

# Afghanistan: A Policy Reversal Factor in Pakistan-United States Relations (1980-2014)

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## Abstract

*Pakistan-US relationship is considered to be inspired by Pakistan's intrinsic geo-strategic position. All the four states sharing frontiers with Pakistan are hosts of multifaceted US interests. To the north of Pakistan lies the People's Republic of China, an emerging global power to whom the US wants to contain through leveraging strategic convergence with Pakistan's eastern neighbor, India, a regional hegemon and Pakistan's longstanding rival. Iran, the Southwestern neighbor of Pakistan, is also on the radar of the US due to its nuclear program and growing influence in the Middle East. Nonetheless, Pakistan's proximity to China, India, and Iran has various implications for Pakistan-US relations. However, the "Afghanistan factor with its magical make-or-break capacity" stands out as the 'policy reversing' factor in Pakistan-US relations. Since the 1980s, the 'Afghanistan factor' has positively or negatively impacted Pakistan-US relations and prompted a shift in Washington's and Islamabad's policies. The prime ace of the study is to analyze Afghanistan's role in shaping Pakistan's foreign policy towards the US and vice versa and to explore the shared interests of Pakistan and the US in Afghanistan, which allow the "Afghanistan factor" to bearings upon Pakistan-US relations. While employing qualitative research design and functioning rational choice theory, this study attempts to analyze and uncover the underlying patterns, strategic calculations and decision-making processes that drove the interactions between Pakistan and the United States due to the Afghanistan factor in the 1980s and 1<sup>st</sup> decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*

**Keywords:** Afghanistan, Pakistan, Geostrategic Location, US-Pakistan Relations.

## Introduction

Before the subcontinent's partition, the US had minimal interest in the region (Sattar, 2020). After the partition of the subcontinent, the US's first preference was India in the region due to its huge population and related collateral factors. However, due to personal reasons of Mr. Nehru, the first prime minister of India, it leaned towards nonalignment and somewhat tilted towards the USSR. On the other hand, Pakistan needed to be aligned with a great power to combat the challenge of its existence and tackle a plethora of challenges as it had inherited a multitude of troubles including territorial disputes, refugee rehabilitation, watercourse disputes, and a fragile economy. This led Pakistan to explore options to bolster its security and counter the perceived threat from India. The US President Harry Truman extended felicitations to Pakistan, acknowledging its sovereignty. However, the United States' priorities in South Asia were firmly centered on establishing a strategic relationship with India, as evident in Venkatramani's 1984 work.

Consequently, despite Pakistan's early appeals for assistance, the US did not come forward immediately to provide support, delaying a potential partnership and leaving Pakistan to explore other options for its security and development (Sattar, 2020). In January 1953, the arrival of Republican President Dwight Eisenhower with the idea of "collective security pacts" and crystal clear policy to contain the USSR and China sprouted new opportunities for the establishment of strategic relations between Pakistan and the US. Hence, the geographic location of Pakistan began attracting the US (Kux, 2001). Pakistan's geostrategic location presented a compelling opportunity for the US to advance its regional interests. Pakistan was eager to establish a relationship with a powerful ally to counterbalance the significant security threats and challenges posed by India (Sattar, 2020).

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Meanwhile, Pakistan sought to leverage this relationship to bolster its security and diplomatic position, particularly vis-à-vis India. Hence, conflicting and divergent interests between both states paved the way for establishing Pakistan-US relations. Relations established with divergent interests could not last beyond the second tenure of Eisenhower. With the arrival of Kennedy as president of the US, the relationship was troubled, and the 1965 war sprouted mistrust between the allies. Finally, Pakistan-US relations faded away. Afterwards, it was the Afghanistan factor which influenced the Pakistan-US relationship. The research revolved around this very “Afghanistan factor”.

### Literature Review

Nawaz (2020) in his latest work, *“The Battle for Pakistan: The Bitter US Friendship and a Tough Neighborhood”*, lays bare the apprehensive partnership between Pakistan and the US, a decades-long rollercoaster marked by mutual mistrust. Pakistan’s neighbors, especially Afghanistan, have crucial impacts on Pakistan-US relations. Internal crises, including economic stagnation, demographic pressures, and militant threats, necessitate Pakistan-US relations. The author also seeks to dig out Pakistan's struggle to balance Pakistan’s allegiance with the US and Afghanistan and illuminates the profound implications for regional equilibrium and global security. Through a meticulous examination of clandestine manoeuvres, high-wire diplomacy, and shadowy dealings, the book exposes the obscure forces driving this volatile relationship.

