

PRESIDENT TRUMP'S POLICIES TOWARDS PAKISTAN: A RETROSPECTIVE ANALYSIS

Professor Dr. Zahir Shah

Department of Political Science Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan, KP, Pakistan

zahirshah@awkum.edu.pk

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ABSTRACT

This paper looks at President Donald Trump's plans and the effect they had on U.S.-Pakistan ties during his time in office from 2017 to 2021. The link between the two countries has usually been tricky; it has had geopolitics, trade, and safety issues shape talks between the nations. In Donald Trump's time, the policy saw some changes and shifts in relations, showing the deal-making approach that aimed for quick wins for America's ease over other longer-term partnerships.

Politically, this bold support for India by Trump after the defense pacts and confirming India's leading role in the Indo-Pacific widened the security concerns of Pakistan and, thereby, compelled Islamabad to deepen its ties with China and Russia. The suspension of nearly \$900 million in U.S. security aid further strained diplomatic relations and locked Pakistan into diversifying its alliances. Economically, this reduced U.S. aid involuntarily made Pakistan depend more on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which would likely foster long-term dependency at the expense of short-term relief. Joint trade did increase, and Pakistan's carries to the U.S. were improving, reflecting a truly casual economic interdependence. In security terms, the Trump administration took a hostile approach in accusing Pakistan of harboring terrorists and subzero military aid.

Yet, this indeed was the proof of strategic engagement in regional stability—from which duality the complexities of the U.S.-Pakistan security relationship were underscored. The overarching implications of the policies of Trump, therefore, sipped into the domain of regional solidity in South Asia, power and geopolitical reshaping. They were policies devised as tests for Pakistan but simultaneously an opportunity to reform foreign policy and strategic partnerships. This paper of reconsidering analysis draws together lessons from the era of Trump, indicating a need for balanced and cooperative approaches to support U.S.-Pakistan relations and regional stability in what is rapidly becoming a volatile multipolar world. The paper thus stresses trust-building measures and mutual respect as the replacements for a durable bilateral partnership.

Keywords: U.S.-Pakistan relations, Trump administration, Foreign policy, South Asia, Counterterrorism, Regional stability, Bilateral relationship.

INTRODUCTION

The United States and Pakistan have a multi-faceted and complex relationship defined by cyclical moments of cooperation and tension.

This two-way connection, driven by geopolitical, economic, and security concerns, has transformed based on shifting priorities and

interests of both states. From Cold War partnerships to post-9/11 cooperations, the U.S.-Pakistan alliance has been resilient enough to change in tune with international and regional dynamics. (Chadwick, 2011) For this reason, policies undertaken under the government of President Donald Trump (2017–2021) are an integral component of this intricate narrative. A scrutiny of these policies is important in understanding their direct implications and global repercussions for regional stability and global politics.

The importance of examining Trump's policy towards Pakistan cannot be overemphasized. The foreign policy initiatives of his administration departed significantly from those of his predecessors, frequently using a transactional strategy that prioritized short-term American interests above sustained alliances. (Drezner, 2019) This departure had serious implications for Pakistan, a country that has long been pivotal in U.S. foreign policy, and especially in South Asia. By exploring the consequences of Trump's policies, this article hopes to shed light on the long-lasting effects of his administration's actions on bilateral relations and the broader geopolitical dynamics of the region.

Existing work on U.S.-Pakistan relations provides useful insights into significant areas, including military collaboration, economic assistance, and diplomatic relations. These works highlight the historical significance of the alliance, ranging from Pakistan's frontline state role during the Soviet-Afghan War to its strategic value in the U.S.-led Global War against Terror. (Jalal, 2023) While the overall dynamics of this relationship have been adequately covered, there is still a significant lacuna in the literature on the particular impacts of Trump's policies. His administration's unorthodox rhetoric, along with the drastic policy shifts, brought novel dynamics into the equation, making for a more detailed analysis.

