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# **Pakistan - U.S. Relations on Slippery Grounds: An Account of Trust and its Deficit**

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## **Introduction**

Pakistan's relations with the U.S. were established and progressed during the rigid cold war period. However, with the erasing of mutual utility for each other, the closeness lost its symmetry and a variety of issues started to dominate the variant interests of each country. In this regard the two alliance partners moved from the place of comfort to that of mutual suspicion and a number of times had to endure a tedious exercise of damage control.

This particular complexity of cooperation and divergent trends between the two countries established a framework of mutual level of trust deficit. A number of issues like the Pakistani desire to develop an atomic bomb, in reaction to India's already achieved capability in this field; Pakistan's tense relations with India and U.S. efforts to prompt India as a balancer to the growing Chinese influence in South Asia, further made the relations between the two countries more problematic and challenging. These and other matters created a feeling of mutual distrust but twice the happenings in Pakistan's neighbor Afghanistan (1979 and 2001) provided an opportunity for the dwindling U.S. interests in Pakistan, to correct itself and put the things in the right perspective. These advances presented a solution as well as a

problem for the policy makers of both Pakistan and U.S. However, the momentum of mutual interests could not hold for long, giving way to clash of interests, especially when it came to matters pertaining to Afghanistan.

On the other hand, the Pakistani over reliance on the U.S. for practical all its ills and requirements created a wide wedge in the thinking process of the rulers and the people of Pakistan. This was vehemently demonstrated during the three-day October 2009 visit of the American Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, in the aftermath of a stiff opposition by the civil society against the American aid legislation known as "Enhanced Partnership with Pakistan Act of 2009" (Kerry-Lugar bill). The \$7.5 billion aid was designated, over a period of five years, mostly for the Pakistani social sector, with lots of strings attached.<sup>1</sup>

The bill had exposed a wide gap between the rulers and their perception of Pakistan – U.S. relations and the civil society of Pakistan. The people saw this aid as a compromise on their sovereignty and micro management of the finances and administration and other affairs. It was not an anti-American outburst but a protest against the manner the political elite dealt with the problems of Pakistan, which was seen within the context of an extreme form of "dependency" on the U.S.

A sharp rejection of the Kerry-Lugar Bill had sent a strong message to Washington that the views presented by Pakistani bureaucrats and politicians do not synchronize with "real Pakistan". Although the visit of the high official of Obama administration was intended to be an exercise in public diplomacy, but soon it turned out to be more of a damage control than anything else.

Although the visit (of Secretary Clinton) was scheduled much earlier, it came when the Pakistani decision makers were in the midst of a crises laden disconnect with the people, on a variety of

issues, most of it relating to security and strategic questions, especially those of perceptions or misperceptions about the American external policies. The U.S. is accused of treating Pakistan as a matter of expediency – and nothing more than that. Examples of arms embargo after the 1965 war, leaving Afghanistan in disarray after the Soviet withdrawal in 1989 and demonizing Pakistan after 9/11, although none of the hijackers were from this land, are quoted in this regard. These and other questions emerge prominent in the minds of a great number of the general public. There is a general belief that whenever an occasion arose Pakistan came to the assist the Americans, but it was never reciprocated in kind – U.S. administrations preferred India over Pakistan, although the Indians were allies of the Soviets during the cold war and staunch supporters of the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.<sup>2</sup>

The questions raised by various civil society sections of the Pakistani society were on the past relationship between the two countries, on drone attacks, and Kashmir and U.S. relations with India, including the preference of that country on civilian nuclear cooperation.

The Secretary of State on that visit spelled out in detail the whole spectrum of on-going Pak-U.S. ties by recognizing that there was a need for better understanding between the people of Pakistan and the American administration. In this context, she agreed that the U.S. policy towards Pakistan/Afghanistan, as they existed during the first half of the Obama administration – both in terms of policy and strategy, must take into consideration Pakistan's sensitivities. The Obama administration had admitted that the past policy of ignoring Pakistan, after a certain objective of U.S. was fulfilled, should be avoided. At the same instance it is argued by the American policy makers that trust is a two way street and have accused, a number of times the Pakistani establishment of not doing enough to undertake serious measures against Al-Qaeda leadership, which it believe is in the border areas

of Pakistan. It is further argued by the American side that the Pakistani military is going after those groups, who threaten Pakistan while doing little to eliminate groups that are a security threat to the American interests in Afghanistan, like the North Waziristan (Miramshah area in particular) based network of Jalaluddin Haqqani (a former anti-Soviet commander) and now accused of operations against the American troops in eastern Afghanistan. According to an analyst, "The Haqqanis are closely allied to al Qaeda and the Taliban, led by Mullah Omar. The Haqqani family runs the *Manba Ulom madrasa* in the village of Danda Darpa Khel, a hub of activity for the terror group".<sup>3</sup> In reiteration the U.S. Drones have attacked suspected targets in the FATA region, with regular frequency, killing numerous civilians, in the process.<sup>4</sup> These cross border attacks, although are carried with the approval and assistance of the Pakistani government but a huge public opinion disapproves of it and it has become increasingly difficult for the government to defend itself. These concerns became an irritant in Pak-U.S. relations, when it comes to public sentiments. In such a charged setting it becomes difficult for both the countries to create a long term strategic understanding.

## **Background – A Decline of structured Related Security Relations**

In the initial phase of Pakistan's creation, it faced a number of security related issues, including a huge influx of refugees from India, weak economic structures, inherited from the British Raj, lack of administrative skills and threats from its eastern neighbor, India. In order to tackle these problems effectively Pakistan was in urgent need of external reinforcement, both in terms of financial assistance and preserving its security. First, Pakistan explored the possibility of receiving relief from the British Commonwealth for help but because of its tilt towards India, did not received any positive response<sup>5</sup>. As a consequence of the Second World War, two major powers had emerged as leaders of their antagonistic respective blocs, the United States and the Soviet Union. The

United States emerged, unscratched by war, a highly potent economic and military power and was searching for alliance partners, to curtail the Soviet influence in the Middle East and in the vicinity of the South Asian region. While the Soviet Union, ravaged by the German army was incapable of providing any assistance to needy Pakistan. Secondly, the newly established Pakistani state felt closer to the idealism of democracy, freedom and openness, which the U.S. professed.

There is a widely believed impression in Pakistan that the basis of the Pakistan-U.S. relations owes its origin to the visit of the First Prime Minister of Pakistan and a founding father, Liaquat Ali Khan to Washington D.C, in May 1950. As a leader of a new nation, the Prime minister was also invited to visit the Soviet Union, approximately at the same time as the U.S. did, but he preferred the United States. This public misperception has been reinforced for last sixty years with no proper response or rebuttal. It is understandable that relations between nations do not rely on a single visit; no matter it might have been a trend setter. Since 1950, the world underwent drastic changes and the interests of both Pakistan and the U.S. adjusted itself, as according to the requirements of the time. In these historic developments, at times the Pakistan-U.S. strategic interests converged but there were eras where a sharp difference of opinion emerged. Pakistan's former Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar describes the initial stage of Pakistan-U.S. ties as:

The United States was the only promising source of assistance. Emerging from the Second World War with its economy intact, it was the wealthiest nation in the world, accounting for over 40 per cent of global production. Also, its democratic system was congenial. It was, however, preoccupied with Soviet expansion in Eastern Europe and the need to stabilize Western Europe through economic and military assistance. US interest in South Asia was rather cursory. However, Pakistan's location next to the Middle East, with its petroleum reserves,

provided a strategic link to benefit to Pakistan's search for cooperation.<sup>6</sup>

In 1954 and again in 1959 Pakistan signed "Mutual Defense Agreement" with the United States, and became a member of American sponsored defense related pacts, Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) and Southeast Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO) in 1955. As a result of Pakistan's joining of collective defense agreements and becoming a close ally of the U.S, between 1953 and 1961, it received assistance of \$2 billion, including \$508 in military related aid.

However, the changed complexion of international relations, resulted in the decline of American interest and influence in the Third World countries, and Pakistan was no exception. A mushroom of newly decolonized countries emerged in Asia and Africa, with weak socio-economic and political structures, thus making the world system more complex and demanding. The rigid bipolar tensions had given way to a Détente between the Americans and the Soviet Union, because of the variety of reasons, mainly because of heavy economic strains, on both the super powers. The 1965 war between Pakistan and India has already given a message to the Pakistani policy makers that the alliance system had outlived its utility and that an ally must not rely completely on its more powerful partner. Confirmation of this perception came soon.

