

**Role of Threat Perceptions in Pak-US Security Alliances:  
An Analysis of Post 9/11 Security Partnership**

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**Abstract:**

The course of Pak-US relations is mostly debated in the context of “trust deficit”. The trust deficit is not new but it has a genesis and dates back to the era of 1950s and 1960s, and onward, during the length of time these relations have been characterized by ups and downs. The main questions are: what are the “connecting factors” framing these relations and what are the “disconnecting factors” breaking these relations. Many elements make alliances possible which include security, economics, and political factors. But the most important ones, which this study aims to highlight, are security and economics. Many post-WW-II and Cold War time’s alliances were shaped by both these factors. The power struggle between the mighty USSR and the USA could be seen as a drive to gather more and more mass support (aligning nations) and establishing the superiority of either Capitalism or Communism. Most of these alliances were formed under the theme of Threat Perceptions. The US adopted the “Financial Assistance” strategy to gather the support of newly independent, mostly decolonized nations. Pakistan also joined the US-Camp under her own TPs. The study highlights the role of TPs in Pak-US relations over time.

**Keywords:** Pakistan, United States, Afghan war, threat perceptions, security, War on Terror

**INTRODUCTION**

Pakistan was keen to strengthen her security position against the natural adversary, India during the first phase of her formation. Because India was stronger economically and militarily, and India also had bad designs against Pakistan, therefore, Pakistan needed a stronger ally to counter such threats (Kronstadt, Pakistan-U.S. Relations, 2006). Pakistan and US alliance was the first of its kind driven by “Security Perceptions”. While establishing the relations during the early 1950’s, the US had been trying to counter the threat of communist surge (Mustafa & Bashir, 2014). But during the course of its time, the relations have not been reliable and there was noted big difference at times. The US extended her support to Pakistan when she needed Pakistan and withdrew the same when the aims were fulfilled. Therefore, a proposition was built that “the US was a selfish and un-trusted friend”. It was because during the most crucial times of her existence (1965 and 1971), Pakistan was denied to provide with military and political assistance. Thus, the testing time of the relations showed, “how un-reliable a friend the US was”. Despite the realities, US relations with Pakistan

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revolved around her own lofty interests: during the Cold War these were containing of communism and promoting anti-communist alliances; and during the war on terror, eradicating Al-Qaeda and downing the fundamentalist Islamic movements. But all along, the concept of threat perception has been dominant in the relations. This study aims to explore the typology of Pak-US relations; it also explains the role of TPs in Pak-US relations. The research is primarily based on historical evidences and analysis provided by different sources, i.e. books, articles, newspapers and independent research. The analysis, arguments and conclusions of the research are drawn in the content analysis.

## **THEORETICAL UNDERSTANDING**

### **The Role of Threat Perceptions (TPs) in Alliance formation**

In the realist perspective, security and survival run in parallel and for states' existence on the international scene both are considered very important. Therefore, the need for strengthening state's security results in the formation of alliances and counter alliances. Alliances are formed by state's either by weaker states against the powerful aggressor state or among the weaker and powerful states to maximize states weaker states power against a specific ideology e.g. the post WW-II alliances SEATO and CENTO against the Soviet communist expansionism. Thus, defining security in terms of state's survival in the realist world structure mean "the ability of state to continue its existence without the risk of external aggression" (Alagppa, 1998). The geo-strategic position of a state is considered the most prominent factor in shaping the security relations, formation of foreign policies both regionally and internationally. It can be concluded that it is geography of a states to determine the friends and foes around. Policy formulation process beyond all other factors is influenced by four main factors: a) present situation; b) past occurrences; c) internal threat perceptions; and d) external threat perceptions. According to Jervis (1976), "threat perceptions may sometimes lead to misperception" (Jervis, 1976). The threat perception may turn into reality in the presence of two main conditions: a) an active war; and b) threat of war. The states in the developing world may be understood in terms of their threat perceptions by considering three important things: a) active war; b) threat of war; and c) defense allocation in annual budgets (Bashir & Mustafa, 2014). Another important factor in the formation of strategic alliances is the similarity or coincidence of interests. This study takes into account the theme of threat perceptions behind Pak-US strategic/security alliance since 1950's and so far. During most of the period the relations were rounding about Pakistan's strive for survival against the growing Indian threat while the US threat perception was the rise of USSR (strengthening of communist bloc).

