

The dynamics of Pakistan-US relations after US withdrawal from Afghanistan: challenges and prospects

Asad Ullah*¹ | Sadia Sulaiman¹ | Syed Adnan Ali Shah Bukhari²

1. Area Study Centre for Africa, North & South America, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, Pakistan.

2. Rabdan Academy, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (UAE).

*Corresponding Author Email: kasad1657@gmail.com

Abstract:

Since the 1950s till February 2023, ties between Pakistan and the United States (US) have seen many highs and lows. The current dynamics of Pakistan-US relations after the US withdrawal from Afghanistan have posed myriad challenges and further complicated the relationship between the two countries. The withdrawal has impacted the dynamics of the relationship between Pakistan and the US, and the implications of this shift have far-reaching consequences for regional security and stability. The paper discusses those challenges and brings forth the prospects that will shape the future of the relationship after new developments, including security concerns, geo-economic, people-to-people ties, and climate change. The researchers put the study together by using a qualitative research design. The theoretical framework of research is based on using soft power, which suggests that Pakistan-US relations could be improved by prioritising diplomacy, trade, dialogue, and cooperation rather than relying on threats and coercion. Overcoming the historical animosity in the Pakistan-US relationship presents a significant challenge for both states. Engaging in sustained and constructive dialogue will require mutual trust, prudence, determination, and strong political will. The paper concludes by stressing the importance of cooperation over common issues, trust-building, and a geo-economic approach to the relationship.

Article History

Received:
29-May-2023

Revised:
15-Sep-2023

Re-revised:
27-Oct-2023

Accepted:
10-Nov-2023

Published:
11-Dec-2023

Keywords: Pak-US relationship, US-Pak cooperation, US-Pak animosity, US withdrawal, War on Terror, regional security, regional stability, geo-economy, soft power.

How to Cite: Ullah, A., Sulaiman, S., & Bukhari, S. A. A. S. (2023). The dynamics of Pakistan-US relations after US withdrawal from Afghanistan: challenges and prospects. *Liberal Arts and Social Sciences International Journal (LASSIJ)*, 7(2), 1-23. <https://doi.org/10.47264/idea.lassij/7.2.1>

Copyright: © 2023 The Author(s), published by IDEA PUBLISHERS (IDEA Publishers Group).

License: This is an Open Access manuscript published under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 (CC BY 4.0) International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

1. Introduction

A two-decades long war era came to an end with the United States withdrawal from Afghanistan in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks in 2001, referred to as 9/11. Pakistan and the US were strategic allies in the war against terrorism in Afghanistan, but their security cooperation had been conspicuous by fluctuating and complex dynamics. The United States alleges Islamabad for supporting terrorist groups and acting against their interests in the region. Although, Pakistan refused all the allegations and charges and demonstrated on his own experienced hardship in the American-led war in Afghanistan. On the other hand, During the past few decades, Washington viewed Islamabad's bilateral relations with a suspicious eye while Islamabad has shown its concern over the expanding partnership of the US and India in the region. The withdrawal of American troops from Afghanistan has further intricated the ties between Islamabad and Washington (Mohyidin, 2021). Over the past few decades, the relationship between Islamabad and Washington has been the subject of meticulous debate and rigorous scrutiny. Currently, the Pakistan-US relationship is strained and confronted with many challenges like divergent policy approaches, security concerns, political differences, varying mutual distrust, and different strategic priorities. Historically, the US has used its presence in Afghanistan as a bargaining chip in its bilateral relationship with Pakistan. At the same time, Pakistan has tried to balance its bilateral ties with the US while utilizing its strategic location. The US military withdrawal from Kabul has created a number of new challenges as well as opportunities for the bilateral relationship between Pakistan and the US. It is imminent that the Pakistan-US relationship is uncertain in the future when considering these multidimensional and multiplex components. However, Islamabad and Washington need to work closely to overcome the hardships and obstacles that come along the way in their relationship (Markey, 2023; Shahbaz, 2023).

This research study is important in the sense that it discussed opportunities and challenges for the relationship of both Pakistan and the US in the wake of the post-withdrawal period from Afghanistan with a special focus on the potential of cooperation and resilience between the two states. The US withdrawal from Afghanistan has apparently impacted the dynamics of the relationship between Pakistan and the US, and the implications of this shift have far-reaching consequences for regional security and stability. Shifting the focus from security to prosperity, through different initiatives such as geo-economic partnerships, climate change mitigation, and strengthening people-to-people ties through cultural and educational exchange programs can transform Pakistan-US relations.

2. Literature review

The US withdrawal from Afghanistan has significant implications for the regional dynamics, particularly for the Pakistan-US relation. To understand the post-withdrawal dynamics, it is important to highlight Pakistan-US relations in the Cold War and War on Terror. Researchers and Scholars have accentuated the evolution of the Pakistan-US Relationship from the Cold

War era to a strategic partnership and non-NATO ally in the war on terror. With the emergence of Pakistan, the geopolitics of the sub-continent transformed which cannot be ignored in state foreign policy. Since Inception, Pakistan's geopolitical consideration influenced its foreign policy. To ensure its existence in the region, Pakistan needed to counter its arch-rivals and was compelled to become a partner with the major power US (Husain, 1987). During the Cold War the US economic and military aid to Pakistan and Pakistan's support to the US against the growing influence of Communism shaped Pakistan-US relations. Cooperation between Islamabad and Washington led to Pakistan entering SEATO and CENTO Defence pacts. Under these pacts, the US provided military and economic assistance to Pakistan. In mid-1970s, Washington showed suspicion over the building of nuclear weapons, which resulted in the end of the cooperation era and created distrust and disagreements (Wright, 2011). However, the USSR invasion of Afghanistan changed Pakistan-US relations to a partnership once again. To contain USSR in Afghanistan, the US needed Pakistan's support while Pakistan needed the US back to secure its northern border. The mutual interest brought both states to enter a new era of bilateral cooperation. But after the disintegration of the USSR, Pakistan-US relations were once again discarded because of the Pressler Amendment, which stopped all economic and military aid. After attaining its goal of containing communism and defeating the USSR, the US lost interest in Islamabad. In the aftermath of the nuclear test in response to the Indian nuclear test to maintain a balance of Power, the US imposed high sanctions under the Glenn Amendment which further deteriorated the relations between the two states (Markey, 2013, Munshi, 2022).

In the aftermath of the 9/11 incident, the security environment affected Pakistan's foreign policy, particularly in the US-led war against terrorism. Pakistan's strategic location and to safeguard its national security, Islamabad was not in a position to remain neutral. Pakistan changed its stance towards the Taliban, became an ally in the war on Terror, and worked together with US to create a new government in Kabul. It also took steps to reduce extremism in Pakistan and stopped supporting insurgents. Pakistan-US relations entered into a new phase of cooperation and alignment. Islamabad supported the military operation in Afghanistan to safeguard its own security. It was a new challenge to Pakistan-US relations to cooperate and fight together against terrorism after a detached decade before 9/11 (Jabeen et al., 2010).

