



**RESEARCH PAPER**

**Divergence of Pak-US Relations during Donald Trump Administration**

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**ABSTRACT**

The objectives of this study is to examine the key political, strategic, and economic factors that contributed to the deterioration of relations between the two nations from 2017 to 2021. The background of the Pak-US relations during the President Donald Trump administration stems from long-standing mistrust, particularly over Pakistan's role in counterterrorism efforts in Afghanistan. The qualitative data has been collected from academic literature, official government statements, policy documents. The study reveals that Pak-US relations began to fail during the Donald Trump administration due to conflicting strategic interests and growing confusion. Pakistan began to pivot more strongly toward China and other regional allies reducing its reliance on the United States. The overall outcome was a weakened partnership with reduced cooperation in security, economic, and diplomatic spheres. To rebuild trust and cooperation, both Pakistan and the United States should re-establish structured diplomatic dialogues focused on mutual security interests and regional stability

**Keywords:** Divergence, Tensions, Harboring, Alienated, Mistrust, Reliance

**Introduction**

The Pakistan and United States relationship has historically experienced cycles of cooperation and strain, shaped by changing geopolitical dynamics and national interests. During the presidency of Donald Trump (2017-2021), this bilateral relationship witnessed a significant downturn, marked by growing mistrust, reduced cooperation, and a clear divergence in strategic priorities. The Trump administration adopted a transactional and security-centric foreign policy, demanding that Pakistan "do more" in counterterrorism efforts, particularly in Afghanistan. This shift was symbolized by the suspension of military and security aid in 2018 and a blunt public narrative that accused Pakistan of providing safe havens to terrorist groups. Moreover, Trump's overt support for India as a strategic partner in South Asia further strained ties with Pakistan, which viewed the growing U.S.-India nexus as a direct threat to its regional security interests. As a result, Pakistan increasingly turned to alternative allies such as China and deepened its participation in regional initiatives like the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (Nawab, et. al.,2021). This introduction sets the stage for analyzing the key factors and implications of the divergence in PAK-US relations during the President Donald Trump era, highlighting how shifting alliances, unilateral policy decisions, and mutual distrust reshaped the traditional framework of bilateral engagement.

**Literature Review**

"A Belated Reckoning: US-Pakistan Relations in the Trump Era" is writer by Jeff M. Smith (2018) define that Donald Trump and US military General blame to Pakistan for double game player in Afghanistan, the Pakistan aids, military leadership and militant sanctuaries

are destabilizing the US forces by supporting the militant and sharing intelligence information. By next year the security agency admits that with Pakistan the improvement is not possible in Afghanistan. This statement considers a better bilateral relation with Pakistan to Congress. By 2009 the aid from US has been increased to Pakistan fifty percent on the indication of US-ambassador in Pakistan where, Pakistan senate state that if 'President Donald Trump want Pakistan to become a graveyard for US troops let him do so' however the Ambassador of United State reply that 'Game is not acceptable to this administration' (Smith, 2018). With these condition of PAK-US relations President Donald Trump administration suspend the aid of Pakistan where blame has been seeming as double game plays of Pakistan.

"Changing Security Situation in South Asia and Development of CPEC" is written by Noreen Hameed (2018) has explain that the traditional and non-traditional security threats had been source of marred the security of South Asia including poverty, health issues, water, food security and literacy although the SAARC had been barrier in progress to deal with these security treats. China an economical power giant wants to have long-lasting impact on regional security South Asian states where, the CPEC and BRI has been a target for USA to reduce the influence of China as regional player and its ideology. China and its rising importance towards Pakistan push back PAK-US relations that also cause the reduction of military assistance and financial aid by US administrations. Invasion of China in South Asian and security concern could replace the impact of US from South Asian states. Regional security of Pakistan faces threatens if Kashmir issue were stay unsolved which can impede regionalism in South Asia, however, the UNO and other organizations attempt multiple time for resolve it where, US administration during Donald Trump era has been offer for solve it however, India and Pakistan being dealt by different commands of US approach. (Hameed, 2018). The new changes in security situation and development in south Asian Regions, and how could CPEC become a development chance for Pakistan somehow, these changing elements are not acceptable for US to keep maintain bilateral relations with Pakistan.