### **GENESIS OF "THREAT PERCEPTIONS" IN PAK-US STRATEGIC ALLIANCES**

By exploring the history of Pak-US strategic relations in the light of "security and survival", one can understand that the key concept of Threat Perceptions plays a vital role in shaping the course of Pak-US relations. Since it came into being in 1947, Pakistan has been striving hard for its survival against the Indian threat. Another important dimension of the establishment of Pak-US relations in the 1950's was the geo-strategic environment of the region and communist policies of expansionism. The main reason behind signing military pact with US in 1954 was to counter the communist threat. It was in the interests of both states to form this alliance, "the interests of Pak-US coincided" which resulted in the formation of such relations. In fact, Quaid-i-Azam, the founder of

Pakistan and the Governor General of that time foresaw the urgency and need “to equip its armed forces” in the September, 1947 (Rose & Husain, 1985). Although, the US role at that time was that of “a dominating power” but still there existed interdependence between the two states (Hasnat & Pelinka, 1986). The history of this relation dates back to 1951 when Liaquat Ali Khan, the first Prime Minister of Pakistan paid his first visit to USA sidelining a similar offer by the former USSR (Ahmed, 2015). The event led to switching on relationship and declaring Pakistan’s tilt towards US (Ahmad, 2015, p. 14).

### **Defense Alliances and the Truman’s Doctrine**

The US president Truman initiated a policy to gain the support of the newly independent or decolonized states against the march of communism. The policy is popularly known as Truman’s Doctrine. During the era from 1945 to 1970, almost 70 countries were decolonized (got independence) which also included Pakistan (Ali, 2016). As a result of decolonization, from 1945 to 1980 nearly 105 countries were granted independence and these states joined the United Nations Organization, which expanded the UNO membership from 51 to 156 member states (McMichael, 2008). The newly independent members of UNO were poverty driven nations who needed economic assistance for boosting their growth rates – such attributes of these nations came to the assistance of US in her campaign against the communism. In this regard, the Marshall Plan is considered one of the most important tools of the Truman administration which introduced the idea of “Foreign Aid” or “Foreign Assistance” for the development of underdeveloped states.

The justification behind the idea of “Foreign Aid” was to spur economic growth in the newly independent countries as well as to win their allegiance against the communism (Ali, 2016, p. 32).

In the beginning, the Pak-US partnership was probably based on Pakistan’s need to gain economic stability; and to counter the Indian threat. Pakistan entered the US sponsored defense systems SEATO (1945) and CENTO (1955), for attaining surety of defense against marginalized threats. But it is also true that the alliance was not purely based on Pakistan’s Threat perceptions (e.g. countering the Indian threat) yet it provided Pakistan with some initial doses to its economy and some sort of military assistance. But the most important dimension of this partnership was that “Pakistan remained aligned” to safeguard the US interests in the region. Another dimension of this relation was that Pakistan gave priority to her own security while the US was sure of Pakistan’s ability to counter communism’s expansion towards Southeast Asia and the Middle East (Akhtar, 2012). On the other hand, India remained non-aligned during this period and showed no tilt towards any bloc. The strangest incident happened during the Sino-India war 1962 was the change in the US policy towards Pakistan. During the period, the US tilt towards India could be observed in the event of 1965 War, which could be marked as “question of life and death” for Pakistan but the US supported India and cut off Pakistan’s aid (Hussain, Ali, & Abbas, 2018).

Regarding Pak-US Strategic and economic partnership during the 1950’s and 1960’s, Raheem Ullah Yousafzai told (Personal communication, December 14, 2019):

“Pakistan since the 1950s and 60s had become part of the US camp in the cold war between Soviet Union and US. Pakistan was against Soviet Union and was an ally of the US and Pakistan became part of the military alliances called CENTO and SEATO and Baghdad

Pact. I think that was the reason that Soviet Union was never willing to forgive Pakistan because Pakistan was firmly in the US camp”.

Resultantly, Pakistan revised her policy and left the US camp by terminating the membership of SEATO and CENTO. From 1966 to 1977, Pakistan established good relations with Moscow and change was seen in her policy towards USSR. Reciprocal visits were made by the administration of both countries which created goodwill and harmony in the region. Presidents, Yahya Khan and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto visited Soviet Union which boosted bilateral relationship, enhanced trade relations and cooperation in the fields of metallic industry, power generation sectors and science and technology (Khan & Noor-Ul-Amin).