The differences in perception between the American and Pakistani policy makers became clear in April 1967, when the United States announced that it was adjusting its arms policy and that the relationship between the two countries would be governed according to newly formulated regulations. According to the US policy announced in April 1967, the previous commitments between the two countries were to be reviewed. The agreement of 1959 remained in force, but the application of this particular agreement became a controversial issue between

the two countries. It was during the first Afghanistan crisis that the 1959 agreement was taken seriously by the Americans.

On April 12, 1967, the Department of State announced that the United States had decided not to resume military assistance to Pakistan (or to India); such assistance had been suspended in September 1965, during the war between Pakistan and India. Pakistan felt betrayed and was concerned about its security. On April 17, 1967, the foreign minister of Pakistan issued a statement which read, in part, as follows:

The recent American decision to stop arms supply is fraught with serious effect on Pakistan's security and, therefore, has caused us considerable concern as is apparent from the reaction all over the country. It is a well-known fact that most of our military equipment is of American origin. As against this, India's arms buildup in acquiring military equipment from diverse sources as well as in increasing its own production is too well-known.

It is apparent that the American decision to ban military supplies to Pakistan has emboldened India to become more intransigent in her attitude towards Pakistan.<sup>7</sup>

Pakistan lost interest in Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) and South East Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO). It initiated a process of gradual disengagement while formally still keeping its links with Washington. There was strong popular resentment against the United States' unilateral action in cutting off military aid. The people demanded that Pakistan should break away from all pacts. But President Ayub, desirous of continuity of close ties with the Americans, rebutting the popular sentiments in his "speech to the nation", said, that "such an emotional reaction is inconsistent with our dignity as a nation,"<sup>8</sup> meaning that this U.S. damaging action should be ignored.

The government of Pakistan was left unable to skillfully confront the situation created by the United States' stopping of military aid to Pakistan. However, some symbolic gestures were made to express Pakistan's dissatisfaction with the change in U.S. policy. Pakistani representatives did not attend the SEATO meeting held in Washington, D.C., in the late April 1967. It was reported in the press that "the green and white flag bearing star and crescent was whisked away from the desk space allotted to Pakistanis...before reporters were allowed into the conference room."<sup>9</sup>

Mian Arshad Husain, who replaced Zulfikar Ali Bhutto as foreign minister, was forced by domestic sentiment to make a policy statement in the National Assembly. Speaking on the U.S.-sponsored defense pacts on June 28, 1968, the foreign minister said:

With a change in the world situation these pacts (CENTO and SEATO) have lost a good deal of their importance. Our own disenchantment with them was completed by the failure of some of our allies to assist at the time of Indian aggression in September 1965...Our interest is...confined to their cultural and economic activities with which there are some beneficial and useful projects. If we are continuing our membership of the pact (CENTO), it is out of deference to wishes of other members, especially Iran and Turkey.<sup>10</sup>

Pakistan's relations with the People's Republic of China became very dear to Pakistan because of China's forthright support of Pakistan's cause in 1965. But the United States and China were involved in a serious confrontation, particularly over Vietnam. Pakistan's independent position on the Vietnam issue became an irritant to the United States. Pakistan expressed its disagreement in the SEATO meeting held in 1956 and took exception to the condemnation of Beijing for its "alleged subversion in Vietnam and Laos and for violating the Geneva

agreements of 1954 and 1962".<sup>11</sup> According to a contemporary observer of the growing divergence between the policies of the U.S. and Pakistan:

The gradual hardening of Pakistan attitude on Vietnam was a clear manifestation of its reservations about membership in the pacts (CENTO and SEATO). The socialist countries took note of Pakistan's independence. China, indeed, expressed appreciation of Pakistan's role within these pacts.<sup>12</sup>

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Pakistan's foreign minister during the Indo-Pakistan war and the architect of Pakistan's close relations with the People's Republic of China, felt that the United States' termination of military air "was to force both countries (Pakistan and India) into confrontation with China."<sup>13</sup> He was of the opinion that the United States had been "badly bogged down" in Vietnam and therefore would provide military assistance to only those countries that the United States would not waste its weapons on countries not involved in conflicts in which the U.S. had vital interests. Bhutto cited Robert McNamara, the U.S. secretary of defense, who made it clear in the spring of 1967 that only South Vietnam, South Korea, Thailand, the Philippines, and Taiwan would be receiving military hardware from the United States.<sup>14</sup> Bhutto noted that the countries mentioned by the American secretary of defense were "involved in the Vietnam conflict and cooperating with the United States' armed forces in one form or the other."<sup>15</sup>

Ironically, Pakistan's China policy that had irked the U.S. so much, particularly during 1962-1967, was soon to serve aims of U.S. diplomacy. The Nixon administration took a ninety-degree turn and decided to improve its relations with the People's Republic of China. During his visit to Pakistan in August 1969, Nixon is reported to have asked Yahya Khan to serve as a coordinator for talks between the U.S. and China. Yahya Khan agreed to act as a go-between, and a personal relationship was

established between the two leaders. Yahya Khan's efforts came to fruition when the U.S. secretary of state, Henry Kissinger, made his famous secret trip to Beijing via Islamabad in 1971 – a trip which turned out to be a prelude to Sino-American détente as well as to the Indo-Pakistan war of 1971 and the emergence of Bangladesh.

The crisis in East Pakistan started in early 1971, when President Yahya Khan refused to hand over power to the majority party – the Awami League, led by Sheikh Mujib-ur-Rehman – in the newly elected Parliament. With the deepening of the crisis in East Pakistan, the atrocities of the martial law regime grew to indecent proportions. This shattered Pakistan's image abroad and completely alienated the Congress, the media, and public opinion in the United States. The incompetent military junta in Islamabad totally failed in crisis management and subsequently in the military defence of East Pakistan.

The Nixon administration could do little to resolve the East Pakistan crisis, though as the fall of Dhaka to Indian troops became imminent, the U.S. pressured India to refrain from taking advantage in West Pakistan. The overwhelming majority of the Bengali population, as a reaction to the "army action", became totally opposed to the concept of a united Pakistan. Moreover, the army had proved that it had become so inefficient during the long spells of martial law that it could not perform in a professional manner. It was naïve of Pakistan to rely on the United States to preserve Pakistan's integrity when its own armed forces could not resist that Indian offensive for even ten days. President Richard Nixon described the East Pakistan situation in the following words:

(On December 9, 1971) I authorized Admiral Moore to dispatch a task force of eight ships, including the nuclear aircraft carrier Enterprise, from Vietnam to the Bay of Bengal.

Finally, Yahya Khan recognized that he should follow the course of action we had been recommending: that he could no longer defend East Pakistan and he should concentrate his forces in the defense of West Pakistan, in which event I indicated he would have my complete support. On December 9, Pakistan accepted the UN General Assembly's call for a ceasefire. India rejected it, however, and tension was still rising along the border in West Pakistan, as I wrote another letter to Brezhnev (the Soviet leader) calling on him to join me in ending the crisis before we ourselves were dragged into it. I began by stating that, in our view, his proposal for the political independence of East Pakistan had been met by Pakistan's own action.<sup>16</sup>

In his memoirs, President Nixon explicitly expressed his distrust and disregard for the Indian leadership, of whom he wrote, "Those who resort to force, without making excuses, are bad enough but those who resort to force while preaching to others about their use of force deserve no sympathy whatsoever".

The 1971 crisis had clearly shown Pakistan that it could not depend on the alliance system or expect miracles from the United States. In the context of the East Pakistan crisis Nixon's and Kissinger's so-called tilt toward Pakistan was primarily symbolic. The people of Pakistan were disappointed over the United States' behaviour and feeling of distrust began to develop that was to last for many years to come.

In the 1970s, the Pakistan's strategic relations with the United States lost their significance. Pakistan's disillusionment with its alliance partner coincided with the emergence of the Gulf region. Pakistan's need for new sources of security and development could now be met by the growing economic power of the Gulf countries. The post-1971 era which began with the creation of Bangladesh witnessed the introduction of a new style and direction in Pakistan's foreign policy with the taking over of power

by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Chairman of the Pakistan People's Party, first as president and then as prime minister.

Pakistan's ties with the Gulf countries in particular and the Middle East region in general were cleverly managed by Bhutto. He saw, correctly, that the interests of Pakistan were connected with the countries situated on the western borders of Pakistan. The Simla Agreement of 1972 enabled Bhutto to bring back 90,000 Pakistani prisoners of war and recover the chunk of territory which had been captured by the Indians. Apart from the Simla Agreement, the emphasis of Pakistan's foreign policy remained with the Gulf and China. Pakistan under Bhutto, it seemed, had turned its back on South Asia. Prime Minister Bhutto thus saw to it that no power could ignore Pakistan in its policy calculations for Southwest Asia without placing itself at a serious disadvantage.

