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Sultan Mubariz Khan * | Saiqa Hanif† | Shumaila Rafique‡

Pak-U.S. Relations: An Analysis of Major Challenges (Post-9/11)

Abstract *'The Pak-U.S. relations have been through many ups and downs throughout the history of Pakistan. For most of the time during the cold war, relations remained either warm or normal except for some short periods. The ties went down the slope after the cold war and towards the onset of the twenty-first century. In addition to some drastic shifts in the regional and global political scenario, the incident of 9/11 proved a watershed for Pak-U.S. ties as well. Pakistan's decision to stand with America and her allies provided an opportunity for both the states to improve bilateral ties. Key challenges include, but not limited to, issues of trust and coordination, the problems of strategic harmony and divergence of interests and varied policies about arms and nuclear proliferation. Pak-U.S. relations have also been affected by their respective relations with other states. From Pakistan's perspective, it is essential not only to identify points of convergence and divergence with the United States but also to explore policy options to meet such challenges.*

Key Words: U.S., Bilateral, Challenges, Strategic Harmony, Nuclear, F.M.C.T., Proliferation

Introduction

The Pak-U.S. ties suffered a New Year's setback when U.S. President Donald Trump, in his first tweet of the year 2018, went hard on Pakistan for the 'deceit' and 'lies' that later has been paying back to the U.S. in return for the billions of dollars that Pakistan is stated to receive (Iqbal & Khan, 2018). The attempted decree to freeze American security aid to Pakistan came as a serious blow for many in both the states and around the world (Landay, Mohammed & Walcott, 2018). It was Trump's notorious Twitter diplomacy once again that turned this sharp jolt into a New Year's surprise, but the decision itself didn't come as a surprise. It has already been anticipated by experts on U.S. policy and Pak-U.S. relations keeping in view the roughness in bilateral ties lately.

The end of the cold war marked the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the start of an era of American supremacy. For Pakistan, a close ally in the past, revised strategic calculations of the U.S. also marked the end of the courtship. Caught in the middle of a complicated domestic and regional scenario, Pakistan could not really adapt to the changed geopolitical settings that resulted in years of isolation and alienation. It was 9/11 and related events that once again marked it pivotal in regional and global geopolitics. The renewed partnership with the United States helped Pakistan get out of that isolation as well as to draw some substantial benefits out of this partnership that somehow lasted for almost over a decade. This time it was the withdrawal of the U.S. and its allies from Afghanistan that marked the end of the honeymoon. The seemingly close partnership, however, has already been facing several challenges and irritants that only became more evident with the passage of time.

This paper intends to highlight some major challenges and points of friction in Pak-U.S. relations in the post-9/11 scenario, with an overview of past relations, developments in the recent past and key points of divergence that are likely to become more obvious in years to come.

Pak-U.S. Relations during Cold-War

The birth of Pakistan in 1947 coincided with the critical years of the cold war. These were the earlier

*Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science & IR, University of Gujrat, Gujrat, Punjab, Pakistan.
Email: sultan.mubariz@uog.edu.pk
†Associate Lecturer, Department of Political Science & IR, University of Gujrat, Gujrat, Punjab, Pakistan.
‡Associate Lecturer, Department of Political Science & IR, University of Gujrat, Gujrat, Punjab, Pakistan.

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Years of the East-West confrontation when the Soviet Union was trying hard to expand its sphere of influence and to proliferate the communist ideology across the globe, and the U.S., along with its allies, was on a quest to contain these efforts while maximizing its own influence. Though the world was increasingly becoming partial either to U.S. or U.S.S.R., there still were left a considerable number of states pursuing a neutral or non-aligned foreign policy.

The founding father of Pakistanis believed to have a vision for its foreign policy, primarily based on the principles of peaceful co-existence and neutrality. Pakistan, therefore, opted for a neutral foreign policy during earlier years (Sattar, 2010). It was mostly due to domestic problem, especially economic issues as well as external insecurities and vulnerability, too much powerful and hostile India in the East and unfriendly Afghanistan in the West, that led Pakistan to approach U.S. (Amin, 2009). The major reasons for preferring the U.S. over U.S.S.R. included (but not limited to) the colonial legacy, the British influences and the pro-West approach of most of its leaders and the Indo-centric approach for foreign policy (Hussain, 2012).