Pakistan's building of nuclear weapon was motivated by her own security dilemma “the Indian nuclear threat” which arose just after “Indian May 1974 Move” of testing nuclear weapons. Attaining the nuclear capability created existential threat for Pakistan which was said to be a big challenge for Pakistan. In the words of Javaid & Mushtaq, “India attainment of nuclear capability was a major challenge for Mr. Bhutto government in the 1974” (Javaid & Mushtaq, 2014). Pakistan's similar motives were restricted by Carter administration by ceasing aid program and imposing economic sanctions (Javaid & Mushtaq, p. 295). The sanction was authorized under section 669 of the Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) because Pakistan was most confidentially working on uranium enrichment (Blood, 2002).

#### **DOMINANT “TPS” DURING SOVIET INVASION OF AFGHANISTAN (1979-89)**

However, the US priorities changed after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. Here the role of threat perception can be understood by the US's sudden approach towards Pakistan as actually it was to stop the march to communism towards Middle East. Because of these priorities Pakistan once again became the apple of US eye and was conferred a frontline role in the containment of communist expansion. Resultantly, cordial economic and military relations were established between the two countries (Lunn, Taylor, & Youngs, 2007). The period can rightly be marked as “an era of regeneration and trust building.” In 1981, US under Regan administration pledged for five-year assistance package for Pakistan which was worth \$3.2 (Kronstadt, 2008).

Pakistan was used as a corridor to supply arms and ammunition to the Afghan fighters (popularly known as Mujahideen), which were supposed to be used against the red army and its affiliates in Afghanistan. Training camps were run inside Pakistan with the support of USA, where fighters were given training and then infiltrated into Afghanistan. Beside all this, there were established close intelligence and military channels between Pakistan and US to curb the communist expansion and strengthen fighter groups. Pakistan's role was very significant in the provision of guerrilla training, weapons and funds to the Mujahedeen – Pakistan's premier intelligence agency, the ISI, operated training camps in the country's tribal areas in collaboration with the CIA (Sial, 2013, p. 2). In the words of Kronstadt “Pakistan became a key transit country for arms supplies to the Afghan resistance, as well as home for some three million Afghan refugees, most of whom have yet to return (2008, p. 27).

According to Sial (2013): Islamabad had the following strategic interests due to which she became “sacrificial lamb”:

- i. To limit the Indian influence in Afghanistan;

- ii. To counter the communist influence there;
- iii. To counter the greater Pashtunistan movement;
- iv. To facilitate to install proven Pakistan regime in Kabul

For the fulfillment of these high motives, Islamabad pushed itself in others' war. There is another theory in the middle, called "the warm water theory" which means that historically Russia has been driving to attain access to warm water ports. The view is most probably held in the English Speaking world whenever they explain the mode of Kremlin's foreign policy. A very recent study finds out that this idea or theory is a general perception and so far no Soviet or Russian leader had ever admitted to such a drive – "the professional and popular literature and even scholarly research fails to yield a single serious study that demonstrate the existence of such imperatives" (Green, 1993). But the notions are geopolitical explanations of the time of Anglo-American and English academicians, strategists and policy makers. According to Green (1993) "both German and Anglo-American policies were based at that time on the belief that the Soviet Union possessed an urge, one that it had inherited from Imperial Russia, for a warm water port. In the words of Pervez Musharraf (former dictator and president of Pakistan): "Soviet Union was trying to get to the warm waters of the Indian Ocean through Balkanizing Pakistan. There was a collusion of U.S. and Pakistan interests therefore we [US and Pakistan] thought of assisting Afghanistan in fighting against the Soviet Union" (Perkovich, 2011).

The US immediately provided them with military aid just after Mujahideen established offensive move against the Soviet occupying forces and they were up to a great extent successful initially in stopping the march of Soviet troops. Later on, other countries also joined the US efforts by providing the Islamist fighters with funds and equipments – the most popular countries were: "Britain, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Pakistan" (Sial, 2013). The Deobandi clerics (Ulema/religious scholars) actively started recruiting Taliban (the students of religious schools) and sent them for Jihad (fight against infidels) in Afghanistan.