"Strategic Divergence in the PAK-US Relationship under the Trump Administrations" written by Yasir Malik & Saira Aquil (2022) explain that Donald Trump perception was untrusted, and dabble game changer Pakistan. Pakistan wasn't partner of US for strategic purpose even US wait for global developments to change it stance. The gray area of Pakistan had faced economic vulnerabilities by republican party which aims United State to think for a strong foreign policy for Pakistan for bilateral relations. For US the relationship with Pakistan is based on Afghanistan and its landscape security changes where, Pakistan is in front liner but NATO partner of US. The initial year of Donald Trump in White house were anticipating on policy opted for Pakistan and Afghanistan, due to both side of PAK-US relations needs each other in different ways either counterterrorism or other aims by US. Trump era has been important to United State because the Afghan war was almost ended with his struggled to peace talk with Taliban, however Trump administration offered settlement on Kashmir issue which had been a great step for Pakistan and India. To tackle China growing power US turn strategic interest with India for undermine the action plane of stability in the South Asian region. President Joe Biden has deemed Pakistan became a world's most extremist territory with the potential to possess nuclear weapons. and lack of regional political instability where untreatable state, where this concept has been called a Trumps lite version. Moreover, the US think that Pakistan is not able to Govern itself the US support have to be involve for development and better management practices in regional politics. (Aquil, 2023). The foreign policies of US for Pakistan under Donald Trump administration has many benefits Where the Kashmir dispute resolving offer one on them.

"Divergence and Convergence of Interest after 9/11 Pakistan-US Cooperation in Perspective of Afghanistan" is written by Humara (2021) explained the cooperation between Pakistan-US relations in the cold war, when Pakistan performed a vital role amid Soviet invasion in Afghanistan. Although history has proven that It were more than an ideological

war for the US, where Pakistan apart of it. After 9/11 the needs of Pakistan were re-evaluated this time, it name were more obvious due to its location and collective efforts with US to threat the Taliban, which is essentially the gateway to Pakistan's inner body. It gives way to Afghanistan, in return Pakistan received aid and support from the Coalition Support Fund. Since then Pakistan has faced internal and external crises as well as criticism from both politicians and public due to support to US where Pakistan foreign polices impacted by US-Afghan war. Pakistan's nuclear arsenal remains controversial and its nuclear program is in disarray. Instead Pakistan fronted a wave of terrorism and the resurgence of the Taliban. However, without Pakistan's cooperation US goals in Afghanistan would have been impossible. Seeking such cooperation, the US even rejected Pakistan's anti-Americanism asking for help from Pakistan undoubtedly the nuclear program, lack of democracy and weak foreign policies, struggle in tribal areas and weak economic condition are still a major concern for American policymakers. Pakistan was called to disconnect with Al Qaeda, initiate army operations, end recruitment in Afghanistan, and help the US to provide intelligence support these are the major effect on Pakistan foreign policy in term of negotiation. The main responsibility of law makers is to confirm peace in Afghanistan by country and state establishing. In the US this idea did not remain silent, especially in the years after the great change in 2011. At the exact time ties between Pakistan and the US deteriorated after capture of Bin Laden (Humara, 2021).

## **Material and Methods**

In this research works a qualitative research design use to provide a deep analysis of US policies and their impact on security issues and economical system of Pakistan. A case study approach to examine specific periods and events, focusing on how US policies have influenced Pakistan's counterterrorism strategies and broader bilateral relations. In the data collection by documents analysis the secondary source will use for analysis of academic books, policy briefs, journal article, reports from policy maker and international organizations that discuss PAK-US relations. For the case studies data collection examination of specific events and policies such as the US courage Pakistan for strategic action on militant groups, the impact of US military aid, and the strategic shifts post Afghan withdrawal. For data analysis a comparative analysis method to compare the impact of Donald Trump policies to understand shifts in strategy and their impact on Pakistan's counterterrorism efforts and bilateral relations. For the data validity and reliability, the Triangulation as multiple data sources, document analysis methods, and case studies to cross verify information and enhance the reliability of findings an expert validation feedback from subject matter to ensure the accuracy and credibility of the data analysis and conclusions. There have been limitations in my research work in accessing classified or sensitive information related to US counterterrorism policies and Pakistan's internal strategies.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Suspension of Financial and Military Aid**