On the other hand, Asia in general and South Asia, in particular, were not of much significance in American strategic calculations that mostly centered on Europe. It was after China's communist revolution in 1949 that Asia drew American attention (Sattar, 2010). Nehru's visit to the United States in 1949 earned Pakistan some attention from the Soviet Union. Many believe that the young state of Pakistan tried to 'play super-power against super-power and accepted Soviet invitation for a state visit. A surprised and concerned United States finally invited Liaqat Ali Khan, and his decision to postpone Moscow's visit to Washington not only opened the door for future relations with America but also earned Soviet unease towards Pakistan (Bahadur, 1998). Earlier disappointed by not getting the substantial loan and aid it was asking for, Pakistan kept on trying to get American attention and support (Sattar, 2010). Noticed by Americans as having a 'tempting strategic prize', Pakistan soon found itself in a difficult situation during Korean War whether to support the United States or not. The Korean War clearly showed the lack of any strategic harmony between the two states (McMahon, 1994).

Nevertheless, the compelling course of events during the cold war brought them closer, resulting in Pakistan's alignment with the West. The economic and security needs of Pakistan led it to abandon its neutral or non-aligned posture. As part of her efforts to gain political, economic and military assistance (against the superior Indian power), Pakistan tried hard to be America's 'most allied ally in Asia' during the 1950s by concluding an agreement for mutual cooperation and defence and joining U.S.-led regional alliances (Sattar, 2010). In the following years, Pakistan received the much-needed economic and military aid from her Western allies at the cost of becoming a part of the American game against the Soviet Union, to the extent that it even provided base facilities for spying operations against the Soviet Union (Paul, 2014). Pakistan received Soviet antagonism as well as a repute for being an 'imperial agent'. The Suez Crisis of 1956 put Pakistan at crossroads, and it failed to keep a balance between ideological considerations (and Islamic affiliations) and a pragmatic approach to stand with the West (Sattar, 2010). It gradually became evident that the courtship was not based on strategic harmony or shared perspectives. Communism, the largest source of concern for America, never actually posed a real threat to the stability or security of Pakistan. On the contrary, United States was least concerned by the Indian threat that had been a central factor in shaping Pakistan's policies since its inception. With the changing regional and international environment and settings, both the states responded to the emerging trends and situations according to their divergent perspectives; Pakistan's inclination towards China and American support to India as a potential counterweight to China being notable cases. Hence the United States lost strategic interests in Pakistan and later left American alliances. Both kept on exploring other options for the next decade or so till the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 (Hussain, 2009).

Pakistan appeared to be so critical to the designs against Soviet presence in Afghanistan that the U.S. ignored the previous concerns about Pakistan over the issues of democracy and, more importantly, nuclearization. Pakistan played an important role to reinforce American efforts for pushing the Soviet Union out of Afghanistan. Pakistan not only provided sanctuaries, training grounds and launching bases for fighters against the Soviet Union through close collaboration between I.S.I. and C.I.A. but also helped the U.S. in building political and diplomatic pressure against the Soviet Union, ultimately compelling the latter to withdraw from Afghanistan (Hussain,b, 2009).

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Pak-U.S. Relations in post-Cold War Era

Pakistan, all of a sudden, became an afterthought in American considerations. This led Pakistanis to believe that they have been 'used and ditched' by their old ally. After the flow of substantial military and economic support for several years during the cold war, military and economic assistance by the U.S. was suspended under Pressler Amendment (Chou, 2005). Years later, President Zardari was reported to comment that it was the U.S. abandonment after Soviet withdrawal that set the stage for terrorism to prevail and grow ((Epstein &Kronstadt, 2013).

With the growing concerns and suspicions over the nuclear programme, the Kashmir issue and American efforts to bring warmth in her relations with India further wedged the rift between once-close allies, U.S. and Pakistan. The bilateral relations saw some improvement during the mid-1990s when under the Brown Amendment, economic aid and delivery of purchased military equipment pending before??? 1990 was permitted. It, however, proved short-lived. Sanctions were once again imposed; this time, the nuclear episode earned the American anger (Kleiner, 2013). The Indian nuclear explosions in 1998 met with nuclear tests by Pakistan, and subsequent nuclearization of South Asia did more harm to Pak-U.S. relations than it did to Indo-U.S. ties. The Kargil crisis of 1999 and military coup added to the bitterness in bilateral relations between Pakistan and U.S.

