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Title 9/11: Unending Agony for Pakistan Examining Pre and Post 9/11 US-Pakistan relations

Author (s): Nazir Ahmed Kasi, Dr. Saman and ,Dr. Noor Ul Amin

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9/11: Unending Agony for Pakistan
Examining Pre and Post 9/11 US-Pakistan relations

**Nazir Ahmed Kasi*

***Dr. Saman Salah*

****Dr. Noor Ul Amin*

Abstract

The present research seeks to explore Pak-US relations under the umbrella of pre and post 9/11 incident. This paper follows a qualitative research design with an exploratory and interpretative approach. Whether the soviet war, the cold wars or 9/11 incident, Pakistan US relations have been tied since independence of Pakistan 1947. The Pak-US relation, no doubt remains very important since independence of Pakistan till present as United States of America was the first country to have bilateral ties. After its inception in 1947, Pakistan required economic support from the US. Pakistan not only received economic support but social and political as well; however, this relation was much on economic and military bases. The terrible incident of 9/11 resulted in Pakistan's participation in fighting the war against terrorism, thus making Pakistan an ally for the US. US offered a treaty to Pakistan to join in "war against terror". The US-Pakistan relations were healthy till the incidents that happened in 2011 which put Pakistan into mysterious situation towards this relation. The discussion comes up with the conclusion that Pak US relation have gone through various ups and downs however both need to stay grounded for their mutual interests.

Keywords: *Pakistan, US, Pre and Post 9/11, Relations*

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*Assistant Professor, Pakistan Study Centre University of Balochistan, Quetta.
Email: nazirkasi7@gmail.com

**Assistant Professor, Department of English, SBK Women's University, Quetta. Email: samanmkn@gmail.com

***Associate Professor of Pakistan Studies, Islamia College University Peshawar, Email: aminicup@gmail.com // dna@icp.edu.pk

Introduction

Throughout the world, the relation between countries has always based on the game of interest. In order to survive worthily, good relations have always been a need for better economy. Being an underdeveloped country, Pakistan has always needed support since its independence. After the cold war between Russia and America, US became the only superpower in the world. Being unipolar, US needed domination throughout the world. Due to geographical location of Pakistan, US forwarded hands towards it. US-Pakistan relations have been tied since independence of Pakistan. Although the relation was between unequal allies – the underdeveloped country and the creator but this relation contains much importance. After 9/11 incident under bush administration, Pakistan and USA joined for war on terror. Since then much of the relation is based on war on terror. However, Trump tweeted on New Year by blaming Pakistan for providing save heavens to Taliban which once gain destroyed the relations due to which Pakistan decided to strengthen its relations with other neighbouring countries by accepting given opportunities. May be Trump was insecure about losing their influence on Pakistan. Some critics opine that in order to understand the motive behind US diplomacy, there is a need to understand the ups and down of this relation in six decades (Akhtar, 2012, p. 206). In 1990s when soviet war had ended and resulted into a huge failure, Pakistan lost its importance and as being a nuclear power, Pakistan came under the sanction of Pressler amendment imposed by US which deprived Pakistan of all military and economic aid. When 9/11 incident (the attack on world trade centre in New York on 11th September 2011 in the United States) took place, India was nearer to US and Pakistan was under sanction- the Pressler amendment. According to the World Bank, Pakistan was in worst economic crisis. The paying of debtors, poor literacy rate lead to Islamic extremism (Cohen, 2005, p. 132). The history of Pakistan both pre and post 9/11 has been discussed by some critics (Tariq, 2006; Shahnaz, 2012; Carol, 2013 & Tariq, 2013). The critics assert that in 58 years of this relation, many phases have been seen. Further, Pakistan helps for the US endeavours in the GWOT that depends on a substantial base of help by the Pakistani masses that is reliable by Pakistan essential interests. Gilani outlined that US-Pakistan can further stabilize their relation by military cooperation, Kashmir issue, by gaining opportunities in the areas of literacy. Besides, these views, historical agony received from US is also highlighted by some other researchers (Umbreen Javid & Imran Mushtaq, 2014; Rizwan, 2014; Ali, 2015; Madiba, 2018; Dr. Sanchita & Akanksha, 2018). These critics agree that this relation developed for economic and military assistance. Besides, this relation could only be improved for long term if US develop their relations with civilian government not with its military.

**PAKISTAN-US RELATIONS IN THE PRE AND POST 9/11 SCENARIO
UNDER BUSH ADMINISTRATION**

Shift always comes when government changes. During Bush administration policies were changed. US offered Pakistan to join “War on Terror” in Afghanistan which gave new way to this relation. At that time Parvez Musharraf was the Prime Minister of Pakistan. Pakistan was not stable and the strategy for the atomic program was also a major concern for Pakistan (Zehra, 2004). Pakistan had to deal with Al-Qaida and Taliban as to handover Osama Bin Laden to the US. After repeated failures, Pakistan allowed America to use its military bases to attack Afghanistan. On the other hand, Musharraf said that there is no option for the country because US had threatened them to take “bombing into stone age” in case Pakistan refused to cooperate in the war.

