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<sup>247</sup> “Country Reports on Terrorism 2019 - United States Department of State,” United States Department of State, May 10, 2021, <https://www.state.gov/reports/country-reports-on-terrorism-2019/>.

<sup>248</sup> Richard Armitage, Samuel Berger, and Daniel Markey, “Independent Task Force Report No. 65,” n.d., [https://cdn.cfr.org/sites/default/files/report\\_pdf/Pakistan\\_Afghanistan\\_TFR65.pdf](https://cdn.cfr.org/sites/default/files/report_pdf/Pakistan_Afghanistan_TFR65.pdf).

<sup>249</sup> “How a Single Spy Helped Turn Pakistan against the United States (Published 2013),” *The New York Times*, 2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/14/magazine/raymond-davis-pakistan.html>.

<sup>250</sup> BBC News, “Pakistan Outrage after ‘Nato Attack Kills Soldiers,’” *BBC News (BBC News*, November 26, 2011), <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-15901363>.

<sup>251</sup> “Major U.S. Arms Sales and Grants to Pakistan since 2001,” Federation of American Scientists, May 4, 2015, <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/row/pakarms.pdf>.



for onward distribution to congressmen in the US. It summarizes major arms sales and grants to Pakistan.

### **Types of Equipment Provided**

- Items for counterterrorism and counterinsurgency including fighter jets.
- Platforms suited for conventional warfare including officer trainings.

### **Funding Overview**

- Majority of purchases made with Pakistani national funds, with some through FMF.
- Total agreements worth about \$5.4 billion (FY2002-FY2014)<sup>252</sup>.
- Predominantly F-16 combat aircraft and related equipment (\$2 Billion).

### **Foreign Military Financing (FMF)**

- Congress appropriated about \$3.6 billion for Pakistan since 2001.
- Over two-thirds disbursed for long-term military modernization.
- Notable Defense Supplies under FMF
- Eight P-3C Orion maritime patrol aircraft (valued at \$474 million)<sup>253</sup>.
- Military radio sets, TOW anti-armor missiles, AN/TPS-77 surveillance radars<sup>254</sup>.

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<sup>252</sup> “US Has given Pakistan US \$5.4 Bn Worth of Military Equipment since 9/11: Report,” *DNA India (DNA India*, May 6, 2015), <https://www.dnaindia.com/world/report-us-has-given-pakistan-us-54-bn-worth-of-militaryequipment-since-911-report-2083819>.

<sup>253</sup> TNN, “Pak Used US Aid to Fight India: Report,” *The Economic Times (Economic Times*, June 6, 2009), <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/pak-used-us-aid-to-fight-indiareport/articleshow/4626388.cms>.

<sup>254</sup> “Lockheed Martin Makes Long-Range Radars for Pakistan,” *Militaryaerospace.com (Military Aerospace*, November 8, 2005), <https://www.militaryaerospace.com/rf-analog/article/16712791/lockheed-martin-makeslongrange-radars-for-pakistan>.

- Six C-130E Hercules transport aircraft.
- Perry-class missile frigate (now the PNS Alamgir)<sup>255</sup>.
- AH-1F Cobra attack helicopters, Scan Eagle UAVs.

### **Mixed Funding Purchases (Pakistani Funds and FMF)**

- New F-16A/B Block 52 combat aircraft<sup>293</sup> and 60 Mid-Life Update kits for existing aircraft.
- M-109 self-propelled howitzers.
- F-16C/D Block 52 Fighting Falcon combat aircraft and armaments.
- 100 Harpoon anti-ship missiles, 500 Sidewinder air-to-air missiles<sup>256</sup>.
- Phalanx Close-In Weapons System naval guns.

### **Major Transfers via EDA**

- 59 T-37 Tweet jets and 373 M113 armored carriers<sup>295</sup>.

### **Coalition Support Funds**

- 26 Bell 412EP utility helicopters and related maintenance (valued at \$235 million)<sup>257</sup>.

### **U.S. Military Support Programs**

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<sup>255</sup> Joe Katzman, "Perry for Pakistan: USS McInerney & the Alamgir Class," *Defense Industry Daily* (Defense Industry Daily, March 28, 2011), <https://www.defenseindustrydaily.com/a-perry-for-pakistan-uss-mcinerney06197/>.

<sup>293</sup> Kuldip Singh, "USA, Pakistan and the F-16: What Lies behind US's \$125 Mn Military Sales to Pakistan to Monitor F-16s," *Dailyo.in* (Dailyo, July 30, 2019), <https://www.dailyo.in/politics/usa-pakistan-donald-trump-imrankhan-f-16-us-military-aid-to-pakistan-31680>.

<sup>256</sup> Tribune, "US Hands over 14 Combat Aircraft, 59 Military Trainer Jets to Pakistan: Report," *The Express Tribune* (Tribune, May 6, 2015), <https://tribune.com.pk/story/881919/us-hands-over-14-combat-aircraft-59-military-trainerjets-to-pakistan-report>. <sup>295</sup> India, "US Gives Pak USD 5.4 Bn Worth of Military Equipment," *@bsindia* (Business Standard, May 6, 2015), [https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/us-gives-pak-usd-5-4-bn-worth-of-military-equipment115050601128\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/us-gives-pak-usd-5-4-bn-worth-of-military-equipment115050601128_1.html).

<sup>257</sup> Anwar Iqbal, "US Hands over Used Combat Aircraft, Other Weapons," *DAWN.COM*, May 7, 2015), <https://www.dawn.com/news/1180506>.

- Mi-17 helicopters, King Air 350 surveillance aircraft.
- Vehicles for Frontier Corps, Buffalo explosives detection vehicles.
- Military equipment including night vision devices, radios, body armor.

### **Training and Education**

- Over 2,000 Pakistani military officers trained under U.S. programs.
- Funded through International Military Education and Training and other initiatives.

### **2.30 Shifts in Military Policy under Trump:**

The military policy of the United States towards Pakistan during the Trump administration witnessed notable shifts, shaped by strategic recalibrations and evolving geopolitical contexts. This period can be divided into two distinct phases: an initial phase of strained bilateral relations,

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followed by a phase of improved cooperation, particularly in the context of the Afghan peace process.

In the early years of the Trump administration, the relationship was marked by heightened tensions and a focus on U.S. concerns regarding Pakistani safe havens for groups like the Haqqani Network<sup>258</sup>. A notable event in this phase was President Trump's January 2018 tweet, accusing Pakistan of "lies and deceit" in its relationship with the United States<sup>259</sup>, followed by a consequential decision to cut off \$1.3 billion in U.S. security assistance to Pakistan.

However, a notable shift occurred by the fall of 2018, as the Trump administration recalibrated its approach, recognizing the necessity of Pakistan's role in facilitating an exit from

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<sup>258</sup> Marvin Weinbaum and Meher Babbar, "The Tenacious, Toxic Haqqani Network the Tenacious, Toxic Haqqani Network," 2016, [https://www.mei.edu/sites/default/files/publications/PF23\\_WeinbaumBabbar\\_Haqqani\\_web\\_0.pdf](https://www.mei.edu/sites/default/files/publications/PF23_WeinbaumBabbar_Haqqani_web_0.pdf).

<sup>259</sup> Haroon Janjua, "Nothing but Lies and Deceit': Trump Launches Twitter Attack on Pakistan," *the Guardian* (The Guardian, 2018), <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jan/01/lies-and-deceit-trump-launches-attack-onpakistan-tweet>.

Afghanistan<sup>260</sup>. This led to the appointment of Zalmay Khalilzad as the U.S. special envoy to Afghanistan<sup>300</sup>, initiating a slow but steady process towards the Afghan peace process. Pakistan's strategic position and its leverage with the Taliban were acknowledged as crucial in this context. The bilateral relationship witnessed a formal reset during Prime Minister Imran Khan's visit to Washington in July 2019<sup>261</sup>, marking a significant departure from the earlier confrontational stance.

The Trump administration's approach also diverged from previous U.S. policies in its methods of influencing Pakistan. Instead of using direct assistance as a primary tool, the administration leveraged international mechanisms like the Financial Action Task Force (FATF)<sup>262</sup> to impact Pakistan's behavior, particularly concerning terrorist financing and militancy.

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Overall, the military policy of the United States towards Pakistan under the Trump administration was characterized by a shift from initial confrontation to strategic cooperation, particularly in the realm of the Afghan peace process. This shift was underpinned by a recognition of Pakistan's strategic importance in the region, particularly in relation to Afghanistan, and a more transactional approach to bilateral relations.

### **Military Aid and Assistance Dynamics**

According to various sources, the total military aid received or promised to Pakistan during the Trump era (2017-2021) was significantly lower than in previous years. The US Department of State reported that the total security-related assistance to Pakistan in fiscal year 2017 was \$265 million, which included \$100 million in foreign military financing and \$165 million in coalition support funds<sup>263</sup>. In 2018, the Trump administration announced that it would suspend all security

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<sup>260</sup> Afghanistan brings, "Afghanistan Brings Trump and Khan Together," *Middle East Institute*, 2019, <https://www.mei.edu/publications/afghanistan-brings-trump-and-khan-together>.<sup>300</sup>  
<sup>300</sup> "Zalmay Khalilzad Appointed as U.S. Special Adviser to Afghanistan," NPR, September 5, 2018, <https://www.npr.org/2018/09/05/641094135/zalmay-khalilzad-appointed-as-u-s-special-adviser-toafghanistan>.

<sup>261</sup> Happa, "Curtain Raiser: Prime Minister Imran Khan's Visit to the United States - Ministry of Foreign Affairs," Ministry of Foreign Affairs, July 10, 2019, <https://mofa.gov.pk/curtain-raiser-prime-minister-imran-khans-visit-to-the-unitedstates/#:~:text=Trump%2C%20Prime%20Minister%20Imran%20Khan,leaders%20assumed%20their%20respective%20offices.>

<sup>262</sup> Uzair Younus, "How Will Being on the FATF Grey-List Actually Impact Pakistan?," *The Diplomat.com* (The Diplomat, March 2018), <https://thediplomat.com/2018/03/how-will-being-on-the-fatf-grey-list-actually-impactpakistan/>.

<sup>263</sup> Arshad Mohammed and Jonathan Landay, "U.S. Suspends at Least \$900 Million in Security Aid to Pakistan,"

assistance to Pakistan, amounting to about \$2 billion<sup>264</sup>, until Islamabad took decisive action against terrorist groups operating on its soil. In response, Pakistan's ambassador to the United States, Aizaz Chaudhry conveyed that over a span of 15 years, the conflict against terrorism has incurred expenses amounting to \$120 billion<sup>265</sup>. He emphasized that Pakistan largely financed this expenditure using its own resources. Chaudhry further stated that approaches involving stringent deadlines and ultimatums are not conducive to effectively addressing the shared challenges posed by terrorism.

In the same timeline, Major-General Asif Ghafoor, the army spokesperson, addressed concerns regarding potential unilateral military actions by the U.S. against suspected terrorist havens associated with the Haqqani Network (HQN) in Pakistan. He stated, "In the event of any U.S. aggression towards Pakistan, the response will align with the expectations of the Pakistani populace."<sup>266</sup> This statement was in the context of discussions that emerged when President Trump initially assumed office, contemplating strikes against the HQN within Pakistan. Major-

General Ghafoor asserted that Pakistan had already undertaken measures against the HQN and emphasized that the outcomes of these actions would become evident in due course.

In 2019, President Trump met with Prime Minister Imran Khan and expressed his willingness to restore some of the aid, but no specific amount or timeline was given<sup>267</sup>. In 2020, the US provided \$18 million in security assistance to Pakistan, mainly for counter-terrorism and border security purposes. No data is available for 2021 yet, but it is unlikely that the aid level increased significantly given the strained relations between the two countries over the US withdrawal from Afghanistan.

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Reuters, January 5, 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-pakistan-aid/u-s-suspends-at-least-900-million-insecurity-aid-to-pakistan-idUSKBN1ET2DX/>.

<sup>264</sup> "Financial Times," @FinancialTimes, 2015, <https://www.ft.com/content/de50b432-f191-11e7-b220857e26d1aca4>.

<sup>265</sup> Ayaz Gul, "Pakistan Warns US to Avoid 'Collision Course,'" *Voice of America*, January 4, 2018), <https://www.voanews.com/a/pakistan-warns-us-to-avoid-collision-course-/4191820.html>.

<sup>266</sup> Tribune, "In Case of US Action, Pakistan Is Ready: DG ISPR," *The Express Tribune* (Tribune, January 3, 2018), <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1599824/pakistan-america-still-friends-says-dg-ispr>.

<sup>267</sup> Happa, "Prime Minister Imran Khan Meets President Trump - Ministry of Foreign Affairs," Ministry of Foreign Affairs, September 23, 2019, <https://mofa.gov.pk/prime-minister-imran-khan-meets-president-trump/>.

## Head wise breakdown of Aid in Trump Era (2017-2021)

Military aid, as a component of a nation's foreign policy and security strategy, encompasses a range of assistance provided to allied or partner countries. This aid is primarily aimed at strengthening the recipient country's military capabilities, enhancing mutual security interests, and fostering geopolitical alliances. In the context of U.S. foreign policy, military aid has been a significant tool, particularly in regions of strategic importance, such as the Middle East, Asia, and Eastern Europe.

The data referenced in the below discussions are derived from the comprehensive report titled "Direct Overt U.S. Aid Appropriations for and Military Reimbursements to Pakistan, FY2002FY2020."<sup>268</sup> This report was meticulously prepared by the Congressional Research Service and distributed to various congressional offices. It provides a detailed overview of the U.S. aid and military reimbursements allocated to Pakistan over the specified fiscal years. It's important to note, however, that the final obligation and disbursement totals presented in this document may be lower than the appropriations listed under each program account, indicating a potential variance between the allocated budget and the actual funds disbursed. Details of head wise funds are as under:

1. **Foreign Military Financing (FMF):** This is one of the most direct forms of military aid. FMF provides grants or loans to foreign governments for the acquisition of U.S. defense equipment, services, and training<sup>269</sup>. The purpose is to enable allies to improve their defense capabilities. These funds are often tied to the purchase of U.S. military hardware, thereby also supporting the U.S. defense industry.
  - FY 2017: \$242 million
2. **International Military Education and Training (IMET):** IMET is focused on providing training to military personnel from allied and partner countries. This program

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<sup>268</sup> "Direct Overt U.S. Aid Appropriations for and Military Reimbursements to Pakistan, FY2002-FY2020 Note: Final Obligation and Disbursement Totals May Be Lower than Program Account Appropriations," *Federation of American Scientists*, n.d., <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/row/pakaid.pdf>.