On its part, the U.S. while formulating its grand design for the Gulf – the twin pillar policy – the American policy makers ignored Pakistan's role in the region. The Americans realised the importance of Pakistan when, during the fourth Arab-Israeli war in 1973, Pakistani pilots took part in combat over Syria.

The Arab oil embargo of 1973 which followed the Arab-Israeli war annoyed the Americans, while Pakistan continued to support the Arab cause. Other issues added to the divergence of perceptions and policies between the U.S. and Pakistan, as well. The shift in U.S. policy toward South Asia became apparent when Henry Kissinger implied U.S. support for India's plan to dominate the region. During his visit to New Delhi in November 1974, Kissinger stated that "the size and position of India give it a special role of leadership in South Asia and world affairs".<sup>17</sup> This statement was extremely significant for Pakistan because it came in the wake of the dismemberment of Pakistan as a result of India's efforts and shortly after India's nuclear detonation. A signal had been sent to the Pakistani leadership that the U.S. was no longer ready to support Pakistan at the expense of India.

The U.S. policy of promoting India as a "regional influential" was due to its desire to distance India from the Soviet Union. The Shah of Iran had already been assigned this role in the Gulf region. It is interesting to note that during this period there was growing cooperation and collaboration between these two designated "regional influentials".

The change in the United States' perception of the strategic balance in the region naturally caused irritation and misgivings in Pakistan. Prime Minister Bhutto visited the United States in February 1975 to try to persuade the Americans to resume military aid to Pakistan. The Indian nuclear blast of May 18, 1974, and Pakistan's resulting sense of insecurity, must have persuaded the U.S. to reconsider its 1965 arms embargo. On February 23, 1975, immediately after Bhutto's visit, under Secretary of State Joseph Sisco announced the end of the arms embargo to Pakistan and India. A State Department spokesman, Robert Anderson explained the action:

India had received \$1,273 billion in arms aid from the Soviet Union between 1964 and 1973, while Pakistan received only \$24 million from Moscow. During the same period, the United States supplied Pakistan with \$160 million in material, including spare parts, and ammunition for arms the Pakistanis already owned, and India \$88 million. During the ten years period, India received \$1.697 billion in arms deliveries while Pakistan obtained \$851 million. I should emphasize that this is a "cash only" policy. We are planning to provide any equipment on a grant military assistance basis or on credit.<sup>18</sup>

Prime Minister Bhutto argued that the decision made by the United States was in fact the removal of an anomaly.

Now, the United States have lifted that embargo but the embargo has been lifted for both India and Pakistan. It has been lifted for sales of arms to Pakistan. The treaty (1959) provides for

gratis assistance of military aid to Pakistan. But here it is not "gratis", it is a question of sale of arms to Pakistan, on a case-by-case basis...I do not understand why so much exaggerated importance is being attached to this decision in India.<sup>19</sup>

Bhutto's search for a nuclear counter to India pressure was seen as a threat to American policy of controlling nuclear proliferation. The U.S. was adopting a discriminatory nonproliferation policy around the world. Pakistan became a target of the nonproliferation policy while such nations as Israel and South Africa, which had already crossed the nuclear threshold, were ignored, and even India was treated leniently. Pakistan had refused to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty when it came into being on March 5, 1970, saying that it would sign the treaty only if India did the same. The United States regarded Pakistan's nuclear program as being defense oriented. Whereas Pakistan claimed that it was for peaceful purposes.

Pakistan had signed an agreement with France on March 18, 1976, by buy a fuel reprocessing plant. The U.S. reacted sharply against this agreement, arguing that Pakistan intended to use the plant to develop nuclear weapons. France came under tremendous pressure to cancel the agreement, and on December 16, 1976, discontinued the export of reprocessing facilities to Pakistan.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, American development aid to Pakistan was suspended in April 1979. The U.S. policymakers did not realize that such methods would in the long run be counterproductive, as Pakistan would eventually build a nuclear facility on its own, and without safeguards, while the French reprocessing policy was to be under safeguards. The United States' policy generated ill will between the two countries, which began to drift away from each other. The administration in Washington, D.C. failed to understand that Pakistan was subjected to tremendous political and military pressures from India, and that all means of defending its territorial integrity had to be explored. Pakistan's desire to develop a nuclear facility did not necessarily mean that a nuclear

device was in the offing; rather, the intention was to develop nuclear facilities and research to such an extent that the option of becoming a nuclear power remained a possibility.

Whatever the U.S. thought of Pakistan's nuclear program, the people of Pakistan regarded it as an important element of their security vis-a-vis India. For the average Pakistani, nuclear development became a sacred national duty, and those who opposed it were looked upon as enemies of the national cause. It is not surprising that Pakistan-U.S. relations plunged to a new low and even the seizure of power by the military did not improve the situation. In fact, it worsened. General Zia ul Haq continued the nuclear program and added to the American opposition by throttling democracy and violating human rights.

While giving an interview to Time magazine in March 1978, General Zia admitted that Pakistan's relations with the United States under President Carter's administration had reached "the lowest point". The main cause, he said, was the controversy over the nuclear reprocessing plant. General Zia called U.S. policy "unfair" and "real arm-twisting".<sup>21</sup> Explaining the nuclear reprocessing plant controversy, in another interview, General Zia Said:

In 1976, the agreement was reached with France within the knowledge and the presence of the representatives of the International Atomic Energy Commission (and) the Agreement was signed between the two free independent states of Pakistan and France. What has changed between 1976 and 1977 - that forced France to go back on their own word - to retract their steps? Nothing. The condition of Pakistan still remains the same; the condition of France still remains the same. The only change that took place was that the United States of America had a new President - President Carter who came with a program and crusade of fighting against nuclear proliferation - a very noble cause, we support it; but what happened? He tried with the

Germans, the Germans refused to go back on their word for providing a nuclear reprocessing plant to Brazil. He tried with South Africa who still have a nuclear reprocessing plant without international safeguards. They talked to India and India after their conversation not only have previous two nuclear plants, had a third nuclear reprocessing plant and refused to get them under the international safeguards. What are the results? The United States of America agreed to give them heavy water. They said you have it; have it in a big way; here is heavy water for your nuclear reprocessing plants.

The only poor country that President Carter could get hold of for achieving his aim was Pakistan and he forced France and President Giscard; somehow or the other. I think, he come under pressure from the United States and refused to give us plant.<sup>22</sup>

The United States' suspicion of Pakistan's nuclear program became a major impediment to any improvement in relations between the two countries. On August 14, 1979, the Pakistani government issued a strongly worded statement against the US policy. The statement read in part:

Pakistan has deeply regretted the escalation of campaign by the United States against Pakistan's nuclear program. The U.S. Ambassador was summoned to the Foreign Office here today and informed of the Government of Pakistan's serious concern over the escalation of the campaign of threats and intimidation in regard to Pakistan's peaceful nuclear program.<sup>23</sup>

US economic aid remained discontinued as a reaction to Pakistan uranium enrichment program. Moreover, in November of 1979 the United States' Embassy in Islamabad was burned down by a mob under the mistaken belief that America was behind the attack on the Great Mosque in Makkah. Several members of the Embassy staff died. Pakistan's relations with the United States were at their lowest when the Russians decided to invade

Afghanistan in 1979. This completely changed the American perspective on Pakistan.

The changes that occurred both in Afghanistan and in Iran brought the United States closer to the Pakistani perception of threat. It is ironic that President Carter, who stressed human rights criteria in the foreign policy endeavors, was compelled to support a dictatorial regime in Pakistan. General Zia gave the impression that he was prepared to replace the Shah of Iran to pursue American interests in the region, and that he would go to any extent in order to do so. He even risked annoying the new Iranian regime by issuing hostile statements toward Iran. It should be mentioned here that General Zia was the first ruler after the inception of Pakistan to adopt a hostile attitude toward Iran. He was critical of the U.S. for not coming to the rescue of the Shah of Iran. Answering a question on the change of government in Iran in an interview to CBS television in Rawalpindi on February 22, 1979, he said: "I think it is the result of the American policies in this region which we are now seeing. The American administration has not been able to realize what is going on. They have been too late in all instances".<sup>24</sup>

When General Zia visited Washington in December 1982, he had a detailed discussion with President Reagan and it was reported that there existed now "an identity or a similarity of approach to such problems as [those in] Iran and Middle East".<sup>25</sup>

The military regime in Pakistan had expressed its concern regarding the increasing Soviet activity in Kabul in October 1979, shortly before the Russian invasion, and had pleaded with the United States for action. Pakistan's foreign affairs advisor, Agha Shahi explained to the American officials that the Afghan developments had affected Pakistan profoundly, the historical role of Afghanistan as a buffer had disappeared, and Pakistan found itself ill- prepared and ill-equipped to meet the military threat. The Pakistani advisor told the Americans that the time to do

something was now.<sup>26</sup> But this warning was not taken seriously by the U.S. until the presence of Russian tanks and soldiers became a reality in Afghanistan.