The Pakistan and US relations while the Donald Trump era from 2017-2021 experienced significant divergence particularly when analyzed through economic and security variables. Trump's America First policy, combined with his transactional approach to foreign relations, led to a sharp deterioration in ties with Pakistan. President Trump has accused Pakistan of deceit and harboring terrorists, leading to the suspension of security assistance. The total cutoff wasn't permanent but only affects military assistance while civilian assistance does not affect. The suspension of fund to Pakistan will continue unless strong operation is taken against destabilizing groups like the Taliban, which target US personnel and destabilize the region, with possible exceptions for national security reasons. Pakistan has been cooperating with the United State but will not compromise on national interests and prestige. The Donald Trump administration has been hints of a Pakistan aid cut for months with the president stating that Pakistan support the terrorist organizations,

where militant and terror these entities represent a threat to the region and beyond. The administration delayed a payment of 255 million dollar (Bloch, 2018) in armed forces funds to Pakistan by pending military action against Haqqani network militants who the United State says they are based in Pakistan and aid the Taliban.

After Donald Trump became president of United State the administration put more pressure on Pakistan aiming to remove its soldiers from Afghanistan. The divergence of Islamabad and Washington started with Pakistan expressing "no more" in deserve of Washington pressure for "do more". The suspension of financial fund to Pakistan will continue until strike action is chosen destabilizing groups like the Taliban, which target US personnel and destabilize the region, with possible exceptions for national security reasons, while United State refused Pakistan as a help of Afghan Taliban to the US on Afghan soil. The Pakistani regime blamed that the US is ignoring Pakistan's value at the expense of its war in Afghanistan. In late 2018, Donald Trump tweeted that the America had treat Pakistan by 33 billion dollars. Ex-Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan stance was that US no need to judge Pakistan accountable for its fail operation in Afghan soil. PAK-US relations down to their bottom point ever with the both governments of the two nations fighting each other by dialog. President Donald Trump stance Pakistan with supporter of militant and secure house for militant in Peshawar and Quetta igniting animosity between the two countries (Bilal, 2025). In January 2019, President Donald Trump dismissed relations with Pakistan and state that Pakistan had been deceiving the Pentagon and White House for decades.

He called for a review of US policy towards South Asia. Donald Trump had previously discussed South Asian policy in August 2017 stating that Pakistan even 'do more' to delimit the extremist. In a telephonic interaction with Ex-Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif Donald Trump observe that Sharif was ready to find solutions and address to outstanding problems. In April 2017 Donald Trump raised objections to US foreign policy after cold war era, arguing that the current policy was unreliable, ineffective and wasteful. He proposed a new rational American foreign policy focusing on economic stability, spreading radical Islam, rebuilding United State military, and fashioning a new rational American foreign policy. President Donald Trump is a businessman by profession he recalls the value of peace for economic and stable trade growth.

In July 2017 Donald Trump blame that Pakistan is breaking the commitment on to collective action again terror. On New Year's Day in 2018 Donald Trump claimed that the US has generously provide Pakistan over 33 billion dollars aid over the last 1.5 decade with less profit ratio (Hassan, 2020). Pakistan's continued sponsorship of militant groups despite US pressure to stop has been a longstanding issue in US-Pakistan relations. President Trump has criticized US aid to Pakistan, stating that low response and lies have led to tensions, reduced security and military aid, an intergovernmental watch list for violence funding, as well as fines on seven Pakistani businesses linked in illegal nuclear activity. However, these rules are unlikely to affect Pakistan's conduct, since the military establishment and spy agencies see terrorist sponsorship as a vital mechanism for protecting sovereignty and national identity. The US should not deter Pakistan from seeking a better relationship with the country, as the US and Pakistan share a shared interest in ending the battle in Afghanistan. Policymakers should focus on leveraging Pakistan's existing strategic perspective to pursue US interests. The Trump administration has implemented measures to curb Pakistan's assistance for extremist organizations, including the army security aid cut of, putting Pakistan on the FATF gray list and targeting LET. However, these efforts have not significantly altered Pakistan's policies. In 2009, the Congress formed the Pakistan Counterterrorism Budget to offer US military weapons and training in combat for tribal fighting back operations. The Trump administration is now withholding Foreign Military Financing, a program that offers allow and loans to enable foreign countries acquire US weapons.