Islamist fighters from all over the Islamic world gathered in Afghanistan and joined the local Jihadist fighters in their cause against the Soviet occupation. The most prominent countries from where these Jihadist originated were mostly Arabs and Africans. It is no surprise that in the 80s, there was noted rise in the religious organizations and charities which were pre-occupied with "sectarian cum Jihadist agenda", and all were run under the patronage of state (Sail, 2013, p.2). But things went bad after the Soviet withdrawal in 1989, when both the Soviets and US did not work on the political sides of post war Afghanistan. No unity and consensus driven political solution was drawn and in the absence of central authority the country went through a bloody civil war which finally ended with the advent of Taliban fighters and their rise to prominence in Kabul in 1996. During this whole era, the Pak-US partnership was primarily concerned about how to prepare and gather more and more jihadist for Afghanistan and how to stop communist march. But after the disintegration of USSR, and achievement of their strategic goals, the US left things unsettled which caused them great damage in the shape of 9/11.



### **“CHANGED TPS” & SANCTION UNDER PRESSLER AMENDMENT (1989-2001)**

The end of Project-Afghanistan (after the Soviet withdrawal and disintegration), threat perceptions of both countries contrasted which resulted in the break of strategic alliance. Pakistan came under severe monitoring for her nuclear program and in 1990 just after the successful “project-Afghanistan”, Bush administration imposed economic and military penalties and “stopped Pakistan’s annual assistance package”. The Pressler amendment gives the US president the right “to annually ratify the assistance package to Pakistan” but it is conditioned with non-possession of nuclear device (Blood, 2002). The CRS Report, 2002 said that Pakistan’s nuclear program came under strict US surveillance in (1988, May), the delivery of (71) F-16 fighter aircrafts was stopped “under the financial cut off”. Owing to all these, in the 1990s, “It became almost impossible to make necessary certification to Congress regarding Pakistan, resulting in stoppage of assistance” (Blood, 2002). When Bill Clinton became the US president, hopes were raised for the restoration of Pak-US relations. There was initially some sympathy for Kashmir cause but, “Pakistan’s support for the Taliban and emergence of radicalism the priorities were changed” (Banerjee & Commuri, 2014). About the changing dimensions and priorities in Pak-US relations, a researcher writes: “Relations between these two states have been characterized by dependence, indifference, agreement, disagreements, engagement, disengagement, tensions and friendship” (Banerjee & Commuri, 2014 p. 42). Pakistan has always been used by the US as “a tool of utility”, about this format of dependency a writer wrote, “Traditionally Pakistan has been an ally for US intervention in the region” (Abbas A. , 2019). The relations were record low and Pakistan was under pressure for her response to the Indian nuclear tests in (1998, May). The US under Pressler amendment imposed economic and military sanctions against Pakistan after her successful nuclear tests which also “deterred the Indian nuclear adventurism against Pakistan”. A researcher highlighted, “the double dealing of US” tells: “the US continues to see Pakistan as a double-dealing and duplicitous ally, while Pakistan often finds US engagement untrustworthy” (Chandio, 2018).

### **LIVING THINGS UNSETTLED BEHIND – POST SOVIET WITHDRAWAL SECURITY SITUATION**

After the Soviet withdrawal, Afghanistan became a boiling pot were with great anarchy and civil war. The country was under turmoil and there were different war factions, supported by different regional countries for “their own selfish interests”. Different fighter groups were fighting heavily to control Kabul. Pakistan wanted peace and establishment of friendly government in Kabul best for serving Pakistan’s interests into CARs region.

Pakistan was not very happy with president Rabbani’s open policies and his non-allegiance to play “a puppet” for Pakistan. In June 1994, after the re-election of Rabbani, the relations became worst. “The relations were further dropped due to Pakistan’s foreign Minister statement that after 28 June 1994 anything happening would be illegal” (Hussain, et al., 2002).

A study finds out: “Since it had played host to millions of Afghan refugees and had facilitated international support for the resistance, Pakistan expected the new government in Kabul to look at Islamabad as a big brother.” However, these expectations did not materialize. “This was not acceptable to the Rabbani government, which sincerely wanted to have close and friendly relations with Pakistan, but not at the cost of an independent foreign policy (Lafraie, 2012).