The United States was visibly upset by the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan, coming as it did on the heels of the developments in Iran. The US promised to grant all necessary help to Pakistan. On January 7, 1980, President Carter made the following statement:

The United States was visibly upset by the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan, coming as it did on the heels of the developments in Iran. The US promised to grant all necessary help to Pakistan. On January 7, 1980, President Carter made the following statement: "We have already assured President 'Zia, who is the leader of Pakistan, directly after the invasion, and since then through emissaries that we are willing to join other nations in giving necessary protection to Pakistan and meet their legitimate defensive military needs".<sup>27</sup>

American analysts regarded the April 27, 1978, coup in which President Daud was killed as the result of local rivalries and therefore, nationalistic in nature, while Pakistan and Iran were convinced that the change in Kabul had the Soviets' blessings and support. The US secretary of state said he had "information" suggesting that the Soviets were not a party to the coup.<sup>28</sup> In fact, according to a Pakistani analyst, the "US adopted a passive policy of wait and see. Diplomatic relations with Kabul were maintained and the modest economic aid program (\$20.6 million for 1978) was continued ... This policy was understandable as the coup did not bring about any qualitative change in the central strategic balance".<sup>29</sup> It was after the new regime in Kabul began to implement revolutionary policies that the US began to doubt the nationalistic nature of the change and to see the hidden hand of the Soviet Union.

The revolutionary changes that occurred in Iran from 1977 to

the beginning of 1979 were misread by the US State Department and mismanaged by President Carter. The Americans were taken by surprise by the strength of the anti-Shah forces which they attributed to the proSoviet elements in Iran. This single-minded policy analysis had the support of Zbigniew Brzezinski, the National Security Advisor, who in the later stages of the revolutionary movement suggested that the US prompt a military coup. General Robert Huyser visited Iran in the last days of the Shah to investigate the position and strength of the Iranian armed forces. But by that time the "military was already in the process of collapse".<sup>30</sup> These moves caused a backlash by the Iranian people and when the Shah was admitted to a New York hospital, on November 4, 1979 Iranian students in Tehran seized the American embassy. The American hostage issue dragged on for more than a year and created further hostility between the two countries. Although the hostages were finally allowed to leave Iran on the day Ronald Reagan was inaugurated in 1981, the damage had been done. As subsequent events showed the Americans had "lost" Iran. The US policy of creating "regional influentials" had failed, at least in this part of the world. The fallout of post-revolutionary Iran forced the US policy makers to reassess the Afghan situation and to reconsider the importance of Pakistan.

The United States must have been relieved to see that the Russian invasion of Afghanistan prompted worsening of relations between the Soviet and Iranian governments. The Iranian government condemned the Russian interference in and later invasion of Afghanistan in the strongest possible terms, and has remained steadfast in this policy. The Iranian President caned the Soviet invasion a "brutal intervention by looters and occupiers and a threat to Iran."<sup>31</sup> The worsening of Iran's relations with the United States had not precluded Iranian support to the Afghan people and their cause. The Russians complained about the Iranian government's hostility toward its northern neighbor on July 9, 1980. On August 13, the Iranians responded by presenting a list

of demands which, if met, could improve the ties between the two countries. This included the demand that the Soviets must withdraw from Afghanistan.<sup>32</sup>

The United States government, after assessing the worsening security situation in the region, decided to resume economic as well as military aid to Pakistan. On January 21, 1980, in his State of the Union message to Congress, President Carter pleaded for necessary assistance to Pakistan: "I am asking Congress, as the first order of business, to pass an economic and military aid package designed to assist Pakistan defend itself."<sup>33</sup>

General Zia rejected as "peanuts" the American offer of a \$400 million economic and military aid package. He said that the United States' proposed aid package was insufficient to ensure Pakistan's security and buys you greater animosity, particularly of another country, and a superpower, which now happens to be our neighbor. Pakistan's expectations from the United States were based on the fact that the latest threat to its security had come not from its eastern borders but from a Communist superpower. During the 1965 and 1971 wars between Pakistan and India, America's position had been that it would assist Pakistan militarily in case of Communist aggression or threat of aggression. The United States under President Carter was hesitant to make the kind of security commitment Pakistan expected. Negotiations between the two countries broke off and it was not until Ronald Reagan assumed the office of president in January 1981 that a meaningful dialogue took place.

The Reagan administration made successful efforts to get Pakistan exempted from the ambit of the Symington Amendment, and a six- year (1982-1987) package of \$ 3.2 billion in economic aid and military sales was agreed to by Congress. (The Symington Amendment prohibits the American government from providing assistance to nations that are importing unsafeguarded nuclear enrichment technology and materials.) As follow-on, another six-

year package of \$4.02 billion in economic and military aid was agreed to by congress, subject to the Pressler Amendment, which requires the US President to certify each year that Pakistan does not possess an atomic device before funds are disbursed. This certification was easily forthcoming during Reagan's tenure; however, before leaving office in January 1989, President Reagan wrote a letter to Congress expressing skepticism that the next President would be able to provide such certification.

The United States' aid to Pakistan attached no conditions for the establishment of military bases in Pakistan, nor was the Pakistan government expected to give up its nonaligned status. Announcing the acceptance of the US aid on September 15, 1981, a spokesman of the Government of Pakistan assured the nation that this would not compromise "our well known position on major international issues in regard to which our foreign policy has consistently maintained a principled stand. Similarly the development of bilateral relations with the United States will not affect our relationship with any third country".<sup>34</sup>

With the resumption of American economic as well as military aid to Pakistan, relations between the two countries attained an unprecedented cordiality and closeness. Pakistan's principled stand on Afghanistan earned the displeasure of the Soviet Union and the growing hostility of India. It had also to bear the burden of about three million Afghan refugees and to suffer a great loss of lives and property as a result of large-scale internal sabotage. The close Islamabad-Washington ties have further been vindicated by the Geneva Accords and the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan.

On the American side, the policy makers were under pressure from those who were concerned about America's providing aid to Pakistan. Four of the major causes of concern were identified by the American ambassador to Pakistan Ronald I. Spiers in a major policy statement on April 20, 1982, at Pakistan Institute of

International Affairs, Karachi.<sup>35</sup> There were (1) Indo-US relations, (2) Pakistan's nuclear program, (3) smuggling of narcotics, and (4) violation of human rights in Pakistan.

American public opinion was concerned with the question of alienating India while supporting Pakistan. There was a fairly strong feeling, especially among the Democratic Congressmen, that a balance had to be maintained between the two countries even though the Indian position on Afghanistan was completely different from that of the United States. President Reagan was able to maintain a balance between the military and economic requirements of Pakistan and the United States' relationship with India through the transfer of sophisticated technology to that country. America's distrust of Pakistan's nuclear program continued to be a problem. President Reagan was under tremendous pressure from Congress to secure guarantees from Pakistan regarding the nature of its nuclear program. It seems the bottom line here was that an atomic explosion by Pakistan would lead to an immediate cut-off of all aid.

America was concerned about narcotics in Pakistan, but appeared satisfied with the steps taken by Pakistan to curtail poppy production and to check the export of narcotics. The question of human rights in Pakistan continued to trouble America. The American ambassador declared bluntly:

It is no secret that the United States feels more comfortable and has the greatest political affinity with other democracies. The fact that Pakistan has a martial law government has been a source of continuing reservation among important sectors of opinion in the United States ... It is not for Americans to advise Pakistan on its internal political structure, but for many Americans one of the basic human rights is the right to participate in the political process.<sup>36</sup>

General Zia visited the United States in December 1982 and

held talks with the Reagan administration. In addition to signing an agreement to set up a Joint Commission on Economic, Commercial, Scientific, Technological, and Educational Cooperation on December 6, the Pakistani president projected his policy of defending Pakistan's sovereignty from the Soviet/Communist onslaught. On one occasion he pointed out that Pakistan considered itself "as a member of the free world and treats the United States as a beacon light of the free world."<sup>37</sup> Zia's visit to the United States was a personal success for the general, as his human rights record was not questioned and the "stability" he had brought to Pakistan was appreciated by the Reagan administration and the members of Congress.