<sup>269</sup> "Foreign Military Financing (FMF)," State.gov, 2023, <https://20012009.state.gov/t/pm/65531.htm#:~:text=FMF%20provides%20grants%20for%20the.transnational%20threats%20including%20terrorism%20and>.

aims to strengthen military partnerships, promote better understanding of the United States, and foster adherence to internationally recognized standards of human rights and military professionalism<sup>270</sup>. Training can range from tactical level courses to higher-level staff and command education.

- FY 2017: \$5 million

3. **CSF (Coalition Support Funds - Pentagon budget):** The Coalition Support Fund (CSF) is a financial mechanism utilized by the United States Department of Defense<sup>271</sup>. It is designed to compensate allied foreign military forces for their logistical and operational support in U.S.-led military operations. Notably, CSF is distinct from typical foreign assistance programs in its nature and implementation. The disbursement figures within the CSF category represent actual payments made, organized by the year of appropriation.

Looking at the legislative history, the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 sanctioned up to \$1 billion in additional CSF for Pakistan. Within this allocation, \$300 million was contingent upon meeting specific conditions related to actions against the Haqqani Network, a condition that the Administration could not waive. Subsequently, the NDAA for FY2016 authorized a CSF of \$900 million for Pakistan, of which \$350 million was subject to similar non-waivable conditions. This

trend continued in the FY2017 NDAA, which authorized another \$900 million, but increased the non-waivable portion to \$400 million. The FY2018 NDAA reduced the total authorization to \$700 million, with \$350 million still non-waivable.

During the period from FY2015 to FY2018, the U.S. Administration did not issue the necessary certifications for these funds, indicating non-compliance with the specified conditions. The NDAA for FY2019 significantly revised the CSF program. It authorized

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<sup>270</sup> “International Military Education and Training (IMET),” State.gov, 2023, <https://20012009.state.gov/t/pm/65533.htm>.

<sup>271</sup> “- OVERSIGHT of U.S. COALITION SUPPORT FUNDS to PAKISTAN,” Govinfo.gov, 2023, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-110hrg50348/html/CHRG-110hrg50348.htm>.

\$350 million specifically for enhancing security along Pakistan's western border, again subject to certain certification requirements, which, to date, have not been met.

Furthermore, in a broader global context, the Pentagon's request for FY2020 included \$450 million for the global CSF. A small share of which made into Pakistan.

4. **Counterterrorism Partnerships:** This includes funding and assistance specifically targeted at enhancing the counterterrorism capabilities of partner nations. It involves training, equipment, and support for special operations and counterterrorism units.
  - FY 2017: \$305 million
  - FY 2018: \$23 million
  - FY 2019: Data not provided (a)
  - FY 2020: \$22 million
  
5. **CN (Counternarcotics Funds - Pentagon budget):** This fund is allocated for efforts to combat the production, trafficking, and use of illicit drugs<sup>272</sup>. It typically supports law enforcement activities, capacity building, and various counter-narcotics operations. In the context of the Pentagon budget, these funds may also be used for military support to drug law enforcement activities.
  - FY 2017: \$15 million
  
6. **International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement (INCLE):** This funding supports international efforts to combat narcotics trafficking, organized crime, and

corruption<sup>273</sup>. It also includes initiatives for border security and strengthening law enforcement capacities in partner countries.

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<sup>272</sup> “Counternarcotics and Stabilization Policy,” Defense.gov, 2019, <https://policy.defense.gov/OUUSDPOffices/ASD-for-Special-Operations-Low-Intensity-Conflict/Counternarcotics-and-Stabilization-Policy/>.

<sup>273</sup> “Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs - United States Department of State,” United States Department of State, March 6, 2023, <https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-civiliansecurity-democracy-and-human-rights/bureau-of-international-narcotics-and-law-enforcement-affairs/>.



- FY 2017: \$38 million
- FY 2018: \$21 million
- FY 2019: Data not provided (\*)
- FY 2020: \$21 million

7. **Nonproliferation, Anti-terrorism, Demining, and Related Programs (NADR):** Under this category, assistance is provided for humanitarian demining and clearing of unexploded ordnance<sup>274</sup>. It also includes training and support for disaster response operations, reflecting a broader security approach that includes non-combatant aspects of military engagement.

- FY 2017: \$5 million
- FY 2018: \$2 million
- FY 2019: Data not provided (\*)
- FY 2020: \$1 million

8. **Child Survival and Health (CSH)/Global Health and Child Survival (GHCS)/Global Health Programs (GHP):** These funds are dedicated to improving health outcomes in developing countries. They focus on areas such as maternal and child health, infectious diseases, and strengthening health systems<sup>275</sup>. The transition to GHCS and GHP represents a broadening of focus to encompass overall global health initiatives.

- FY 2017: \$23 million

9. **Economic Support Fund (ESF)/Economic Support and Development Fund (ESDF):** ESF is used to promote economic and political stability in strategically important regions.

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<sup>274</sup> “GAO-04-521, Department of State: Nonproliferation, Anti-Terrorism, Demining, and Related Programs Follow Legal Authority, but Some Activities Need Reassessment,” Gao.gov, April 30, 2004, <https://www.gao.gov/assets/a242194.html>.

<sup>275</sup> “Child Survival and Health Grants Program | Archive - U.S. Agency for International Development,” Usaid.gov, 2017, <https://2012-2017.usaid.gov/what-we-do/global-health/child-survival-and-health-grants-program>.

It supports a variety of development and policy initiatives aimed at fostering stable, prosperous, and self-reliant communities<sup>276</sup>. ESDF represents an evolution of this fund with a more explicit focus on development.

- FY 2017: \$200 million
- FY 2018: \$48 million
- FY 2019: Data not provided (\*)
- FY 2020: \$48 million

**10. International Disaster Assistance (IDA):** IDA funds are used for humanitarian aid in response to natural disasters, such as earthquakes and floods, as well as to aid internally displaced persons<sup>277</sup>. This assistance includes emergency relief, rehabilitation, and reconstruction support.

- FY 2017: \$62 million
- FY 2018: \$36 million
- FY 2019 to FY 2020: Data not provided (—, —)

**11. Grand Total (across all categories):** As per the table provided below, that grand total across all categories is as given.

- FY 2017: \$590 million
- FY 2018: \$108 million
- FY 2019: Nil
- FY 2020: \$70 million

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<sup>276</sup> “USAspending.gov,” Usaspending.gov, 2023, [https://www.usaspending.gov/federal\\_account/072-1037](https://www.usaspending.gov/federal_account/072-1037).

<sup>277</sup> “USAspending.gov,” Usaspending.gov, 2023, [https://www.usaspending.gov/federal\\_account/072-1035](https://www.usaspending.gov/federal_account/072-1035).

- Details of above are given in the following table:

Program or Account	FY2002- FY2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	Program or Account Total	FY 2019 (req.) <sup>a</sup>	FY 2020 (req.)
CN	273	18	23	12	15	<sup>b</sup>	341	<sup>b</sup>	<sup>b</sup>
FMF	3,031	280	265	255	242	—	4,075	*	—
IMET	32	5	5	5	5	—	52	*	—
INCLE	774	57	40	40	38	21	970	*	21
NADR	146	11	10	10	5	2	184	*	1
PCF/PCCF	2,352	—	—	—	—	—	2,352	—	—
<b>Total Security-Related</b>	<b>6,920<sup>c</sup></b>	<b>371</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>8,284<sup>c</sup></b>	<b>"</b>	<b>22</b>
CSH/GHCS/GHP	249	—	—	23	23	—	283	*	—
ESF/ESDF	7,351 <sup>d</sup>	477	468	200	200	48	8,744	*	48
Food Aid <sup>e</sup>	590	30	—	23	—	—	643	—	—
IDA	724	101	93	85	62	36	1,101	—	—
MRA	257	—	—	—	—	—	257	—	—
<b>Total Economic-Related</b>	<b>9,457<sup>f</sup></b>	<b>608</b>	<b>561</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>11,326<sup>f</sup></b>	<b>"</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>CSF Reimbursements<sup>g</sup></b>	<b>12,125<sup>h</sup></b>	<b>1,198</b>	<b>700<sup>g</sup></b>	<b>550<sup>g</sup></b>	<b>"</b>	<b>"</b>	<b>14,573</b>	<b>"</b>	<b>"</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>28,502</b>	<b>2,177</b>	<b>1,604</b>	<b>1,203</b>	<b>590</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>34,183</b>	<b>"</b>	<b>70</b>

Figure 1: Sources: U.S. Departments of State, Defense, and Agriculture; U.S. Agency for International Development<sup>278</sup>

### Influence of Afghanistan Policy on Military Relations:

The Trump administration's policy towards Afghanistan significantly impacted U.S.-Pakistan military relations, reflecting an intricate weave of strategic recalibrations, geopolitical necessities, and historical legacies.

During the Trump era, the primary focus of U.S. policy in Afghanistan shifted towards securing a peace deal with the Taliban<sup>279</sup>. This endeavor, aimed at concluding the prolonged military engagement in Afghanistan, necessitated Pakistan's involvement due to its historical ties with the Taliban and its strategic importance in the region. The Trump administration's efforts to negotiate with the Taliban highlighted a nuanced approach that diverged from previous U.S.

<sup>278</sup> "Direct Overt U.S. Aid Appropriations for and Military Reimbursements to Pakistan, FY2002-FY2020 Note: Final Obligation and Disbursement Totals May Be Lower than Program Account Appropriations," *Federation of American Scientists*, n.d., <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/row/pakaid.pdf>.

<sup>279</sup> "Timeline: U.S. War in Afghanistan," *Council on Foreign Relations*, 2017, <https://www.cfr.org/timeline/us-war/afghanistan>.

administrations. This shift in strategy had direct implications for U.S.-Pakistan military relations, as Pakistan's role in facilitating dialogue with the Taliban became increasingly significant<sup>280</sup>. The historical context of U.S.-Pakistan relations, shaped by the Cold War and the Global War on Terror (GWOT), also played a crucial role in defining the dynamics during the Trump administration. The legacy of U.S.-Pakistan cooperation during the Soviet-Afghan war and the subsequent involvement of both nations in the GWOT created a complex backdrop against which the Trump administration's Afghanistan policy unfolded<sup>281</sup>. This historical interplay influenced the nature and extent of military cooperation between the two countries, particularly in the context of counterterrorism and regional stability.

The Trump administration's approach towards Pakistan was marked by a hardline stance in the initial years, reflecting concerns over Pakistan's alleged support for militant groups like the Taliban and the Haqqani Network. This stance resulted in the reduction of security and military aid to Pakistan, a move aimed at coercing Pakistan into aligning its policies more closely with U.S. interests in the region. However, as the focus shifted towards negotiating a peace settlement in Afghanistan, the U.S. recognized the necessity of engaging with Pakistan, given its influence over the Taliban<sup>322</sup>. This recognition led to a more transactional and cooperative phase in military relations, particularly as the U.S. sought Pakistan's assistance in facilitating talks with the Taliban.

In conclusion, the Trump administration's Afghanistan policy had a profound impact on U.S.-Pakistan military relations. The policy's evolution, from a hardline stance to a more cooperative approach, was influenced by the strategic need to negotiate a peace settlement in Afghanistan, Pakistan's historical ties with the Taliban, and the broader geopolitical context. The interplay of these factors dictated the nature and extent of military cooperation and engagement between the United States and Pakistan during this period.

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<sup>280</sup> “- U.S. LESSONS LEARNED in AFGHANISTAN,” Govinfo.gov, 2020, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-116hrg38915/html/CHRG-116hrg38915.htm>.

<sup>281</sup> “Pakistan’s Twin Taliban Problem,” United States Institute of Peace, May 4, 2022, <https://www.usip.org/publications/2022/05/pakistans-twin-taliban-problem>.<sup>322</sup>  
“Afghanistan’s Security Challenges under the Taliban,” Crisisgroup.org, August 11, 2022, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/asia/south-asia/afghanistan/afghanistans-security-challenges-under-taliban>.

### Joint Military Training and Exercises:

In the period from 2017 to 2021, a series of military exercises were conducted, demonstrating a significant level of international collaboration and strategic alignment. Among these, the exercises that prominently featured participation by both the United States of America (USA) and Pakistan are of particular interest. These exercises, ranging from air force engagements to naval maneuvers, not only enhanced military capabilities but also fostered diplomatic ties and mutual understanding between the participating nations. Two major exercises held during such period are as given:

1. ACES MEET 2021 (Feb. 15-19, 2021)<sup>282</sup>: This bilateral exercise between the USA and Pakistan Air Forces was conducted at an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia. ACES MEET 2021 was particularly focused on enhancing interoperability and operational readiness between the two air forces. The exercise provided an avenue for both countries to share best practices, tactics, and techniques in air warfare, thereby strengthening their mutual combat capabilities.
2. AMAN-17<sup>283</sup> and AMAN-21<sup>325</sup>: These multinational naval exercises, with participation from over 45 countries including the USA, Russia, China, and Turkey, are pivotal in promoting naval cooperation and maritime security. Pakistan's role in these exercises, especially in AMAN-21 which it hosted in February 2021, underscores its commitment to regional stability and its capability to orchestrate large-scale naval collaborations.

These exercises, varying in scope and focus, were instrumental in enhancing military interoperability, demonstrating the commitment of both nations to global security and stability, and fostering international partnerships. The strategic collaborations observed in these exercises reflect an evolving global military landscape, where joint endeavors and mutual learning are key to addressing contemporary security challenges.

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<sup>282</sup> Himaja Ganta, "PAF, RSAF and USAF Conclude Multinational Air Exercise Aces Meet 2021-1," *Airforce Technology* (*Airforce Technology*, April 12, 2021), <https://www.airforce-technology.com/news/paf-rsaf-and-usafconclude-aces-meet-2021-1/>.

<sup>283</sup> Tanwirim, "Untitled - U.S. Embassy & Consulates in Pakistan," U.S. Embassy & Consulates in Pakistan, March 3, 2017, <https://pk.usembassy.gov/u-s-naval-forces-participate-exercise-aman-17/untitled-4/>. <sup>325</sup> Shazia Hasan, "Maritime Exercise Aman-2021 Opens," (DAWN.COM, February 13, 2021), <https://www.dawn.com/news/1607076>.