Sattar (2020), in *“Pakistan’s Foreign Policy 1947-2019: A Concise History”* A renowned expert in Pakistan's Foreign Service, has authored a comprehensive and insightful book that spans the country's foreign policy from 1947 to 2019. The book's latest edition provides an in-depth analysis of the entire “Operation Enduring Freedom” (2001-2014). The author begins by exploring the foreign policy vision of Pakistan and Pakistan's quest for alignment with a great power in the 1950s. The book also meticulously examines the Soviet invasion and civil war in Afghanistan, the disintegration of the USSR, Pakistan's nuclear program, and the aftermath of 9/11. Furthermore, it provides:

- A detailed understanding of Pakistan's foreign policy decision-making process and its implementation.
- Highlighting the key factors.
- Reasons.
- Compulsions that influence decision-making.

The author also explores Pakistan's relationships with its neighbors, great powers, and Muslim states, making this work a scholarly masterpiece. Hussain (2021), in his scholarly work *“No-Win War: The Paradox of US-Pakistan Relations in Afghanistan's Shadow,”* he sheds light on the aftermath of 9/11 and Pakistan-United States relations. He observes that the alliance between both states has always been tense. As the years passed, their relationship became increasingly strained, with both sides struggling to reconcile their competing interests. It sheds light on the Afghan effect and Pakistan-US relations.

Marshall (2016) in his renowned work, *“Prisoners of Geography: Ten Maps That Tell You Everything You Need to Know about Global Politics”*, states that Pakistan shares a long border with Afghanistan known as the Durand Line. Though it has been a longstanding point of contention, it plays an important role in the foreign policy choices of Pakistan because *“...geography has dictated that Pakistan will involve itself in Afghanistan”*. In 1979, the USSR invaded Afghanistan in search of a hot water port, and Pakistan aligned itself with the US in Afghanistan against the USSR. In contrast to Pakistan’s choice, India chose to support and help the USSR in Afghanistan. Pakistan and the US operated closely in Afghanistan against the USSR. However, their interests could not be converged, as Pakistan wanted to limit the USSR in Afghanistan to restrict its approach to the “hot waters” of the Indian Ocean. However, the US was in search of containing the USSR overall. After the 9/11 attacks, Pakistan-US relations, which were at their lowest ebb, again improvised on the demand of the US. Pakistan was left with no other option except to be aligned again with the US in her global campaign against terrorism. Again, at the time of 9/11, the relations between Pakistan and the US were on the floor. This time, the US employed coercive measures to club Pakistan in the global war against terror. This time, Afghanistan had a critical role in Pakistan-US relations.

## **Theoretical Framework**

Since the 1940s, rational choice theory has been a vital framework for analyzing foreign policy choices in International Relations. Morgenstern and V. Neumann have pioneered it. Allison believes that the rational actor model theory enables the researcher to decode the rationale behind any decision made by front-runners of any state in given circumstances (Feddersen, 2004). The research explores the choices of Pakistan after the USSR invaded Afghanistan and the 9/11 attacks. An important presumption of the rational actor model advocated by Allison is that any leader should choose the option that best fits his state in posed circumstances. Hence, it deals with the “subjectivity of rationality and discords objectivity in rationality (Hechter, 1997). This study aims to employ rational choice theory to assess Pakistan’s choice to be aligned with the US during the Afghan War in the 1980s and the Global Campaign against Terrorism ignited after the 9/11 attacks. At the time of the invasion of Afghanistan by the USSR, Pakistan was advancing its nuclear program, which was at its initial state and the US, as well as the West, was attempting to halt Pakistan’s nuclear program. Pakistan was facing several internal and external challenges. On the other hand, Pakistan’s warm water port was the long-term goal of the USSR in the region. In the given scenario, Pakistan’s for-runners decided to be aligned with the US to draw the focus of the West and the US from its nuclear program as well as to discord the probability of the USSR’s invasion of Pakistan to take access to its warm water ports (Marshall, 2016).

Likewise, Pakistan was facing several nuclear-based and democracy-based sanctions at the time of 9/11. Pakistan-US relations were at an all-time low. After the 9/11 attacks, the US brought a reversal in its policy towards Pakistan due to its geostrategic location and proximity to Afghanistan (Chamberlin, 2010). To secure the cooperation, the US employed coercive measures to align Pakistan with it. Pakistan accepted the demands of the US to preserve its sovereignty, strategic assets, and economy, as well as for the Kashmir cause.