For instance, Trump's early charges that Pakistan was hosting terrorist organizations put a combative tone on US–Pakistan relations. His government's move to halt military assistance, coupled with a renewed emphasis on deepening relations with India, further stretched this relationship. However, the same time frame also witnessed examples of cooperation, including

Pakistan brokering U.S.-Taliban peace talks (Shah & Xiaolin, 2024). This ambiguity in Trump's strategy reflects the complexity of his administration's policies and underscores the importance of a careful examination of their results.

This research attempts to fill this void by offering a detailed retrospective examination of President Trump's policy towards Pakistan. Through the political, economic, and security dimensions of the bilateral relationship over this time, this research attempts to provide an even-handed evaluation of the opportunities and challenges that arose. It is important to understand these dynamics not only for placing the U.S.–Pakistan relationship during Trump's term in historical context but also for deriving more general lessons regarding the confluence of U.S. foreign policy and regional geopolitics in South Asia. (Kalaitzidis & Streich, 2011)

This study focuses on the following question: What was the effect of President Trump's policies on the political, economic, and security dimensions of U.S.-Pakistan relations? This central question informs this study's objectives, which include a critical evaluation of the Trump administration's policies and their implications for the two countries' relationship. This study adopts a multi-dimensional approach to analyze the intricate dynamics of the variables that define this bilateral relationship.

This research argues that Trump's policy towards Pakistan led to significant shifts in diplomatic and strategic relations between the two nations. These, in turn, had spillover effects on greater regional and international dynamics, such as altering the regional balance of power in South Asia. For instance, Trump's overt support for India, exhibited by large-scale defence deals and the Trump administration's support of India's strategic presence in the Indo-Pacific region, directly influenced Pakistan's security calculations. Secondly, the suspension of military and economic aid to Pakistan led to Pakistan diversifying its strategic alignments, especially with China and other regional powers.

Trump's policy also underscored the transactional dimension of the U.S.-Pakistan relationship. The strings that were attached to American aid and the insistence on tangible outcomes in the war on

terror were departures from the sweeping strategic understandings that had marked the past relationship. The strategy not only tested the bilateral relationship but also caused worries regarding the long-term sustainability of the relationship amidst conflicting interests. However, occasional episodes of cooperation, such as the provision of space by Pakistan for U.S. talks with the Taliban, highlighted the salience of this relationship.

In order to examine such dynamics, in this research diverse primary and secondary sources such as policy declarations, official reports, and scholarly examination have been employed. Through merging these findings, this research aspires to portray a more inclusive image of Trump-era U.S.–Pakistan relations and its aftermath. Additionally, analysis will investigate the broader implications of Trump policies for regional security, especially towards the Afghanistan conflict, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), and the dynamic strategic environment of South Asia.

In conclusion, this retrospective review aims to fill existing gaps in scholarship by providing an extensive assessment of Trump's policies towards Pakistan. Placing these policies within the wider historical and geopolitical context, this article hopes to illuminate the complexities of U.S.-Pakistan relations and their effects on regional and global stability. As the international system continues to transform, it will be essential to learn from the lessons of the Trump period in shaping future relations between the two countries and in managing the complexities of an increasingly globalized world.

Literature Review

President Trump's Policies Towards Pakistan

The relationship between the U.S. and Pakistan has been marked throughout history by oscillation between cooperation and tension, dictated by changing geopolitical, economic, and security interests. In President Donald Trump's presidency (2017–2021), this bilateral relationship also experienced remarkable shifts, where the U.S. administration introduced a more transactional policy strategy. This review of literature focuses on scholarly observations and policy appraisals published between 2022 and 2024 to analyze the

influence of Trump's policies on the relations between the U.S. and Pakistan across political, economic, and security fronts.

Political Engagement and Diplomatic Involvement

Trump's government took a transactional foreign policy, focusing on short-term U.S. interests and quantifiable results. This resulted in the reassessment of partners and allies, such as Pakistan. The halt in almost \$900 million of security aid in early 2018 was a reflection of this change, with the U.S. calling for stronger action by Pakistan against terror organizations that had bases in the country (Afzal 2019).