Pakistanis generally attribute this to American inconsistency and fickleness, while United States believes that the twists and turns stemming every now and then from Pakistan's wrong-headedness, especially its approach towards India, have been a major factor to deteriorate bilateral ties between Pakistan and the U.S. (Kux, 2001).

Post-9/11 Developments and Key Challenges

At the dusk of the 20th century, Pak-U.S. relations were at their worst low.

The incident of 9/11 and the subsequent war against terrorism resulted in the revival of Pakistan's pivotal position to American strategic considerations. Pakistan supported the U.S. in the latter's fight against terror that in turn helped Pakistan get over the political isolation and economic stagnation that it had been confronted with since the 1990s (Sattar, 2010). This also led Pak-U.S. relations to a whole new level. The renewed ties were mostly centered around four broader areas; joining hands in the global fight against terrorism, working towards regional stability, aiding Pakistan's efforts for economic, social, political and democratic developments, bringing the (governments and people of)both the states closer to foster mutual coordination and a trusted relationship (Sial, 2007). This should have provided an ideal ground for a concrete long term partnership. The things, however, unfolded in a different manner.

Pakistan mainly provided logistic support to the U.S. rendering access to its military bases for Americans. In return, it received approximately $21 billion in a decade, mostly as defense assistance and reimbursements as well as economic and financial gains (Fair, 2012:243). Others areas of cooperation included intelligence sharing, high-level interaction between the security officials and strategic dialogue.

In spite of the stated partnership against terror, Pak-U.S. relations have faced several challenges in almost two decades since the patch-up. Some important ones have been discussed here.

Issues of Coordination and Trust

While Trump's allegations against Pakistan of harbouring terrorism, providing sanctuaries to terrorists, deceiving and lying about its efforts against terrorism might have been considered as 'mad scramble' by many in both countries and may depict an absence of a coherent policy vis-à-vis Pakistan, these were not the first ones by some U.S. official in recent years (Landay, Mohammad & Walcott, 2018). The recent statements by U.S. officials once again sparked anger in Pakistan, both in government and the general public. Pakistan has not only defended its stance and performance against terrorism but also called the tweets and statements a result of frustration due to U.S. defeat in Afghanistan (B.B.C., 2018). Following the rescue of a Canadian-American family by Pakistani forces from abduction by militants, relations chilled steadily due to U.S. demands for access to one of the arrested abductors allegedly linked with the Haqqani network. The refusal by Pakistan brought the latest disagreement in

an increasingly dysfunctional relationship (Goldman, Landler & Schmitt, 2017). Such developments have reinforced the American perceptions about Pakistan's double game as well as Pakistan's perceptions about being scapegoated for Washington's difficulties in Afghanistan.

Despite the often-repeated rhetoric to curb militancy and terrorism as a common threat, the partnership lacked actual coordination and mutual trust from the earlier years, bedevilling bilateral relation during the course of approximately two decades since then. The U.S. has not been satisfied with Pakistan's performance in countering terrorism and militancy, while Pakistan has been consistently offended by the 'do more' mantra by the United States. It never was a symmetrical relationship, nor was it meant to be the one. However, it proved to be shakier and wayward beyond anticipation.

Besides general suspicions and dissatisfaction regarding commitment, performance and objectives of Pakistan's counter-terrorism campaign, the U.S. officials have a general perception that state authorities in Pakistan 'distinguish' or discriminate between the militants and terrorist groups operating within Pakistan (against the security of the state itself) and those operating out-from Pakistan in India and Afghanistan (Tellis, 2008). The security establishment, in particular, is alleged to provide 'active and passive support' to such elements, which are assumed to have sanctuaries in Pakistan to get training, supplies and launching space against other states, notably India and Afghanistan. Haqqani Network and Lashkar e Tayeba (LeT) are the most striking examples of such elements, operating against American and Afghan interests in Afghanistan and India, respectively (Armitage, Berger & Markey, 2010). Some believe that these groups are 'led, manned, and financed by native Pakistanis' (Tellis, 2008).

Mutual trust deficit can be clearly observed on both sides, and this has kept bilateral relations from materializing into a partnership. Kerry-Lugar Bill came as a depiction of trust issues, and it triggered controversies over the conditionality of security-related assistance.