As a sequel, Pakistan aligned itself with the US by making rational decisions to save its interests. The US also reversed its policy towards Pakistan, ignoring its nuclear program. The Afghanistan factor played an important role. However, the decision made eventually proved to be irrational instead of rational.

## **Methodology**

Due to the nature of the research question and the principal argument, qualitative research is proposed as a suitable research design. Instant research revolves around the differing prospects and viewpoints regarding foreign policy choices. Hence, the proposed research design serves the purpose. This research has gathered data from both primary and secondary sources, emphasizing secondary sources. Primary sources include official documents, statistics, and notifications, while secondary sources encompass many materials, such as books, scholarly articles, newspaper editorials, research journals, and online resources. The focus is on articles from prominent national and international newspapers that discuss the war on terrorism and Pakistan-US relations. The data is predominantly qualitative, with some factual data from government departments of both countries used to support the research.

## **Background of the Study**

Pakistan-US relations are often considered the subject of the crisis in the region. Afghanistan has been considered to be the stimulator of Pakistan-US relations. There are three high-profile episodes of the relationship between Pakistan and the US, i.e., the decade of 1950, the decade of 1980 and the first decade of the 21st century. Out of these three, the Afghanistan factor stimulates the last two episodes. The relationship between Pakistan and the US is cruel to the famous phrase “fair weather friends”. Instead, they are “fair-weather foes”. In the 1950s, Pakistan and the US entered into relations with their divergent interests. However, the relationship was exhausted within a decade, and differences began surfacing in Eisenhower's second tenure. With the arrival of J.F Kennedy, the relationship faded away. After this episode of the high-profile relationship between Pakistan and the US, the following episode of high-profile relations depends upon the Afghan factor.

## **Afghanistan Factor in Pakistan-US Relations**

Afghanistan has played a crucial role in Pakistan-US relations. The Afghanistan factor not only revamped Pakistan-US relations in the 1980s but also overhauled the relationship between

Pakistan and the US after the September 11, 2001 attacks. The discussion below attempts to highlight the role of the crisis in Afghanistan in Pakistan-US relations and analyze the rationale behind Pakistan's choices of aligning itself with the US.

### **Pakistan-US Relations: Immediate Before Soviet-Afghan War**

Although the relationship between Pakistan and the US was established in the 1950s, with time, the relationship between Pakistan and the US faded away. After the 1971 war, the significance of the South Asian region decreased in the US foreign policy. However, President Nixon maintained a strong bond with Pakistan (Kux, 2001). Conversely, Pakistan's new Prime Minister, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, sought to revamp the state's foreign policy. Hence, he visited China thrice from 1972 to 1976 and the USSR twice in 1972 and 1974. To enhance ties with the Muslim world, Pakistan left SEATO AND CENTO (US-led security alliances) and joined a non-aligned movement. The US was unhappy with Pakistan's policy (Sing, 2006).

On the other hand, Pakistan, in order to maintain the balance of power in the region, ignited its nuclear program on a full scale because the world had failed to halt or roll back the Indian nuclear program (Kux, 2001). With the arrival of President Carter in the US, Pakistani-US relations further deteriorated because he was a prominent critic of Pakistan's nuclear program. The US imposed proliferation-based sanctions on Pakistan under Symington's (1977) and Glenn's (1978) amendments. However, India was spared from these sanctions (Sattar, 2020). Zia's Marshal Law came with its problems for Pakistan-US relations. Pakistan also witnessed public demonstrations against the US in 1979. However, the Afghanistan factor recuperated Pakistan-US relations.