Additionally, Trump has made cuts to the Coalition Support Fund that reimburses Pakistan for allowing the United State to utilize its army bases for ground operations and drone strikes in certain areas. Halting aid favor to Pakistan establishment can be seen as a positive step since taxpayer money should support Robust foreign military especially those have links to non-state actors. However, it's important to note that cutting off aid is unlikely to change Pakistan's reliance on militant proxies. The US and India faced challenges when trying to add Pakistan to the FATF gray list (Khan, 2018). which eventually occurred in June 2018, potentially paving the way for more sanctions. Nonetheless, it's worth mentioning that sanctions often do not lead to changes in state behavior not successful.

### **FATF Grey List**

The Financial Action Task Force has classified Pakistan on the grey list owing to its inability to adhere with the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR 1267). This has resulted in calls for more stringent measures overcoming money laundering and financial assistance for terrorist groups. A comprehensive action plan has been developed to implement anti-money laundering policies and to freeze the assets of terrorist groups in compliance with UNSCR-1267 and UNSCR-1373. The National Accountability Bureau, working alongside the Federal Reserve Bank of Pakistan, the State Bank of Pakistan, the FIA and the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan, has initiated a series of operations aimed at halting illegal money transfers within the country. These efforts are focused on disrupting financial networks that support terrorism and tackling traditional money laundering practices such as Hawala and Hundi. However, Pakistan continues to face challenges in fully implementing The FATF's concerns must be addressed through a 26-point strategy. Since 2000, the task force's assessment committee has published a blacklist of non-compliant states. Ex-Prime Minister of Pakistan Imran Khan has been criticizing to oppositions parties responsible for money laundering and has taken stern action against corrupt politicians. The US continues to push Pakistan demanding more policy measures due to dissatisfaction with the Jorge W. Bush and Obama foreign planning measures. The rise of Donald Trump in the United State has led to a re-consider of Pakistan in the United Nations' grey list, which has weakened PAK-US ties and led to accusations of Pakistan is backup of extremisms and no strategic encounter (Shah, et. al., 2020).

Pakistan had combating terror even when the Taliban and militant group didn't pose single serious threats to Pakistan and its civilian. The United State unjust pressure on Pakistan is unjust, as no sovereign nation can allow such unjust pressure. Pakistan's National Action Plan has been successful in the destruction of terrorist facilities and economic lifelines but the US withheld 900 million dollars from the CSF for tax year 2017. Pakistan's name on grey list has stigmatized the state internationally, with Saudi Arabia, China, and Turkey opposing its inclusion. The accusation is that Pakistan has not taken Effective efforts towards specific terrorist organizations such as Jamat ud Dawa and Jaish-e-Muhammad. Compliance with UNSCR-1267, which demands aid obligations on terrorist groups also pushed Pakistan into the grey list.

Pakistan have agenda to address action plan deficiencies, but failure could lead to blacklisting like Iran and North Korea. Despite these hurdles, Pakistan has raised the struggle in the war on terror, after establishing the National Action Plan. The development of antiterrorism Acts (1995-2010), expanding the act of the FIA in counterterrorism and operations management, and the amendment in the National Action Plan have been improved measures (Amin, 2020). The FATF an international monitor on corruption and terror funding have placed Pakistan its 'Grey List'. The country was indicted by the FATF from 2008 and 2012 to 2015 although the action force maintains Pakistan on the 'Grey List' owing to its challenge profile. Pakistan has been pressured to fully comply with the action plan, which might result in severe consequences such as being on the grey list for several sectors such as banking, exports and trade, overseas payments, international loans, and international investments.