Foreign Minister Sahabzada Yaqub Khan, addressing the foreign policy debate on December 24, 1985, in the National Assembly, replied to the critics who suggested that Pakistan's foreign policy toward Afghanistan was being directed by the United States so as to pursue its own security and political interests. The foreign minister refuted these charges by making it clear that the US was not involved in the foreign policy making process of Pakistan, and that Pakistan formed its policy according to its own national interest. He argued:

There are unfortunately some critics of our policies who go to the extent of suggesting that our policy towards Afghanistan is formulated at the behest of American interest rather than our own. The suggestion is as shameful as it is groundless. Pakistan's principled policy towards the Afghanistan situation and its search for a negotiated political settlement based on principles has been endorsed by successive UN resolutions which have the overwhelming support of the international community. The US is only one of 122 countries in this respect. The convergence of our perception of the situation in Afghanistan with that of the US can hardly be cited as evidence that our policy is dictated by America. On the contrary, all it establishes is that the United States, like 122 other members of the international community, shares a

respect for the basic principles of inter-state conduct.<sup>38</sup>

Some critics accused Zia of accepting dictation from the US on Afghanistan. However better informed critics knew that their relationship was not based on anything but congruence of perceptions. The presence of Soviet troops at Pakistan's border, with few indications of their long-term intentions, made Pakistan insecure. Moreover, India's hostile gesture in not condemning the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan made matters more difficult for Pakistan. Since Pakistan's own resources were inadequate to meet the challenge it welcomed assistance from friendly countries not only the US.

The single most positive development that occurred between the two countries was the American decision to provide Pakistan with the sophisticated F-16 aircraft. The F-16s, apart from discouraging Afghan violations of Pakistan airspace, were to add to Pakistan's overall defense capability vis-a-vis its eastern neighbor India. The government of Pakistan had to justify to the public the necessity of its new relationship with the United States, and the F-16 became a test case for the new contacts between the two countries. The U.S. signed an agreement in Washington, D.C., on December 5, 1981, to sell F-16s to Pakistan. The first batch of six of these highly sophisticated aircraft was paid for in cash and was delivered before December 1982. The remaining 34 aircraft were delivered to the Pakistan Air Force by the end of 1985. These aircraft were provided to Pakistan for purely defensive purposes, and according to a US official the defense-oriented deal was of a modest nature. In the initial stages the aircraft were not fitted with an essential electronic component known as ALR 69. However, that particular snag was removed after Pakistan insisted on receiving the aircraft with its original capability.

Under Secretary of State James Buckley told a Congressional committee that supplying these aircraft to Pakistan would not

upset the balance of power in the South Asian region, and that the only intention of this agreement was to "deter attacks across the Afghan border".<sup>39</sup> Buckley allayed Congress fears that the F-16s would encourage an arms race between Pakistan and India, arguing that India possessed a very large well-equipped, well-trained military establishment that provided it with a decisive superiority over Pakistan in the air as well as on the ground. Given the large numbers of advanced aircraft which the Indian already had or would receive from the Soviets and the United Kingdom, they would emerge six years later with an even greater edge over the Pakistanis notwithstanding the addition of 40 F-16s to the latter's inventory.<sup>40</sup>

In 1986 the Pakistani government told the U.S. that Afghan aircraft were carrying out sneak attacks on the camps of the Afghan refugees in Pakistan and that the radar protection afforded by the high mountains allowed Afghan aircraft to escape. When the Pakistani aircraft went into action, the Afghan intruders would quickly return to their bases, which were near the Pak-Afghan border, Pakistan's air force could be effective against these attacks only if it could maintain a constant air patrol on the 1,500-mile border with Afghanistan. With the increase in Afghan raids on Pakistani territory, the government started to put pressure on the US provide Pakistan with AWACS (Airborne Warning and Control System) aircraft. The press in the United States revealed on April 27, 1987, that Prime Minister Junejo had written a letter to President Reagan asking that A WACS be supplied immediately on "lease." Pakistan's request became lost in the confusion surrounding the technical debate over the utility of the AWACS and the comparative advantage of other radar systems.

Prime Minister Mohammad Khan Junejo visited the United States in July 1986. In addition to meeting with President Reagan, he held talks with former secretary of state Henry Kissinger. The meeting between Reagan and Junejo centered around such vital issues as Afghanistan, Pakistan's nuclear program and narcotics.

President Reagan recognized the need for very strong support for Pakistan to ensure its security, which had been challenged by the presence of the large number of Soviet troops in Afghanistan. The joint statement issued during Prime Minister Junejo's visit read in part:

Both leaders agreed on the urgent need for a political settlement of the Afghanistan problem consistent with the principle enunciated in the seven resolutions adopted by overwhelming majorities in the United Nations General Assembly. The President expressed his strong support for Pakistan's sustained efforts to promote such a peaceful settlement of the brutal conflict imposed upon the Afghan people. They expressed the hope that at the forthcoming round of the Geneva proximity talks under the auspices of the personal representative of the UN Secretary General, the Kabul side will put forward a short timetable for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan.

The President expressed his admiration for Pakistan's courage in standing up to Soviet pressures through Afghanistan and for its selfless provision of humanitarian relief to three million Afghans who have fled to Pakistan in the last seven years ... The two leaders expressed the hope that the (Afghan) Alliance will play an increasing role in bolstering international support for the cause of Afghan freedom.<sup>41</sup>

Although the two leaders were in harmony regarding the Afghanistan issue, there seemed to be serious apprehensions on the US side as far as the Pakistani nuclear program was concerned. Another point of considerable difference between the two nations was over the international narcotics traffic. In spite of the diplomatic language that is normally used in such statements, the American suspicion concerning these issues could not be hidden and was reflected in the joint statement.<sup>42</sup>

The United States' continuing doubt about Pakistan's nuclear program remained a sore point between the two countries. This attitude persisted even after repeated assurances given by the Pakistani government that its program was peaceful. On certain occasions the United States' accusations became very blunt and unfriendly. US Ambassador Deane Hinton on February 16, 1987, while addressing a gathering of intellectuals at the Institute of Strategic Studies in Islamabad, said that the US believed that Pakistan's nuclear program was not peaceful. He said there were "indications that Pakistan may be seeking a weapons capability which will generate tension and uncertainty"<sup>43</sup> The ambassador issued a veiled threat to Pakistan: He said that Pakistan should not compete in nuclear capability with India, as in the ultimate analysis, Pakistan would be the loser. The ambassador had no convincing answer to a member of the audience who suggested that the US had been applying a double standard when it came to its nuclear nonproliferation policy. Ambassador Hinton frankly linked US aid to Pakistan's nuclear program:

One must also consider the impact of a decision to acquire nuclear weapons on Pakistan's relations with other nations including the United States. Our ability under US law to provide economic and security assistance to Pakistan remains dependent on Pakistani restraint in the nuclear area. In 1985, Congress legislated a new annual requirement that, for our assistance program to continue, the President must certify that Pakistan does not have a nuclear explosive device and that our aid substantially reduces the risk it will obtain one. The President has twice so certified. For the future, I would note that it is open to question whether the President could so certify were he to conclude that Pakistan had in hand, but not assembled, all the needed components for a nuclear explosive device.<sup>44</sup>

The Ambassador asked the Pakistani government to sign the Nonproliferation Treaty or, as an alternative, to accept the opening of its nuclear facilities for inspection. Otherwise, the

ambassador added, Pakistan might risk losing US assistance. Just a few days after the ambassador's caution to Pakistan, the US administration issued a formal warning, saying that Pakistan should "stop its nuclear program or its economic and military aid (would) be suspended".<sup>45</sup> The Pakistan government brushed aside these pressure tactics and called them "inconsistent with the principle of sovereign equality".<sup>46</sup> In fact, the U.S. was applying a "twin-track" strategy - on the one hand, warning Pakistan against the continuation of its nuclear program, and on the other, trying to convince Congress to waive the nonproliferation rules for Pakistan so that the Soviet could be effectively countered in Afghanistan.<sup>47</sup>

In March 1987 the US House Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs, chaired by Stephen Solarz (who was known to be anti-Zia), opened its arguments on the question of the continuation of US aid to Pakistan. A series of objections were voiced in the committee meeting. Senator John Glenn, Chairman of the senate Government Affairs Committee, appearing before the subcommittee as a witness, strongly advocated the suspension of military assistance to Pakistan. This suggestion was opposed by the administration. Deputy Assistant of State Robert Peck, who also appeared before the Congressional subcommittee, said that the suspension of aid to Pakistan "would introduce the worst kind of uncertainty ... whatever influence we have over the thrust and direction of Pakistan's nuclear activities derives from our strong security links and any cut-off of aid by adding new restrictions would be counterproductive".<sup>48</sup>

On March 19 of the same year, the House subcommittee recommended certain conditions which were to be enforced while administering a proposed \$4.02 billion economic and military aid package to Pakistan. It suggested that the waiver of the Symington Amendment should be for only two years, and stipulated that Pakistan must adopt reliable and verifiable safeguards for its nuclear facilities. In the Senate subcommittee, Assistant Secretary

of State Richard Murphy while representing the administration warned the senators that "any shift to a policy of threat and ultimatum would decrease, not increase, the likelihood of our nonproliferation goal in South Asia which has been a central national concern for the Reagan administration and a key issue in the Pak-US relationship."<sup>49</sup>

While the question of granting aid to Pakistan was being debated in Congressional committees, the Government of Pakistan took a firm stance. The minister of state for foreign affairs, Zain Noorani, made it clear that Pakistan would not accept undue pressures from the United States. He said, "Pakistan's nuclear programme [*sic*] shall go on no matter difficulties we have to face and what sacrifices we have to undergo. In clear terms, he declared that Pakistan's peaceful nuclear program would be pursued and that no power could dissuade the national objectives. Replying to objections raised by members of the US Congress, the minister declared that Pakistan should never become a victim of discriminatory objections. He further stated that the US had the right to make any law it felt appropriate, but at the same time, Pakistan was equally competent to accept the American conditions or to resist them.