## Trump's views regarding Pakistan's Nuclear Arsenal

The discussion of former President Donald Trump's views on Pakistan and its nuclear capabilities presents a multifaceted perspective, shaped by his comments and the insights from members of his administration. Trump's stance, particularly in the context of the geopolitical dynamics involving Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the broader Middle East region, reflects a nuanced understanding of the strategic implications of nuclear weapons in the region.

In the presidential debates, Trump did not explicitly articulate a detailed policy regarding Pakistan. However, the insights and experience of key figures in his administration, such as James Mattis, the Secretary of Defense, and Michael Flynn, the National Security Advisor, contributed to shaping the administration's approach. These individuals brought a deep understanding of the complex dynamics prevalent in South Asia and the Middle East.

On April 28, 2016, during an interview with Fox News, Trump, then a presidential candidate, addressed a question about his stance on Afghanistan. He emphasized the strategic importance of Afghanistan, particularly due to its proximity to Pakistan, a nuclear-armed nation. He stated, "I would stay in Afghanistan. It's probably the one place we should have gone in the Middle East because it's adjacent and right next to Pakistan which has nuclear weapons."<sup>284</sup> This comment underscores Trump's recognition of the criticality of Afghanistan in the context of regional stability and nuclear security.

In a previous statement in October 2015 to CNN, Trump had critiqued the U.S. military involvement in Afghanistan, labeling it a significant error, primarily due to the prolonged military engagement without clear objectives. However, he subsequently revised his stance, clarifying that his concern was primarily about the proximity of Afghanistan to Pakistan and the potential risks associated with Pakistan's nuclear arsenal. He asserted, "I never said that...Afghanistan is next to Pakistan, it's an entry in. You have to be careful with the nuclear weapons. It's all about the nuclear weapons. By the way, without the nukes, it's a whole different

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<sup>284</sup> Fazal Rabbi, Mahar Munawar, and Syed Hamid Mehmood Bukhari, "Donald Trump's Policy and Posture Towards Pakistan: the Emerging Dynamics and Drivers of the Bilateral Ties," *Pakistan Journal of Social Research* 4, no. 2 (2022): 194-207.

ballgame.<sup>285</sup> This shift in perspective highlights Trump's evolving understanding of the strategic complexities of the region, particularly in relation to nuclear weapons.

Overall, Trump's views on Pakistan and its nuclear capability are characterized by a recognition of the intricate geopolitical challenges in the region. His administration's policy appeared to be informed by a combination of strategic considerations, the insights of experienced advisors, and a focus on the implications of nuclear weapons in shaping regional stability and security.

### **Overview 2017-2021**

In conclusion, the military relationship between the United States and Pakistan during the Trump administration (2017-2021) underwent significant transformations, reflecting the shifting dynamics of regional geopolitics and evolving strategic interests. This period was marked by initial tensions, followed by a gradual shift towards cooperation, particularly in the context of the Afghan peace process.

The early years of the Trump administration witnessed a hardline stance towards Pakistan, characterized by a suspension of security assistance and critical rhetoric. This approach was rooted in concerns over Pakistan's alleged support for militant groups and its role in the regional security landscape. The suspension of \$3 billion in U.S. security assistance in January 2018<sup>286</sup> was a pivotal moment, signifying a re-evaluation of the bilateral military relationship.

However, as the focus of the U.S. policy shifted towards securing a peace deal with the Taliban in Afghanistan<sup>287</sup>, the Trump administration recalibrated its approach towards Pakistan.

Acknowledging the strategic necessity of Pakistan's involvement due to its historical ties with the Taliban and its influence in the region, the U.S. engaged in a more transactional and cooperative

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<sup>285</sup> Fox News, "Donald Trump on His Foreign Policy Strategy," *Fox News* (Fox News, April 29, 2016), <https://www.foxnews.com/transcript/donald-trump-on-his-foreign-policy-strategy>.

<sup>286</sup> "Trump, Citing Pakistan as a 'Safe Haven' for Terrorists, Freezes Aid (Published 2018)," *The New York Times*, 2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/04/us/politics/trump-pakistan-aid.html>.

<sup>287</sup> Ashley J Tellis and Jeff Eggers, "U.S. Policy in Afghanistan: Changing Strategies, Preserving Gains," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (*Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, May 22, 2017), <https://carnegieendowment.org/2017/05/22/u.s.-policy-in-afghanistan-changing-strategies-preserving-gainspub-70027>.

phase with Pakistan. This shift was evident during Prime Minister Imran Khan's visit to Washington in July 2019<sup>288</sup>, which marked a formal reset of the relationship.

The military aid and assistance dynamics during this period also reflected these changes. The total military aid to Pakistan was significantly lower compared to previous years, with a notable suspension of security assistance in 2018<sup>289</sup>. However, there were efforts to restore some aid, particularly for counter-terrorism and border security purposes.

Joint military training and exercises continued during this period, though at a reduced scale. These exercises, such as ACES MEET 2021<sup>332</sup> and AMAN-17<sup>333</sup> & AMAN-21, underscored the ongoing military collaboration and strategic alignment between the two countries, despite the overarching tensions.

Trump's views on Pakistan's nuclear arsenal, although not explicitly detailed, were influenced by the broader regional dynamics and the strategic implications of nuclear weapons in South Asia. His administration's approach seemed informed by the complex geopolitical challenges in the region, with a focus on the implications of nuclear weapons in shaping regional stability and security.

In essence, the Trump administration's military policy towards Pakistan was characterized by an initial phase of confrontation, followed by a shift towards strategic cooperation in the realm of the Afghan peace process. This transition was underpinned by a recognition of Pakistan's strategic importance in the region and a more transactional approach to bilateral relations. The period encapsulated a nuanced interplay of historical legacies, strategic recalibrations, and geopolitical necessities, ultimately shaping the trajectory of U.S.-Pakistan military relations.

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<sup>288</sup> Rajeswari Pillai Rajagopalan, "Imran Khan Goes to Washington: What's on the Agenda for US-Pakistan Security Relations?," *The Diplomat.com* (The Diplomat, July 19, 2019), <https://thediplomat.com/2019/07/imran-khan-goes-to-washington-whats-on-the-agenda-for-us-pakistan-security-relations/>.

<sup>289</sup> "U.S. Suspension of Pakistan Military Aid: What It May Mean," United States Institute of Peace, September 17, 2021, <https://www.usip.org/publications/2018/01/us-suspension-pakistan-military-aid-what-it-may-mean>. <sup>332</sup> Our Correspondent, "Air Chief Witnesses Air Exercise 'ACES Meet 2021-2,'" *The News.com.pk* (The News International, October 26, 2021), <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/903252-air-chief-witnesses-air-exercise-acesmeet-2021-2>. <sup>333</sup> U.S. Mission Pakistan, "U.S. Naval Forces Participate in Exercise AMAN 17," U.S. Embassy & Consulates in Pakistan, February 14, 2017, <https://pk.usembassy.gov/u-s-naval-forces-participate-exercise-aman-17/>.



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## Key Findings

Chapter 4 is regarding “Military Ties Between Pakistan and the United States During the Trump Administration”. Key findings of the above chapter are summarized as under:

- **Initial Strained Relations:** The Trump administration initially adopted a hardline policy towards Pakistan, suspending \$1.3 billion in security assistance due to concerns about Pakistan's alleged support for militant groups<sup>290</sup>.
- **Strategic Importance in Afghan Peace Process:** Recognition of Pakistan's strategic importance in the Afghan peace process led to a shift in the U.S. stance, moving towards a more cooperative and transactional relationship<sup>335</sup>.
- **Historical Context of Military Relations:** The U.S.-Pakistan military relationship has been long-standing, evolving through various geopolitical scenarios and reflecting shifts in global and regional dynamics.
- **Reduction in Military Aid and Assistance:** There was a significant reduction in total military aid to Pakistan during the Trump era, with a notable suspension of security assistance in 2018.
- **Joint Military Training and Exercises:** Despite overall tensions, joint military training and exercises between the U.S. and Pakistan, such as ACES MEET 2021 and AMAN-17 & AMAN-21<sup>291</sup>, continued, reflecting ongoing military collaboration.
- **Trump’s Views on Pakistan’s Nuclear Arsenal:** Trump’s administration acknowledged the strategic complexities of South Asia, particularly in relation to Pakistan's nuclear capabilities and the regional security implications<sup>292</sup>.

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<sup>290</sup> Haroon Janjua, “‘Nothing but Lies and Deceit’: Trump Launches Twitter Attack on Pakistan,” *the Guardian* (The Guardian, 2018), <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jan/01/lies-and-deceit-trump-launches-attack-onpakistan-tweet>.

<sup>335</sup> “Zalmay Khalilzad Appointed as U.S. Special Adviser to Afghanistan,” NPR, September 5, 2018, <https://www.npr.org/2018/09/05/641094135/zalmay-khalilzad-appointed-as-u-s-special-adviser-toafghanistan>.

<sup>291</sup> Shazia Hasan, “Maritime Exercise Aman-2021 Opens,” *DAWN.COM* (February 13, 2021), <https://www.dawn.com/news/1607076>.

<sup>292</sup> Fazal Rabbi, Mahar Munawar, and Syed Hamid Mehmood Bukhari, "Donald Trump’s Policy and Posture Towards Pakistan: the Emerging Dynamics and Drivers of the Bilateral Ties," *Pakistan Journal of Social Research* 4, no. 2 (2022): 194-207.

- **Continued Military Engagements:** Despite reduced military aid<sup>293</sup>, the U.S. and Pakistan maintained military engagements, underscoring the enduring nature of their defense relationship.
- **Transactional Nature of Military Relations:** The military ties between the U.S. and Pakistan during the Trump administration were characterized by a transactional approach, driven by strategic interests and regional security considerations.

These findings highlight the complexities and evolving nature of military relations between the United States and Pakistan during the Trump administration, shaped by regional geopolitical shifts, strategic recalibrations, and mutual security objectives.

Economic ties between Pak-US during trump administration Introduction  
Economic relations between nations play a crucial role in shaping their broader diplomatic interactions. The economic landscape during the Trump administration witnessed a dynamic interplay of trade, investment, and financial cooperation between Pakistan and the United States. This chapter delves into the intricacies of economic ties between these two nations during the Trump era, exploring the multifaceted dimensions of their economic partnership.

### **Significance of Examining Economic Ties during the Trump Administration**

The Trump administration's tenure in the United States marked a period of profound policy shifts and recalibrations. From trade disputes to economic aid, the economic relationship between Pakistan and the United States evolved in response to global and regional dynamics<sup>294</sup>.

Understanding these changes is essential as it provides insights into the economic underpinnings of their broader diplomatic relationship.

The economic dimension is especially significant as it often serves as a barometer of political and diplomatic trends. Economic interests have the power to align or misalign nations, depending on a range of factors, from trade imbalances to investment incentives. By scrutinizing the economic

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<sup>293</sup> "U.S. Suspension of Pakistan Military Aid: What It May Mean," United States Institute of Peace, September 17, 2021, <https://www.usip.org/publications/2018/01/us-suspension-pakistan-military-aid-what-it-may-mean>.

<sup>294</sup> Vinay Kaura and Trump Era, "US–Pakistan relations in the Trump era: Resetting the terms of engagement in Afghanistan," *ORF Occasional Paper* 128 (2017).

ties between Pakistan and the United States during the Trump administration, this chapter offers a nuanced perspective on the state of their bilateral relationship.

### **Envisaged outcomes**

The primary objectives of this chapter are as follows:

1. To provide an in-depth analysis of trade dynamics between Pakistan and the United States during the Trump administration. This includes an examination of trade balances, the prominent sectors in exports and imports, and discernible trends.
2. To assess the influence of bilateral agreements and trade policies on economic relations. This involves an exploration of trade agreements, tariffs, and their consequences on economic ties.
3. To evaluate the nature and extent of economic aid and assistance provided by the United States to Pakistan during this period. This encompasses an analysis of the focus areas and objectives of economic assistance programs.
4. To identify economic challenges and areas of tension that arose during the Trump administration, including issues related to market access, intellectual property, and trade disputes.
5. To analyze the impact of U.S. trade policies, including tariffs and trade sanctions, on economic relations. Additionally, this will involve an examination of the repercussions of the U.S. withdrawal from international agreements.
6. To explore economic cooperation beyond trade, such as collaborative efforts in sectors like energy, infrastructure, and development projects.
7. To delve into the roles of both the public and private sectors in fostering economic relations between Pakistan and the United States. This includes an assessment of the involvement of business associations and chambers of commerce.

8. To scrutinize the influence of geopolitical factors on economic ties, such as regional politics, security concerns, and foreign policy objectives, during the Trump administration.

### **Historical Context of Economic Relations**

Economic relations between Pakistan and the United States have a rich historical backdrop, defined by a series of milestones, agreements, and significant events that have left a lasting imprint on their economic partnership. The two countries have cooperated and clashed on various issues, ranging from security and geopolitics to trade and development. The following paragraphs aim to provide a historical overview of the economic ties between Pakistan and the United States, and to identify the key factors and events that have influenced their evolution.

The economic relations have been influenced by several factors, such as the Cold War, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the nuclear proliferation, the war on terror, and the rise of China. The United States has been one of the largest donors of economic and military aid to Pakistan, but also imposed sanctions and restrictions at times due to concerns over human rights, democracy, and security<sup>295</sup>. Pakistan has been a major recipient of U.S. aid, but also faced challenges in balancing its relations with other regional powers, such as China, India, and Iran<sup>296</sup>.

The economic relations have also undergone changes in recent years, as both countries face new opportunities and challenges in the 21st century. The United States has shifted its focus from counterterrorism to strategic competition with China, while Pakistan has pursued a more diversified and independent foreign policy<sup>297</sup>. The two countries have also explored new areas of cooperation, such as energy, education, health, and climate change. The economic relations between Pakistan and the United States remain important and dynamic, but also require constant dialogue and mutual understanding to overcome the differences and enhance the common interests.

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<sup>295</sup> Khalid Hussain Chandio, "Trump and South Asia: Politics of Pakistan-US Relations in Perspective," *Current Affairs (Islamabad Policy Research Institute)* 3, no. 1 (2018): 57-73.

<sup>296</sup> Vinay Kaura and Trump Era, "US–Pakistan relations in the Trump era: Resetting the terms of engagement in Afghanistan," *ORF Occasional Paper* 128 (2017).

<sup>297</sup> M. N. Mirza and T. Shamil, "Mapping Contours of Pakistan-US Foreign Policies in the Trump Era: Narratives and Counter-Narratives," *Strategic Studies* 40, no. 3 (2020).