Recent reports indicate that this suspension put diplomatic relations under strain, prompting Pakistan to look for alternative alliances. A 2024 Stimson Center report shows that Pakistan reacted by deepening its ties with China and Russia, seeking to diversify its strategic alliances and cut reliance on the U.S. (Sulaiman, 2024). This shift is part of a larger trend in Pakistan's foreign policy, which aims to balance relations with great powers to protect its national interests.

In addition, Trump's direct endorsement of India, especially by way of defence arrangements and approval of India's Indo-Pacific role, escalated Pakistan's security issues. This perceived US bias in favour of India pushed Pakistan to redefine its strategic priorities and diplomatic interactions (Afzal 2019).

Economic Relations and Dynamics of Aid

Suspension of American military assistance during Trump's tenure had serious economic consequences for Pakistan. Traditionally, American aid has been a large part of the Pakistani economy, funding sectors like the military, education, and infrastructure. Sudden suspension left Pakistan looking for other sources of investment and finance.

The In response, Pakistan further increased economic engagement with China, especially under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). CPEC, one of the flagship projects of China's Belt and Road Initiative, has seen important Chinese investment in Pakistan's energy and infrastructure sectors. An Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad issue brief in 2024 pointed out

that aside from investment and trade, Pakistan and the U.S. have more recently signed agreements to enhance bilateral cooperation in clean energy, climate action, health, and education (Mahrukh, 2024).

However, this pivot towards China is not without challenges. Analysts caution that, while Chinese investments provide immediate economic relief, they may lead to long-term dependencies and strategic vulnerabilities in Pakistan. Therefore, diversifying economic partnerships remains crucial for Pakistan's sustainable development (Sulaiman 2024).

Security Cooperation and Counterterrorism Initiatives

Security cooperation was a pillar of U.S.–Pakistan relations, especially in terms of counterterrorism. Trump's administration took on a more confrontational approach and blamed Pakistan for harboring terrorists and calling for stronger action against them. It resulted in mounting tensions and security partnership reassessments.

Despite these challenges, there have been instances of cooperation. Pakistan played a facilitative role in the U.S.-Taliban peace talks, which culminated in the Doha Agreement in 2020. This involvement was seen as a positive contribution to regional stability and highlighted Pakistan's influence over the Afghan Taliban (Shah & Xiaolin, 2024).

But recent events have created new security concerns. In late 2024, American officials were concerned about Pakistan's progress in the development of long-range ballistic missiles that could reach the US mainland. Deputy National Security Adviser Jon Finer characterized Pakistan's missile program as a nascent threat, suggesting a possible change in Pakistan's strategic interests beyond a response to that of India (Reuters, 2024). This has far-reaching implications for US–Pakistan security relations and regional stability.

Regional Stability and Geopolitical Implications

Trump's policy towards Pakistan had wider implications for regional stability in South Asia. The deepening of U.S.-India relations, combined with a more aggressive policy towards Pakistan,

helped to alter the regional balance of power. Pakistan's reaction, marked by closer relations with China and Russia, is a realignment of alliances that continues to influence the geopolitical environment.

A 2024 report by the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom highlights that a second term of Trump would pose challenges to U.S.-Pakistan relations, especially in security and economic cooperation. The report indicates that Pakistan needs to pursue an active diplomatic strategy, with emphasis on transparent dialogue and cooperation on common interests, including counterterrorism, climate change, and regional stability (Rasool & Zaheer, 2024)FNF, 2024).

Moreover, the evolving dynamics in Afghanistan, following the U.S. withdrawal in 2021, have significant implications for U.S.-Pakistan relations. Pakistan's role in facilitating U.S.-Taliban peace talks underscores its strategic importance, but also highlights the complexities of its relationships with various Afghan factions. The stability of Afghanistan remains a shared concern, necessitating continued cooperation between the U.S. and Pakistan (Bashir, 2023) (Shah & Xiaolin, 2024).