There is an influential lobby in the United States that believes that U.S. - Pakistan relations are of a "quicksand" nature; this lobby has advocated a complete disengagement from Pakistan, with little regard of the consequences.<sup>50</sup> Some other believe that with the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan the US policy of assistance in defense matters is "bound to become more difficult to sustain and in this regard mounting pressure on the U.S. - Pakistan alliance seem. The fact that these gloomy predictions have not come to pass shows that the U.S. - Pakistan relations had acquired a realism and maturity of their own.

The policy makers in both the U.S. and Pakistan, it seems,

have come to recognize that certain policy goals of each country have become intrinsic to its foreign policy. Pakistan's relations with its western neighbors - Iran and the Arab countries - and its support for the Palestinian cause cannot be undermined because of the American connection. Similarly, Pakistan cannot be expected to give up its autonomy in the nuclear field except in a regional contest.

Pakistani policy makers, for their part, now seem to accept American constraints in sharing their perceptions on India. U.S. relations with Pakistan and U.S. relations with India are no longer hostage to each other. This gives more flexibility to the United States' diplomacy in South Asia.

In the final analysis, the close collaboration between the US and Pakistan in the 1980s has justified itself in the fulfillment of the national interests of both countries. The Soviet forces had withdrawn from Afghanistan and Pakistan faced the future with greater confidence in its defense capability and economic potential under a democratic order.

### **An Exercise in Crises Management: 1990-2000**

The 1979-1989 decade of Pakistan-U.S. relations was characterized by close coordination between the two countries on Afghanistan, and therefore many irritants were either ignored or put aside. The logical consequence of the Soviet defeat in Afghanistan and later its collapse in 1989 was that Pakistan no longer remained relevant for the strategic interests of the U.S. Immediately, the relations between the two countries touched its lowest ebb when in October 1990, the U.S. President George Bush Senior invoked the Pressler Amendment by refusing to extend a certification to the Congress that Pakistan was not proceeding with its bomb related nuclear program. As a result, economic and military sanctions came into effect. The U.S. dealt harshly on this issue when it even withheld \$1.2 billion worth of military equipment, which Pakistan had already paid for before

1990, as a result of a contract. The Pakistani perception on the issue is reflected by twice appointed Pakistan's former Ambassador to the U.S.,

Pakistan also argued that the goal of nuclear nonproliferation could only be advanced in the region on an equitable and non-discriminatory basis and not by the imposition of penalties on one country, while overlooking the nuclear conduct of the country that started this race in the first place. Pakistan's security concerns vis-a-vis India, which had already demonstrated its nuclear weapons capability in 1974, and which enjoyed a conventional military force ratio of three to one, warranted the pursuit of a regional approach to nonproliferation. Pakistan could not, therefore, be expected to make unilateral concessions. While the US accepted this logic in principle, the continued application of Pressler sanctions was at variance with this declared policy.<sup>51</sup>

Relations between the two nations went to a crises phase when all the efforts were made to create tensions on issues of terrorism and narcotics, apart from the nuclear related confrontation. All this happened when the U.S. was in the process of constructing a new world order, in the aftermath of the bipolar world. Apart from that since 1988 Pakistan had geared back to a democratic era, which was weak and needed support from the free world. To make matters worse for the fragile democratic process in Pakistan, when in 1992/93 the U.S. threatened Pakistan to declare it a terror sponsor state. Once again a new set of sanctions were imposed in 1993 under MTCR (Missile Technological Control Regime) for receiving Chinese missile knowhow.

It was ultimately realized in Washington, that the sanction regime against Pakistan was a counterproductive exercise. As a result of U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry's visit to Pakistan in January 1995 and later Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's meeting with President Bill Clinton in April of the same year,

Clinton "signaled a shift away from the punitive approach that had been pursued thus far by the Washington".<sup>52</sup> At a joint news conference in Washington, D.C. President Clinton also highlighted some of the commonalities between the American and Pakistani policies, which could become a catalyst for a damage control between the two former allies. He spoke,

I want to thank Prime Minister Bhutto and the Pakistani officers and soldiers who have worked so closely with us in many peacekeeping operations around the globe, most recently in Haiti, where more than 800 Pakistanis are taking part in the United Nations operation.

On the issue of terrorism, I thank the Prime Minister for working with us to capture Ramzi Yusuf, one of the key suspects in the bombing in the World Trade Center. We also reviewed our joint efforts to bring to justice the cowardly terrorist who murdered two fine Americans in Karachi last month. I thanked the Prime Minister for Pakistan's effort in recent months to eradicate opium poppy cultivation, to destroy heroin laboratories, and just last week, to extradite two major traffickers to the United States. We would like this trend to continue.

Finally, the Prime Minister and I discussed the ambitious economic reform and privatization programs she has said will determine the wellbeing of the citizens of Pakistan and other Moslem nations.<sup>53</sup>

As a consequence of the American shift and to repair the damage, in May 1995 the U.S. Congress, in a near unanimous eased the Pressler sanction through an amendment initiated by Republican Senator, Hank Brown. That modification allowed non-military assistance to Pakistan and as a onetime waiver, released embargoed \$368 million military equipment.

There were at least three other factors which kept the relations between the two countries on the hook. One, when in response to the Indian blasts Pakistan detonated a series of nuclear devices in June 1998; yet another set of U.S. sanctions came into immediate effect. Two, the decade's old Afghan civil war and its repercussions leading to the presence of Osama bin Laden and his Al-Qaeda network had direct fallout on Pakistan. Three, the October 1999 military takeover in Pakistan became another irritant in the U.S.-Pakistan relations.

### **Foundation of a New Relationship**

At least until the September 11, 2001 terror attack, the Pakistan-U.S. bilateral relations were strained because of several differences of perceptions. In early half of 2001, the relationship revolved around at least three issues. The signing of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT); Pakistan's close ties with the Taliban and the military rule in Pakistan – all three casted a shadow on the bilateral relations of the two countries. The unresolved issue of F-16s and the diversified perceptions on the Kashmiri war of liberation also remained a cause of tense relations between the two former allies of the Cold War.

In the beginning of 2001, Pakistan was already reeling under a variety of sanctions imposed by the United States on various pretexts. The latest of the series came in the first week of September when Pakistan was blamed of receiving Chinese components for missile development and blamed for violating the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR). With that, Pakistan became the most sanctioned nation in the year 2001.

Pakistan was in fact associated with the 'Afghan Sanctions Regime' and the UN Security Council on behalf of the U.S. had criticized Kabul's "continued support for international terrorism, refusal to hand over Osama bin Laden and failure to comply with its resolutions". The Security Council declared that Afghan government must fully comply with the decision of the Council.

In a similar action by the Council, it was decided that more than 50 per cent of 15 UN monitors of the Sanctions Enforcement Support Team should be deployed at the Pak-Afghan borders to enforce arms transfer from Pakistan. A strong link between the Taliban and uncontrolled militant gangs in Pakistan were thus suspected by the United States. In April 2001, the U.S. State Department's Office of the Coordinator for Counter terrorism released a report called 'Patterns of Global Terrorism' for the year 2000.

The American administration expressed a strong conviction about a "trend of terrorism shifting from the Middle East to South Asia." The report exonerated the Indian government of any crime of 'State Terrorism' and instead implicated Pakistan regime's "support of the Kashmir insurgency, and Kashmiri militant groups continued to operate in Pakistan, rising funds and recruiting new cadres." On Pakistan's contacts with the Taliban, the report came to the conclusion: "Credible report indicate that Pakistan is providing the Taliban with material, fuel, funding, technical assistance, and military advisers." The report further referred to the failure of the Pakistani government to prevent Pakistanis from going to Afghanistan to support the Taliban.