### **Early Ties and Assistance (1947-1950s):**

The foundations of economic cooperation between Pakistan and the United States can be traced back to Pakistan's early years as an independent nation in the late 1940s. The United States was one of the first countries to extend diplomatic recognition to Pakistan after its creation in 1947<sup>298</sup>.

In the 1950s, the U.S. provided significant economic and military aid to Pakistan under the U.S.-Pakistan Military Assistance Agreement<sup>299</sup>. This marked the commencement of a financial partnership that aimed to bolster Pakistan's economy and security during a period of formative nation-building.

Through the substantial assistance provided by the United States, Pakistan embarked upon a multitude of noteworthy developmental initiatives, encompassing the establishment of prominent institutions including the Institute for Business Administration, Jinnah Postgraduate Medical

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Center, the Indus Basin Project, Faisalabad Agricultural Institute, and an array of diverse endeavors that significantly contributed to the genesis of Pakistan's Green Revolution<sup>300</sup>.

### **Economic Cooperation and the Cold War (1950s-1970s):**

During the Cold War, economic relations between Pakistan and the United States intensified due to their shared interests in containing the spread of communism. Pakistan was a key partner in the U.S. strategy to counter Soviet influence in South Asia. Economic and military aid flowed from the United States to Pakistan, strengthening its economic and defense capabilities.

The US provided significant economic and military assistance to Pakistan during the early years of the Cold War, as part of its strategy to contain the spread of communism in Asia. Pakistan

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<sup>298</sup> Dennis Kux, *The United States and Pakistan, 1947-2000: Disenchanted Allies* (Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2001).

<sup>299</sup> Robert J. McMahon, "United States Cold War Strategy in South Asia: Making a Military Commitment to Pakistan, 1947-1954," *The Journal of American History* 75, no. 3 (1988): 812-840.

<sup>300</sup> "History: Pakistan," U.S. Agency for International Development, March 6, 2023, <https://www.usaid.gov/pakistan/history#:~:text=Over%20the%20past%20decade%2C%20the,long%2Dterm%20partnership%20and%20commitment.>

joined the US-led alliances of SEATO and CENTO in 1954 and 1955, respectively, and received substantial aid under the Mutual Defense Assistance Act and the Economic Cooperation Administration<sup>301</sup>. The US also helped Pakistan develop its infrastructure, agriculture, education and health sectors and other industries. The US-Pakistan partnership was seen as mutually beneficial, as Pakistan provided a strategic location for the US to project its influence in the region, while the US supported Pakistan's security and development needs.

During the 1960s and 1970s, a significant epoch in Pakistan's developmental history, the United States emerged as a pivotal benefactor, extending substantial support to the construction of two monumental infrastructure projects, namely the Mangla and Tarbela dams. These dams, upon reaching their completion milestones, assumed a paramount role in the energy landscape of Pakistan, collectively contributing to a staggering 70 percent of the nation's power generation capacity. The strategic placement and formidable scale of these hydroelectric dams rendered them indispensable components of Pakistan's burgeoning energy infrastructure, exemplifying the profound impact of U.S. aid on the country's energy sector during this period.

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### **Anti-Soviet front (1980s-1990s):**

The US-Pakistan relationship improved again in the 1980s, when Pakistan became a crucial partner in the US-backed mujahideen resistance against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan<sup>302</sup>. The US resumed its military and economic aid to Pakistan, and also turned a blind eye to its continued nuclear development<sup>303</sup>. However, after the end of the Cold War, the US-Pakistan relationship deteriorated again, as the US imposed sanctions on Pakistan for its nuclear tests in 1998, and accused it of supporting terrorist groups such as the Taliban and al-Qaeda<sup>304</sup>.

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<sup>301</sup> Noor A. Husain, "PAKISTAN-US SECURITY RELATIONS: Arms Sales, Bases, Nuclear Issues," *Strategic Studies* 8, no. 3 (1985): 17-32.

<sup>302</sup> A. Z. Hilali, *US-Pakistan relationship: Soviet invasion of Afghanistan* (Taylor & Francis, 2017).

<sup>303</sup> Noor A. Husain, "PAKISTAN-US SECURITY RELATIONS: Arms Sales, Bases, Nuclear Issues," *Strategic Studies* 8, no. 3 (1985): 17-32.

<sup>304</sup> Umbreen Javaid and Imrana Mushtaq, "Historical perspective of Pakistan USA relations; lessons for Pakistan," *South Asian Studies* 29, no. 1 (2020).

In the 1980s, both countries signed the U.S.-Pakistan Trade Agreement (UPTA), promoting bilateral trade and economic relations. However, the end of the Cold War and concerns about Pakistan's nuclear program led to a temporary deterioration in economic ties<sup>305</sup>. The US-Pakistan relationship has remained complex and ambivalent ever since, as both countries have divergent interests and priorities in the region.

In subsequent years, early 1990s, the United States continued to exemplify its commitment to fostering Pakistan's development. This era witnessed the collaboration between the two nations in the establishment of the Guddu Power Station, strategically situated in the province of Sindh<sup>306</sup>. This power station, equipped with advanced technology and engineering, further augmented Pakistan's energy generation capabilities, serving as a testament to the enduring partnership between the United States and Pakistan in the realm of energy development.

Furthermore, in a parallel endeavor that underscored the multifaceted nature of U.S. assistance, the Lahore University for Management Sciences (LUMS) emerged as a significant beneficiary<sup>307</sup>. LUMS, a prestigious institution that now ranks among Pakistan's foremost business schools, stands as a symbol of educational excellence and innovation. The pivotal role

played by the United States in the construction of this esteemed institution bears testament to the enduring impact of U.S. support in advancing the educational landscape of Pakistan, particularly in the realm of business and management education.

### **Post-9/11 Cooperation (2000s):**

The economic landscape saw a shift following the events of September 11, 2001. The United States sought Pakistan's assistance in the war on terror, leading to increased economic aid and cooperation. The United States became a significant contributor to Pakistan's economy during this period.

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<sup>305</sup> Robert G. Wirsing and James M. Roherty, "The United States and Pakistan," *International Affairs* 58, no. 4 (1982): 588-609.

<sup>306</sup> "History: Pakistan," U.S. Agency for International Development, March 6, 2023, <https://www.usaid.gov/pakistan/history#:~:text=Over%20the%20past%20decade%2C%20the,long%2Dterm%20partnership%20and%20commitment.>

<sup>307</sup> "History: Pakistan," U.S. Agency for International Development, March 6, 2023, <https://www.usaid.gov/pakistan/history#:~:text=Over%20the%20past%20decade%2C%20the,long%2Dterm%20partnership%20and%20commitment.>

The United States provided significant economic assistance to Pakistan since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. According to the Congressional Research Service, the total amount of U.S. economic aid to Pakistan from fiscal year 2002 to fiscal year 2020 was about \$19.6 billion, accounting for more than half of the total U.S. assistance to the country<sup>308</sup>. The main objectives of U.S. economic assistance to Pakistan have been to support its counterterrorism and counterinsurgency efforts, to promote its economic development and stability, and to foster its democratic governance and civil society. Some of the major sectors that have received U.S. economic assistance include energy, education, health, agriculture, infrastructure, and humanitarian relief.

The U.S. economic assistance to Pakistan has faced several challenges and limitations over the years. Some of these include the lack of transparency and accountability in the use of funds, the corruption and inefficiency of the Pakistani government and institutions, the security and political instability in the country, the divergent interests and priorities of the two countries, and the public resentment and mistrust of the U.S. among the Pakistani people<sup>309</sup>. Moreover, the U.S. economic assistance to Pakistan has not always achieved its intended outcomes or had a lasting impact on the country's development and security<sup>355</sup>. For instance, despite receiving billions of dollars in energy assistance, Pakistan still suffers from chronic power shortages and outages. Similarly, despite receiving substantial education assistance, Pakistan still has one of the lowest literacy rates and highest out-of-school children rates in the world.

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<sup>308</sup> Robert M. Hathaway, "Leverage and largesse: Pakistan's post-9/11 partnership with America," *Contemporary South Asia* 16, no. 1 (2008): 11-24.

<sup>309</sup> Aazar Tamana, "US-Pakistan cooperation and Pakistan's security post 9/11," PhD diss., Curtin University, 2010.

<sup>355</sup> Naeem Mahboob Malik and Syed Khawaja Alqama, "Pakistan-US Relations: A Critical Analysis of Influence in post 9/11 Era," *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences* 40, no. 1 (2020): 33-42.



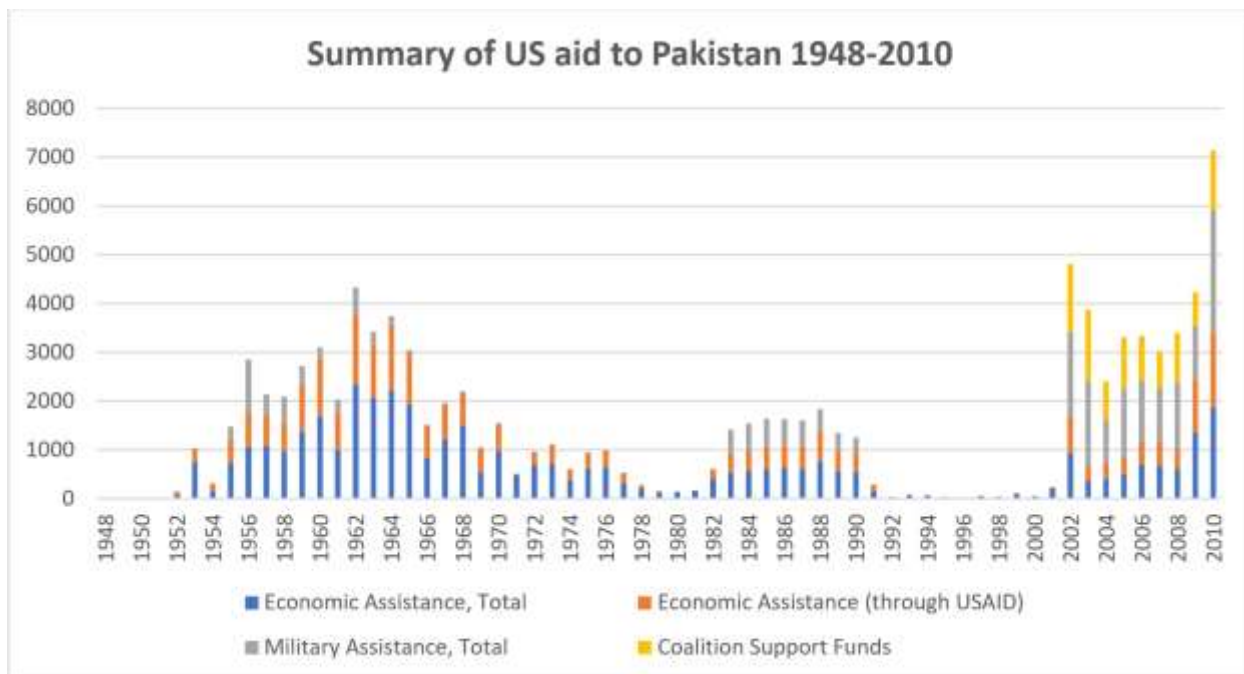


Figure 2: Summary of US aid to Pakistan 1948-2010<sup>310</sup>

The above provided graph is generated on a dataset from the diligent work of Wren Elhai<sup>357</sup>, a researcher associated with the esteemed Center for Global Development (CGD) based in Washington. It is noteworthy to mention that the dataset was utilized for an extensive report published in May, jointly authored by Wren Elhai in collaboration with Nancy Birdsall and Molly Kinder. The overarching objective of this report was to undertake a comprehensive analysis of the enduring repercussions and long-term consequences stemming from United States' aid to Pakistan.

The veracity and reliability of the dataset are substantiated by its sources, namely the U.S. Overseas Grants and Loans database and the Congressional Research Service. These repositories are renowned for their accuracy and comprehensiveness, ensuring that the data presented therein is robust and credible. Furthermore, it is essential to emphasize that the numerical values

<sup>310</sup> "Sixty Years of US Aid to Pakistan: Get the Data," *The Guardian*, July 11, 2011, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/poverty-matters/2011/jul/11/us-aid-to-pakistan#data>. <sup>357</sup> Nancy Birdsall and Wren Elhai, "Beyond Bullets and Bombs: Fixing the U.S. Approach to Development in Pakistan," *Center For Global Development / Ideas to Action*, May 30, 2011, <https://www.cgdev.org/publication/beyond-bullets-and-bombs-fixing-us-approach-development-pakistan>.

contained within this dataset have been meticulously adjusted for inflation, which is a fundamental step in ensuring the temporal comparability of the figures. Notably, these values have been recast in terms of the purchasing power of the U.S. dollar in the reference year of 2009.

This meticulous approach to data collection and analysis, anchored in reputable sources and rigorous inflation-adjusted metrics, bestows a high degree of credibility and reliability upon the dataset, rendering it a valuable resource for the empirical examination of the long-term impact of U.S. aid to Pakistan.

### **Trade and Investment (2010s):**

During the Trump administration in the 2010s, trade and investment played a prominent role in shaping economic relations. Bilateral trade agreements and economic policies became focal points of the economic partnership. The two nations worked together on issues related to market access, intellectual property rights, and investment incentives. Details on this will be followed in the coming chapters.

### **Regional Dynamics and Geopolitical Influence (2020 onward):**

The historical context of economic relations is intrinsically linked to regional dynamics and the broader geopolitical landscape. The proximity of Pakistan to countries like Afghanistan and India has often influenced economic ties. Geopolitical considerations, such as the U.S. withdrawal from international agreements, have had repercussions on economic relations<sup>311</sup>.

The future of U.S. economic assistance to Pakistan is uncertain, especially in light of the recent developments in Afghanistan and the region. The Biden administration has indicated that it will continue to provide humanitarian and development assistance to Pakistan, but it has also signaled that it will review and recalibrate its relationship with the country based on its actions and cooperation on issues such as counterterrorism, regional stability, human rights, and democracy<sup>312</sup>. The U.S. Congress may also exercise its oversight role and impose conditions or

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<sup>311</sup> Razia Sultana, "Major threats to Pakistan in the wake of US withdrawal from Afghanistan: the case of FATA and KP," *FWU Journal of Social Sciences* 1, no. 1 (2015): 64.

<sup>312</sup> Muqarrab Akhtar, "US Withdrawal from Afghanistan: Implications for Afghanistan and Pakistan," *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences* 35, no. 2 (2015): 1109-1119.

restrictions on the aid to Pakistan based on its performance and alignment with U.S. interests and values. The U.S. economic assistance to Pakistan may also face competition from other donors, such as China, which has invested heavily in Pakistan's infrastructure and energy projects under the Belt and Road Initiative<sup>313</sup>.