The withdrawal of US forces would create a gap in Afghanistan and lead to the emergence of the Taliban and a civil war like situation. The Relation with the Taliban creates a challenge on the border as the emergence of militant groups will be a major threat to Islamabad's sovereignty. It will further deteriorate the situation on the northern border of Pakistan. Before the US withdrawal Akber warned in his paper about the rise of non-state actors in the wake of US withdrawal without establishing any proper government and peace. This failure would be disastrous for all the neighbouring states and the region. The exit strategy and establishment of a peaceful government are the steps to maintain peace in the region. The US actively involved the stakeholder in Kabul for stability and peace as it's linked with the peaceful and positive future of Islamabad. The US looks serious to make a peace agreement acceptable to all. However, the trust deficit seems to be a major hurdle in it. The allegation and distrust regarding

the militancy affect the talks on so many occasions. Pakistan tried to bring the Taliban back to the negotiation table and support the peace process in the larger interest of the peaceful region (Akbar, 2015).

The past resentment, ill will, trust deficit, and suspicion in Pakistan-US relations termed as major challenges during the President Biden Administration and post-withdrawal from Afghanistan. The Pakistan-US relations degenerated during the last decade since the Obama administration. The unhealthy Pakistan-US relationship was summarized by considering three major factors. Firstly, the regional political environment and emerging situation in Afghanistan, secondly, Pakistan-India Relation and thirdly, China-US conflict. After the Doha deal, Pakistan-US relations during Biden's presidency became more tense because of the lack of cooperation between them in the aftermath of the US withdrawal from Afghanistan (Ahmar, 2021). The US withdrawal from Afghanistan and changing regional dynamics create a new set of Challenges in Pakistan-US relations which need to be addressed for strengthening ties between the two states and a peaceful region.

3. Theoretical framework

The concept of soft power is derived from the work of Joseph Nye which states the capacity to gain more benefit without the use of hard power i.e., military means but developing favourable magnetism that can assist to influence other forms of power. To materialize those capacities, it would need the leadership, planning, strategies, and identification of those capacities for the power behaviour to be carried out in a specific context (Nye, 2004, p. 3-4). Soft power is explained by another researcher that the ability to influence international relation through cooperative strategies involving political ideas, economic norms, and cultural social Values (Amstutz, 1999, p. 131). The study follows the soft power theory because Pakistan-US Bilateral relation could change by emphasizing on trade, diplomacy, technology, and people to people relation instead of coercion and threat (Ahmar, 2021, p. 5). In the post withdrawal period, US need to adopt a soft power approach toward Pakistan to strengthen their ties and maintain its influence in the region. The use of soft power such as trade technology, aid, diplomacy, and culture exchange will promote democracy, reducing trust deficit and anti-Americanism, and strengthening the relation between Pakistan and the US.

4. Research methodology

The study is qualitative in nature to gather in-depth insights of the Pakistan-US Challenges in the aftermath of US troops withdrawal from Afghanistan. It includes only secondary data which mainly relied on latest sources. Secondary data is collected through systematic way and retrieved relevant data from many sources such as journal articles, policy papers, news articles and reports related to the concerned topic. In this study, the researcher uses content analysis which entails analyzing the existing literature and other sources including official documents and statements, media information, publications of Think Tanks, and research publications (Elo

& Kyngäs, 2008). In the study, the researchers identify different themes, evolving trends, changing official positions, and foreign policy approaches to assess the changing and evolving dynamics of the Pakistan-US relationship in the post-withdrawal period from Afghanistan. To get a better understanding of the topic, the method of data triangulation has been used in this research. Data triangulation refers to the gathering of research data from different sources to examine a phenomenon (Carter et al., 2014). The researchers have ensured the cross-referencing of data from different resources to enhance the validity and reliability of the research. Moreover, the researcher has substantiated the claims from different sources to strengthen its arguments.

5. United State withdrawal from Afghanistan: analysis and discussion

Afghanistan is commonly referred to as the graveyard of empires. First, the USSR and then the United States experienced defeat despite battling for two decades and possessing the world's heavy and most sophisticated weaponry. In February 2020, the White House and the Afghan Taliban reached a peace deal that, released 5,000 Taliban prisoners, and fixed a specific date (May 1, 2021) for the full evacuation of foreign troops from Afghanistan (Agreement for Bringing Peace to Afghanistan, 2022). President Biden postponed the original May 1, 2021, deadline of the withdrawal from Afghanistan, which was established by his predecessor. However, despite clear indications that the Taliban was not adhering to the terms of the agreement, the Biden administration proceeded with a plan to withdraw by August 31, 2021 (Miller, 2021). The Afghan national government collapsed before August 31, 2021, withdrawal's deadline. On August 15, 2021, the Afghan Taliban arrived at the gates of Kabul, and the city fell (Murtazashvili, 2022).

In some way, the US blames Pakistan for what went wrong in Afghanistan. They make a convincing case that Pakistan supports the Afghan Taliban, and they defeated the US (Schroden, 2022). When it comes to how the Taliban get funds, the West keeps focusing on the \$33 billion the US gave to Pakistan over the past 20 years and ignores the \$1 trillion the US spent in Afghanistan during the same time. Western media widely disseminated this made-up story to cover up the real causes, such as miscalculation, corrupt government the shadowy National Afghan Army, the US's local partners in Afghanistan, and Taliban's strength etc. (Akbar, 2021). On the other hand, the withdrawal has been justified by the notion that the locus of US strategic interests has shifted away from South Asia to the Indo-Pacific region (Trubowitz, 2021). A key analytical insight is that what Washington lacked was a lucid and cohesive strategy in Afghanistan.

5.1. Post-withdrawal US policy and Pakistan's position

The quick withdrawal of US forces and the Taliban's takeover have made it difficult for both countries to reset their ties where the focus of their ties should be bilateral in nature. Pakistan made significant efforts to project its importance to the US after the withdrawal as played an

important role in the peace process in Afghanistan. Due to Pakistan's geographic, ethnic, and historical ties with Afghanistan, and its connections with the Afghan Taliban provide it with the potential to bring them to the negotiating table for peace talks (Mustafa et al., 2021). After the Peace Deal, Pakistan facilitated and ensured safe exit of the US troops from Afghanistan. Pakistan provided a crucial supply route for NATO forces through its land and airspace and helped in the evacuation of US citizens and Afghan allies from Afghanistan (Mahmood & Ahmad, 2021). However, the Biden administration has not made Pakistan a priority in its foreign policy for the first time in more than 20 years (Chaudhary & Nasr, 2021). Since 2001, Pakistan has been an important non-NATO ally in the war on terror, but the US foreign policy is no longer based on the need for security in the region. Instead of fighting terrorism, the US has shifted its focus to other issues like climate change, the domestic economy, and competition with other big powers, especially China and Russia (Chaudhary & Nasr, 2021; Gillani et al., 2023). The post-withdrawal era has been a tumultuous one for Pakistan-US relations. The US is concerned about China's growing assertiveness which poses new strategic threats in the region. In response to these threats, the US is working to strengthen current alliances and create new ones, including its relationship with India. Because of this, the Biden administration considers India an important factor in maintaining a healthy strategic equilibrium in the Indo-Pacific with China. Currently, the United States places less emphasis on Pakistan and Afghanistan when it comes to their national security and strategic interests.