### **The USSR Invades Afghanistan: Pakistan-US Relations Improved**

In 1979, Pakistan-US relations were experiencing an all-time low. However, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 revitalized the strained relationship between the two countries. As Soviet forces invaded Afghanistan on December 26, 1979, Pakistan was facing a plethora of internal and external challenges. Rational actors in Pakistan initially responded cautiously to avoid escalation at Western borders. However, US President Carter wanted Pakistan to openly oppose the USSR's aggression (Sattar, 2020). In this regard, the US president discussed it with its Pakistani counterpart. He offered that the US would revive the two-decade-old Bilateral Security Agreement (1959). President Carter also offered that the US would assist Pakistan in every possible way. However, Pakistan did not seem in a hurry to commit to the US (Tahir-Kheli, 1982). Kux believes that Pakistan's geostrategic location was important for both the superpowers of that time, i.e., the US and the USSR. High-level officials of both powers approached Pakistan to secure Pakistan's support in Afghanistan. The Soviet Ambassador met with General Zia to convince Pakistan that the Soviet invasion was necessary due to the internal situation of Afghanistan. Hence, the Soviet invasion made Pakistan an important state for the US and the Western bloc (Kux, 2001). Pakistan was also cautious of Soviet dreams of having access to the warm waters of the Arabian Sea. In the given scenario, Pakistan had to make a rational decision. The US offered a package to Pakistan, yet General Zia rejected the US package, considering it inadequate, derisively calling it "peanuts". Later, during his October 1980 visit to the UN General Assembly, Zia met with President Carter, who suggested adding F-16 jets to the package. In 1981, Reagan was elected president of the United States and assumed charge of his office in January 1981 to revive American prestige and contain the influence of the USSR. He sought to enlist Pakistan's support in pushing back against Soviet influence in Afghanistan (Sattar, 2020). Reagan's administration strengthened ties with Pakistan, recognizing its strategic importance in countering Soviet influence in Afghanistan. A comprehensive \$3.2 billion, five-year aid package was carefully crafted to address Pakistan's concerns and demonstrate US commitment. Washington aimed to secure Islamabad's cooperation in advancing shared regional interests by assisting and effectively creating a quid pro quo arrangement. This strategic partnership enabled both nations to pursue their respective goals, with the US seeking to contain Soviet expansion and Pakistan gaining valuable support for its security and stability.

### **Provision of F-16 Fighter Jets to Pakistan**

Although the US and Pakistan agreed on their new relationship, issues arose regarding including 40 F-16 fighter-bombers in the military aid package. The US had previously only supplied these advanced aircraft to NATO allies and Japan. Some US officials, like Ambassador Ronald Spiers,



considered the F-16s unnecessary, but Pakistan emphasized their importance for its defense capability and national morale. The acquisition of F-16s symbolized national pride and demonstrated Pakistan's ability to counter Indian and Soviet forces (Sattar, 2020).

### **Nuclear Program of Pakistan Was No More Big Issue for the US**

The US also approved a six-year waiver for assistance to Pakistan. The Reagan administration was skeptical about the effectiveness of sanctions in deterring Pakistan's nuclear program, emphasizing the need to address underlying security concerns through cooperative relations and conventional arms aid. By late 1982, the United States and Pakistan had established a new partnership, with the US providing \$600 million in annual military and economic aid. The Reagan administration hoped closer security links would influence Pakistan's leadership to slow down its nuclear program. In May 1984, Vice President George Bush visited Pakistan, cementing the strong relationship that had developed over the past three years. During lunch with Zia, Bush discussed the nuclear issue, receiving assurances that the program was peaceful. These high-level visits showcased the strong partnership between the US and Pakistan, with both countries sharing a common goal in supporting the Afghan resistance against Soviet occupation. However, the nuclear issue remained a sensitive topic, with the US emphasizing its concerns and Pakistan reassuring its peaceful intentions.

### **The Pressler Amendment: A New Hurdle in US-Pakistan Relations**

In 1984, despite the ongoing collaboration in the Afghan war, concerns about Pakistan's nuclear program intensified in Washington. As the Reagan administration sought approval for a new \$4 billion aid package for Pakistan, Senator John Glenn proposed an amendment requiring annual presidential certification that Pakistan did not possess or develop nuclear weapons. Prime Minister Junejo's 1986 visit to Washington solidified US-Pakistan relations with a \$4.02 billion aid package and praise for Pakistan's more open political system. However, the US emphasized the importance of Pakistani restraint on nuclear development. In 1989, President Bush warned Benazir Bhutto that if Pakistan continued its nuclear program, Pressler amendments would be invoked against her (Kux, 2001). Consequently, the amendments were invoked in 1990, halting the delivery of F-16 fighter jets and affecting Pakistan's military capabilities. However, in 1996, the Brown Amendment was brought to support Pakistan, allowing the delivery of "military tools" and joint military exercises to improve relations (Rudolph, 2008).

### **Expectations of USSR Withdrawal: Policy Began Reversing**

In 1987, the Soviet Union announced its intentions to withdraw from Afghanistan. The US and Pakistan had different priorities: the US focused on Soviet withdrawal, while Pakistan sought a friendly government in Kabul.

### **USSR Withdrawal: Afghanistan Factor Again Caused Policy Reversal**

Pakistan-US relations deteriorated rapidly after the USSR's withdrawal from Afghanistan for various reasons. The US also lost interest in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The US had used Pakistan as a frontline state during the Soviet-Afghan war, but after the withdrawal, Pakistan was no longer a strategic partner (Rashid, 2000).