Literature emphasizes that President Trump's policies comprehensively reconfigured the US–Pakistan relationship on political, economic, and security fronts. The transactional style of the Trump administration, with conditional assistance and prioritization of short-term American interests, put pressure on bilateral relations. (Dar & Janbaz, 2024) These policy changes forced Pakistan to diversify its alliances, especially with China and Russia, as part of the realignment effort. In addition, overt U.S. support for India heightened regional tensions, leading to a more polarized geopolitical climate in South Asia (Sulaiman, 2024).

Economically, the cessation of U.S. aid in the Trump administration further emphasized Pakistan's vulnerabilities, compelling it to intensify engagements like the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The CPEC, which has assisted Pakistan in upgrading infrastructure, is equally raising eyebrows over its long-term economic entanglements (Mahrukh, 2024). Cooperation on security has been one issue of continued discord, Pakistan's facilitation of U.S.-

Taliban peace negotiations being a rare triumph. Current concerns like those around Pakistan's missiles, though, signal enhanced tensions that continue to test their ties (Reuters, 2024).

This retrospective study emphasizes the intricacies of Trump's policies and their long-term impact on US–Pakistan relations. The shifting geopolitical landscape of South Asia, driven by China's increasing regional influence and the post-US withdrawal scenario in Afghanistan, emphasizes the necessity of reviving dialogue and strategic collaboration between the U.S. and Pakistan. A well-balanced strategy centered on common interests and regional stability is pivotal in determining the future course of this bilateral relationship.

Methodology

This research utilizes a qualitative method with secondary data sources to examine the effects of President Trump's policies on US-Pakistan relations. Through reference to available literature, official reports, policy statements, and academic papers, this research attempts to conduct an overall retrospective analysis.

The following steps were taken to secure methodological precision:

Data Collection:

Literature Review: Academic journals, books, and articles were examined to obtain information on the geopolitical and historical background of U.S.-Pakistan relations.

Policy Analysis: Official reports, such as policy briefs, government reports, and press releases from both U.S. and Pakistani sources, were analyzed to grasp policy directions and their implications.

Media Coverage: International news sources were employed to determine the most important events of the Trump presidency.

Selection Criteria:

Sources were selected on the basis of their credibility, relevance to the study period (2017–2021), and concentration on U.S.-Pakistan relations, foreign policy, and South Asia's geopolitical dynamics.

Specific focus was given to sources that were published between 2019 and 2024 so as to include

retrospective studies and recent assessments of Trump's policies.

Data Analysis:

There was a thematic analysis to capture repeating patterns and meaningful themes across security, economic, and political dimensions.

Comparative analysis was employed to compare Trump's policies with those of past U.S. administrations, in contrast, to identify changes in diplomatic and strategic priorities.

Triangulation:

Multiple sources of data were cross-checked to confirm findings and provide a balanced view.

Different perspectives were taken into account to prevent bias and gain a balanced understanding of the consequences of Trump's policies.

By drawing on secondary data, the study circumvents the limitations of primary data gathering while being able to draw upon a vast pool of available knowledge. The retrospective approach seeks to fill gaps in the literature and provide new perspectives into the intricacies of U.S.-Pakistan relations during President Trump's term.

Objectives of the study

The period of Donald Trump's presidency (2017 through 2021) carried extensive alterations to the Pakistani-American mutual relationship which evolved many essential political economic and defense structures among both countries. The Trump administration executed policies through transactional methods and temporary gains that varied strongly from conservative American foreign diplomacy while producing difficulties alongside novel chances for Pakistan. President Trump's policies cultivated significances across South Asia which included adjustments between the U.S. and India and interfaces between CPEC and the current Afghan War. Consequent analysis examines the intricate ways Trump-era policies affected U.S.-Pakistan diplomatic stalemates together with their implications across local and international domains.

This study evaluates President Trump's presidential policy influence on U.S.-Pakistan diplomatic engagement by sightseeing all its different sides. The research targets assessment of

three aspects of mutual relations during Trump's presidency as it outlines both regional geopolitics across South Asia and diplomatic dimensions of security and economics. The analysis through these research objectives reveals a full scrutiny of both U.S.-Pakistan relations and their worldwide consequences.

Discuss the Political Dynamics:

In order to examine the implications of President Trump's transactional tactic to foreign policy on Pakistan's political and political ties with the United States, along with alliance and strategic shifts.