In March 2022 at the Islamabad Security Dialogue, former Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa took the floor to adopt a new approach toward a positive future. He emphasized the importance of resolving past conflicts and focusing on progress (Dawn, 2021). Pakistan's security strategy places higher emphasis on economic security and seeks to engage with the US on issues that are not directly related to national security, such as technological advancement and climate change. Nevertheless, given Pakistan's existing inadequacies in terms of its ability to manage its own economic affairs, putting this plan into action will need a tremendous amount of work (Jamal, 2021). Washington's relationship with Islamabad appears to be limited in scope, lacking a strategic perspective, and emphasizing tactical considerations. The relationship appears to revolve mainly around transactional negotiations regarding Pakistan's potential contributions to America's policy of counterterrorism etc.

5.2. Post-withdrawal challenges to Pakistan-US relationship

Traditionally, Afghanistan has been the lens through which Washington sees at its relationship with Pakistan (Dawi, 2022). This relationship has been fraught with tension and complexity in the past, and the post-withdrawal era is likely to be no exception. Both countries have different interests in the region, which hurts their ability to work together on counterterrorism, regional security, and other issues. President Joe Biden's comments about Pakistan have made the situation even more complicated. He said that Pakistan "may be one of the most dangerous nations on earth" (The White House, 2022). On the other hand, former PM Imran Khan told in an interview that "whenever the US needed us, they built ties, and Pakistan became a frontline

state, and then they abandoned us and placed sanctions" (Alvi, 2022). The lack of communication between the states on a high level creates misconceptions. Changes in global and regional geopolitical dynamics give rise to challenges between the two states (Roy & Khalid, 2019).

The already shaky ties between the two countries further witnessed a new low when Pakistan's premier, Imran Khan (2018-2022) raised the issue of a US-led foreign conspiracy to oust him from power (Latif & Sajid, 2022; Ghauri et al., 2023). However, the National Security Council has not found any evidence to support Khan's claims of external interference or intimidation. While it is true that Khan's visit to Russia was not viewed positively by the US and the West due to their stance on the Russia-Ukraine conflict, it is unlikely that they would resort to attempting to remove a Pakistani government. There are other means available to the US and other foreign powers to exert pressure on Pakistan, such as through the FATF and IMF (Ahmed, 2022). The FATF grey list is a mechanism used to identify and sanction countries with inadequate measures to combat money laundering and terror financing. Pakistan was placed on the grey list in 2018, and subsequently, the country has faced financial constraints due to reduced access to international financing and investment (Karim & Hayat, 2019).

Pakistan's inclusion in the FATF's grey list has resulted in the imposition of financial restrictions and a threat of being blacklisted if the country does not adopt effective measures to counteract money laundering and terror financing. Pakistan has taken several steps to address the concerns identified by the FATF, and as a result, has fulfilled 26 out of the 27 demands made by the said organization. Despite the progress, Pakistan has not been removed from the FATF's grey list. This has led to speculation about the potential politics behind the decision. The US has used its leverage in the FATF to put pressure on countries to comply with its policies and exert geopolitical influence. In the case of Pakistan, the US has used the threat of being blacklisted to pressurize the Pakistani government to act against terror financing, which aligns with the US government's goal of countering terrorism (Hasan, 2021).

Consequently, the FATF has been utilized as a coercive tool to induce policy changes and promote greater financial regulation in Pakistan. Therefore, Khan's claims of a foreign conspiracy appear to lack sufficient evidence and raise questions about their veracity. On the other hand, the allegation against the US makes the scandal surrounding the "letter gate" incident may have negative consequences for Pakistan-US relations. The rise of anti-American sentiments is being attributed to Imran Khan due to the cipher conspiracy for his own political motives, which could lead to further tensions between the two states. Despite these events taking place, there is an opportunity to improve Pakistan-US relations by focusing on trade and people-to-people contact. The recent arrival of Ambassador-designate Donald Blome (June 2021) offers hope for reshaping ties beyond just security concerns (US Mission Pakistan, 2022). With the 75th anniversary of Pakistan-US relations approaching, it's an ideal time to reduce hostilities and work toward mutual interest. While progress may be slow, each step taken can lead to more opportunities for both countries.

5.2.1. Inherent trust deficit

In Pakistan, the common opinion is that the US is the primary force behind militancy and extremism in the country. To some extent, this interpretation and anti-American emotions can be justified on logical grounds because Washington has proven to be a "fickle friend" with continuously changing attitudes (Riedel, 2011, p. 11-16). The decades of misperception and lack of bilateral engagement between the two states led to the current trust deficit (Riedel, 2011, p. 120). The already strained relationship between the two countries has been further complicated by issues such as Pakistan's alleged support for militant groups and differences over drone strikes etc. The recent withdrawal of the US from Afghanistan in August 2021 has brought to the forefront the fragile nature of the relationship.

In the first public hearing of Congress after the US withdrawal, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken told the Foreign Affairs Committee of HOR that Pakistan has a "multiplicity of interests some that are in conflict with ours." He blamed that Pakistan has consistently supported the Taliban, who fought against the US in Kabul for 20 years (Zengerle & Pamuk, 2021). Pakistan's foreign office responded to Blinken's remarks that it is "not in line with the close cooperation" between the two states. According to Raoof Hasan, former assistant to PM Imran Khan, Pakistan's longstanding relationship with the United States has been plagued by a fundamental absence of trust, which has led to sustained negative consequences for Pakistan. In his view, this relationship can be characterized as "delusional" reflecting a pattern of unrealistic or misguided perceptions on the part of both states (Kugelman & Hasan, 2017). The trust deficit has been going on for a long time and has made it hard for both states to work together on several security and economic issues of mutual interest. Addressing the issue of trust deficit, it will require a sustained effort by both countries to rebuild the confidence and find a common ground while acknowledging and addressing the issues that have contributed to the erosion of trust over time.

5.2.2. Pakistan's focus on geo-economics

The geo-economics refers to the reciprocity between economics and geo-politics, where economy surpasses security. It involves the use of economic tools to achieve two key objectives; to develop the geopolitical capacity through the mobilization of economic resources, and to employ these resources in foreign relations as a means of exerting political influence (Hussain, 2021, p. 315). Throughout history, the foreign policy of Pakistan is influenced by multiple factors such as regional factors, the fluctuating interests of major powers in the South Asian region, and the security dynamics of its neighbours including Afghanistan and India. Interestingly, during the ongoing decade, the foreign policy of Pakistan has taken a major shift i.e., its focus is now more on geo-economics rather than geopolitics. This change in policy is apparent in the first ever document named as National Security Policy, which comprehensively outlines Pakistan's shift from geopolitics to geo-economics in the public policy of Pakistan (Mahmood, 2022).

Unfortunately, Pakistan's geo-economic aspirations for most of the times do not coincide with that of the US and same is the case this time. In fact, Pakistan's geo-economic strategies and goals are tied with another great power and a competitor of the US i.e., China. China has a huge sum of investment in Pakistan through CPEC which is a flagship project of the great Built and Road Initiative commonly known as BRI (Ali, 2022). Pakistan's focus on geo-economics creates challenges in its relationship with the US, which is primarily driven by geo-strategy. The US valued Pakistan as an important strategic ally in the fight against terrorism. However, the US should also recognize Pakistan's legitimate economic interests and work with Pakistan to find ways to support its developing economy without undermining US interests in the region. The strained Pakistan-US relationship compelled Pakistan to seek deeper ties with China. This was partly driven by the US efforts to strengthen its partnership with India as to counterbalance China. The divergent interest led to tensions in the past and are likely to continue to pose challenges for Pakistan and the US as both countries are entering into a new era of relationship (Ali, 2021).