As President George Bush took office in 1989, the Cold War was ending, and the global balance of power was shifting. In 1990, the US imposed sanctions on Pakistan under the Pressler amendment due to its nuclear program. The sanctions froze \$564 million in economic and military aid, including delivering F-16 aircraft. Pakistan continued to pay for F-16s, even though delivery was frozen. Despite sanctions, the US allowed Pakistan to purchase military equipment commercially, citing the Pressler amendment's explicit ban only on government-financed transfers. However, the Brown Amendment, which eased some sanctions, was seen as a victory for Pakistan, but its impact was largely symbolic. Pakistan's support for the Taliban in Afghanistan and the eventual Taliban victory in 1996 was initially welcomed by the US but later criticized due to the Taliban's harsh policies towards women and human rights abuses.

### **Rise of Taliban in Afghanistan: Relations Further Strained**

The rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan further strained relations. The US had abandoned Afghanistan after the USSR withdrawal, and the political instability that followed affected Pakistan. The Taliban gained control of Kabul in 1996, and Pakistan, along with the UAE and

Saudi Arabia, recognized their regime (Rashid, 2000). However, the US did not recognize the Taliban due to human rights violations and links with al-Qaeda. The US also failed to provide economic assistance to Afghanistan, leading to a power vacuum that the Taliban filled (Rashid, 2000).

### **Nuclear Tests: the US Imposed Sanctions Upon Pakistan**

On May 28 1998, in response to India's nuclear tests, Pakistan also conducted nuclear tests, which led to US sanctions under the Arms Export Control Act (Kux, 2001). The sanctions affected Pakistan's economy and strained relations further (Rahman, 1999)—finally, Musharraf's coup in October 1999 and the subsequent democracy-related sanctions further deteriorated relations.

### **Pakistan-US Relations: Post USSR Withdrawal Scenario**

The relationship between the United States and Pakistan in the post-USSR withdrawal scenario was complex and tense. The US was critical of Pakistan's nuclear program, alleged support for militant groups, and harboring Islamic extremists. Pakistan felt unfairly treated by the US, particularly regarding the F-16 fighter jets that were not delivered despite payment. The relationship was further strained by issues like drug trafficking, corruption, and Pakistan's support for China's missile program. Despite hopes for improvement, the relationship remained challenging due to Pakistan's hawkish stance on India and Afghanistan, and the US had little interest in improving relations. High-level visits and diplomatic efforts failed to yield significant progress, and the relationship remained strained.

### **Pakistan-US Relations: In Close Temporal Proximity of the 9/11 Attacks**

In the wake of the 9/11 attacks, Pakistan-US relations had reached an all-time low. Wendy Chamberlin, the former US Ambassador to Pakistan (serving from September 13, 2001, to May 29, 2002), has vividly described the nadir in Pakistan-US relations when President Bush assumed office. The relationship was in tatters, with Pakistan facing a raft of US sanctions and military cooperation grinding to a halt. The situation was so dire that USAID closed its mission in Pakistan, severing a critical link in the development partnership between the two nations (Chamberlin, 2010).

### **Afghanistan Factor: Again Improved Pakistan-US Relations**

Afghanistan factor proved to be the elixir for overhauling the exhausted relationship between the two states: Pakistan and the US. As the US prepared to launch a global campaign against terrorism predominantly in Afghanistan under the code name of "Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan", it became evident that Pakistan's cooperation was crucial for achieving strategic objectives. Recognizing Pakistan's pivotal role in the region, the US sought to reinforce diplomatic ties with Islamabad to secure its support. On September 13, 2001, the US presented a comprehensive list of expectations to Pakistan's leadership, which President Musharraf subsequently accepted, marking a significant shift in the bilateral dynamic.

### **Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan: Pakistan-US Relations**

President Bush dubbed the attacks of 9/11 as the "Pearl Harbor of the 21st century" and declared them an "act of war." He vowed to bring the perpetrators to justice and punish those who supported terrorism.

### **The US Used Coercive Diplomacy to Secure Pakistan's Support in the War on Terror after 9/11**

The US employed a strategy of coercive diplomacy to secure Pakistan's support in the War on Terror following the 9/11 attacks. This approach involved using a combination of incentives and penalties to persuade Pakistan to align with US interests. The US clarified that failure to cooperate would have severe consequences, including economic sanctions and diplomatic isolation. Hence, Pakistan had cooperated with the US. This cooperation was instrumental in disrupting terrorist networks. Pakistan granted the US access to its airspace as well as military bases, enabling the deployment of military assets and operations against terrorist targets in Afghanistan. Pakistan's intelligence agencies captured several high-profile terrorists, including Khalid Sheikh Mohammed

and Ramzi bin al-Shibh. Pakistan allowed NATO supply routes to pass through its territory, enabling the transportation of critical supplies to coalition forces in Afghanistan.