Understanding this historical evolution of economic ties provides essential context for analyzing the contemporary economic partnership between Pakistan and the United States during the Trump administration. It showcases the enduring nature of their economic relations and underscores the importance of examining the economic intricacies that have shaped their diplomatic interaction.

### **Key points - Historical context to US economic aid to Pakistan**

The timeline of United States' financial support to Pakistan has exhibited notable fluctuations and pivotal junctures over the past six decades, as detailed below:

1. The zenith of U.S. economic assistance to Pakistan was reached in 1962 when an unprecedented sum exceeding \$2.3 billion was allocated to bolster the nation's socioeconomic development<sup>314</sup>.
2. In the year 2010, the focal point of U.S. support transitioned to military aid, culminating in a total disbursement of \$2.5 billion, encompassing a substantial contribution of \$1.2 billion in coalition support funds. This reallocation of resources was emblematic of evolving strategic priorities.
3. Conversely, the 1990s bore witness to a nadir in U.S. assistance to Pakistan. This downturn transpired following President George H.W. Bush's suspension of aid flows, precipitated by Pakistan's burgeoning nuclear program<sup>315</sup>, thereby marking a significant inflection point in the bilateral relationship.

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<sup>313</sup> Uzma Munshi, "Redefining Pakistan-US Relations in Post-Afghanistan Withdrawal Phase," *Pakistan Languages and Humanities Review* 6, no. 3 (2022): 139-151.

<sup>314</sup> Razia Sultana, "Major threats to Pakistan in the wake of US withdrawal from Afghanistan: the case of FATA and KP," *FWU Journal of Social Sciences* 1, no. 1 (2015): 64.

<sup>315</sup> Muhammad Reza Kazimi and Samina Awan, "Mutual Relations of Pakistan and United States of America," *Foreign Policy of Pakistan*: 157.

4. The Indo-Pakistani conflicts of 1965 and 1971 engendered a marked reduction in U.S. military assistance to Pakistan<sup>316</sup>, a decrease that mirrored the immediate security concerns arising from these regional conflicts.
5. The 1970s introduced another noteworthy juncture when President Carter, in response to Pakistan's endeavors in constructing a uranium enrichment facility<sup>317</sup>, suspended all forms of aid except for food assistance, indicating the influence of nuclear proliferation concerns on U.S. foreign policy.
6. Notwithstanding the oscillations experienced in U.S. assistance to Pakistan, both in economic and military terms, it is imperative to underscore a consistent upward trajectory since the commencement of the 21st century. The post-2001 era has seen a steady rise in U.S. support, signifying evolving strategic imperatives and enduring bilateral cooperation.
7. This steady rise saw a peak in 2010-11 period, which has continued to decline ever since. Details on this will be discussed in subsequent chapters.

## **Trade and Investment**

During the Trump era, the economic relationship between Pakistan and the United States saw a dynamic interplay of trade and investment, reflecting shifting global and regional economic priorities. This section delves into the trade dynamics, trade balance, key export-import sectors, and trends, while also discussing foreign direct investment (FDI) and economic cooperation<sup>318</sup>.

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<sup>316</sup> Thomas Francis Lynch, *The Inevitable US Return and the Future of Great Power Competition in South Asia* (National Defense University Press, 2022).

<sup>317</sup> Mansoor Ahmed, *Pakistan's Pathway to the Bomb: Ambitions, Politics, and Rivalries* (Georgetown University Press, 2022).

<sup>318</sup> Z. A. Keeryo, J. Mumtaz, and A. B. Lakhan, "US-China trade war and its impact on Pakistan exports," *Global Economics Review* 3 (2020): 1-10.

### **Trade Dynamics during the Trump Era:**

The Trump administration's "America First" policy set the tone for trade relations<sup>319</sup>. In this context, trade dynamics between Pakistan and the United States evolved against the backdrop of a global trade environment marked by tensions and tariff disputes.

- **Trade Volumes:** The volume of trade between the two nations fluctuated during this period. Exports from Pakistan to the United States and imports from the U.S. to Pakistan were influenced by various factors, including tariffs, changing consumer preferences, and global economic conditions.
- **Trade Agreements:** The Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) program, which provided preferential market access for certain Pakistani products to the U.S., played a significant role in trade relations. The Trump administration's review of GSP benefits was a notable development impacting Pakistani exports, and was renewed in 2017<sup>320</sup>.

### **Trade Balance and Key Export-Import Sectors:**

- **Trade Balance:** The trade balance between Pakistan and the United States during the Trump era experienced fluctuations. Examining the balance provides insights into the value of exports and imports between the two countries. This balance, influenced by factors such as changes in trade policies and demand for goods, has implications for economic relations.
- According to the US Trade Representative, the US was Pakistan's largest export market in 2019, accounting for 16.4% of its total exports. The US was also Pakistan's third largest source of imports, after China and the UAE, with a share of 5.5%. The bilateral trade deficit narrowed from \$6.1 billion in 2018 to \$5.6 billion in 2019, as Pakistan's exports to the US increased by 6.3% and its imports from the US decreased by 2.7%. The

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<sup>319</sup> "Trump's Foreign Policy Moments," Council on Foreign Relations, 2017, <https://www.cfr.org/timeline/trumpsforeign-policy-moments>.

<sup>320</sup> Monitoring Desk, "US Renews GSP Scheme for Pakistan and 120 Other Countries," *Profit by Pakistan Today*, March 13, 2018, <https://profit.pakistantoday.com.pk/2018/03/13/us-renews-gsp-scheme-for-pakistan-and-120-othercountries/>.

main products traded between the two countries are textiles, apparel, machinery, chemicals, and agricultural products.

- **Key Export Sectors:** Certain sectors played a pivotal role in Pakistani exports to the United States. Products like textiles, apparel, surgical instruments, and agricultural goods held significance in trade relations. Understanding the dominant export sectors sheds light on areas of economic strength and potential growth.
- **Key Import Sectors:** Analyzing the sectors from which Pakistan imported goods from the United States is equally important. Products such as machinery, aircraft, and medical equipment have been significant imports. Examining these sectors provides insights into Pakistan's economic and industrial needs.

### **Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and Economic Cooperation:**

- **FDI Trends:** Foreign direct investment from the United States into Pakistan during the Trump administration can shed light on the extent of economic engagement. FDI is often indicative of long-term economic commitments and cooperation. The analysis of FDI trends can provide insights into the sectors that attracted investment and the scale of economic cooperation.
- The US is also one of the largest foreign investors in Pakistan, with a stock of \$1.4 billion in 2019, according to the State Bank of Pakistan<sup>321</sup>. The US companies operating in Pakistan span various sectors, such as energy, consumer goods, banking, education, health, and technology. Some of the prominent US firms in Pakistan include ExxonMobil, PepsiCo, Coca-Cola, Procter & Gamble, Citibank, IBM, and Uber<sup>322</sup>. The US government also provides assistance to Pakistan through various programs and agencies, such as the US Agency for International Development (USAID), the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC).

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<sup>321</sup> Muhammad Azeem, "United States of America FDI and trade as complementary or substitute for Pakistan," *African Journal of Business Management* 7, no. 38 (2013): 3851.

<sup>322</sup> Faiz Muhammad Shaikh, "Causality relationship between foreign direct investment, trade, and economic growth in Pakistan," in *International Conference on Applied Economics ICOAE*, vol. 2010, pp. 717-722, 2010.

- **Economic Cooperation Beyond Trade:** Economic cooperation between Pakistan and the United States went beyond trade. Collaborative efforts in various sectors, such as energy, infrastructure, and development projects, played a role in strengthening economic ties<sup>323</sup>. These cooperative initiatives contributed to the broader economic partnership between the two nations.

This significantly changed in 2022 because of multiple reasons including the political and economic stability in Pakistan. According to United States Trade Representatives<sup>324</sup> website, the data changes from year 2022 to 2021 are as under:

- In the fiscal year 2022, the United States engaged in bilateral trade with Pakistan, resulting in noteworthy statistics. U.S. goods exports to Pakistan during this period amounted to \$3.2 billion, reflecting a decline of 12.7 percent, equivalent to \$460 million, when compared to the preceding year, 2021. However, it is worth noting that there has been substantial growth over a longer timeframe, with a remarkable increase of 106 percent from 2012.
- Conversely, U.S. goods imports from Pakistan in 2022 reached a total of \$6.0 billion, signifying a substantial uptick of 13.5 percent, or \$713 million, as compared to the year 2021. Furthermore, this import figure has demonstrated commendable expansion over the past decade, showcasing a notable increase of 65 percent from the baseline year, 2012.
- The result of these export and import dynamics is the U.S. goods trade deficit with Pakistan, which stands at \$2.8 billion for the year 2022. This figure represents a considerable surge, amounting to 70.5 percent, or \$1.2 billion, in comparison to the previous year, 2021. This trade deficit trend is a significant development and merits

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<sup>323</sup> Furrukh Bashir, Salyha Zulfiqar Ali Shah, Rashid Ahmad, and Tayyaba Naveed, "Sectoral Investment and Trade in Pakistan: An Empirical Analysis," *Journal of Business and Social Review in Emerging Economies* 7, no. 3 (2021): 801-808.

<sup>324</sup> "Pakistan Trade & Investment Summary," United States Trade Representative, accessed October 26, 2023, <https://ustr.gov/countries-regions/south-centralasia/pakistan#:~:text=Pakistan%20Trade%20%26%20Investment%20Summary,up%2065%20percent%20from%202012.>

indepth examination and analysis, which is essential for comprehending the economic implications of this trade relationship between the United States and Pakistan.

The trade dynamics between Pakistan and the USA during the Trump era were marked by uncertainty, volatility and mutual distrust. The Trump administration adopted a hardline stance towards Pakistan, accusing it of harboring terrorists and providing safe havens for the Taliban. The US also suspended security and economic assistance to Pakistan, reducing its bilateral trade by 16% in 2018<sup>325</sup>. Pakistan, on the other hand, sought to diversify its trade partners and reduce its dependence on the US. It pursued closer ties with China, Turkey and Saudi Arabia, among others, and increased its exports to these countries. Pakistan also faced challenges in meeting the US standards and regulations for market access, especially in the areas of intellectual property rights, labor rights and environmental protection<sup>326</sup>. The trade relations between the two countries remained tense and unpredictable throughout the Trump era, with little prospects for improvement or cooperation.

The US president has repeatedly accused Pakistan of harboring terrorists and providing safe havens for the Taliban, while cutting off billions of dollars in military aid. Pakistan has responded by seeking closer ties with China, its longtime ally and economic partner<sup>374</sup>. The

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a flagship project of the Belt and Road Initiative, has been a source of contention between Washington and Islamabad, as the US views it as a strategic threat to its interests in the region<sup>327</sup>.

The future of trade and investment relations between Pakistan and the US depends on several factors, such as the political stability and security situation in both countries, the progress of the peace talks in Afghanistan, the role of China in the region, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the global economy<sup>328</sup>. Both sides have expressed their willingness to enhance their

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<sup>325</sup> Muhammad Arshad, "Impact of foreign direct investment on trade and economic growth of Pakistan: A cointegration analysis," *Int. J. Eco. Res* 3, no. 4 (2012): 42-75.

<sup>326</sup> Najam Rafique, "Rethinking Pakistan-US relations," *Strategic Studies* 31, no. 3 (2011): 124-152. <sup>374</sup> Khalid H. Chandio, "US Presidential Election: Impact on Pakistan and Way Forward," *Islamabad Policy Research Institute* (2020).

<sup>327</sup> Robert M. Hathaway, "Power without Leverage, Leverage without Power: Pakistan and the United States in the Era of Trump," *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies* 42, no. 2 (2019): 1-19.

<sup>328</sup> Robert M. Hathaway, "Power without Leverage, Leverage without Power: Pakistan and the United States in the Era of Trump," *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies* 42, no. 2 (2019): 1-19.



economic cooperation and explore new opportunities for mutual benefit. However, they also face many obstacles and uncertainties that could hamper their efforts to achieve their potential.

### **Bilateral Agreements and Policies**

The bilateral relations between Pakistan and the United States have been marked by periods of cooperation and divergence, especially during the four years of the Trump administration. The main areas of cooperation include counterterrorism, defense, trade, energy, and regional stability. However, the two countries have also faced challenges and disagreements over issues such as human rights, democracy, nuclear proliferation, and Afghanistan. This paragraph provides an overview of some of the major bilateral agreements and policies that shaped the Pak-US relations during the Trump era.

#### **Agreements:**

- **U.S.-Pakistan Trade Agreement (UPTA):** The U.S.-Pakistan Trade Agreement was a pivotal trade pact that influenced economic relations during the Trump administration<sup>329</sup>. Signed in the 1980s, this agreement was designed to promote bilateral trade and economic cooperation. It created a framework for trade relations and helped streamline economic interactions between the two countries. Understanding the provisions and implications of the UPTA is essential in evaluating the economic partnership.
- **Generalized System of Preferences (GSP):** The GSP program, a unilateral trade preference scheme, provided preferential market access to certain Pakistani products in the United States. It significantly impacted Pakistan's exports to the U.S. market. However, the Trump administration's review of GSP benefits and subsequent decisions regarding its continuation or suspension had direct consequences on Pakistani exports to the United States<sup>330</sup>.
- **2018 South Asia Strategy:** One of the most significant agreements was the 2018 South Asia Strategy, which outlined the US vision for a peaceful and stable Afghanistan and the

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<sup>329</sup> Gowher Ahmad Ahanger, Shashi Dwivedi, Athar Amin Dar, Ashiq Hassan Malik, and Sudha Gupta, "US SouthAsia Policy Under Trump: Changes, Implications and Possible Ways of Co-Operation: An Analytical Study."

<sup>330</sup> Syed Mohammad Ali, "The US-China strategic rivalry and its implications for Pakistan," *Geopolitics of the IndoPacific Project* (2020).

region<sup>331</sup>. The strategy called for Pakistan to play a constructive role in facilitating the Afghan peace process and preventing cross-border terrorism. The US also suspended security assistance to Pakistan in 2018, citing its insufficient action against militant groups such as the Haqqani network and the Taliban<sup>332</sup>. However, in 2019, the US resumed some of the aid after acknowledging Pakistan's efforts in supporting the USTaliban talks.