5.2.3. US conservative security concerns

US Conservative security concerns posed a challenge in Pakistan-US relations because the two countries have different priorities and interests when it comes to security. The US only cared about achieving its own strategic objectives in Afghanistan, it didn't pay much attention to Pakistan's security concerns in the region. US priorities in Afghanistan still included bigger goals like eliminating terrorism, extremism, and countering China while Pakistan had domestic and regional concerns (Akhter et al., 2021 p. 346-354). The resurgence of the Taliban in Afghanistan has raised concerns for the international community, especially the US, about the potential for a rise in terrorist activities. Many complaints have been received regarding extremist organizations such as ISIS-K and Al-Qaida considering Taliban's return to power. A recent assessment made by the UN Security Council that terrorist groups had more freedom in Afghanistan than they had before in recent times (United Nations official, 2022). US intelligence reports show that the total number of al-Qaeda operatives in Afghanistan has increased since the withdrawal of US forces in August 2021. The US wants Pakistan to prevent terrorist groups from using its territory as a haven and to disrupt its funding networks. Additionally, the US expects Pakistan to use its influence with the Taliban to prevent them from allowing them to operate in Afghanistan.

On the other hand, the US withdrawal from Afghanistan has made US policymakers worried about the security situation in the region, especially when it comes to Pakistan's security in general and nuclear weapons in particular. Pentagon has claimed that they had warned President Biden that the abrupt withdrawal could increase the risks of Pakistan's nuclear weapons and potentially undermine the country's security. The US withdrawal has led to the creation of a power vacuum, which has been filled by non-state actors and extremist groups like the Taliban and ISIS-K. The repercussions of the rise of non-state actors could potentially spill over into Pakistan, which could have serious consequences for regional and global security

(Iqbal, 2021). Overall, the situation in Afghanistan has become a major security concern for the US and Pakistan and collective efforts will be needed to ensure that the security situation in the region does not deteriorate further.

5.2.4. Issue of military and economic aid

The US aid to Pakistan has come into the spotlight once again following the withdrawal of US troops. Even though the US has been a major provider of military aid and assistance to Pakistan for many years, with the aim of supporting Pakistan's efforts to combat terrorism and maintain stability in the region. The US provided Pakistan with over \$33 billion in military and civilian aid during the Afghanistan war, which ended in 2021 (Dawi, 2022). However, military assistance was halted in 2018, and the 2022 security aid was reduced to approximately \$300 million (Dawi, 2022). The issue of US aid to Pakistan and its subsequent stoppage after a certain time is inherently linked to the complex nature of Pakistan-US relationship. President Donald Trump's (2017-21) tweet and the subsequent suspension of security aid brought the issue back up. As President Trump tweeted (Trump, 2018)

The United States has foolishly given Pakistan more than 33 billion dollars in aid over the last 15 years, and they have given us nothing but lies & deceit, thinking of our leaders as fools. They give safe haven to the terrorists we hunt in Afghanistan, with little help. No more!

The decision of the Trump administration to cut off military aid as a punitive gesture has resulted in further complications in the already strained relationship between Pakistan and the US. Unfortunately, this decision failed to produce any positive outcomes, and instead, have some consequences. Due to the reduction in US aid, Pakistan has been compelled to seek assistance from other countries. Rebuilding the relationship will require significant efforts from both sides. The decision to cut off military aid had a considerable impact, and it will take time to repair the damage caused.

5.2.5. Issue of co-operation between the US and Pakistan on counter terrorism

Before the evacuation of US troops, the first round of dialogue on counterterrorism held in January 2021 (Business-Standard, 2023). After the US withdrawal, lack of cooperation between Pakistan and the US on counterterrorism has led to a rise in terrorist activities in the region. The lack of joint training, joint operations and intelligence sharing has given rise to the unchecked growth of terrorist groups in the region. In the wake of the US departure, the potential for a power vacuum in Afghanistan resulted in instability and provided an opportunity for extremist organizations to gain a foothold in the region again. The number of terrorists strikes in Pakistan increased by a record 51 percent in a single year after the US withdrawal (Khan, 2022). The Police Lines Mosque in Peshawar was targeted by a suicide bomber on January 30, resulting in the deaths of over 100 people and injuring 52 others. This attack is

considered as one of the deadliest in recent years and was claimed by Jamat-ul-Ahrar, a faction of the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). At the same time, a potential terror attack in Makerwal, Punjab, was prevented by the local police. The security situation in Pakistan has deteriorated significantly since the withdrawal of US and NATO forces from Afghanistan 16 months ago (Firdous & Nizamani, 2023).

The US officials claimed negotiations regarding the use of Pakistan's airspace for military operations and air strikes in Afghanistan. However, Pakistan's foreign office has rejected these claims, stating that no such negotiations are taking place. Pakistan has emphasized the need for respecting its sovereignty and has stated that any decision about the use of airspace will be made in accordance with the national interests (Yousaf, 2021). However, the lack of effective negotiation and cooperation on counterterrorism has undermined the trust and mutual understanding between the two states further deteriorating their relationship.

5.3. Post-withdrawal prospects of Pakistan-US relation

Historically, Pakistan-US relationship was viewed mainly through the prism of geostrategy and security, especially during the Cold War and the recent decades of conflict in Afghanistan. However, the world is undergoing rapid transformations, marked by the urgency of global health, climate change, energy scarcity, technological advancements, and evolving trade and investment patterns. Therefore, there is an opportunity to reframe the Pakistan-US ties, recognizing that shared goals and aspirations extend beyond security concerns. The current challenges demand adaptability, innovation, and collaboration, and provide an opportunity to deepen the relationship between the two nations (US Mission Pakistan, 2022). As Ex-Foreign Secretary of Pakistan, Shamshad Ahmad pointed out that Pakistan is not a "lost friend" since its geopolitical condition is vital to maintain peace in South Asia. "Pakistan has not disappeared from the American radar; rather, it stands big for US interests in Asia" (Ahmad, 2018). Pakistan and the United States have a complex relationship that has been shaped by various geopolitical and strategic factors. However, despite the ups and downs, both states share a common interest in promoting stability and prosperity in the region. Therefore, there are significant opportunities to enhance bilateral engagement and foster a more productive partnership.

In May 2021, former Foreign Minister of Pakistan Shah Mahmood Qureshi told his US counterpart that Pakistan wanted to improve our ties with the US by improving regional connectivity promoting economic collaboration and fostering a shared vision for a peaceful South Asia (DAWN, 2021). This new stance by the leaders of Pakistan underscores the expectation that the US should consider Pakistan as an equal partner. Both states need to start the dialogue on the sectors of mutual interests and priorities, like IT, agriculture, climate change, health, and economy. Pakistan is prepared to deliberate on the arduous issues as well, including its apprehensions regarding India (DAWN, 2021). Keeping in view the security concerns in their bilateral ties, both nations can benefit to enhance cooperation in other numerous areas.