### **The US Acknowledged Pakistan's Intelligence Agencies Competence**

The US acknowledged the competence and effectiveness of Pakistan's intelligence agencies in combating terrorism. Pakistan also conducted more than a dozen military operations against militant groups to augment the US-led campaign against terrorism:

#### **Operation Al-Mizan**

Launched in 2002 in Wana, South Waziristan, several militants, including Nek Muhammad, were arrested and demolished their hideouts.

#### **Operation Zalzala**

Launched in 2008 in Spinkai, South Waziristan, this operation cleared the region of militants and dispersed TTP and Mehsud-related militants.

#### **Operation Sher Dil**

Launched in 2008 in Bajaur Agency, this operation killed 1500 militants, including Abu Saeed Almisri, and dismantled the TTP command system.

#### **Operation Daraghalam**

Launched in 2008 in Khyber Agency, this operation secured NATO supply routes and forced Mangal Bagh militants to flee.

#### **Operation Rah-e-Haq**

Launched in 2007 in Swat, this operation cleared the region of TTP and accomplice groups, establishing government control and securing a ceasefire agreement.

#### **Operation Rah-e-Rast**

Launched in 2009 in Swat, this operation killed 2088 militants and captured key operatives, regaining control of the region.

#### **Operation Rah-e-Najat**

Launched in 2009 in South Waziristan, this operation destroyed TTP strongholds, killing 800 militants and disrupting their ability to coordinate attacks.

#### **Operation Zarb-e-Azb**

Launched in 2014 in North Waziristan, this operation killed 3600 militants and dismantled terrorist networks, securing a decisive victory against terrorist forces.

### **Pakistan's support was crucial to the success of Operation Enduring Freedom**

Pakistan's support was crucial to the success of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. The country's contributions, including intelligence sharing, airspace access, and logistical support, enabled the US to maintain a large-scale military presence in Afghanistan and disrupt terrorist networks.

### **Areas of US cooperation with Pakistan during Operation Enduring Freedom (2001-2014) are enlisted as under**

The US also extended its cooperation towards Pakistan in exchange for Pakistan's cooperation with the US.

### **United States Lifted Sanctions from Pakistan**

In 2001, the US lifted nuclear-related sanctions on Pakistan, allowing aid to resume. This marked a shift in US foreign policy toward Pakistan.

## USAID Resumed its Operations in Pakistan

USAID resumed operations in Pakistan in 2002. It spent \$200 million over five years and trained over 12,000 educators. USAID also provided aid after the 2005 earthquake and 2010 floods.

## Pakistan: Major Non-NATO Ally

Pakistan was designated a major Non-NATO Ally in 2004, allowing for closer military cooperation and loans. This status enabled Pakistan to purchase US products and strengthen military ties.

## US' Economic Assistance for Pakistan

The US provided Pakistan with \$30.2 billion in economic assistance during OEF (2001-2014). This aid helped stabilize Pakistan's economy and opened up international markets. The table below highlights the facts and figures regarding US aid to Pakistan from 2001 to 2014.

**Figure 1: US Aid appropriations for and military reimbursements to Pakistan**

**Direct Overt U.S. Aid Appropriations for and Military Reimbursements to Pakistan, FY2002-FY2015**  
Prepared by the Congressional Research Service for distribution to multiple congressional offices, March 6, 2014  
Note: Final obligation and disbursement totals typically are lower than program account appropriations (rounded to the nearest millions of dollars)