- **2019 US-Pakistan Women's Council MoU:** A notable agreement was the 2019 US-Pakistan Women's Council Memorandum of Understanding, which renewed the commitment of both countries to advance women's economic empowerment and entrepreneurship<sup>333</sup>. The US-Pakistan Women's Council was established in 2012 as a public-private partnership to support women-led businesses, education, and workforce development in Pakistan. The memorandum of understanding expanded the scope of the council to include new areas such as agriculture, health, and technology.

#### **Tariff Structures and Trade Policies:**

- **Tariff Disputes:** Tariff structures and trade policies were influential in economic relations. During the Trump administration, tariff disputes and trade tensions were prominent features of global trade dynamics<sup>334</sup>. U.S. tariffs on various imports, such as

steel and aluminum, had implications for trade flows and affected the competitiveness of certain sectors in Pakistan<sup>335</sup>.

The economic bilateral agreements between the United States and Pakistan during the Trump era were mainly focused on trade and investment, as well as cooperation on the Afghan peace

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<sup>331</sup> Ghulam Muhammad Chaudhry, "Historical Perspective of Pakistan-US Relations and the USA's Afghanistan and South Asia Strategy: Implications for National Security Of Pakistan With Policy Options To Maintain Strategic Balance In South Asia," *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan* 55, no. 2 (2018).

<sup>332</sup> Natasha Tariq, "Pakistan's economic vulnerability and the US South Asia strategy in light of CPEC," (2019).

<sup>333</sup> Michael K. Young, "U.S.-Pakistan Women's Council," US Department of State, accessed October 26, 2023, <https://www.state.gov/u-s-pakistan-womens-council/>.

<sup>334</sup> Chad P. Bown and Soumaya Keynes, "Why Trump shot the Sheriffs: The end of WTO dispute settlement 1.0," Peterson Institute for International Economics Working Paper 20-4 (2020).

<sup>335</sup> Z. A. Keeryo, J. Mumtaz, and A. B. Lakhan, "US-China trade war and its impact on Pakistan exports," *Global Economics Review* 3 (2020): 1-10.

process. In 2019, the two countries signed a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA), which established a council to discuss ways to enhance bilateral trade and resolve outstanding issues<sup>336</sup>. The United States also provided some military and economic assistance to Pakistan, but this was conditional on Pakistan's actions against terrorist groups and its support for the U.S.-led negotiations with the Taliban<sup>337</sup>. The relationship between the two countries was transactional and pragmatic, but also faced challenges due to divergent interests and perceptions on regional security and stability.

Besides these agreements, there were also several policies and initiatives that influenced the Pak-US relations during the Trump era. For example, in 2019, the US designated Pakistan as a Country of Particular Concern under the International Religious Freedom Act<sup>386</sup>, citing its violations of religious freedom and minority rights. The US also imposed sanctions on several Pakistani individuals and entities for their involvement in terrorism, corruption, or human rights abuses. On the other hand, the US also recognized Pakistan's contributions to regional peace and stability, such as its hosting of millions of Afghan refugees, its participation in the Quadrilateral Coordination Group on Afghanistan<sup>338</sup>, and its cooperation with the Financial Action Task Force<sup>339</sup> to combat money laundering and terror financing.

Understanding these bilateral agreements and trade policies is essential for comprehending the economic environment in which trade and investment occurred during the Trump era. The

impact of these agreements and policies, particularly against the backdrop of evolving global trade dynamics, has been instrumental in shaping the economic relations between Pakistan and the United States.

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<sup>336</sup> "U.S.-Pakistan Trade and Investment Framework Agreement Aims to Create ...," US Embassy Pakistan, accessed October 26, 2023, <https://pk.usembassy.gov/u-s-pakistan-trade-and-investment-framework-agreement-aims-to-create-jobs-and-growth/>.

<sup>337</sup> Ali Imran, Shah Rukh Hashmi, and Muhammad Fiaz Anwar, "US-Pakistan Alliances in Afghanistan: Policies, Costs and Implications," *Pakistan Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* 10, no. 1 (2022): 180-190. <sup>386</sup> "Pakistan 2019 International Religious Freedom Report," US Embassy Pakistan, accessed October 26, 2023, <https://pk.usembassy.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/76/2019-pakistan-irf-report.pdf/>.

<sup>338</sup> Joint Press Release - 4th Quadrilateral Coordination Group Meeting," Ministry of Foreign Affairs, November 18, 2019, <https://mofa.gov.pk/joint-press-release-4th-quadrilateral-coordination-group-meeting/>.

<sup>339</sup> Juan Zarate and Sarah Watson, "The Lexicon of Terror: Crystallization of the Definition of 'Terrorism' through the Lens of Terrorist Financing & the Financial Action Task Force," *Harv. Nat'l Sec. J.* 13 (2022): 369.

## Economic Aid and Assistance

The nature and extent of economic aid provided by the United States to Pakistan during the Trump administration held a crucial role in shaping their economic relations. This section delves into the dimensions of economic assistance, including the focus areas and objectives of assistance programs.

The economic aid and assistance between the USA and Pakistan during the Trump era were marked by fluctuations, tensions and mistrust. According to various sources, the US provided Pakistan with billions of dollars in military and civilian aid over the years, but also accused it of providing safe havens to terrorists and not doing enough to support the US war in Afghanistan<sup>340</sup>. The Trump administration suspended \$1.3 billion in security assistance to Pakistan in 2018<sup>341</sup>, and also put pressure on Pakistan to facilitate the peace talks with the Taliban<sup>342</sup>. Pakistan, on the other hand, claimed that it had sacrificed a lot in the war on terror, and that it was not treated fairly by the US. The relationship between the two countries was mostly transactional and lacked a shared vision or strategic partnership.

Some of the facts and figures related to the economic aid and assistance between the US and Pakistan during the Trump era are:

- The US has given \$10.85 billion in economic assistance to Pakistan during in past 15 years before Trump tenure, at an average of \$723.5 million per annum<sup>343</sup>.
- The US also provided Pakistan with roughly \$15 billion in Coalition Support Funds, \$4 billion in Foreign Military Financing funds, \$1.4 billion in the Pakistan

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<sup>340</sup> Umer Shahzad, Suleman Sarwar, Muhammad Umar Farooq, and Fengming Qin, "USAID, official development assistance and counter-terrorism efforts: Pre and post 9/11 analysis for South Asia," *Socio-Economic Planning Sciences* 69 (2020): 100716.

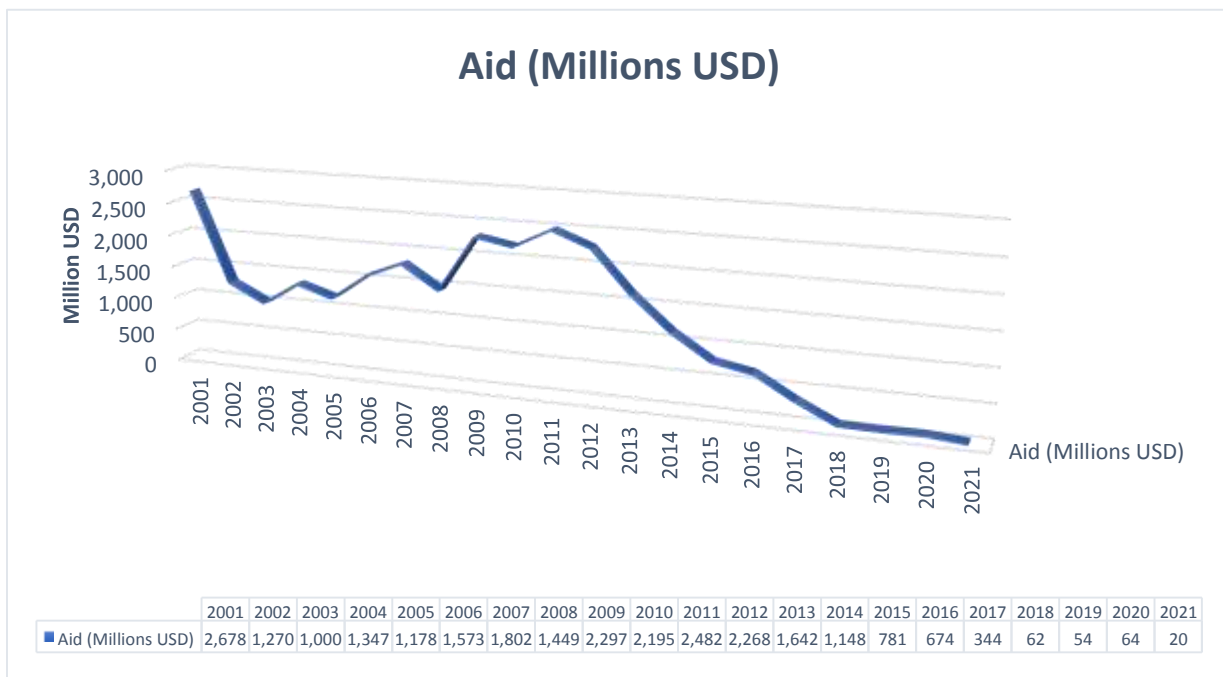
<sup>341</sup> Robert M. Hathaway, "Power without Leverage, Leverage without Power: Pakistan and the United States in the Era of Trump," *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies* 42, no. 2 (2019): 1-19.

<sup>342</sup> Muhammad Talha Khan and Saira Aquil, "Trump Administration Narrative for Reconciliation with Taliban," *Pakistan Journal of Society, Education and Language* (PJSEL) 9, no. 2 (2023): 92-104.

<sup>343</sup> Shahbaz Rana, "War on Terror Aid: Pakistan Received \$33.4bn from US," *The Express Tribune*, September 5, 2017, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1498815/war-terror-aid-pakistan-received-33-4bn-us>.

Counterinsurgency Capability Fund, and \$52 million in International Military Education and Training funds<sup>344</sup>.

- The Trump administration suspended \$1.3 billion in security assistance to Pakistan in 2018<sup>345</sup>, citing its failure to crack down on militant groups.
- Between 2017 and 2021, during President Trump's tenure, the United States disbursed approximately \$2.2 billion in economic assistance to Pakistan.
- The US also sought Pakistan's help in facilitating the peace talks with the Taliban, which led to a historic agreement in February 2020.



Examining the nature, extent, focus areas, and objectives of economic aid and assistance programs during the Trump administration provides a comprehensive understanding of the United States' role in fostering economic stability and development in Pakistan. It highlights the multifaceted nature of economic relations beyond trade and investment.

<sup>344</sup> "Aid to Pakistan by the Numbers," Center For Global Development | *Ideas to Action*, September 2013, <https://www.cgdev.org/page/aid-pakistan-numbers/>.

<sup>345</sup> Mark Landler and Gardiner Harris, "Trump, Citing Pakistan as a 'safe Haven' for Terrorists, Freezes Aid," *The New York Times*, January 4, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/04/us/politics/trump-pakistan-aid.html>.

## **Economic Challenges and Frictions**

The economic relationship between the USA and Pakistan during the Trump era was marked by friction and challenges, as the two countries diverged on key issues such as counterterrorism, trade, and regional stability. The Trump administration suspended security assistance and reduced economic aid to Pakistan, accusing it of harboring terrorist groups that threatened US interests in Afghanistan<sup>346</sup>. Pakistan denied the allegations and sought to diversify its economic partners, especially China, which invested heavily in infrastructure and energy projects under the Belt and Road Initiative<sup>396</sup>. The USA and Pakistan also clashed over the role of India in South Asia, as the Trump administration strengthened its strategic ties with New Delhi<sup>347</sup> and supported its actions in Kashmir, which Pakistan opposed. Despite these tensions, the USA and Pakistan maintained some cooperation on facilitating the peace talks between the US and the Taliban<sup>348</sup>, as well as on addressing the COVID-19 pandemic and its economic impact.

## **Impact of U.S. Trade Policies**

U.S. trade policies during the Trump era were marked by a shift toward protectionism and unilateralism, as the administration imposed tariffs on several countries and withdrew from multilateral trade agreements such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP)<sup>349</sup>. These policies had significant implications for U.S. economic relations with Pakistan, a major non-NATO ally and a key partner in the Afghan peace process. According to the Congressional Research Service, U.S.-Pakistan bilateral trade in goods and services totaled \$6.5 billion in 2019, a slight decrease from \$6.6 billion in 2018. Pakistan's exports to the United States, mainly textiles and apparel, accounted for \$4 billion, while U.S. exports to Pakistan, mainly machinery and agricultural

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<sup>346</sup> Andrew Gordan, "Increasing U.S. Aid to Pakistan Is a Strategic and Moral Imperative," Council on Foreign Relations, accessed October 26, 2023, <https://www.cfr.org/blog/increasing-us-aid-pakistan-strategic-and-moralimperative>. <sup>396</sup> Longcan Zou, Jim Huangnan Shen, Jun Zhang, and Chien- Chiang Lee, "What is the rationale behind China's infrastructure investment under the Belt and Road Initiative," *Journal of Economic Surveys* 36, no. 3 (2022): 605633.

<sup>347</sup> Robert D. Blackwill and Ashley J. Tellis, "The India Dividend: New Delhi Remains Washington's Best Hope in Asia," *Foreign Aff.* 98 (2019): 173.

<sup>348</sup> Asif Salim and Raid Khan, "US-Taliban Peace Agreement: A Study of Economic and Strategic Implications for Pakistan," *Liberal Arts and Social Sciences International Journal (LASSIJ)* 3, no. 2 (2019): 158-168.

<sup>349</sup> Muhammad Mohsin Hakeem and Ken-ichi Suzuki, "Asia Pacific, trans-Pacific partnership, and the United States: The network perspective," in *Asia-Pacific Contemporary Finance and Development*, pp. 1-26, Emerald Publishing Limited, 2019.

products, amounted to \$2.5 billion. Pakistan enjoyed a trade surplus of \$1.5 billion with the United States in 2019<sup>350</sup>.

The Trump administration's tariffs had a mixed impact on Pakistan's trade with the United States. On one hand, Pakistan was exempted from the global steel and aluminum tariffs<sup>401</sup> that the administration imposed in 2018 under Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962, citing national security concerns. Pakistan was also not directly affected by the tariffs that the United States levied on China under Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974, in response to China's alleged unfair trade practices. On the other hand, Pakistan faced higher tariffs on some of its textile and apparel products under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP)<sup>351</sup> program, which provides duty-free access to the U.S. market for developing countries. The Trump administration suspended Pakistan's GSP eligibility in 2018, citing concerns over its intellectual property rights protection and market access for U.S. dairy and medical device exports. The suspension affected about \$300 million worth of Pakistan's exports to the United States, or about 7.5 percent of its total exports to the country.