5.3.1. Building resilience through humanitarian aid and disaster relief cooperation

Whenever Pakistan was affected by natural disasters like earthquakes and floods, the US always helped Pakistan. On October 5, 2005, a disastrous earthquake of 7.6 magnitude hit western Kashmir and north-eastern Pakistan, resulting in the suffering and displacement of over 3.5 million people (Awais et al., 2012). Seventy-three thousand (73000) people lost their lives and millions of people were displaced (Awais et al., 2014). The US retorted immediately and guaranteed \$510 million in aid to help Pakistan in relief efforts. It included \$300 million for reconstruction, infrastructure development, and humanitarian relief, \$110 million in military support, and an expected \$100 million from private contributions for the flood victims. The US encouraged other states to come forward and help Pakistan in those hard and testing times, resulting in \$6.2 billion in pledges (US Department of State, 2005). The US prioritized ensuring adequate shelter for victims during the winter and focused on providing immediate needs such as relief supplies, health, water, sanitation, and logistics.

In a tragic turn of events, several years later, Pakistan was once again hit by a devastating natural disaster. In July 2010, the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa experienced the deadliest and worst flood the region had ever seen. Heavy rainfall exceeding the monthly normal rain over a 4-day period resulted in overflowing rivers, causing damage to infrastructure, crops, and loss of human and animal lives. This catastrophic event resulted in a death toll of 1,961 individuals, affected 20.3 million people, and left 1.7 million houses damaged (Rahman & Khan, 2012). The US responded quickly and generously to Pakistan's request for aid after the devastating floods. The US offered both civilian and military aid, infrastructure assistance, including halal meals, and air support for the transport of goods and the rescue of people, with a rough value of \$81 million. To support relief operations, the US provided 26 military helicopters and evacuated over 26,000 people while transporting around 20 million pounds of relief supplies (US Department of State, 2010). Additionally, hundreds of US personnel (military and civilian) worked tirelessly in Islamabad, flood-affected areas, and Pakistani military bases to support flood relief operations.

At the start of 2020, the world was struck by a pandemic affecting the entire globe called COVID-19. The virus spread like wildfire, and it reached every state within a short span of time. The pandemic caused diseases as well as cost the lives of tens of hundreds of people. Besides this, it also resulted in economic meltdown and social unrest. Pakistan was also affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The first patient infected by the virus in Pakistan was reported in the last days of February 2020 (Abid et al, 2020). Pakistan's fragile economy as well as below standard healthcare system faced severe challenges due to the pandemic. Among the helping states, the US provided Pakistan with 62.5 million doses of vaccines (Pfizer and Moderna) to save the lives of the people. Similarly, the US also helped Pakistan during these testing times by providing personal protective equipment, kits for diagnosis, and medical equipment to save the lives of the people in Pakistan (US Mission Pakistan, 2022). The US support to Pakistan was not limited to medical supplies, in fact, they extended their helping

hand to Pakistan and provided US\$63 million to cope with the pandemic. The aid included a share for the provision of PPE, laboratory supplies, and medical equipment (US Embassy Pakistan, 2020). The partnership between Pakistan and the US clearly displays the necessity and importance of international support and cooperation during hard and testing times.

In June 2022, the people of Pakistan faced again a dreadful crisis in the form of catastrophic floods that submerged a major portion of the state, causing the displacement of people, and leading to instability and economic hardship. The severe flood got attention from foreign states such as the United States and international media to provide support and assistance to the affected people. Despite the intricate relationship, the United States contributed \$97 million in aid to Pakistan (USAID, 2022). Earlier this year the US announced an additional \$100 million in aid on humanitarian grounds and support recovery (Reynolds, 2023). Increasing aid to Pakistan is critical not merely to meet humanitarian duties and avert similar crises, but also to serve US geopolitical goals. This can create a positive environment for engagement between the two states, which can make it easier for them to work together on a wide range of issues that are important to both the states. Giving aid can also help Pakistani people to feel better about the US. Overall, the provision of US aid to Pakistan can have a positive impact on the bilateral relationship and can help to create a way forward for a more prosperous bilateral partnership between the two states.

5.3.2. From security to prosperity: shifting focus to the geo-economics

Pakistan and the US have an asymmetrical relationship, mainly due to the absence of significant mutual strategic or economic interests. Their relationship has been primarily driven by security concerns on a case-by-case basis at various occasions, with both nations depending on each other (Mir, 2021). Pakistan wants to shift the focus of its relationship towards a geo-economic orientation, moving beyond its previous emphasis on counterterrorism and security. The US considers the withdrawal from Afghanistan and the unexpected and immediate takeover of Taliban of Kabul a humiliation as a great power. In the aftermath of current events, it accentuates the need for a reassessment of the Pakistan-US relationship (Munshi, 2022).

Strengthening trade and investment ties with the US and collaborating on regional connectivity may result in mutual advantages. Former Special Assistant to PM Imran Khan (2018-22) Dr. Moeed Yusuf draws the attention of US policymakers that Pakistan's leadership has shifted its focus to an "economic security paradigm" with an aim of transforming Pakistan into a "geo-economic melting pot" to boost economic growth and regional connectivity. Additionally, Pakistan is no longer seeking to provide military bases to US but aims to offer economic bases. This represents a marked departure from past practices (Jamal, 2021). The shift towards geo-economics can provide a new framework for enhancing bilateral relations between Pakistan and America. Both states have much to gain from closer economic ties, including increased trade, investment, and job creation. By prioritizing economic cooperation, Pakistan and the United States can build a stronger and more sustainable partnership (Ahmar, 2021). This will

require a renewed commitment from both states, including efforts to address security concerns and promote stability in the region. With the right approach, geo-economics can pave the way for more resilient bilateral relationship.

5.3.3. Common security concerns: bridging the gap between Pakistan and the US

The US withdrawal from Afghanistan has created several security concerns for Pakistan and US in the region. The terrorist organizations such as TTP and ISIS-K once again rising on Afghan land and causing a threat to regional peace and security. They are involved in terrorist activities and their presence and continued rise can further deteriorate the stability and peace of the region (United Nations official, 2022). Pakistan and the US hold identical views on Afghanistan despite having a different approach. However, the trust deficit between the two states is a major hurdle, which requires persistent dialogue between their civil and military leadership to bridge the gap. The shift in regional geopolitics can put pressure on both nations regarding security concerns.

To address the trust deficit and promote cooperation and negotiation, it is essential for both states to engage in an extensive discourse on the major issues. It needs a deep understanding of each other's security concerns and national interests. Concrete efforts are required to identify areas of mutual interest for collaborative actions (Roy & Khalid, 2019). Dialogue between Pakistan and the US is need of the hour on counterterrorism, extremism, countering security threats and combating terror financing. The dialogue should aim to promote an extensive approach to combating terrorism, relying on the coordinated efforts and continuation of the dialogue between both the states (APP, 2023).

In the prevailing situation, Pakistan and US need to work on geofencing and intelligence sharing. Pakistan's intelligence agencies are more familiar with the situation in Afghanistan that how things work there. Similarly, Washington has enough intelligence system and resources that can be beneficial in tracing the extremist and terrorist activities in the region and Afghanistan particularly. By collaboration, both Pakistan and the US can maintain peace and address the security challenges in the region. Security concerns and Challenges are one of the major barriers in the bilateral relation between the two states, however, it has the potential to create new opportunities for bilateral cooperation and buildup relationships.