Another incident that unveiled the mutual distrust took place in 2011 when Davis, a C.I.A. contractor, killed two Pakistanis. Americans claimed diplomatic immunity for Davis and stated that the act was in self-defence. On the other hand, Pakistanis believed him to be a cold-blooded murderer, and the incident resulted in increased anti-Americanism, triggering widespread anger and debate in public, media and political spheres. A perception in the U.S. prevailed that the entire incident was scripted by I.S.I. that, unhappy and suspicious about C.I.A.'s activities in Pakistan, intended to bring intelligence cooperation between Pakistan and U.S. to a standstill (Fair, 2012:244). Initially, the American Consulate, without disclosing any details about his duties, declared Davis as 'technical and administrative staff. A few weeks later, U.S. officials admitted that Davis was an ex-soldier of Special Forces, was a C.I.A. contractor, operating as a member of a covert team working to track militants identified as critical targets by U.S. (Kronstadt, 2011).

Salala incident in 2011 proved to be another example that not only caused Pak-U.S. relations to suffer unprecedentedly but clearly showed the extent to which the absence of coordination and issues of trust can harm bilateral ties. The issue provoked intense anger and anti-American sentiments across Pakistan; not limited to public, media and political spheres but bringing a sense of betrayal and animosity to the military that has been a long-standing ally of U.S. Pakistan rejected to attribute it to error since it was over a mile deep in Pakistani territory and operation lasted for almost two hours ignoring signals to stop from the Pakistani side. The attack was declared as an 'unprovoked act of aggression and 'indiscriminate' violence, as stated by then-Chief of Pakistan Army General Ashfaq Pervez Kayani (Malik, 2013).

Drones, too, have caused a constant stir in recent years. U.S. drone attacks have not only been considered as a violation of Pakistan's sovereignty but have been the reason for catalyzing anti-American sentiments among Pakistani masses. The collateral damage and civilian causalities have helped little to eradicate militancy and terrorism, rather have helped in promoting militancy and violence as revenge and hatred (Khan, 2014).

Perhaps no other incident has brought distrust and suspicions to the surface more fiercely than the killing of ObL in Abbottabad in 2011. What was seemed as 'glory conclusion of the biggest manhunt in history' by the United States, the operation brought embarrassment as well as resentment to Pakistanis since ObL was residing in virtual proximity with Pakistan Military Academy Kakul in Abbottabad (Butt, 2011)? The operation by the U.S. to kill ObL inside Pakistan created a large hole in

mutual trust and confidence, even worsened by U.S. pressure to free Dr Shakeel being held by Pakistan on accounts of spying for C.I.A. inside Pakistan (Krepon, 2018). Such developments have caused a rift in bilateral relations, clearly showing the lack of mutual trust and coordination.

Absence of Strategic Harmony

Though been in close cooperation and relation since 9/11, Pakistan and U.S. have been looking to secure their respective, individual interests instead of finding some concrete grounds for mutual and common interests. Such a strategy worked for both as long as the interests did not diverge to a larger extent or there did not arise a clash of interests. The divergence, inevitably, became obvious with the passage of time. From Pakistan's perspective, two major areas where its strategic interests clearly diverged from those of the U.S. have been its position and policy vis-à-vis Afghanistan and India.

Pakistan's Afghan policy is complicated due to inherent contradictions. There has been a willingness to fight against terrorism and militancy for the stability of Afghanistan as well as to rid Pakistan of terrorism by securing its backyard. This, however, has to meet with the traditional concept of 'strategic depth' for Pakistan through Afghanistan that does not allow letting go of the position and leverage it has been enjoying in Afghanistan, in the form of Taliban. As key strategic requirements, Pakistan is compelled to secure a future bargaining position in Afghanistan (Siddiqa, 2011). The killing of Taliban leader Mullah Akhtar Mansoor in Baluchistan by a U.S. strike proved to be a major setback to the peace process in Afghanistan. Most importantly, it sabotaged Pakistan's efforts to convince the Taliban to be back to the negotiation tables but also exposed the divergent strategic interests and objectives that Pakistan and United States have been looking to (Rafique, 2016). Pakistan has repeatedly expressed serious reservation about Indian involvement in Afghanistan, through which India has been allegedly sponsoring insurgency and militancy in Baluchistan and other areas of Pakistan. It has been during the American presence and under American patronage that India has penetrated through Afghanistan, raising concerns in Pakistan (Khalid, 2011). The two most important areas of the clash between Pakistan and the U.S. over Afghanistan include the perceptions about 'who should wield actual power in Afghanistan' and Indian role in Afghanistan (Krepon, 2018).