The most damaging part of the report reads: "Islamabad also failed to take effective steps to curb the activities of certain Madrasas that serve as recruiting grounds for terrorism." Earlier the U.S. had accused the Taliban to provide a home for "international terrorists, particularly Osama bin Laden and his network in the portions of Afghanistan it controlled." The Pakistani officials were to refute the U.S. allegations, saying that it was not engaged in any terrorist activities in Kashmir. It is in all essence of logic a genuine freedom struggle by the Kashmiri people who are undergoing all kinds of atrocities under the state terrorism by India. On May 2, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a clarification saying, "The government of Pakistan is opposed to terrorism in all its forms and is committed to carrying

out its obligations arising from all ten international conventions on terrorism to which Pakistan is a party.”

Pakistan Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar visited the United States in June, 2001 where he tried to remove any misgivings about the relationship between the two countries. After talks with the American officials, the foreign minister remarked that he was successful in narrowing the gaps on issues relating to Afghanistan, terrorism and nonproliferation. While in reality the U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell told the visitor that Pakistan must sever its close ties with Taliban, strictly prevent proliferation and restore democracy. A wide gap of credibility existed between the two countries and the Americans believed that Pakistan’s argument that it had little influence on Kabul was a cover-up. The U.S. government seemed convinced that Pakistan was not complying with whatever it said in its policy statements; thereby a common ground for the normalcy of relations could not be laid.

Pakistan found it hard to cope with the post-nuclear economic sanctions imposed by the American-led grouping of industrialized nations. The misery was further aggravated as Pakistan heavily relies on international monetary linkages/financial assistance, with an added handicap of huge financial debt. In the backdrop of worsening relations between the two countries, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Christina B. Rocca visited Pakistan in the first week of August, 2001. During her visit, Pakistan’s foreign minister highlighted the focal concern when he insisted that the U.S. should lift economic sanctions against Pakistan. It seems that the Pakistani foreign minister could not comprehend the American mood or his country’s limitations and issued a statement on the Reuters Television on September 8 of the same year, in which he defended the Taliban, asked the world community to shun away from the ‘internal’ affairs of Afghanistan.

After the events of September 11, 2001 the whole structure of the U.S.-Pakistan relations underwent a series of revisions. The American president in a 'revengeful' mood to punish the attackers of the Twin Towers and the Pentagon issued a warning to the world at large by saying that "either you are with us or otherwise..." There was no third choice left. General Pervez Musharraf admitted that his decision to extend 'unstinted support' to the Americans against Afghanistan was taken under tremendous pressure. He further revealed that the "U.S. authorities had asked (him) to reply in definite terms whether Pakistan was a friend or foe of the United States". The U.S. had demanded of extending support, including the use of Pakistan's air-space, logistics and intelligence information. According to a leading newspaper of Pakistan: "Sources close to the government said the U.S. had left the president with no option other than extending the fullest support to Washington's endeavours (*sic*) against the Taliban".

The measures that Washington wanted Islamabad to take included allowing American troops to use naval facilities and airspace and sharing of all intelligence reports about Osama bin Laden's movement inside Afghanistan. Otherwise, the president told the politicians; Washington had warned that it would treat Pakistan as a country harboring terrorists. In that case, the president said, no strategic installations would have remained safe. "I could not take that risk." The sources quoted General Musharraf as having said that he could risk his life but he could not put the whole country at risk.

Soon after, the sanctions were lifted one after another as the American administration, ignoring the nature of regime in Pakistan sought desperately Pakistan's help in their war against Afghanistan. On September 22, 2001, the U.S. took a first step by removing the nuclear related sanctions. On September 29, President Bush applied another waiver when he lifted democracy sanctions clamped after the October 1999 military takeover.

When the U.S. military operations started the divergence of basic interests of the two countries widened, both in content and strategy. On at least three counts, the U.S. ignored the Pakistani policy positions. One, the President of Pakistan had repeatedly pleaded for a 'targeted bombing' so that the innocent Afghan people could be spared. On the contrary, the American planes bombed indiscriminately, killing the innocent civilians and even allowed the massacre by the Northern Alliance of the prisoners of war (PoWs) in places like Qila-e-Jangi prison. Secondly, while both the leaders stood side by side in front of the international electronic media, President Bush announced that as desired by Pakistan, the Northern Alliance forces would not enter Kabul. Thirdly, the bombing should pause during the month of Ramazan. General Musharraf in all his earnestness said: "One also needs to give serious consideration to having operations ceased during Ramazan because one should be very clear that it will have its negative fallout". On all these counts, the Pakistani positions were ignored and not even a rationale for the U.S. actions was presented to the Pakistani leadership. On November 3, Inter Services Public Relations Director General Major General Rashid Qureshi admitted to the journalists that the U.S. "was not disclosing details of its operational and tactical plans to Pakistan".

The American circles have always expressed deep apprehensions regarding the real intentions of the Pakistani establishment. Michael A. Sheehan, Coordinator for Counter terrorism, while testifying before the House International Relations Committee in July 2000 stated: "Pakistan has a mixed record on terrorism. Although it has cooperated with the United States and other countries on the arrest and extradition of terrorists, Pakistan has tolerated terrorists living and moving freely within its territory".

In spite of all the accusations and suspicion about Pakistan's intentions, by 2004 it was recognized by the American administration and the Congress that the difficult war in

Afghanistan requires Pakistan's cooperation and a close coordination in logistics, especially in the field of ground intelligence. As a gesture to woo dejected Pakistan, President George W. Bush in a statement on June 17, 2004 declared Pakistan to be a "major non-Nato ally of the United States for the purposes of the Arms Export Control Act." A BBC commentary explained that this move "is in recognition of Islamabad's contribution in the fight against al-Qaeda, and is being seen as Washington's way of saying thank-you. Pakistan will now enjoy a special security relationship with the US... Pakistan's new status means that it is now eligible for a series of benefits in the areas of foreign aid and defence [sic] co-operation, including priority delivery of defence [sic] items.... (but this) symbolism is more important than the substance."<sup>54</sup>

## **Conclusion**

On 2<sup>nd</sup> May of 2011, founder of al-Qaeda and most wanted on the American watch list, Osama bin Laden was killed in a military operation by the American Special Forces, well inside the Pakistani territory of Abbottabad. Immediately, it prompted a crisis between the two countries. The U.S. officials in anger addressed a number of questions to the Pakistani authorities, the main target being the military establishment and its spy agency, the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). According to an article in New York Time, "Tensions between the American and Pakistani governments intensified sharply...as senior Obama administration officials demanded answers to how Osama bin Laden managed to hide in Pakistan, and the Pakistani government issued a defiant statement calling the raid that killed the Al Qaeda leader 'an unauthorized unilateral action.'<sup>55</sup> As an instant follow-up, the U.S. Congress threatened to cut Pakistan's aid or at least reduce it, describing Pakistan as a "duplicitous ally". In a White House speech of June 22, of the same year, President Obama's while announcing a drawback of the American troops from Afghanistan, expressed his apprehensions about the presence of "safe-havens" in

Pakistan, vouching that he as President “will never tolerate a safe-haven for those who aim to kill us: they cannot elude us, nor escape the justice they deserve.”<sup>56</sup> The U.S. as mentioned before has long been suspicious of the Pakistani establishment’s intensions of its intimate dealing with various terrorist groups, which have agendas to harm the American interests in Afghanistan or beyond.

The post Osama tensions between the two countries will have a prolonged bearing on the relations between the two countries and once the Americans leave Afghanistan, their interests and relations with Pakistan, will see a steep decline, in the years to come.

In sum, as observed from the preceding discussions of Pakistan-U.S. problematic relationship, on a number of issues the perceptions of Pakistani public differ from that of the U.S., especially when it comes to India, Pakistan’s nuclear program and Afghanistan. There is a strong view in Pakistan that the U.S. administration feels more comfortable with military dictators than with the elected setups. The Pakistani public has long held an outlook that the ruling elite easily give way to the U.S. pressures and for their legitimacy look towards the support of Washington. These views have been confirmed by the recent revelations (2011) of WikiLeaks. While on the other hand, U.S. perceive Pakistan-U.S. relations from a regional/global perspective, where realpolitik overcomes all other considerations.

## **Notes and References**

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- 1 Senator John Kerry, one of the co-authors of the Bill gave a list of 8 Pakistani “Myths” regarding this financial legislation. In the same documents he responded to each “Myth”.