As mentioned in the Dawn newspaper, an amount of \$1 billion was given to Pakistan in 2003 by the US which was a thank to Pakistan for its cooperation in the war (2012). Besides, President George Bush also declared Pakistan, in 2004 as a non-NATO partner, thus different kinds of military gears were provided to Pakistan. Hence, on the north western side of Pakistan, various drones strikes, were launched since 2004. Many civilian deaths were reported in these strikes which created huge opposition from public.

In a report in 2007, Pakistan was also accused of utilizing the amount paid to her by the US to create military barriers against India rather than utilizing the amount towards the betterment of the economy of the country. Further, the relation between Pakistan and US were in critical scenario in 2008 due to US blames over Pakistan on various political issues. A drone attack by US in June 2008, led to the martyr of 11 troops of Pakistan army as well as the death of some Taliban’s. this attack once again caused lack of collaboration and mistrust in this relationship.

PAK-US RELATIONS UNDER OBAMA’S ADMINISTRATION

In 2008, Obama was elected as the president of the US. Obama as a new president came up with his new administration. He declared new strategies to all major areas that were important to the US along with the security strategies for Pakistan. The Bush administration however had tried to help Pakistan both in military and economic aspects and provided \$750 million USD for FATA. However, the new administration strategy emphasized on Washington’s relation with Islamabad. Obama planned to change relations based on military assistance into new strategic part. However, his efforts failed since after joining his office, Obama focused on war in Afghanistan which he believed was neglected by the Bush administration. He further claimed that the trust could only be strengthened if Islamabad would help Washington to achieve its goal.

A confirmation in 2009, was made by President Musharraf for utilizing the major amount paid by the US to Pakistan thus used on making better territories against India. In October 2001, the Kerry Lugar Bill was passed which provided Pakistan with a non-military aid of about \$ 7.5 billion; in return Pakistan had to follow the demonstrations of the US. This Bill indicated US concerns about the alarming situation of the Pakistani Taliban and doubted Pakistan’s military directions.

However, in 2011, the Pak- US relation turned towards new ways. In the beginning, the CIA Raymond Davis killed two Pakistani's in Lahore, claiming that they came to burglarize him. However, the American officials asked Pakistan to release him immediately. Raymond Davis was released lately and sent to the US. In May 2001, an operation led by the navy killed Osama bin in Abbottabad.

The US President Barrack Obama stated that the information related to the operation was unknown to Pakistan. In contrast, ISI (Pakistan military) claimed that the operation was conducted jointly. However, Asif Ali Zardari denied this claim. Another factor that occurred in 2011 that weakened the relations was the airstrike on the Pakistani soldiers by the US army in which 24 troops were martyred. The Afghan and the US authorities claimed that the firing was in result of Pakistan's attack. However, the Pakistan military and government both denied the case.

During 2012, the bilateral relations between both the countries continued to stay weak however, Pakistan decided to go for better relations with the US. Thus, Islamabad guaranteed that trilateral procedure on Afghanistan would not result into disaster towards the Pakistan-US relations.

Later, in July 2012, US also presented an apology for Salalah attack. After a month, CSF payment was released to Pakistan. According to Dawn (2012), the US had setup a Pakistan Private Association Activity to help advance business enterprise in Pakistan. In this connection, Pakistan and the United State organizations met up in London to explore the extensions of the interest.

The US also established "US-Pak Women Council" to advance financial strengthening among Pakistani women. The US ambassador also accepted the efforts and sacrifices of Pakistan in battle against extremism and terrorism. The US also declared that Al-Qaida was minimized with the help of Pakistan. However, after one year the US claimed that the reason behind the terrorism was the strategic location of Pakistan.

The relations went towards new grounds. In the new strategic dialogue Clinton declared "a new phase in our partnership with a new focus and a new connection to work together we shared". The partnership since 2009 "Kerry-Lugar-Bremen" or "KBL", it has been estimated that US provided an aid worth \$ 5 billion to Pakistan and over \$ 1 billion in 2010 for flood relief, humanitarian response and the hurdles which had been faced in connection to the war on terror (Factsheet, 2015).

US-Pakistan had completed 70 years of their relation. In 7 decades Pakistan and US faced many hurdles however tried hard to build trustworthy relation. They both together had built relation for economic development, status and security of the nation. Hale (2017) asserts that, "although our bilateral relationship has faced many challenges at times in our history, America and Pakistan shared interests have shaped an enduring relationship over seven decades". However, the relations still have deficits. During 2017, Donald Trump administration stared with new challenges to Pakistan.

During Trump administration many changes were observed. Things have been centralized apart from diplomatic relations. Donald Trump introduced new strategy and

asked Pakistan to follow them for defeating Taliban in Afghanistan war. The US warned Pakistan not to dare to reject cooperation after the very statement that India is the strongest Ally for the US. However, Major General Asif Ghafoor claimed US to do more for Pakistan instead of asking Islamabad to do so.