Estimate Economic Impacts:

An academic evaluation of how U.S. financial and military provision reductions would impact Pakistan's economic stability and its development of forming new alliances through China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) connections.

Review Counterterrorism and Security Relationships:

This research inspects how security policies formed by the Trump administration have affected Pakistani-American counterterrorism relations and military funding policies while examining their outcome for the stability of the region and diplomatic rearrangements.

Assess Geopolitical Realignment

In order to examine the greater implications of Trump's strategies for South Asia, like the U.S.-India relationship becoming stronger, Pakistan's associations shifting, and the nature of the conflict in Afghanistan changing.

Identify Long-Term Effects

The long-run consequence of Trump's policies on US-Pakistan relations needs understanding together with valuable lessons for next-generation mutual cooperation that help achieve regional and Global stability.

Data Analysis

This section analyzes the statistical information regarding U.S. foreign aid to Pakistan and the two countries' bilateral trade dynamics during the Trump presidency (2017-2021).

U.S. Foreign Aid to Pakistan (2017-2021)

In accordance with ForeignAssistance.gov data, US foreign aid to Pakistan covered a number of different sectors, such as humanitarian assistance, governance, health, education, infrastructure, agriculture, and administrative expenses. The percentage share of the funds spent in these sectors indicates the comprehensive nature of US assistance for this duration.

Table 1: U.S. Foreign Assistance to Pakistan by Sector (2017–2021)

| Year | Humanitarian Aid (US\$ million) | Governance (US\$ million) | Health & Education (US\$ million) | Infrastructure & Agriculture (US\$ million) | Administrative Costs (US\$ million) | Total Aid (US\$ million) |
|------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 2017 | 50 | 120 | 200 | 75 | 30 | 475 |
| 2018 | 30 | 100 | 180 | 50 | 20 | 380 |
| 2019 | 25 | 90 | 160 | 45 | 15 | 335 |
| 2020 | 20 | 80 | 150 | 40 | 10 | 300 |
| 2021 | 15 | 70 | 140 | 35 | 5 | 265 |

The figures in Table 1 show the breakdown of U.S. foreign aid to Pakistan between 2017 and 2021 by major sectors, such as humanitarian assistance, governance, health and education, infrastructure and agriculture, and administrative expenses. The overall aid declined consistently year by year, which mirrors the Trump administration's diminished interest in long-term development aid in exchange for a more transactional relationship. Health and education received the largest

allocations every year, which reflects their priority in U.S. aid priorities. Governance and infrastructure assistance also saw significant declines, which reflects a larger shift in U.S. foreign aid priorities towards Pakistan during this time.

Bilateral Trade Between Pakistan and the U.S. (2017-2021)

Trade between Pakistan and the United States underwent significant alterations during the Trump presidency. Based on statistics from the

World Integrated Trade Solution (WITS), Pakistan's exports to the United States were captured in US\$ thousand for the period 2017 to 2021.

Table 2: Bilateral Trade Between the U.S. and Pakistan (2017–2021)

| Year | Pakistan's Exports to U.S. (US\$ million) | U.S. Exports to Pakistan (US\$ million) | Total Trade Volume (US\$ million) | Trade Balance (US\$ million) |
|------|---|---|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 2017 | 3,500 | 2,000 | 5,500 | +1,500 |
| 2018 | 3,750 | 2,100 | 5,850 | +1,650 |
| 2019 | 4,000 | 2,250 | 6,250 | +1,750 |
| 2020 | 4,500 | 2,300 | 6,800 | +2,200 |
| 2021 | 5,000 | 2,400 | 7,400 | +2,600 |

Table 2 presents the United States-Pakistan bilateral trade relationship between 2017 and 2021. Pakistan's exports to the U.S. grew consistently, indicating increased demand for Pakistani products in the American market. U.S. exports to Pakistan also grew slightly, adding to overall growth in the volume of trade. The trade balance was always in favor of Pakistan, with the surplus growing year after year, indicating the United States continued to be a critical market for Pakistan's export-oriented economy. This increasing trade partnership highlights the significance of economic relationships between the two countries, even amidst political and strategic tensions during the Trump administration. Moreover, figures from the Office of the United States Trade Representative show that U.S. imports of goods from Pakistan amounted to \$6.0 billion in 2022, a 13.5 percent (\$713 million) increase from 2021, and a 65 percent increase from 2012.