5.3.4. Collaborating on climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies

After the 9/11 attacks, both Pakistan and the US have mostly worked collectively in the South Asian region as Pakistan was a non-NATO ally of the US. After the United States withdrawal from Afghanistan, security cooperation has been decreased between the two states. Now, it is essential to create new areas of mutual interest and cooperation for sustainable engagement. It needs that the US should shift its focus from security to other evolving challenges such as to combat climate change and work with Pakistan on mitigation and adaptation strategies. This

may be achieved by giving top priority to long-term disaster relief initiatives. Such actions will not only help to foster a more productive relationship between the two states but also address the issue of anti-American sentiments.

The increasing prominence of climate change as a major policy priority in Islamabad may bring about a shift in expectations regarding its relationship with the United States. Both states have expressed their intent to collaborate on addressing the issue of climate change, with a focus on mitigating and adapting to the adverse impacts of environmental degradation. Pakistan has become one of the most important countries in the fight against climate change and environmental degradation through environment-related programs like the Ten Billion Trees Tsunami Program, the Ecosystem Restoration Fund, and the Recharge Pakistan initiative (Hussain, 2022). Pakistan's clean and green initiative has received global recognition, especially from Senator John Kerry, a US special presidential envoy for climate (Malik, 2021). In Washington, a research committee issued a recommendation that the United States should continue engaging Pakistan despite persistent mistrust over Afghanistan, with climate cooperation and investment (France 24, 2022). By prioritizing climate-related issues, Pakistan and the United States can establish a common ground for collaboration, creating avenues for sustained engagement. This could lead to a renewed relationship between the two nations and bridge trust deficits that have emerged in the aftermath of the US withdrawal from Afghanistan.

5.3.5. Strengthening people-to-people ties: cultural and educational exchange programs

The practice of modern diplomacy acknowledges that official talks between states are not sufficient to maintain healthy international ties. Cultural exchange programs can promote cultural awareness and appreciation between Pakistan and the US. The US prioritizes people-to-people exchanges that aim to foster mutual relations. By promoting cultural immersion, these exchanges enable cross-cultural understandings and encourage connections based on shared interests. Moreover, these programs can facilitate professional development and academic advancement, allowing participants to gain valuable knowledge and expertise from experts and scholars that can benefit both countries (US Department of State, 2022). The United States Educational Foundation in Pakistan is a platform aimed at facilitating Pakistani students in fulfilling their academic aspirations of pursuing higher education in the US. The beneficiaries of these programs have contributed significantly to addressing global challenges and advancing the developmental agenda of Pakistan, attaining valuable leadership skills in the process. As a result, USEFP has successfully served as a catalyst in realizing the academic and professional aspirations of numerous Pakistani students.

Pakistan Ambassador to US Masood Khan highlighted that professional and cultural exchange programs, such as the Global UGRAD, Fulbright Student Program, SUSI, IVLP, YES, and the Hubert Humphrey Fellowship Program, serve as essential elements that reinforce and strengthen the Pakistan-US relationship (The News, 2023). Since 1951, the Fulbright program has provided 4,100 Pakistani individuals with scholarships to pursue academic studies, engage

in research, exchange ideas, and contribute towards finding solutions to international issues of mutual concern. Over the past twenty years alone, 2,568 Pakistanis have been recipients of this prestigious scholarship. Upon completion of their programs, Fulbright scholars join a community of more than 32,000 Pakistanis who have participated in US government-sponsored exchange programs or English language courses throughout the years (US Mission Pakistan, 2022). Pakistan can use these cultural exchange programs in unconventional ways to develop stronger people-to-people ties between the two states. By creating opportunities for personal interaction and dialogue, Pakistan can foster a greater sense of mutual understanding and respect between the two countries, which can lead to greater cooperation and an enduring bilateral relationship between the two countries.

6. Conclusion

Pakistan-US relations in the context of US withdrawal from Afghanistan have reached a critical juncture due to conflicting national interests and divergent priorities. Many analysts attribute the decline in the partnership to the severe reduction of security assistance by the Trump administration in 2018 and the US withdrawal from Afghanistan. The US has shifted its strategic interest from South Asia to Indo pacific. In contrast, Pakistan's interests were more indigenous and regional, with India being a significant factor. Pakistan has been accused of harbouring terrorism despite its numerous efforts, which has created a trust deficit in Pakistan-US relations. Recent diplomatic efforts between the two countries, including high-level engagements and discussions, have been largely symbolic and exploratory without producing substantial agreements or outcomes. While Pakistan prioritizes regional trade and connectivity, the United States has shown limited interest towards this approach.

Despite many challenges in the post-withdrawal era, several prospects could strengthen ties between Pakistan and the US. Working together in hard times, Pakistan and the US could improve their ability to respond to natural disasters, such as floods, and other disasters. This could help build trust and understanding between the two countries, which could have positive spillover effects on other areas of cooperation. Emphasizing geo-economics, Pakistan and the US should transform their relationship from a security-centric to a broad-based economic partnership while collaborating on infrastructure development, energy cooperation, and trade relations. It could provide a new impetus for the relationship, which has been dominated by security concerns. Prioritizing the consideration of geoeconomics in no way suggests that geostrategic issues should be disregarded. In the wake of the US withdrawal, Pakistan and the US need to improve their ability to address common security concerns. Furthermore, Pakistan and the US could work together to mitigate the impact of climate change as Pakistan is also hit by the catastrophe of climate change severely. This could provide a new avenue for cooperation and contribute to global efforts to address climate change. Moreover, it is imperative that both states adopt a constructive and pragmatic approach to their strained partnerships, focusing on mutual trust, respect and understanding. Only by doing so the two states can overcome challenges and achieve their shared vision of a stable, peaceful, and prosperous region.

Declaration of conflict of interest

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest(s) with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

ORCID iD

Asad Ullah <https://orcid.org/0009-0006-4339-3379>

Sadia Sulaiman <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5560-1311>

Publisher's Note

IDEA PUBLISHERS (IDEA Publishers Group) stands neutral with regard to the jurisdictional claims in the published maps and the institutional affiliations.