The September 2020 legislation intends to garner diplomatic backing in the next months, with China, Turkey, and Malaysia all playing important roles in preventing Pakistan from being blacklisted. FATF is used as a contemporary tool by powerful Western countries to force weaker ones to comply with their orders. Pakistan's Kashmir diplomacy has been rendered useless in major western capitals, with analysts urging that Pakistan must take real steps against terrorist organizations. Pakistan must begin strong diplomacy to garner enough support to out of the grey list and careful to going onto the FATF's blacklist (Idrees, 2020). This will boost Pakistan's standing in the body and free it from its grip. Support from friendly nations such as China, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Malaysia will strengthen Pakistan's position. Pakistan must exhibit strong diplomacy to convince the Western elite about its AML and anti-terror measures, with the achievement of avoiding FATF blacklisting and the grey list. The research covers the laws and actual initiatives made by the government and its agencies to satisfy the criteria; yet, the watchdog does not appear happy with Pakistan's efforts and asks for greater efforts to curtail AML and CFT regimes.

### **Trade Sanctions on Pakistan**

The US has increasingly used economic, embargoes and sanctions against groups and states that not adhere to United State standards in nuclear technology, resolving international disputes, and manufacturing weapons. However, these sanctions have often failed to change the behavior of the sanctioned countries, as seen in the sanctions programs of Iran, Syria, North Korea and Pakistan. The US politics and its impacts on selected countries are evident in President Donald Trump record breaking economic sanctions policy. Trade sanctions are controversial and ineffective, killing civilians and restricting basic necessities like, medicines, food and employment. In an international trade rule of world states are less affected by sanctions, as they seek other trade partners when one market closes its doors.

Pakistan has faced multiple US sanctions since 1965 due to various reasons including nuclear program pursuits, supporting militant groups, and using US armaments against India. The effectiveness of these sanctions in Pakistan is debated but none could prevent Pakistan develop a atomic technology. Pakistan sought assistance from its strategic partner China between the sanctions timeframe. US unilateral sanctions proved inadequate, negatively impacting Pakistan's economy and tarnishing the US's global power reputation. The US sanctions were miscalculated and ineffective (Irfan, 2021). However, as Pakistan began to pursue nuclear ambitions, the US attempted to exert pressure Using both financial and military restrictions Pakistan carried out six nuclear tests in 1998 indicating that the US objections program was a failure. The United State allowed Pakistan to continue its strategic partnership with China which was unintentionally act and find ways to solution and upgrade without United State support. South Asia's terrain is changing due to the rapid-fire profitable growth of India and Pakistan, which are now the capitals of the profitable corridor initiated by China. Trump and his administration, along with India, are opposing China's OBOR action, and as Pakistan is its mate, the US has advised Islamabad for reshape consideration of its foreign policy, especially for Washington. That's why Donald Trump Push Pakistan to Grey List of FATF and applied sanctions on Pakistan for trade and economic system.

Donald Trump has criticized Pakistan for the insecurity in the region and has no way avoided blaming Pakistan. The US has neither tolerance nor coffers for supporting Pakistan, and has declared his policy of 'America First' in his election crusade and National Security Strategy. rather of relating with Pakistan, the US finds it more salutary to bond with India, as its profitable growth and power on the Indian Ocean will give America a huge advantage in balancing China's raising impact in the South Asia (Owais, 2019). The contest bilateral relation India and Pakistan is likely to be increased by Trump's conduct and statements. Pakistan used to enjoy numerous favors made by America for being its non-NATO supporter, but faced a suspense of aid worth 300 million dollars This has led to Pakistan's mistrust and instability towards Trump.

The Trump administration and Obama administration have taken a tough stance on Pakistan with the Pentagon blocking Pakistan's Coalition Support Fund which was provided for assistance to American forces in Afghanistan. The United State armed forces has expand on demand ties with Pakistan while Donald Trump confronts Pakistan in his first presentation as Chief of Staff of the United States Army at Fort Myer (Shamil, 2020). This is a strategic use of pressure tactics to enforce a state that the US trust in doing enough. The Trump administration has fostered the impression that Pakistan is principally responsible for the US's failure to defeat the Taliban. This narrative is used as a pressure tactic against Pakistan. The US presidential elections have significantly influenced global decisions and policies.