Similarly, on account of relations with India and India's role in the region and beyond, the U.S. and Pakistan have been clearly on different pages. The cordial ties leading to the strategic partnership between India and U.S. have been a source of concern in Pakistan. The Indo-U.S. partnership is stated to be centred on three basic grounds; energy, terrorism, and China (Gupta, 2005).

U.S. efforts to preserve the gains with India by 'de-hyphenating' the Indo-Pak rivalry helped little to keep Pak-U.S. relations on track. The so-called 'de-hyphenation' proved to be unrealistic and artificially crafted since neither India nor Pakistan could ever manage to ignore that how U.S. relations with the other might affect their own balance of power (Markey, 2013).

This shows contrast with Pakistan's relations with China. While Pakistan views the U.S as a more demanding and transcending partner, China is considered a benign power and a reliable partner. The Sino-Pak ties, from the tentative days to the 21st century, survived many tests and transitions in both the states as well as the change in a regional and global environment. The partnership at times may apparently seem odd or thin, for lacking cultural affinity or common values that help to bolster partnerships and alliances. This, however, has been grounded in some common interests, and this strategic harmony has been fostered through political, economic and military ties. The substantial economic assistance and military cooperation have not really been affected by the growing Sino-Indian trade-in post-cold war era. It is believed that the rise of India as political, economic and military power has reinforced the original rationale behind the Sino-Pak entente (Small, 2015)

The China factor has also become an irritant in Pak-U.S. relations. The growing Chinese power has earned American attention and concerns about the latter's interests in Asia-Pacific, South and Central Asia and beyond. The U.S. has been investing in India, viewing it as a potential counterweight against China. While the U.S. might not take the Sino-Pak cordial relations as really threatening, but the complicated security structure of the region is very likely to influence Pak-U.S. relations. Soviet rivalry not only led the U.S. to assess Pakistan or India as a potential partner during the cold war, and the Indo-Pak animosity made it difficult for her to keep itself the Indo-Pak disputes and regional issues. While the Indo-Pak disputes stay unresolved, American competition with China may trigger the former

to again pick sides in S. Asia (Markey, 2013). In recent years, the Chinese support for Pakistan at international forums, its satisfaction with Pakistan's performance for curbing militancy and the mega project of C.P.E.C. in the wake of American tilt towards India, distrust and shrinking aid for Pakistan has further eroded Pak-U.S. relations in favor of China (Rifaat & Maini, 2016).

The Questions of Aids, Assistance and Supplies

The U.S. assistance to Pakistan has been either insufficient to compensate Pakistan's loss or the cost of war on terror or fluctuating and inconsistent with producing any substantial results.

In recent years, following the Abbottabad episode and subsequent arrest and trial of Dr. Shakil Afridi, U.S. sought to withhold assistance to Pakistan. Some American Senators suggested ending all foreign assistance to Pakistan unless Dr Afridi was released. Many reports by U.S. agencies identified several risks that may jeopardize the U.S. aid programme in Pakistan, including political risks, operating restrictions, resistance to reforms and security risks (Epstein & Kronstadt, 2013). Pakistani officials, on their part, allege the aid agency and N.G.O.s for spying and being involved in activities detrimental to national security and interest of Pakistan under cover of aid and humanitarian assistance (Walsh, 2012)

Arms supplies have also become an irritant, especially from Pakistan's perspective. This has become more frustrating due to the stark Indian military buildup and problems of power asymmetry in South Asia. One striking case in this regard is that of F-16s, long-desired multipurpose falcons that Pakistan has been desperate to add to its military power since the 1980s (not a new thing to add; Pakistan wanted more) and that has a long history of issues over sales and supplies between Pakistan and U.S. After working closely with the U.S. after 9/11, Pakistan has been expecting to receive this essential supply from the U.S. However, developments in recent times have been disappointing. In May 2016, U.S. Congress refused to subsidize the sale of 8 F-16s to Pakistan under the Foreign Military Financing (F.M.F.) programme. Disappointed by the move, many in Pakistan have been feeling that Pakistan has been betrayed and abandoned by the U.S. after the latter's stay in Afghanistan almost came to an end. This is considered as a reflection of the American strategy after Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in the late 1980s and early 1990s when Pakistan was not only left to deal with the chaos and unrest in Afghanistan but also faced Pressler, Symington and Brownback Amendments (Rafique, 2016). This has also compelled Pakistan to explore other options for military supplies, notably China and Russia. Pakistan may get the supplies or alternatives, but the cancellation of the deal would seriously rip apart the bilateral ties between Pakistan and the U.S. (Raza, 2016).