References

- Abid, K., Bari, Y., A., Imran, A. (2020). Progress of Covid-19 epidemic in Pakistan, *Asia Pacific Journal of Public Health* 32(4), 154-156. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1010539520927259>
- Agence France-Presse. (2022, October 4). Study eyes US cooperation with Pakistan amid China rise. *France 24*. <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20221004-study-eyes-us-cooperation-with-pakistan-amid-china-rise>
- Agreement, D. (2020). Agreement for bringing peace to Afghanistan between the Islamic emirate of Afghanistan which is not recognized by the United States as a state and is known as the Taliban and the United States of America. <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Agreement-For-Bringing-Peace-to-Afghanistan-02.29.20.pdf>
- Ahmad, S. (2018). Pakistan-US Relations and their strengths and weaknesses. Irritants in Pakistan-2018US Relations: way forward, *IPRI*, Islamabad. <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R47565>
- Ahmed, M. (2022). Letter gate conspiracy in Pakistan. *Modern Diplomacy*. <https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2022/04/10/letter-gate-conspiracy-in-pakistan/>
- Ahmar, M. (2021, May). Changing dynamics of Pakistan-US relations and the challenge of soft power. *London School of Economics and Political Science*. <https://www.lse.ac.uk/ideas/publications/reports/changing-dynamics-pakistan-us-relations>
- Akbar, K. (2021, September 14). The US can't blame Pakistan for its failure in Afghanistan. *The Diplomat*. <https://thediplomat.com/2021/09/the-us-cant-blame-pakistan-for-its-failure-in-afghanistan/>
- Akbar, M. (2015). US Withdrawal from Afghanistan: implications for Afghanistan and Pakistan. *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences (PJSS)*. 35(2). <http://pjss.bzu.edu.pk/index.php/pjss/article/view/380/345>
- Akhter, H., Ahmad, R. E., & Sajid, M. (2021, December). Divergence and convergence of interests after 9/11: Pakistan-US cooperation in perspective of Afghanistan. *Journal of Indian Studies* 7(2). 445-55. http://pu.edu.pk/images/journal/indianStudies/PDF/15_v7_2_21.pdf
- Ali, S., M. (November 21, 2022). The U.S-China strategic rivalry and its implications for Pakistan. *Stimson Center*. <https://www.stimson.org/2020/the-u-s-china-strategic-rivalry-and-its-implications-for-pakistan/>
- Alvi, M. (2022, February 11). US always used Pakistan, says PM Imran Khan. *The News International*. <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/932440-us-always-used-pakistan-says-pm>

- APP. (2023, March 7) "Pak, US Reaffirm commitment to address Common threat of terrorism." Associated Press of Pakistan. <https://www.app.com.pk/national/pak-us-reaffirm-commitment-to-address-common-threat-of-terrorism/>
- Awais, S. M., Dar, U. Z., & Saeed, A. (2012). Amputations of limbs during the 2005 earthquake in Pakistan: a firsthand experience of the author. *International Orthopaedics*, 36, 2323-2326. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00264-012-1589-3>
- Carter, L. M., Salyers, V., Myers, S., Hipfner, C., Hoffart, C., MacLean, C., ... & Barrett, P. (2014). Qualitative insights from a Canadian multi-institutional research study: in search of meaningful e-learning. *Canadian Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 5(1), 10-20. <https://doi.org/10.5206/cjsotl-rcacea.2014.1.10>
- Chaudhary, S., N. & Nasr, V. (2021 February 10). Biden needs a new Pakistan policy. This is what it should look like. *Atlantic Council*. <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/biden-needs-a-new-pakistan-policy-this-is-what-it-should-look-like/>
- Consulate General of Pakistan, (2021, October 31). US Special Presidential Envoy John Kerry calls on Prime Minister Imran Khan. *Jeddah*. <https://parepjeddah.org/2471-2/>
- Dawi, A. (2022, March 16). US-Pakistan relations Ebb after Afghanistan withdrawal. *Voice of America*. <https://www.voanews.com/a/us-pakistan-relations-ebb-after-afghanistan-withdrawal/6488429.html>
- Dawn. (2021, March 18). Read: full text of Gen Bajwa's Speech at the Islamabad Security Dialogue. *DAWN*. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1613207>
- Elo, S., & Kyngäs, H. (2008). The qualitative content analysis process. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 62(1), 107-115. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2648.2007.04569.x>
- Ghauri, M. J., Khan, M. R., & Ahmed, N. (2023). Journalism and the regime change in Pakistan (2022): exploring the solidarity and political discourses on the social media. *Journal of Humanities, Social and Management Sciences (JHSMS)*, 4(1), 97–117. <https://doi.org/10.47264/idea.jhsms/4.1.7>
- Gillani, Z., Aquil, S., & Rehman, H. (2023). Strategic interaction between Russia and US in Syria: a game theoretic analysis from 2014-2022. *Liberal Arts and Social Sciences International Journal (LASSIJ)*, 7(1), 221–238. <https://doi.org/10.47264/idea.lassij/7.1.13>
- Hussain, N. A. (1987). Pakistan-US security relations: Arms Sales, Bases, and Nuclear Issues. in Rose, L.E. & Hussain, N.A (Eds.), *United States-Pakistan Forum: Relations with the Major Powers*. Vanguard.
- Hussain, H. (2022, December 22). Climate change relief can transform the Pakistan-US relationship. *New Lines Institute*. <https://newlinesinstitute.org/pakistan/climate-change-relief-can-transform-the-pakistan-u-s-relationship/>

- Hussain, M. (2021). CPEC and Geo-Security behind Geo-Economics: China's master stroke to counter terrorism and energy security dilemma. *East Asia* 38(4), 313–32. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12140-021-09364-z>
- Iqbal, A. (2021, September 29). US Generals express concern over Pakistan's Nuclear arsenal in wake of Taliban Takeover of Afghanistan. *DAWN*. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1649127>
- Jabeen, M., Mazhar, M., S., Goraya, N., S. (2010, December). Trends and Challenges in Pak-US Relations: post September 1. *A Research Journal of South Asian Studies*, 25 (2), 185-198. <http://111.68.103.26/journals/index.php/IJSAS/article/viewFile/2794/1041>
- Jamal, S. (2021, January 24). Pakistan hopes for renewed bilateral ties with US under Biden. *Gulf News*. <https://gulfnews.com/world/asia/pakistan/pakistan-hopes-for-renewed-bilateral-ties-with-us-under-biden-1.76708725>
- Karim, S., & Hayat, U. (2019). Pakistan on FATF's grey list: what, why, and why now. *DAWN*. <https://dawn.com/news/1418143>
- Khan, I. A. (2022, October 20). Terror attacks in Pakistan surge by 51% after Afghan Taliban victory. *DAWN*. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1715927>
- Kugelman, M. & Hasan, R. (2017, November 30). What a year of Track II discussion says about the future of US-Pakistan relations. *War on the Rocks*. <https://warontherocks.com/2017/11/year-track-ii-discussions-says-future-u-s-pakistan-relations/>
- Latif, A., & Sajid, I. (2022, March 9). Pakistani PM Imran Khan ousted in parliament no-confidence vote. *Anadolu Agency*. <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/pakistani-pm-imran-khan-ousted-in-parliament-no-confidence-vote/2559696>
- Mahmood, A. (2022, February 15). Pakistan's strategic shift from geo-politics to geo-economics. *Pakistan Today*. <https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2022/02/15/pakistans-strategic-shift-from-geo-politics-to-geo-economics/>
- Markey, D., S. (2013). From the outside-in: US-Pakistan relation in the regional context. *No Exit from Pakistan*, 106–36. Cambridge University. https://assets.cambridge.org/97811070/45460/frontmatter/9781107045460_frontmatter.pdf
- Mark. R. A (1999). International conflict and cooperation: an introduction. McGraw-Hill College. <https://archive.org/details/internationalcon0000amst>
- Markey, D., S. (2023, January 31). America's Perennial Pakistan Problem. *Foreign Affairs*. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/afghanistan/2021-09-09/americas-perennial-pakistan-problem>