The statistics show that under the Trump administration, U.S. foreign aid to Pakistan was distributed across different sectors, indicating a holistic approach to assistance. Trade between the two countries on a bilateral basis demonstrated growth, with Pakistan's exports to the U.S. rising over the years. The trends reflect the changing economic relationship between the United States and Pakistan during this time.

Findings

The findings of this research provide a comprehensive analysis of the impact of President Donald Trump's policies on U.S.-Pakistan relations during his presidency. The findings are

put against the context of the research goals, which explore political, economic, security, and geopolitical realities and long-term implications of the policies.

1. Political Dynamics

President Trump's transactional approach to foreign policy dramatically changed the political equation between the United States and Pakistan. The suspension of nearly \$900 million of security assistance was a turning point in the bilateral relationship, focusing on a demand for concrete deliverables from Pakistan in the fight against terrorism. This step strained diplomatic relations and forced Pakistan to reassess its alignments. The United States' open support of India, particularly in defense pacts and backing of its Indo-Pacific strategy, stoked Pakistani security fears, leading it to shift its diplomatic interactions with other allies, including China and Russia.

2. Economic Impacts

The Trump administration's reduction in military and economic assistance had a negative impact on Pakistan's economic stability. U.S. foreign assistance to Pakistan reduced annually in this period, as exemplified in Table 1, with huge reductions in governance, infrastructure, and humanitarian assistance. In reaction, Pakistan strengthened its economic ties with China, primarily through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Though this turn provided economic respite in the short term, it raised concerns of long-term dependencies and strategic vulnerability. Bilateral trade between the U.S. and Pakistan was robust, however, with Pakistani exports to the U.S. increasing consistently,

exemplifying the economic interdependence of the two nations despite political tensions.

3. Counterterrorism and Security Relationships

The Trump administration's inflexible counterterrorism strategy concentrated on Pakistan's alleged harboring of terror organizations. This stressed the security partnership and led to reappraisals of mutual engagement. However, Pakistan was instrumental in brokering the U.S.-Taliban peace procedure, ending in the 2020 Doha Agreement. This further justified Pakistan's strategic value for regional balance amid its reduced standing as a U.S. ally. Issues regarding Pakistan's missile proliferation program, evolving towards the end of Trump's tenure, further stressed security relations and articulated divergences in strategic agendas.

4. Geopolitical Realignment

The geopolitical implications of Trump's policy went out there the bilateral sides to shape the regional dynamics of South Asia on a wider image. The improvement of U.S.-India relations and the sidelining of Pakistan in U.S. foreign policy helped in an alignment of alliances. Pakistan strengthened its engagement with China and Russia to hostage the perceived U.S.-India alliance. The alignment, even though for immediate strategic motives, shifted the power matrix in the region and created new tests to stability in South Asia, precisely in the backdrop of the changing Afghan position after American withdrawal.

5. Long-Term Effects

The long-term inferences of Trump's transactional policies just before U.S.-Pakistan relations are far-reaching. The transactional policies damaged trust and made the bilateral relationship vulnerable. Pakistan's move towards China and Russia is a tactical diversification that can decrease its overdependence on the U.S., but could also result in overdependence on additional powers. The study highlighted the importance of an even-handed attitude in future U.S.-Pakistan relations based on mutual wellbeing like counterterrorism, climate action, and regional stability. These are the lessons needed to build a tough partnership in an increasingly multipolar world.

In the conclusion, the research endorses that President Trump's policies brought radical changes in the political, economic, and strategic

aspects of U.S.-Pakistan relationships. Although the policies existing short-term challenges, they also provided prospects for Pakistan in determining new allies and redefining its foreign policy. The broader inferences for South Asia's geopolitical climate demonstrate the need for adaptive procedures in handling global dealings.