Nuclear Issue and Proliferation Policies

Immediately after the first (and last till date) use for military purposes during WWII by the U.S., the significance of nuclear technology has become very evident with the passage of time. This significance got multifold for the developing countries, especially those facing security dilemmas, since maintaining huge stockpiles of conventional arms have not been affordable for most of them. In addition to this, the duel-use of nuclear technology has made it even more desirable because it can be used for energy production and other peaceful purposes as an important and cost-effective alternative (Durrani, 2012). Pakistan initially held a stance against proliferation during talks for the Non-Proliferation Treaty (N.P.T.) (Malik, 2013). It was not until the separation of East Pakistan due to Indian sponsorship in 1971 and the Indian nuclear explosion in 1974 that Pakistan sought to explore the nuclear option as a viable answer to counter the hegemonic and much powerful rival (Salik, 2009). Often referred to as security-driven, Pakistan's nuclear programme actually is India-driven, to be more precise, and hence, most of the policies in this regard have been bound to those of India's (Lavoy, 2008). This not only has been a source of general criticism against Pakistan but has been an irritant in Pak-U.S. relations quite often. Pakistan's nuclear posture, especially the stance of nuclear first use and massive retaliation, has been under criticism by the non-proliferation proponents (Khan, 2013). The revelation of Dr. Khan's proliferation network and the American allegations that two of the important Pakistani scientists have been in contact with some of the key global terrorist networks resulted in huge American pressure on Pakistan (Lavoy, 2008). Pakistan responding to global non-proliferation commitments separated Khan from the nuclear programme and kept him under scrutiny. These efforts,

however, have been denounced by the U.S., claiming that this punishment has been minor, and Pakistan's decision not to let I.A.E.A. and U.S. investigate Dr. Khan has been considered as one hampering the non-proliferation efforts (Fair, Crane, Chivvis, Puri&Spirtas, 2010). Besides, U.S. officials and think tanks have been persistent in expressing their concerns over the safety and security of Pakistan's nuclear weapons, with the often-repeated notion that the Pakistani nukes may fall into 'wrong hands' (Paul, 2014).

U.S. nonproliferation policy, however, proved to be quite flexible for India in the recent past. India, a non-signatory of N.P.T. and a de-facto nuclear state, has been allowed to enter the nuclear mainstream due to U.S. support. The Indo-U.S. nuclear deal and India's access to Nuclear Suppliers Group (N.S.G.) exposed the double-faced non-proliferation policy of the United States. The U.S., through this deal and support, has become a major reason for offsetting the fragile balance of power in South Asia. To further disappointment, Pakistan has been denied any such deal by U.S. (Malik, 2013).

Similarly, Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty has been another source of friction between Pakistan and U.S. Pakistan has actively participated in talks for F.M.C.T.; however, it restrained to sign on a similar rationale. It has suggested that "A cut-off in the manufacturing of fissile material must be accompanied by a *mandatory programme for the elimination of asymmetries* in possession of fissile material stockpiles by various states. Such transfer of fissile material to safeguards should be made first by states with huge stockpiles, both in the global and regional context. This makes it very likely that Pakistan would neither sign nor ratify F.M.C.T. unless India does so at the same time (Mian, Nayyar, Rajarama & Ramana, 2006)

Conclusion

Pakistan's decision to join the U.S. as an ally against terrorism helped to open a new chapter in Pak-U.S. relations. However, the alliance has been clearly asymmetrical, and the larger nation has been, the larger beneficiary as well. In addition to that, American strategic calculations have been changed throughout almost two decades since 9/11. The changing geopolitics at the regional and global level has caused many challenges for once-allied states to continue the courtship. Pakistan had experienced a similar situation after the end of the cold war but succeeded little in anticipating it coming again after the war on terror. Pakistan needs to address these issues with carefully crafted and integrated foreign policy executed through skilled and active diplomacy.

On her part, U.S. too might find it harmful to lose Pakistan, given the latter's pivotal geopolitical position, the security fabric in the region, American interests in Afghanistan and Central Asia and the Middle East. Merkey in 'No Exit from Pakistan' has analyzed this relation, concluding that this is not a friendly game, but both can still benefit from it**.** The future trajectory of these relations depends on the cautiousness with which both states deal their mutual relations.

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