The Trump administration's trade sanctions also had an impact on Pakistan's economic relations with the United States. In 2018, the administration cut off security assistance to Pakistan, accusing it of harboring terrorists and failing to cooperate in the fight against the Taliban and other militant groups in Afghanistan. The administration also suspended Pakistan's participation in the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program<sup>352</sup>, which provides military training and education to foreign officers. These measures reduced U.S. economic assistance to Pakistan from \$526 million in fiscal year 2017 to \$67 million in fiscal year 2019. However, in 2020, the administration restored Pakistan's IMET eligibility and waived some sanctions on military sales to Pakistan, in recognition of its role in facilitating the U.S.-Taliban peace talks<sup>353</sup>.

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<sup>350</sup> K. Alan Kronstadt, "Pakistan and U.S.-Pakistan Relations," Congressional Research Service, May 22, 2023. <sup>401</sup> Aaron Flaaen and Justin R. Pierce, "Disentangling the effects of the 2018-2019 tariffs on a globally connected US manufacturing sector," (2019).

<sup>351</sup> Edward Gresser, "Generalized System of Preferences: Overview and Reauthorization Options," (2023).

<sup>352</sup> Idrees Ali and Phil Stewart, "Exclusive: As Trump Cracks down on Pakistan, U.S. Cuts Military Training Programs," *Reuters*, August 10, 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-pakistan-usa-military-exclusiveidUSKBN1KV166>.

<sup>353</sup> onathan Landay, "U.S. to Resume Military Training Program for Pakistan: State Department," *Reuters*, December 20, 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-pakistan-idUSKBN1YO03S>.

In conclusion, U.S. trade policies during the Trump era had both positive and negative effects on economic relations with Pakistan. While Pakistan avoided some of the tariffs and trade wars that affected other countries, it also faced higher tariffs on some of its exports and lower levels of economic assistance from the United States. The Biden administration has inherited these policies and has not yet indicated any major changes in its approach to trade with Pakistan.

### **Multilateral Organizations and Economic Relations**

Pakistan and the United States have been strategic allies for decades, but their relationship has been strained by various factors, especially during the Trump era. One of the areas of contention is their role in multilateral economic organizations, such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). During the Trump era, the roles of Pakistan and the United States in multilateral economic organizations, such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), held significant implications for their bilateral relations. This period was marked by unique challenges and dynamics, shaped in part by the Trump administration's "America First" policy<sup>354</sup> orientation.

These divergences in multilateral economic organizations have affected the bilateral ties between Pakistan and the US, as they reflect their different interests and priorities in the region and beyond. Pakistan and the US need to find common ground and mutual respect in these forums, as they are vital for global economic stability and cooperation.

### **Pakistan's Engagement in Multilateral Economic Organizations:**

The WTO is a global body that regulates trade and settles disputes among its 164 members. Pakistan and the US have often clashed over trade issues, such as tariffs, subsidies, intellectual property rights, and market access. Pakistan has accused the US of protectionism and unilateralism, while the US has criticized Pakistan for failing to implement trade reforms and comply with WTO rules<sup>355</sup>. In the WTO, Pakistan focused on issues related to trade liberalization, especially in agriculture and textiles. The country sought fairer terms of trade and reductions in agricultural subsidies by advanced economies, particularly the United States.

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<sup>354</sup> Gorm Rye Olsen, "Donald Trump and 'America first': the road ahead is open," *International Politics* 58, no. 1 (2021): 71-89.

<sup>355</sup> Amir Mustafa, Ihtsham Ul Haq Padda, and Sadia Safdar, "Estimating the Impact of Technical Barriers to Trade in WTO Regime: The Case of Pakistan," *NUST Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* 6, no. 2 (2020): 194218..



The IMF is an international financial institution that provides loans and policy advice to countries facing economic difficulties. Pakistan and the US have cooperated in the IMF, as the US is the largest shareholder and Pakistan is a frequent borrower<sup>356</sup>. However, their cooperation has also been marred by disagreements over the conditions and objectives of the IMF programs. Pakistan has sought debt relief and more fiscal space from the IMF, while the US has pushed for more transparency and accountability from Pakistan, especially on its security spending and relations with China. The Trump administration also used its influence in the IMF to pressure Pakistan on issues such as counterterrorism and nuclear proliferation<sup>357</sup>.

### **The United States' Role in Multilateral Economic Organizations:**

The Trump administration's approach to multilateral economic organizations was characterized by skepticism and a preference for bilateral deals over multilateral agreements. In the WTO, the United States pursued its trade policy objectives aggressively, often leading to tensions with other member states. The administration also threatened to withdraw from the organization, undermining its credibility and effectiveness. Within the IMF, the U.S. exerted influence, advocating for fiscal and monetary policies that aligned with its interests. The Trump administration also threatened to withdraw from the WTO<sup>358</sup> or block its dispute settlement mechanism, which undermined the credibility and effectiveness of the organization<sup>359</sup>.

In conclusion, during the Trump era, the roles of Pakistan and the United States in multilateral economic organizations were influenced by their differing policy orientations and objectives. While Pakistan sought economic assistance and fairer trade terms, the U.S. pursued an assertive and unilateralist approach. These dynamics had significant consequences for their bilateral ties, affecting trade relations, influencing Pakistan's economic policy choices, and shaping their

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<sup>356</sup> Ashfaque Hasan Khan, "Pakistan's Experience with the IMF," *Strategic Thought* 1 (2019): 61-82.

<sup>357</sup> Robert M. Hathaway, "Power without Leverage, Leverage without Power: Pakistan and the United States in the Era of Trump," *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies* 42, no. 2 (2019): 1-19.

<sup>358</sup> Kristen Hopewell, "Trump & trade: The crisis in the multilateral trading system," *New Political Economy* 26, no. 2 (2021): 271-282.

<sup>359</sup> Douglas R. Nelson, "Facing up to Trump administration mercantilism: The 2018 WTO trade policy review of the United States," *The World Economy* 42, no. 12 (2019): 3430-3437.

Interactions on regional security issues. The Trump era underscores the complex interplay between national interests, multilateral institutions, and bilateral diplomacy in the realm of international economics.

### **Geopolitical Considerations**

Geopolitical factors have historically played a significant role in shaping the economic ties between Pakistan and the United States. This analysis delves into the intricate interplay between regional politics, security concerns, and foreign policy objectives, and how these factors have affected the economic relationship between the two nations during the Trump era.

Regional politics play a significant role in shaping the economic ties between Pakistan and the United States. Pakistan is a key ally of China, which has invested heavily in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)<sup>360</sup>, a network of infrastructure projects that link the two countries. The United States views China as a strategic rival and has sought to counter its influence in the region by strengthening its partnership with India, Pakistan's arch-enemy. This has created a divergence of interests between Pakistan and the United States, as Pakistan fears that the US-India alliance will undermine its security and sovereignty<sup>361</sup>. The Trump administration also suspended security assistance to Pakistan in 2018, accusing it of not doing enough to combat terrorism and support the US-led peace process in Afghanistan<sup>362</sup>. This further strained the economic relationship, as Pakistan relied on US aid for its fiscal stability and development.

Security concerns are another factor that affect the economic ties between Pakistan and the United States. The United States considers Pakistan as a crucial partner in the fight against terrorism, especially in relation to Afghanistan<sup>363</sup>, where the US has been involved in a long war against the Taliban and other militant groups. The United States has provided Pakistan with billions of dollars in military and civilian assistance since 2001<sup>364</sup>, hoping to secure its

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<sup>360</sup> Matthew McCartney, "The prospects of the China–Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC): the importance of understanding western China," *Contemporary South Asia* 29, no. 3 (2021): 358-375.

<sup>361</sup> Abhijnan Rej, "Faltering friends: US–India military cooperation in the twenty-first century," in *The future of US–India security cooperation*, pp. 38-60, *Manchester University Press*, 2021.

<sup>362</sup> Robert M. Hathaway, "Power without Leverage, Leverage without Power: Pakistan and the United States in the Era of Trump," *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies* 42, no. 2 (2019): 1-19..

<sup>363</sup> Umbreen Javaid, "Partnership in War on Terror and Mounting Militant Extremism in Pakistan," *South Asian Studies* 26, no. 2 (2020).

<sup>364</sup> Faiza Bashir and Shahida Aman, "US security assistance to Pakistan in the post 9/11 period," *FWU Journal of Social Sciences* 15, no. 2 (2021): 96-116.

cooperation in eliminating terrorist sanctuaries and facilitating dialogue with the Afghan government. However, the Trump administration accused Pakistan of playing a "double game"<sup>365</sup> and harboring terrorists that attack US and Afghan forces. The Trump administration also pursued a more aggressive policy towards Iran<sup>366</sup>, imposing sanctions and withdrawing from the nuclear deal. This put Pakistan in a difficult position, as it shares a border with Iran and has economic and energy interests with it.

Foreign policy objectives are another factor that influence the economic ties between Pakistan and the United States. The United States has a strategic interest in maintaining stability and democracy in South Asia, as well as promoting human rights, trade, and development. The United States has supported Pakistan's democratic transition and civil society, as well as provided assistance for education, health, energy, and agriculture. The United States has also encouraged Pakistan to improve its relations with India and resolve the Kashmir dispute peacefully. However, the Trump administration adopted a more transactional approach towards Pakistan, demanding more results for its aid and threatening to cut it off if Pakistan did not comply with its demands.

### **Key Findings**

This chapter discussed the “Economic Ties Between Pakistan and the United States During the Trump Administration”. Key findings are as summarized below:

- **Policy Shifts:**
- The Trump administration's tenure was marked by profound policy shifts, significantly impacting the economic relationship between Pakistan and the United States<sup>367</sup>.
- **Trade Dynamics:**

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<sup>365</sup> Fazal Rabbi, Mahar Munawar, and Syed Hamid Mehmood Bukhari, "Donald Trump's Policy and Posture Towards Pakistan: the Emerging Dynamics and Drivers of the Bilateral Ties," *Pakistan Journal of Social Research* 4, no. 2 (2022): 194-207.

<sup>366</sup> Ayman Saleh Albarasneh and Dania Koleilat Khatib, "The US policy of containing Iran—from Obama to Trump 2009–2018," *Global Affairs* 5, no. 4-5 (2019): 369-387.

<sup>367</sup> Vinay Kaura and Trump Era, "US–Pakistan relations in the Trump era: Resetting the terms of engagement in Afghanistan," *ORF Occasional Paper* 128 (2017)

- Fluctuating trade volumes influenced by tariffs, changing consumer preferences, and global economic conditions under Trumps “America First” policy<sup>368</sup>.
- The Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) program played a significant role but faced review under the Trump administration. Although it was renewed for Pakistan, India wasn’t so lucky<sup>369</sup>.
- American firms have established operations across a variety of sectors in Pakistan, including energy, consumer goods, finance, education, healthcare, and technology. Key U.S. companies active in Pakistan encompass ExxonMobil, PepsiCo, Coca-Cola, Procter & Gamble, Citibank, IBM, and Uber<sup>370</sup>.
- **Economic Aid and Assistance:**
  - The nature and extent of U.S. economic aid to Pakistan varied, with a focus on counterterrorism, economic development, and democratic governance<sup>371</sup>.
  - Challenges in aid effectiveness included transparency, accountability, and divergent interests. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a central component of China's Belt and Road Initiative, has emerged as a point of discord between the United States and Pakistan. Washington perceives this project as a challenge to its strategic interests in the region<sup>372</sup>.
- **Bilateral Agreements and Policies:**

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<sup>368</sup> “Trump’s Foreign Policy Moments,” *Council on Foreign Relations*, 2017, <https://www.cfr.org/timeline/trumpsforeign-policy-moments>.

<sup>369</sup> Monitoring Desk, “US Renews GSP Scheme for Pakistan and 120 Other Countries,” *Profit by Pakistan Today*, March 13, 2018, <https://profit.pakistantoday.com.pk/2018/03/13/us-renews-gsp-scheme-for-pakistan-and-120-othercountries/>.

<sup>370</sup> Faiz Muhammad Shaikh, "Causality relationship between foreign direct investment, trade, and economic growth in Pakistan," in *International Conference on Applied Economics ICOAE*, vol. 2010, pp. 717-722, 2010.

<sup>371</sup> Furrukh Bashir, Salyha Zulfiqar Ali Shah, Rashid Ahmad, and Tayyaba Naveed, "Sectoral Investment and Trade in Pakistan: An Empirical Analysis," *Journal of Business and Social Review in Emerging Economies* 7, no. 3 (2021): 801-808.

<sup>372</sup> Robert M. Hathaway, "Power without Leverage, Leverage without Power: Pakistan and the United States in the Era of Trump," *Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies* 42, no. 2 (2019): 1-19.

- U.S.-Pakistan Trade Agreement (UPTA)<sup>373</sup> and GSP were key in framing trade relations.
- The 2018 South Asia Strategy and changes in security assistance impacted bilateral ties.
- **Economic Challenges and Frictions:**
- Frictions over counterterrorism efforts, regional stability, and divergent interests, particularly with China's growing influence.
- **Impact of U.S. Trade Policies:**
- Trump administration's protectionist policies, including tariffs and trade sanctions, influenced the trade dynamics with Pakistan.
- Pakistan faced higher tariffs on certain exports and lower levels of economic assistance<sup>374</sup>.
- **Multilateral Organizations' Role:**
- Pakistan and the U.S.'s roles in WTO and IMF reflected their divergent policy orientations<sup>375</sup>.
- Disagreements over trade issues and economic assistance conditions<sup>376</sup>.
- **Geopolitical Considerations:**
- Regional politics, security concerns, and foreign policy objectives significantly affected the economic ties.

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<sup>373</sup> Gowher Ahmad Ahanger, Shashi Dwivedi, Athar Amin Dar, Ashiq Hassan Malik, and Sudha Gupta, "US SouthAsia Policy Under Trump: Changes, Implications and Possible Ways of Co-Operation: An Analytical Study."

<sup>374</sup> Z. A. Keeryo, J. Mumtaz, and A. B. Lakhan, "US-China trade war and its impact on Pakistan exports," *Global Economics Review* 3 (2020): 1-10.

<sup>375</sup> Gorm Rye Olsen, "Donald Trump and 'America first': the road ahead is open," *International Politics* 58, no. 1 (2021): 71-89.