Program or Account	FY 2002- FY2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	Program or Account Total	FY 2014 (req.)	FY 2015 (req.)
1206	173 <sup>a</sup>	139 <sup>a</sup>	—	—	—	—	312	—	—
CN	135	47	43	39	1	8	273	—	—
FMF <sup>c</sup>	1,366	300	294	295	296	280	3,031	300	280
IMET	11	2	5	4	5	5	32	5	5
INCLE	270	88	170	114	75	57	774	74	41
NADR	53	13	24	25	20	11	146	18	10
PCF/PCCF	—	400	700	800	452	—	2,352	—	—
<b>Total Security-Related</b>	<b>2,208</b>	<b>989</b>	<b>1,236</b>	<b>1,277</b>	<b>849</b>	<b>361</b>	<b>6,920</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>336</b>
CSH/GHCS	157	34	30	28	—	—	249	—	—
DA	286	—	—	—	—	—	286	—	—
ESF	2,380 <sup>d</sup>	1,114	1,292	919	905	724	7,334	766	546
Food Aid <sup>e</sup>	183	55	124	51	96	81	590	30	—
HRDF	17	—	—	—	<1	—	17	—	—
IDA	170	103	232	145	54	20	724	—	—
MRA	42	60	91	43	12	9	257	—	—
<b>Total Economic-Related</b>	<b>3,235</b>	<b>1,366</b>	<b>1,769</b>	<b>1,186</b>	<b>1,067</b>	<b>834</b>	<b>9,457</b>	<b>796</b>	<b>546</b>
CSF Reimbursements <sup>b</sup>	6,697	685	1,499	1,118	688	353 <sup>a</sup>	11,040	—	—
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>12,140</b>	<b>3,040</b>	<b>4,504</b>	<b>3,581</b>	<b>2,604</b>	<b>1,548</b>	<b>27,417</b>	<b>1,193</b>	<b>882</b>

Sources: U.S. Departments of State, Defense, and Agriculture; U.S. Agency for International Development

### Abbreviations:

1206: Section 1206 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for FY2006 (P.L. 109-163, global train and equip)  
 CN: Counternarcotics Funds (Pentagon budget)  
 CSF: Coalition Support Funds (Pentagon budget)  
 CSH: Child Survival and Health (Global Health and Child Survival, or GHCS, from FY2010)  
 DA: Development Assistance  
 ESF: Economic Support Funds  
 FMF: Foreign Military Financing  
 HRDF: Human Rights and Democracy Funds  
 IDA: International Disaster Assistance (Pakistani earthquake, flood, and internally displaced persons relief)  
 IMET: International Military Education and Training  
 INCLE: International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement (includes border security)  
 MRA: Migration and Refugee Assistance (also includes Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance or ERMA)  
 NADR: Nonproliferation, Anti-Terrorism, Denying, and Related (the great majority allocated for Pakistan is for anti-terrorism assistance)  
 PCF/PCCF: Pakistan Counterinsurgency Fund/Counterinsurgency Capability Fund (PCF overseen by the Pentagon, PCCF overseen by State)

### Notes:

a. P.L.480 Title I (loans), P.L.480 Title II (grants), and Section 416(b) of the Agricultural Act of 1949, as amended (surplus agricultural commodity donations). Food aid totals do not include freight costs.  
 b. CSF is Pentagon funding to reimburse Pakistan for its support of U.S. military operations; it is technically not foreign assistance. Figures in the CSF row reflect actual payments and not appropriations.  
 c. Includes \$75 million for FY2008 and \$25 million for FY2009 to train and equip Pakistan's Frontier Corps.  
 d. Congress authorized Pakistan to use the FY2003 and FY2004 ESF allocations to cancel a total of \$1.5 billion in debt to the U.S. government.  
 e. The NDAA for FY2013 approves \$1.65 billion in additional CSF for all "key cooperating nations;" the accompanying conference report limits FY2013 CSF for Pakistan to \$1.2 billion. The enacted NDAA for FY2014 authorizes another \$1.26 billion for all cooperating nations.  
 f. This funding is "requirements-based;" there are no pre-allocation data.

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Source: (Kronstadt: K Alan, Congressional Research Services).

## Economic Support Fund

During OEF, the US provided Pakistan with \$7.8 billion in Economic Support Funds (ESF) (Kronstadt, 2014).

## Development Assistance

The US provided \$286 million in Development Assistance to Pakistan during OEF, focusing on education and teacher training (Kronstadt, 2014).

## CSH, Food Aid, and Human Rights & Democracy Fund

The US provided \$620 million in Food Aid, \$249 million in Child Survival and Health (CSH), and \$18 million in Human Rights and Democracy Funds to Pakistan during OEF (Kronstadt, 2014).



**Migration and Refugee Assistance (MRA) Fund**

The US provided \$257 million to Pakistan during OEF to address refugee and IDP challenges (Kronstadt, 2014).

**International Disaster Assistance**

The US provided Pakistan \$724 million in International Disaster Assistance during OEF, mainly for earthquake and flood relief (Kronstadt, 2014).

**Coalition Support Fund for Reimbursement**

The US provided \$12.9 billion to Pakistan under the Coalition Support Fund during OEF, mainly for counter-terrorism operations (Kronstadt, 2014).

**United States: The Biggest Destination of Pakistan's Exports**

The US remained Pakistan's largest export destination during OEF, with exports growing from \$2.2 billion in 2001 to \$3.6 billion in 2014.