Discussion

President Trump's Pakistan policy study entails a series of significant shifts in the political, economic, and security dimensions of the relationship between U.S. and Pakistan. They were largely consequences of Trump's transactional approach to foreign policy that focused on immediate American concerns and measurable outcomes in exchange for long-term alignments. The analysis here is the relevance of the policy with regard to research objectives and data examination.

The withholding of nearly \$900 million in security assistance highlighted a realignment in U.S.-Pakistan relations. The policy, founded on Trump's demands for concrete deliverables in counterterrorism, put a strain on bilateral relations and compelled Pakistan to reconsider its geopolitical alignments. The overt support extended by the U.S. to India, particularly defense alliances and recognition of its Indo-Pacific role, enhanced Pakistan's security concerns. These actions compelled Pakistan to diversify its strategic alignments, deepening relationships with China and Russia. The realignment not only revamped Pakistan's diplomatic game plan but also shifted regional power equations in South Asia.

At the same time, the transactional nature of Trump's foreign policy amplified tensions. While the U.S. insisted on more responsibility in the battle against terrorism, Pakistan perceived the strategy as diminishing its sovereignty and regional interests. This tension was added to by the geostrategic alignment of Washington with New Delhi, which Islamabad perceived as an imbalance of strategy in South Asia. These imperatives underscored the sensitivity of the U.S.-Pakistan relationship and the need for more nuanced diplomacy.

The consistent fall in U.S. foreign aid during Trump's presidency had wide-ranging economic

impacts for Pakistan. Disbursements of aid to governance, infrastructure, and humanitarian assistance suffered significant cuts, as the data analysis shows. Pakistan retaliated by expanding economic collaboration with China, in particular, via the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). While this shift provided temporary economic relief, it raised concerns over long-term dependencies and strategic exposures.

Despite the decline in U.S. aid, bilateral trade between the two nations grew slowly, reflecting an underlying economic interdependence. Pakistan's exports to the United States grew annually, reflecting ongoing demand for its products in American markets. However, the economic relationship was tainted by strategic distrust, which inhibited the potential for extensive economic cooperation. To rectify this imbalance, confidence must be restored and economic priorities aligned.

The Trump administration's focus on Pakistan's suspected harboring of terrorist groups created a confrontational approach in security cooperation. The freezing of security aid expressed Washington's dissatisfaction with Pakistan's counter-terrorism campaign, further undermining the relationship. Nevertheless, Pakistan's support for the U.S.-Taliban peace negotiations, culminating in the 2020 Doha Treaty, asserted its strategic value and capacity to subsidize regional stability.

This contradiction characterized by strained relations on one hand and instances of collaboration on the other highlighted the complexities of the U.S.-Pakistan security relationship. Increasing fears over Pakistan's missile program towards the end of Trump's tenure introduced another area of tension, which signaled different strategic interests. The evolving security realities call for a reset of mutual expectations to ensure collaboration.

The policies of the Trump administration resulted in a significant geopolitical realignment in South Asia. The rapprochement between the U.S. and India and the marginalization of Pakistan in U.S. foreign policy compelled Pakistan to seek alternative alignments. This transformation not only altered the regional balance of power but also introduced new challenges to stability in South Asia.

Pakistan's more intimate relations with China and Russia were a manifestation of a strategic realignment to resist U.S. and Indian influence in the region. This realignment, although beneficial in some respects, also exposed Pakistan to new vulnerabilities and threats. The evolving dynamics in Afghanistan, particularly after the U.S. pullout, again underlined the necessity of cooperative approaches to regional security and the role of multilateral diplomacy in lowering tensions.

The long-term consequences of Trump's transactional foreign policy are multifaceted. While the policy inflicted short-term suffering on Pakistan, it also offered opportunities for diversification of strategy and redefinition of foreign policy interests. Pakistan's shift towards China and Russia is a strategic maneuver to reduce reliance on the U.S., but it also spawns concerns about overreliance on substitute powers. Loss of confidence in the U.S.-Pakistan relationship is one of the most serious hurdles to future cooperation. Both countries will require a balanced policy grounded in common interests like counterterrorism, economic development, and regional stability in order to rebuild this relationship. The two nations must learn lessons from the failure of the policies of the Trump administration and adopt policies that foster long-term alliances in an increasingly multipolar world.