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- Myth 1: The \$7.5 billion authorized by the bill comes with strings attached for the people of Pakistan.
- Myth 2: The bill impinges on Pakistan's sovereignty.
- Myth 3: The bill places onerous conditions on US military aid to Pakistan that interfere in Pakistan's internal affairs and imply that Pakistan supports terrorism and nuclear proliferation.
- Myth 4: The bill requires US oversight on promotions and other internal operations of the Pakistani military.
- Myth 5: The bill expands the Predator program of drone attacks on targets within Pakistan.
- Myth 6: The bill funds activities within Pakistan by private US security firms, such as Dyncorp and Blackwater/Xe.
- Myth 7: The bill aims for an expanded US military footprint in Pakistan.
- Myth 8: The United States is expanding its physical footprint in Pakistan, using the bill as a justification for why the US Embassy in Islamabad needs more space and security.

For the American response see "Myths and facts about Kerry-Lugar bill", *Dawn*, 10 October, 2009.

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- 2 Syed Farooq Hasnat, "Hillary Converse with Real Pakistan", *The Nation*, November 15, 2009.
  - 3 Bill Roggio, "US hits Haqqani Network in North Waziristan, kills 8", *The Long War Journal*, February 24, 2010, (retrieved on October 06, 2010); [http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2010/02/us\\_hits\\_haqqani\\_netw\\_1.php](http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2010/02/us_hits_haqqani_netw_1.php)
  - 4 The American Drone (unmanned Aircraft) attacks, which began in 2004 increased to 117 in 2010. In 2008, there were 35 such attacks, while in 2009, 53 drones hit the Taliban and Al Qaeda sanctuaries inside the FATA region. So, far (till January 7, 2011) there have been a total of 219 such attacks, of which 158 in North Waziristan. These attacks have killed some key leaders of the terror organization but at the same time numerous civilians have lost their lives, including women and children.); Created by Bill Roggio and Alexander Mayer, "Charting the data for US airstrikes in Pakistan, 2004 – 2011", *The Long War Journal*; (retrieved on January 8, 2011); <http://www.longwarjournal.org/pakistan-strikes.php>
  - 5 British Commonwealth consists of the former colonies of the British Empire on these issues see Hassan Sohail, *Partition and Anglo Pakistan Relations, 1947-1951*, (Lahore, 1991)
  - 6 Abdul Sattar, *Pakistan's Foreign Policy, 1947-2005: A Concise History* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2007), P. 37.

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- 7 Statement by the Foreign Minister of Pakistan, April 17, 1967, *Dawn*, April 18, 1967.
  - 8 President Ayub's broadcast to the Nation, May 1, 1967. *The Pakistan Times*, April 15, 1967.
  - 9 *The Washington Post*, April 15, 1967.
  - 10 *Dawn*, June 29, 1968.
  - 11 G.W. Choudhury, *India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Major Powers* (New York: The Free Press, Macmillan Publishing Company, 1975), p. 11.
  - 12 *Ibid.*
  - 13 Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, *The Myth of Independence* (Lahore: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 102.
  - 14 *Ibid.*, pp. 102-103.
  - 15 *Ibid.*, p. 103.
  - 16 Richard Nixon, *The memoirs of Richard Nixon*, Vol. 1 (New York: Warner Books, 1978), pp. 654-655. The contents of Nixon's letter to Brezhnev as presented in the book are as follows: "This must be followed by an immediate cease-fire in the West. If this does not take place, we would have to conclude that there is in progress an act of aggression directed at the whole of Pakistan, a friendly country toward which we have obligations.

I, therefore, propose an immediate joint appeal for a complete cease-fire. Meanwhile, I urge you in the strongest terms to restrain India with which by

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virtue of your treaty, you have great influence and for whose actions you must share responsibility.

- 17 Henry A. Kissinger, "Toward a Global Community, the Common Course of India and America", *The Department of State Bulletin*, November 25, 1974.
- 18 Quoted in K. Arif (Ed.), *America-Pakistan Relations: Documents* (Lahore: Vanguard Books, 1984), pp. 309-310.
- 19 Bhutto's statement at a press conference, March 10, 1975. The Prime Minister made it clear that Pakistan would not give any bases in return for the resumption of sale of armament. He said, "It was a unilateral decision to be taken without exception of quid pro quo or reciprocity, why would there be any speculations at all that Pakistan has had to give something in return – Pakistan had to give nothing in return. And this brings me to the point that Pakistan has not given any bases whatsoever to any power, large or small, on its territory. This is a categorical statement I am making. *Dawn*, March 11, 1976. It may be noted that the 1959 Agreement was not a treaty (as Bhutto had stated) but an executive agreement did not provide for gratis arms supplies.
- 20 Shirin Tahir-Kheli, *The United States and Pakistan: The Evolution of an Influence Relationship* (New York: Praeger, 1982), p. 120.
- 21 *President of Pakistan, General Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq: Interviews to Foreign Media*, Vol. 1, March-December, 1978, (Islamabad: Ministry of Films and

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- Broadcasting, Government of Pakistan, 1979), p. 163.
- 22 *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, January-December, 1979, (Islamabad: Ministry of Films and Broadcasting, Government of Pakistan, 1980), pp. 369-370.
- 23 "Pakistan's Statement on the U.S. Campaign against its Peaceful Nuclear Program", *The Pakistan Times*, August 14, 1979.
- 24 President of Pakistan, *op.cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 369-370.
- 25 M. Fazal Imam's report on Zia's visit to U.S., *Dawn*, December 15, 1982.
- 26 Agha Shahi's statement, *Dawn*, October 30, 1979.
- 27 President Carter's interview with John Chancellor of NBC News on January 7, 1980, *Dawn*, January 9, 1980.
- 28 Cyrus Vance, *Hard Choices: Critical Years of American Foreign Policy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1983), p. 384.
- 29 Rais Ahmad Khan, "US Policy towards Afghanistan", *Pakistan Horizon*, No. 1 (1987), p. 68.
- 30 Richard W. Cottam, "The United States and Revolutionary Iran", in Hafeez Malik (Ed.), *Soviet-American Relations with Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan* (London: MacMillan, 1987), p. 225.
- 31 *The Guardian*, March 22, 1980.

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- 32 *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, May 22, 1981, p. 30882.
  - 33 President Carter's State of the Union Message to the Congress, January 21, 1980, *The New York Times*, January 22, 1980.
  - 34 Statement of the spokesman of the Government of Pakistan on the acceptance of the U.S. Aid Package, September 16, 1981.
  - 35 *Dawn*, April 21, 1982.
  - 36 *Ibid.*
  - 37 President of Pakistan, *op. cit.*, p. 163.
  - 38 *The Pakistan Times*, December 25, 1985.
  - 39 Statement by Under Secretary of State Buckley in the hearings before the Subcommittee on International Security and Scientific Affairs, International Economic Policy and Trade, and Asian and Pacific Affairs of the House of CFA on security and economic assistance to Pakistan, September 16, 1981. *The Pakistan Times*, September 18, 1981.
  - 40 *Ibid.*
  - 41 Joint statement issued during Premier Junejo's visit to the U.S., 16 July 1985, reproduced in *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol. XL, No. 1 (1987), p. 250.
  - 42 *Ibid.*
  - 43 *Pakistan Horizon*, Vol. XL, No. 1 (1987), p. 250.

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- 44 *Dawn*, February 17, 1987.
- 45 *Dawn*, February 27, 1987.
- 46 *Ibid.*
- 47 *Ibid.*
- 48 *The Economist*, March 10-14, 1987.
- 49 *Dawn*, March 11, 1987.
- 50 Robert G. Wirsing, "The Soviet Role in South Asia: Potential for Change", *unpublished paper* presented at Third United States – Pakistan Bilateral Forum, October 10-13, 1988, p. 28.
- 51 Maleeha Lodhi, "*The Pakistan – US Relationship*", <http://www.defencejournal.com/april98/pakistanus.htm>
- 52 *Ibid.*
- 53 "The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto of Pakistan", April 11, 1995, *The American Presidency Project*; <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=51220>
- 54 "Bush names Pakistan 'major ally' " *BBC News*, 17 June, 2004; <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/3814013.stm>
- 55 Steven Lee Myers and Jane Perlez, "Tensions rise as U.S. officials press Pakistan for answers," *The New York Times*, May 3, 2011. It was quoted in the same article that John O. Brennan, a White House

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adviser on counterterrorism remarked that he was concerned that Osama was there for such a long time and the local authorities showed their complete ignorance?

- 56 *ABC News*, June 22, 2011; <http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/transcript-obama-afghanistan-troop-withdrawal-full-speech/story?id=13906420&singlePage=true>

Pakistan–United States Relations refers to the bilateral relationship between Pakistan and the United States. On 20 October 1947, two months and six days after Pakistan's independence, the United States established relations with Pakistan, making it amongst the first nations to establish relations with the new state. Pakistan allied itself with the United States during the Cold war era against the Soviet Union, and was an integral player in the CENTO and SEATO alliances. Relations worsened in the