“no organized infrastructure of any banned organization in presenting Pakistan. We have fought an imposed and imported war twin in Pakistan and now we cannot do anyone for anymore” (Ghafoor, 2017). However multiple visits held towards Pakistan. Later, President Trump claimed that Pakistan frequently gives place of refugee to the agents of terror.

Besides, currently, CPEC (China Pakistan Economic Corridor) is also an issue between Pakistan US relations. It has two arms that consist of network of road, bridges, pipelines and railways that will run from China’s western city of Khaksar to each of Pakistan’s major cities before connecting to the deep-water seaport Gwadar and by the Arabian sea. The CPEC is mostly centred around the financial collaborations among Pakistan and China. CPEC is the sign of developing financial cooperation between China and Pakistan with the aggregate worth being around US \$ 62 million. The motive behind CPEC is to lift up the economic situation in Pakistan. “CPEC project not only benefits Pakistan and China but to the whole region specially the biggest beneficiary will be Kandahar. Regarding Pakistan and USA relations, it affects the relation by the mean of interest. CPEC predicts Pakistan in a good will for the growth in terms of economy, politics and military. Pakistan is growing relation with China as they both enjoy a great history of friendship.

However, Trump’s message did not deliver a positive contribution towards Pakistan’s efforts in the counterterrorism. The motive behind CPEC is to stabilize the economic situation of Pakistan. US has become insecure due to its role from the last few decades. The US is not happy with the growing relations of Pakistan and China and the CPEC project. However, the project in a broader sense does not seem to benefit Pakistan. However, “This project should not be a threat to the US or India but as a source of regional and global stability along with the potential market that provides to the world” (kazmi,2018).

One of the major problems between Pakistan and US relation are the drone attacks which created hatred among the people of Pakistan towards America which as believed by Pakistani’s has violated their sovereignty. According to Associated Press (2009), since August 2008, over 30 drone strikes attacked Pakistan in which 263 people were killed including the militants. When war on terror had begun, US asked Pakistan to provide their bases for operation and strikes on terrorists. President Musharraf allowed US for the drone attacks where militants were suspected. Similarly, Zarrab-e-Ahab follow the same accord however the government officials of both the countries were against this accord. It has been reported that over 2693 people were killed in 235 drone attacks till 2008 (Janes Defence Weekly, 2008; Akhtar, 2012; Hali, 2012). Since 2004

till present drone strikes destroyed the nation however the ratio of strikes has been reduced.

DISCUSSION

Pak-US relation holds greater importance. The relation had tied since independence of Pakistan. However, both the countries had gone through different phases. After world war II, US became the most powerful nation. As Pakistan is well known for its geographical location due to which America made Pakistan an important ally in order to increase influence in Asia. The two main organizations SEATO and CENTO further strengthened the relation. However, the ties had shaken when Pakistan got sanction under Pressler amendment by the end of the Soviet war in Afghanistan.

After the 9/11 incident, Pak-US relations turned towards new ways. US realized that only Pakistan could help by giving air bases for the war. It also did much effort in providing NATO an easy way to access Afghanistan. Pakistan had played an important role for the elimination of terrorism however when it came to the US interest, all blame was to be faced by Pakistan. Trump accused Pakistan as to providing safe heavens to terrorists. Moreover, in the beginning of the new year President Trump tweeted that Pakistan did nothing except giving lies and deceptions. Further he threatened to stop all aids towards Pakistan.

Zahid Awan (2018) discussed the way forward for Pakistan-US relations. He claimed that Pakistan and US cooperate much on their common goals. However, whenever Pakistan needs the US support, they step back due to which relations have declined. He further discusses the allegations on Pakistan by the US: Firstly, US claimed Pakistan as a failure to remove terrorism; however, besides having well trained, well equipped army, US failed to occupy or control Afghanistan completely. Then the US also claims to have given an amount of \$ 33 billion for 16 years (not well utilized by Pakistan). However, the method of economic support was also politicized by the United States through US AID. Further US blames Pakistan for giving a way to China. By seeing the fact that USSR had collapsed by the leading US world's only superpower, US launched many attacks on Muslim countries such as Syria, Afghanistan, Yemen, Libya, Iraq and gained much benefits in terms of economy from these wars. However, US has not been encouraged globally for its war strategies and killing of the innocent.

CONCLUSION

“No foreign policy—no matter how ingenious—has any chance of success if it is born in the minds of a few and carried in the hearts of none,” (Kissinger, 1973). Since independence, Pakistan and the United States have passed seven decades. Both the countries cooperated with each other yet could not build a valuable relationship. The reasons behind the misunderstanding are different concerns over one goal. Whether US

stayed bipolar, unipolar or multipolar country, it always tried to demonstrate in order to attain prosperity. Pakistan is a friendly nation and always struggle to achieve stability for the nation. The bilateral ties hold great importance but destroyed the relation. At present the PAK-US relation is going through crucial stage. However, the government of Pakistan should take right decisions for the betterment of the nation since an unstable relation with the US (A superpower) might put Pakistan in a crucial stage.

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