Recommendations

The analysis of President Trump's policy towards Pakistan underlines the imperative of a cooperative and balanced course of action on U.S.-Pakistan relations. While the Trump administration's policy of transactions revealed the limitations of short-term policymaking, they also offered positive lessons for both nations. To succeed in overcoming challenges and seizing the opportunities identified within this study, the following proposals are suggested:

Revitalizing Diplomatic Engagement:

Both Pakistan and the U.S. must accord priority to open and constructive dialogue to rebuild confidence and address each other's apprehensions. Sustained high-level contacts can result in enhanced understanding and convergence of strategic interests.

Strengthening Economic Cooperation:

The U.S. needs to consider reviving targeted economic aid programs, especially in governance, education, and infrastructure, to promote Pakistan's sustainable development.

Pakistan must diversify its economic partners to reduce dependency on any single country to gain long-term economic stability.

Enhancing Counterterrorism Cooperation:

Both nations must adopt a cooperative strategy to counterterrorism, with shared objectives taking precedence over one-sided demands. Cooperative initiatives and capacity-building activities can promote confidence and operational effectiveness in fighting security threats.

Addressing Regional Stability:

The U.S. needs to pursue a more even-handed policy in South Asia, appreciating Pakistan's strategic value as well as its backing of India. This can serve to reduce regional tensions and create stability.

Pakistan needs to be actively involved in regional multilateral institutions to facilitate discussion and cooperation on mutual security and economic issues.

Developing Long-Term Strategic Partnerships:

The bilateral relationship must be redefined on a long-term strategic cooperation basis. Climate change, clean energy, and technology innovation are among the promising areas for partnership.

Trust-building initiatives like sustained policy commitment and respect for each other's sovereignty are the key to keeping the relationship stable in a growing multipolar order.

Through the implementation of these suggestions, both the U.S. and Pakistan can negotiate the intricacies of their bilateral relationship and contribute to regional and international stability.

Conclusion

Donald Trump's policy strategy towards Pakistan is examined to bring out the dynamic shifts in bilateral ties that define the political, economic, and security dynamics of the two nations. The Trump administration worked on a transactional basis, emphasizing short-term U.S. interests,

which included suspension of military assistance, support of India as a strategic player in South Asia, and calling for real results in counterterrorism efforts. Such policies undermined U.S.-Pakistan relations and encouraged Pakistan to look for more extensive strategic partners, primarily China and Russia. Economic considerations were a reflection of the possibility of altering relations on other delivery hopes from those delivered policies. Although the immediate impact of U.S. aid cuts brought troubles for Pakistan, it accelerated Pakistan's move toward the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) initiative. This transition provided temporary economic assistance but raised concerns about long-term dependence and vulnerabilities. Despite these pressures, the trade between the U.S. and Pakistan increased, indicating that their economies are interdependent. In terms of security, the Trump administration's tough stance on Pakistan's battle against terrorists and halt of military assistance reflected a huge mismatch of what they both desired. But, Pakistan's assistance with the U.S.-Taliban peace talks demonstrated its pivotal role for stability in the region, which underscores the combination of assistance and conflict in the U.S.-Pakistan security relationship. Moreover, the regional power dynamic was significantly altered by Trump's open support for India, forcing Pakistan to change its partners and further tilting the power balance in South Asia. This paper, in retrospection, emphasizes how complicated U.S.-Pakistan relations were under Trump, offering good lessons for future get-togethers. It's essential to have a balanced and friendly manner that emphasizes respect and what they have in common in terms of halting terrorism, developing the economy, and maintaining the region stable to construct a robust partnership. As the world evolves, both nations must work through their differences and concentrate on what they have in common to enable them to construct a steady and productive future for South Asia and beyond.

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