**Assistance under the Kerry-Lugar-Berman Act**

The US provided \$7.5 billion in civilian assistance to Pakistan under the Kerry-Lugar-Berman Act (2009-2014) to enhance bilateral cooperation.

**Military and Security Assistance**

The US provided military assistance to Pakistan to enhance its security forces' capabilities in counterinsurgency operations (Kronstadt, 2014).

**Arms Sales and FMF Program**

Pakistan was granted access to the Foreign Military Financing (FMF) program, enabling the purchase of US defense articles, including weapons and equipment. Agreements worth \$5.4 billion were signed during OEF 2001-2014.

**Pakistan Counterinsurgency Fund (PCF)**

The US provided \$2.35 billion to Pakistan towards the PCF to conduct counterinsurgency operations against militants and banned organizations. The fund included advanced technology weapons and necessary tools.

**Non-proliferation, Anti-Terrorism, Demining, and Related Fund (NADR)**

The US provided \$157 million towards NADR to support Pakistan's non-proliferation, anti-terrorism, and demining efforts.

**International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement (INCLE)**

The US provided \$831 million towards INCLE to support Pakistan's efforts in combating drug trade by terrorist networks.

**Counter Narcotics (Pentagon Funding)**

The US provided \$272 million towards Counter Narcotics (Pentagon Funding) to support Pakistan's efforts in combating drug trade by terrorist networks.

**Conclusion**

Afghanistan factor is vital in Pakistan-US relations. At the time of the USSR invasion of Afghanistan, Pakistan-US relations were at nadir; Pakistan was facing US sanctions due to its nuclear program as well as Zia's Marshal Law coupled with allegations of human rights violations; however, the 'Afghanistan factor' dramatically transformed Pakistan's fortune, and Pakistan came out of its international isolation to become a most sought-after state. Both superpowers of the time, i.e., the USSR and the US, approached Pakistan with starkly opposite offers to secure its cooperation in Afghanistan. Although Pakistan's decision-makers received bids from both superpowers, they were cautious due to past bitter experiences with both superpowers. The USSR's role in the 1971 war, its stance on the Kashmir issue and its longstanding desire to have access to warm-water ports raised suspicions regarding its true intentions. Meanwhile, the US had

demonstrated fickleness in its relations with Pakistan over the past three decades, making it difficult for Islamabad to trust the US' commitments. Meanwhile, Pakistan's nuclear ambitions and severe financial constraints rendered neutrality unviable.

Consequently, rational actors from Islamabad reasonably foreseen that aligning with the US would ease economic pressure, and the US would dispense with its nuclear program and ally itself with the US. Rational actors in Washington, in a move dictated by realpolitik and as a pragmatic response to Pakistan's strategic value, reversed their policies regarding Pakistan and exercised conditional reprieve from criticism over its nuclear program in exchange for cooperation. Hence, this strategic alignment came with an implicit understanding that the US would approve of Pakistan's nuclear development in return for its support. As a sequel, Pakistan bought time to advance its nuclear program as well as procured sophisticated conventional weaponry from the US. However, the USSR could not emerge victorious in the Afghan war, and the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan led to a renewed deterioration in Pakistan-US relations. As a result, the US reinstated sanctions against Pakistan, reviving tensions that had been temporarily set aside during the Afghan war.

Similarly, at the time of the September 11, 2001 attacks, Pakistan-US relations were at the lowest ebb. Pakistan was facing nuclear as well as democracy-based sanctions. The United States, while considering Pakistan's proximity to Afghanistan, again revised its policy and aligned Pakistan with it while employing the carrot-and-stick approach. Again, the 'Afghanistan factor' cast its spell, and Pakistan's policymakers, while considering its economic woes, decided to be aligned with the US again. Sanctions were lifted, financial as well as military cooperation was resumed, and the US designated Pakistan as a major non-NATO ally of the US. However, the relationship between Pakistan and the United States couldn't withstand the tests of time and lost its momentum within a decade due to the trust deficit, Indo-US nexus, anti-Pakistan interim set up in Afghanistan, US' insensitivity towards Pakistan's concerns as well as its 'do more' policy.

We can safely hold that the "Afghanistan factor with its make-or-break potential" has been a significant determinant in the trajectory of Pakistan-US relations since the 1980s. It can revamp Pakistan-US relations temporarily. The relationship between Pakistan and the US is cruel to the famous phrase "fair weather friends". Instead, they are "fair weather foes." Pakistan-US relations are dependent upon the crisis in the region, and Pakistan's geo-strategic location is more important for the US than the people of Pakistan.

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