The second Trump presidency presents a complex chapter in US-Pakistan relations, with a renewed focus on strategic alignment and security concerns. Pakistan's economic relationship with Washington remains strong, with the US being the largest export market and a significant investor in sectors like energy, agriculture, and technology. USAID programs and the PAK-US Green Alliance have been instrumental in sustaining economic growth and fostering climate resilience. However, Trump's focus on reducing foreign assistance and tightening trade policies could potentially disrupt these efforts. Trump's antagonism towards China could test Pakistan's diplomatic resilience. The Donald Trump's foreign policy, unlike Biden's, may favor direct engagement with Pakistan, potentially enabling dialogue on crucial issues like Afghanistan's stability and counterterrorism. Success depends on Pakistan's diplomatic agility and ability to strike balance in relations with Beijing and Washington. Promoting educational and business ties with the Pakistani-American diaspora can enhance mutual understanding.

The United State policies for Pakistan has significant implications for its economic stability, security dynamics, and international diplomatic standing. The relationship between the two nations has been influenced by areal counterterrorism efforts and Afghanistan. During Trump's first term, he adopted a cooperative stance towards Pakistan, facilitating Doha Peace Talks Afghan Taliban and United State. However, in 2017 the Trump administration blocked the Coalition Support Fund which had helped Pakistan in counterterrorism efforts (Khan, 2024). The current global and regional geopolitical landscape presents an opportunity for renewed bilateral compromise of upcoming administration and Pakistan, particularly in energy, Information Technology, and agriculture.

The Trump administration should strike a balance between its stance on Iran and Pakistan's energy needs, and consider reevaluating its stance on the Pakistan-Iran pipeline. The Trump administration showed little interest in investing in Pakistan's economy or supporting development projects, in contrast to China's economic development influence by initiatives like the CPEC. The United States has struggled to persuade Pakistan to change its direction, particularly in terms of national security strategy. In 2019, Ambassador Alice Wells denounced the CPEC in Washington DC citing Pakistan's increasing inquiries about the project. The incoming President Joe Biden administration should remember that public accusing may drop on deaf ears in Pakistan. and raise these consequences privately while proposing different methods to assist satisfy their economic progress needs.

When Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf hold office in 2018, it adopted a significant financial recession, with the government run out of foreign exchange reserve to satisfy debt payments. Imran Khan's adviser on trade and investment, Abdul Razak Dawood, criticized the PML-N for negotiating poorly with China on CPEC (Neog, 2020) and advised on hold everything for a year to get things together. Imran Khan's government established a CPEC Authority to expedite implementation and eliminate bureaucratic obstacles with retired general Asim Saleem Bajwa as its chairman. Despite economic challenges, the PTI have maintained plan under the CPEC, including constructing new roads and in Lahore, the first rapid transit metro in Pakistan is being completed. China's ambassador to Pakistan,

Nong Rong, has reiterated its dedication to the CPEC stating that the project has consistently yielded positive results.

### **Divert security interest from Pakistan to India**

The United State and India have contracted a three military cooperation agreements, including the Logistical Cooperation Agreement in 2016, and Connectivity Compliance and Protection Agreement in 2018, which now form the INDO-US Global Strategic Partnership, with similar aims in 2002. The US has maintained a long-standing partnership with India, primarily reason to its growing regional presence in South Asian region and its significant contribution to India's development and food aid surpassing that of Pakistan in 2000. The US has adopted a policy that indirectly supports Indian interests by authenticate both India and Pakistan to directly negotiate between each other.