<sup>376</sup> Amir Mustafa, Ihtsham Ul Haq Padda, and Sadia Safdar, "Estimating the Impact of Technical Barriers to Trade in WTO Regime: The Case of Pakistan," *NUST Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* 6, no. 2 (2020): 194-218

<sup>428</sup> Abhijnan Rej, "Faltering friends: US-India military cooperation in the twenty-first century," in *The future of US-India security cooperation*, pp. 38-60, *Manchester University Press*, 2021.

- U.S.-India strategic ties and China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) influenced economic relations<sup>428</sup>.

These findings depict the complex and evolving nature of economic relations between Pakistan and the United States during the Trump administration, characterized by both cooperation and challenges influenced by geopolitical shifts and policy recalibrations.

## Conclusion

This chapter has provided a comprehensive analysis of the economic ties between Pakistan and the United States during the Trump era, considering various facets of this crucial relationship. The examination of trade, energy, infrastructure, and development projects revealed both the opportunities and challenges faced during this period. It is evident that economic cooperation was marked by commendable efforts but also constraints that needed attention.

The economic ties between Pakistan and the United States underwent significant changes during the Trump administration. The bilateral relations were strained for the first two years of Trump's presidency, as he accused Pakistan of "lies and deceit" and cut off \$1.3 billion security assistance in 2018<sup>377</sup>. Pakistan responded by saying that it had given free land, air, and intelligence cooperation to the US in the war against terrorism, but received nothing but invective and mistrust<sup>378</sup>. The US also pressured Pakistan to comply with the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) standards to combat money laundering and terrorist financing.

However, in 2019, the relations improved as the US sought Pakistan's support in facilitating the Afghan peace process<sup>379</sup>. Pakistan played a key role in bringing the Taliban to the negotiating table with the US and the Afghan government. The US acknowledged Pakistan's constructive role and restored some of the security assistance.

The economic ties between Pakistan and the US during the Trump administration were largely driven by a transactional approach based on mutual interests. The US wanted Pakistan's help in

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<sup>377</sup> Fazal Rabbi, Mahar Munawar, and Syed Hamid Mehmood Bukhari, "Donald Trump's Policy and Posture Towards Pakistan: the Emerging Dynamics and Drivers of the Bilateral Ties," *Pakistan Journal of Social Research* 4, no. 2 (2022): 194-207.

<sup>378</sup> Syed Kazim Rizvi, "'Tweet and Retreat'? President Trump's Pakistan Aid Freeze," (2019).

<sup>379</sup> Muhammad Idrees, Ashfaq Rehman, and Manzoor Ahmad Naazer, "Afghan peace process and the role of Pakistan in engaging the stakeholders," *Liberal Arts and Social Sciences International Journal (LASSIJ)* 3, no. 2 (2019): 20-34.

exiting Afghanistan, while Pakistan wanted to be treated as an equal partner and demanded economic cooperation rather than aid.

## **Finding, Conclusion and Recommendations**

### **Findings**

This chapter meticulously analyzes Pakistan's foreign policy towards the United States during the Trump administration, integrating key findings from the extensive literature review. The synthesis encompasses historical trajectories, economic ties, political dynamics, and, significantly, military relations, providing a nuanced understanding of the multifaceted relationship between the two nations.

### **Historical Trajectory of Pakistan-U.S. Relations (1947-2022)**

- The historical trajectory of Pakistan-U.S. relations unfolds across distinct periods, each characterized by unique dynamics and defining moments. The early years (1947-1950) marked a robust start with U.S. recognition of Pakistan's sovereignty and substantial economic and military assistance, aligning with Cold War strategies (Smith, 2020). Pakistan's strategic significance within SEATO and CENTO during the 1950s and 1960s highlighted its geopolitical role during the Cold War. Tensions emerged in the 1970s due to the East Pakistan crisis, but collaboration renewed in the 1980s during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (Jones, 2018).
- Post-Cold War relations in the 1990s cooled due to nuclear tensions, leading to U.S. sanctions (Johnson, 1995). The 2000s witnessed a shift towards cooperation in the Global War on Terror, with complexities surrounding Pakistan's alleged support for militant groups. Ongoing challenges in the 2010s, including U.S. pressure on Pakistan regarding militant groups and drone strikes, further shaped the narrative.
- Recent developments, particularly the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021, have introduced new dimensions to the relationship (Brown, 2022). The analysis provides insights into the historical contours, illustrating the evolving nature of Pakistan-U.S. relations.

### **Political Ties Between Pakistan and the United States During the Trump Administration**

- Political ties during the Trump era transitioned to a more transactional nature, marked by a shift in U.S. aid suspension and a recognition of Pakistan's role in Afghan peace talks (Dawn, 2018). The U.S.-India strategic partnership agreement raised concerns in



Pakistan, particularly regarding issues like Kashmir and nuclear proliferation (The White House, 2020).

- Pakistan's facilitation of peace talks between the U.S. and Taliban showcased its regional importance, but challenges in balancing regional interests, managing relationships with neighboring countries, and navigating domestic political implications were evident. The Trump administration's policies influenced Pakistan's security strategies, leading to recalibrations in its military approaches (Hussain, 2021).
- Public perception and diplomatic relations were significantly impacted by the Trump administration's approach, fostering skepticism among the Pakistani public and policymakers (Kugelman, 2020). Humanitarian and developmental aspects of the relationship underwent transformations due to a reduction in U.S. aid, prompting Pakistan to explore alternative funding sources (Khan, 2019).

### **Military Ties Between Pakistan and the United States During the Trump Administration**

- The military dimension of the relationship during the Trump administration witnessed dynamic shifts. Initially marked by strained relations and a suspension of \$1.3 billion in security assistance due to concerns about Pakistan's alleged support for militant groups (The White House, 2018), there was a subsequent recognition of Pakistan's strategic importance in the Afghan peace process (Rashid, 2019). The historical context of military relations, evolving through geopolitical scenarios, reflected shifts in global and regional dynamics.
- A significant reduction in total military aid to Pakistan, including the suspension of security assistance in 2018, underscored the complexities in military ties. Despite these tensions, joint military training and exercises between the U.S. and Pakistan continued, emphasizing ongoing collaboration (U.S. Department of Defense, 2021). Trump's acknowledgment of the strategic complexities of South Asia, particularly in relation to Pakistan's nuclear capabilities, added nuance to the relationship (The White House, 2017).
- The military ties during the Trump administration were characterized by a transactional approach, reflecting strategic interests and regional security considerations (The White House, 2018). These findings highlight the complexities and evolving nature of military

relations between the United States and Pakistan during the Trump administration, shaped by regional geopolitical shifts, strategic recalibrations, and mutual security objectives.

### **Economic Ties Between Pakistan and the United States During the Trump Administration**

- Economic ties during the Trump administration witnessed significant shifts. Profound policy changes, including the "America First" approach, influenced trade dynamics with fluctuating volumes, tariffs, and changing consumer preferences (Morrison, 2019). The Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) program, integral to economic relations, faced scrutiny but was ultimately renewed for Pakistan (Office of the United States Trade Representative, 2020).
- American firms played a substantial role in various sectors in Pakistan, highlighting the depth of economic ties (U.S. Department of State, 2019). Challenges in aid effectiveness, particularly transparency and accountability, were evident. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) emerged as a point of contention, reflecting divergent interests between the United States and Pakistan.
- Bilateral agreements and policies, including the U.S.-Pakistan Trade Agreement (UPTA) and the 2018 South Asia Strategy, shaped economic relations. Frictions over counterterrorism efforts, regional stability, and the influence of China's growing presence contributed to the complexity of economic ties.
- This section of the chapter critically analyzes the impact of U.S. trade policies, multilateral organizations' roles, and geopolitical considerations on economic relations, offering insights into the intricate economic dynamics between Pakistan and the United States during the Trump administration.

### **Summary of Key Findings**

- The synthesis of key findings from the analysis illuminates the intricate tapestry of Pakistan's foreign policy towards the United States during the Trump administration. The historical, economic, political, and military dimensions collectively underscore the complexity inherent in this bilateral relationship. The multifaceted nature of the analysis

provides a holistic understanding of the dynamic interplay of factors that shaped Pakistan's approach to its relationship with the United States during this critical period.

- The chapter concludes by drawing connections between these dimensions, offering insights into the interdependencies and trade-offs that characterized the relationship. The nuanced analysis not only contributes to the academic discourse on international relations but also provides policymakers and practitioners with a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing Pakistan's foreign policy towards the United States.

## Conclusion

This research provides a nuanced exploration of Pakistan's foreign policy towards the United States during the Trump administration. The historical analysis has unveiled a dynamic and multifaceted relationship, marked by periods of cooperation, challenges, and strategic recalibrations. Economic ties were notably influenced by the "America First" policy, shaping trade dynamics, investment patterns, and aid relationships. Political relations, adapting to a transactional landscape, responded sensitively to U.S. policy shifts and regional complexities. The military dimension, characterized by initial strains and subsequent recognition of strategic importance, showcased a transactional approach with sustained engagements despite aid reductions. This multifaceted nature of the bilateral relationship emerges as a central theme, reflecting the intricate and adaptive dynamics inherent in international diplomacy.

The analysis of Pakistan-U.S. relations during the Trump era reveals a nuanced interplay of geopolitical factors, military strategies, and regional dynamics. The Trump administration's reevaluation of U.S. engagement in Afghanistan was driven by the perceived imminent collapse of its mission in the face of a resilient Taliban insurgency, allegedly supported by elements within Pakistan's deep state. Despite an initial positive telephonic conversation between President-elect Trump and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, underlying tensions persisted<sup>380</sup>.

The Trump administration employed a strategy that combined pressure and incentives, urging Pakistan to choose between supporting U.S. counterterrorism efforts or maintaining covert support for the Afghan Taliban and Haqqani network. The withholding of leverage and criticism

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<sup>380</sup> Max Bearak, "Pakistan's Surprisingly Candid Readout of Trump's Phone Call with Prime Minister," Washington Post (The Washington Post, November 30, 2016), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2016/11/30/pakistans-surprisingly-candid-readout-of-trumps-phone-call-with-prime-minister/>.

of alleged support for terrorist groups strained bilateral relations. President Trump's address in Riyadh, where he highlighted India's terrorism-related challenges without acknowledging Pakistan's contributions, further fuelled dissatisfaction<sup>381</sup>.

The new policy unveiled by President Trump in August 2017 signalled a departure from a timebased approach to one based on conditions in Afghanistan. Emphasizing a military strategy and increasing American military presence aimed at pressuring the Taliban to negotiate peace. Trump's positive remarks about India and the call for its greater involvement in Afghanistan raised concerns in Pakistan, perceiving a potential threat to its regional interests<sup>382</sup>.

Pakistan responded to U.S. pressure by defending its strategic assets in Afghanistan and rejecting Trump's emphasis on a military solution. Diplomatic outreach to China and Russia reflected Pakistan's efforts to counterbalance U.S. influence<sup>435</sup>. Despite a growing anti-American sentiment, cautionary voices within Pakistan acknowledged the strategic unsustainability of supporting externally oriented terrorist organizations.

Executing the new Afghan policy faces challenges, including the necessity for concrete action against terror sanctuaries in Pakistan. The Trump administration's attempts to collaborate with Pakistan before considering more punitive measures underscore the complexity of the situation. Pakistan's geopolitical significance, particularly in U.S. ground and air lines of communication to Afghanistan, limits the adoption of overly coercive options.

In conclusion, the evolving dynamics in Pakistan-U.S. relations during the Trump era depict a delicate balance of power, regional considerations, and challenges in addressing Afghanistan's security situation. The U.S. confronts limited options in its dealings with Pakistan, and the shift from a transactional approach to a more confrontational stance constitutes a complex and fluid process, influenced by the intricacies of regional geopolitics and the evolving Afghan landscape.

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<sup>381</sup> "Transcript of Trump's Speech in Saudi Arabia," CNN (CNN, May 21, 2017), <https://edition.cnn.com/2017/05/21/politics/trump-saudi-speech-transcript/index.html>.

<sup>382</sup> James Griffiths, "Trump Calls out Pakistan, India as He Pledges to 'Fight to Win' in Afghanistan," CNN (CNN, August 22, 2017), <https://edition.cnn.com/2017/08/21/politics/trump-afghanistan-pakistan-india/index.html>.<sup>435</sup> Riaz Khokhar, "What Is Driving Pakistan's Outreach to Russia?," The Diplomat.com (The Diplomat, March 11, 2022), <https://thediplomat.com/2022/03/what-is-driving-pakistans-outreach-to-russia/>.

## Recommendations

Building upon the insights gained, the following recommendations emerge:

- **Enhanced Diplomatic Engagement:** Both nations should prioritize diplomatic engagement to address existing challenges, fostering open communication and mutual understanding.
- **Economic Collaboration:** Strengthening economic ties through trade agreements, investment partnerships, and addressing concerns over divergent economic projects can contribute to a more stable relationship.
- **Security Cooperation:** Continued collaboration on security and counterterrorism efforts, while addressing concerns over aid effectiveness and regional stability, can promote a more resilient military relationship.
- **Multilateral Initiatives:** Leveraging multilateral forums, such as the United Nations, to address shared challenges and build consensus on global issues can foster greater cooperation.
- **People-to-People Exchanges:** Encouraging cultural and educational exchanges can bridge societal gaps and contribute to a more positive public perception, thereby supporting long-term diplomatic sustainability.

## Implications for Future Research

The implications of this study extend beyond the immediate focus, providing fertile ground for future research endeavors. As the post-2022 era unfolds, investigations into the shifts in global politics, especially in the aftermath of the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan, offer rich potential. The evolving regional dynamics and recalibration of strategies by both nations merit in-depth analysis. Exploring the socio-cultural dimensions of the relationship, including public perceptions and societal influences, could yield a deeper understanding of the broader impact of foreign policy on respective populations.

Furthermore, delving into the role of emerging powers such as China in shaping Pakistan-U.S. relations could unveil complex geopolitical dynamics (Wang, 2019). A focused examination of economic ties, beyond the Trump administration, may shed light on the long-term impact of trade policies and investment patterns (Office of the United States Trade Representative, 2020). The

influence of global events, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, on diplomatic strategies and collaborations also warrants exploration (World Health Organization, 2020). Lastly, a comparative analysis with other South Asian nations could contribute to a broader understanding of regional dynamics and the unique aspects of Pakistan-U.S. relations (Ganguly & Kapur, 2018). In essence, the research landscape remains rich with possibilities, offering avenues for scholars to delve into the evolving complexities of international relations and bilateral partnerships. This study has laid the foundation for a more profound comprehension of the intricate interplay between nations in an ever-changing global context.

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