- Miller, Z. & Madhani, A. (2021, July 8). Overdue: Biden sets Aug. 31 for US exit from Afghanistan. *AP NEWS*. <https://apnews.com/article/joe-biden-afghanistan-government-and-politics-86f939c746c7bc56bb9f11f095a95366>
- Mir, N., A. (2021, November 9). Issues and mistrust in US-Pakistan Relations. *Atlantic Council*. <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/southasiasource/issues-and-mistrust-in-us-pakistan-relations/>
- Mohyidin, R. (2021, July 30). US-Pakistan relations post-US withdrawal from Afghanistan: a shift in dynamics. *TRT World Research Centre*. <https://researchcentre.trtworld.com/featured/us-pakistan-relations-post-us-withdrawal-from-afghanistan-a-shift-in-dynamics/>
- Munshi, U. (2022, September 30). Redefining Pakistan-US relations in post-Afghanistan withdrawal phase. *Pakistan Languages and Humanities Review*. 6(3), 139–51. [https://doi.org/10.47205/plhr.2022\(6-iii\)12](https://doi.org/10.47205/plhr.2022(6-iii)12)
- Murtazashvili, J., B. (2022, January). The collapse of Afghanistan. *Journal of Democracy*, 33 (1), 40–54. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.2022.0003>
- National Security Archive. (2011, July 27). Non-Papers and Demarches: US and British combined to delay Pakistani Nuclear Weapons Program in 1978-1981, Declassified Documents Show. *National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 352*. George Washington University. <https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/nukevault/ebb352/>
- Nizamani, U. & Firdous, A. (2023, February 14). The case for continued US-Pakistan counterterrorism cooperation. *South Asian Voices*. <https://southasianvoices.org/the-case-for-continued-u-s-pakistan-counterterrorism-cooperation/>
- Nye, J. S. (2004). *Soft power: the means to success in world politics*. Public affairs.
- PIPS. (2023, January 7). Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS) releases its Annual 'Pakistan Security report 2022'. *Pak Institute for Peace Studies. (PIPS)*. <https://www.pakpips.com/article/7315#:~:text=These%20actions%20caused%20a%20total,2021%20%E2%80%93%20besides%20injuring%2051%20others>
- Rahman, A. & Khan A., Z. (2012). Analysis of 2010-flood causes, nature and magnitude in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan,” *Natural Hazards*, 66(2) 887-904. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11069-012-0528-3>
- Reynolds, D. (2023, January 20). America's ongoing support for Pakistan's flood recovery. *Share America*. <https://share.america.gov/americas-ongoing-support-for-pakistans-flood-recovery/>
- Riedel, B. (2011). Understanding Pakistan. In *Deadly Embrace: Pakistan, America, and the Future of Global Jihad*, 1–16. Brookings Institution.

- Roy, M., I. & Khalid, F. (2019). The Dynamics of Pakistan-US relations (2001-2019): (American Apprehension in Indian Ocean). *Journal of Indian Studies*, 5(2), 213-230. http://pu.edu.pk/images/journal/indianStudies/PDF/7_v5_2_19.pdf
- Schroden, J. (2022, May 23). *Who is to blame for the collapse of Afghanistan's security forces?* War on the Rocks. <https://warontherocks.com/2022/05/who-is-to-blame-for-the-collapse-of-afghanistans-security-forces/#:~:text=Last%20week%2C%20the%20Special%20Inspector,Afghanistan%20through%20signing%20the%20U.S.%2D>
- Shahbaz, M. (2023, January). Revisiting friends & foes: US-Pak Relation's turbulent history and future. *Open Journal of Political Science* 13, no. 01. 88–118. <https://doi.org/10.4236/ojps.2023.131006>
- The News International. (2023, January 6). Cultural, professional exchange programs vital for Pak-US relations: Masood Khan. *The News*. <https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/1027734-cultural-professional-exchange-programs-vital-for-pak-us-relations-ambassador-masood-khan>
- The Newspaper's Staff. (2021, May 17). Pakistan wants broad-based partnership with US, Blinken Told. *DAWN*. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1623975>
- The White House. (2022, October 14). *Remarks by President Biden at a democratic congressional campaign committee reception*. The United States Government. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2022/10/14/remarks-by-president-biden-at-a-democratic-congressional-campaign-committee-reception>
- Trubowitz, P. (2021, September 3). Biden's messy Afghanistan withdrawal has increased the need to deliver on his domestic agenda by Professor Peter Trubowitz. *Americas' Global Role*. <https://americas.chathamhouse.org/article/biden-messy-afghanistan-withdrawal-domestic-agenda/>
- Trump, D. (2018, January). Tweet about US aid to Pakistan. *Twitter*. https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/947802588174577664?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E947802588174577664%7Ctwgr%5Eb9629fb5837440d2c31d865505b62c6d02afcd63%7Ctwcon%5Es1_&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.vox.com%2F2018%2F9%2F4%2F17818396%2Fpakistan-aid-military-trump-pompeo-afghanistan
- US Department of State. (2022, November 10). Cultural, educational, and sports diplomacy: The National Museum of American Diplomacy. *US Department of State*. <https://diplomacy.state.gov/discover-diplomacy/topic/cultural-educational-and-sports-diplomacy/>
- United Nations. (2022, January 28). Fourteenth report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) to international peace and security and the range of United Nations efforts in support of Member States in countering the threat. *United Nations*. <https://www.un.org/en/delegate/page/un-official-documents>

- US Mission Pakistan, (2022, May 23). US Embassy Islamabad announces arrival of Ambassador Donald Blome. *US Embassy & Consulates in Pakistan*. <https://pk.usembassy.gov/u-s-embassy-islamabad-announces-arrival-of-ambassador-donald-blome/>
- US Mission Pakistan. (2022, September 29). Ambassador Blome's remarks 75th anniversary reception. *US Embassy & Consulates in Pakistan*. <https://pk.usembassy.gov/ambassador-blomes-remarks-75th-anniversary-reception-september-29-2022/>
- USAID. (2022, October 27). Additional Humanitarian funding for flood response in Pakistan. *United States Agency for International Development*. <https://www.usaid.gov/news-information/press-releases/oct-27-2022-additional-humanitarian-funding-flood-response-pakistan>
- US Department of State. (2010, October 29). Update: US response to Pakistan's flood disaster. <https://2009-2017.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2010/10/150186.htm>
- US seeks a strong partnership with Pakistan on counterterrorism: official*. Business Standard. (2023, February 14). https://www.business-standard.com/article/international/us-seeks-a-strong-partnership-with-pakistan-on-counterterrorism-official-123021400709_1.html
- US State Department Report. (1972, February 3). Military assistance and arms sales to Pakistan (No B-17365). *Department of States*. <https://www.gao.gov/assets/b-173651-091331.pdf>
- Wright, W (2011, May 8). *The double game*. The New Yorker. <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2011/05/16/the-double-game>
- Yousaf, K. (2021, October 23). Pakistan denies airspace accord with US. *The Express Tribune*. <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2326064/pakistan-denies-airspace-accord-with-us>
- Zengerle, P., & Pamuk, H. (2021, September 13). Blinken says US will assess Pakistan ties over Afghanistan's future. *Reuters*. <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/blinken-says-us-will-assess-pakistan-ties-over-afghanistans-future-2021-09-13>