The United States favors India because of its rising commercial market and economic progress, whereas Pakistan's frail and unpredictable economy creates unsafe circumstances for international investors. The availability of a huge number of Indian communities in the United States puts pressure on Congress to support India, but the Pakistani community is less active in this respect. The growing dominance of Russia-China in Central and South East Asia has prompted the United States to form a strategic partnership with India to challenge China in the area (Imran, 2019). The Cold War collaboration between the United States and Pakistan ended in 1993 and the shifting dynamics of global power resulted in a new defense collaboration with India. The United States' ties with Pakistan are centered on nonproliferation initiatives, terrorism and counterterrorism, and the promotion of Pakistan's democratic culture.

The INDO-US ties are specific for opposing Chinese dominance in the area. The agreement of the Conversation, Mutuality, and Security Pact a significant defense milestone, has reinforced the Indo-US alliance. The United States has entered into an agreement with India that facilitates the transfer of secure communication and data equipment, along with enabling real-time data-sharing with the Indian military. This move aligns with efforts to bolster the relationship between India and the US. Before this agreement, the US had already relaxed restrictions on advanced defense exports to India. The advantages of the COMCASA were too significant for India to overlook. The standoff between Chinese and Indian border forces in 2017 marked a pivotal moment for Delhi, highlighting the importance of real-time intelligence sharing with the US. The Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (Smith, 2018) which gives India with immediate resulted to American geospatial intelligence enhancing collaboration and improving the precision of automated systems and weaponry. This type of intelligence is crucial for warfare, target identification, and effective responses to natural disasters.

### **Pak-US cooperation in Afghan Peace Process**

The US and Pakistan conflicting strategic goals in the Indo-Pacific area, with the US focusing on China rivalry and Pakistan maintaining a balance of power with India. Despite their deep strategic and economic links, the two states have job together for almost twenty years to establish political stability in Afghanistan and eliminate terrorism in South Asia region. Potential collaboration involves growing foreign investment in Pakistan and balancing ties with China and US desire to enhance collaborate is contingent on Pakistan assistance in war in terrorism. The Pakistan-US relationship is largely concerned with peace efforts in Afghanistan and counterterrorism cooperation between the two countries. In 2017, President Trump unveiled a new South Asia shift policy, which includes a withdrawal action plan from Afghanistan and steps to ensure Pakistan helps the US accomplish its regional objectives.

In July 2019 the White House greeted Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan, acknowledging Pakistan's contribution to getting the Taliban to the talks table and making sure Pakistan will continue having a role in promoting the Taliban to remain involved in peace talks. Pakistan's centrality to US strategy in the area is most likely owing to its counter-terrorism capabilities and historical, geographical, cultural, and economic ties to Afghanistan. The US wants Pakistan to committed "pledges" (Khokhar, 2020) on two assisting the US in conducting stability negotiations with the Taliban and taking serious action against extremist organizations operating on its land. Pakistan's aid for the Afghan negotiations and anti-terrorist measures is a crucial prerequisite for any extension in the aim of the PAK-US partnership.

The results of the study indicate that Pak-US relations experienced a significant decline during the Donald Trump administration due to strategic disagreements and mutual distrust. The Trump administration's decision to cut military and security aid in 2018, combined with strong public criticism accusing Pakistan of harboring terrorist groups, led to a sharp deterioration in diplomatic ties. This strained relationship caused Pakistan to shift its foreign policy focus toward strengthening its alliance with China and enhancing regional partnerships. The reduced cooperation affected joint efforts in counterterrorism, economic collaboration, and defense coordination. Overall, the divergence weakened bilateral relations and created a more fragmented regional security environment.

### **Conclusion**

The divergence of PAK-US relations during Donald Trump's era reflected a period of strained diplomacy, strategic distrust, and policy disconnect. The Trump administration's hardline stance, including the suspension of military aid and accusations against Pakistan for harboring terrorist elements, created a hostile environment that undermined decades of bilateral cooperation. Additionally, the growing US strategic partnership with India further alienated Pakistan and contributed to a shift in regional alliances. In response, Pakistan sought to diversify its foreign policy by strengthening ties with China and enhancing its role in regional connectivity projects like CPEC. This era highlighted how unilateral policies, lack of mutual trust, and shifting geopolitical priorities can severely impact long-standing partnerships. The Trump period thus serves as a critical case study in understanding how diplomatic divergence can reshape traditional alliances in South Asia.

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