Pakistan's Foreign Minister's statement annoyed the Afghans which not only generated a mass protest in Kabul outside the Pakistani Embassy; but rockets were fired on the embassy. In 1994, a tragedy happened when some Afghani terrorists hijacked a school bus near Peshawar (KP), in which teachers (up to 10) and students (almost 70) were made hostage (Gannon, 1994). The bus was driven to Islamabad, near the Kabul embassy. They demanded ransom, supply of food to Kabul and also demanded a helicopter for their safe return to Kabul. These demands were followed by the International Committee of Red Cross warning the short of food supplies for almost 50000 people in the coming weeks (Gannon, 1994). All the gunmen were killed in commando operation by Pakistani SSG, "the commandos stormed the Afghan Embassy, entered the room where the gunmen were hiding, killing all them, freed the hostages" (Abbas M., 2016).

The incident affected the relations so much that it tuned the Kabul government headed by president Rabbani towards India and against Pakistan. But Rabbani was not an ultimate authority outside Kabul and the country was portraying a picture of ancient Greek city states where many smaller states were under control of different authorities. Kabul and suburbs were under Rabbani and Massoud, Mazar-e Sharif under commander Dostum, Herat was controlled by commander Ismail Khan while the southern Afghanistan was under Kematyar. In many instances, the warriors were not paid by their warlord rather they collected money for their commander and themselves by looting the general people and drug trafficking making the situation a deteriorating one for the general public.

There was no central authority, leading to law and order situation for the masses, who were sick of war and plundering and wanted peace. Not to speak of other parts even in Kabul no one could left his house alone at night or go outside accompanied by his females (wife/sister) for the fear of disrespect and dishonor. "The moral degradation was on rise that a boy in Kandahar was married to another man and the event was celebrated with full zeal" (Jalalzai, 2003). All these things were making the people mentally sick and emotionally fed up. They wanted alternative authority who possess the force to relieve them and take them out of such nasty situation. It can be concluded here that "Afghanistan was presenting a picture of the Hobbs state of nature of – the war of all against all". In this, "alarming and critical situation full of anarchy and moral degradation an appeasing force of Taliban was rising gradually from the ashes of Afghan Jihad in Kandahar region". They with the support of general masses, minor war groups and finally support of government forces, established themselves in Kabul, controlled almost 90 percent of Afghanistan at that time. There regime became very popular in short span of time.

### **"CHANGED TPS" & PAK-US ALLIANCE IN GLOBAL-WOT (POST 9/11)**

The September 11 scenario is described by many as an analogy to or "the new Pearl Harbor" for the US which changed the internal security dynamics fundamentally. It was an attack on the homeland making them "feel vulnerable for the first time in 60 years history". "It turned an administration with quasi-isolationist tendencies into one committed to robust intervention overseas" (Powell, 2011). The 9/11 attacks on "US twin towers and Pentagon" changed the core of politics in South Asia. The subsequent US/NATO intervention toppled the Taliban regime in Kabul by installing their puppet regime in Kabul, while Pakistan had to bring drastic changes in her policy towards Taliban. Pakistan helped the American adventurism against the Taliban and Al-Qaeda by providing them with Aerial, logistic and intelligence support "which off course was in the best interests of Pakistan

at the very moment". "Since 9/11, these relations have entered an era of close ties with shared interests" – "however, there is a perception that the renewed friendship is being driven solely by America's need for Pakistani cooperation in the War on Terrorism" (Gilani, 2006). Mentioned above, were the basic TPs which helped renewing the old structure of Pak-US strategic partnership under a new framework.

Commenting on the Al-Qaeda attacks on United States of America a commentator puts: "The destruction of the twin towers graphically illustrated the dark side of globalization" – "Terrorists used the tools of a modern global society, the internet, open borders and hi-tech airplanes, to attack the west at home" (Powell, 2011).

Pakistan under this new framework has been the most important ally working on the frontline in the war on terror campaign. According to a research writer, "The 9/11 incident has triggered a series of changes in the geo-strategic environment around Pakistan" (Ali, 2015). Taliban provided shelter to the operator of 9/11 (Al-Qaeda). Prior to launching the most expensive of her history campaign against terrorists in Afghanistan, the US demanded "a safe handover of Bin Ladin, the Saudi billionaire the leader of the terrorist organization Al-Qaeda the suspects of 9/11 attacks on Pentagon and twin towers in USA" (Ali, 2015, p. 67). The compliance with US demand could have become for the regime in different dimensions e.g. a formal recognition by the super power and her western allies, economic assistance from world monetary organizations and ultimately coming into the UN good books but the most important would be saving her people from the lengthiest and most destructive war in their country.

But the Taliban denied doing so which compelled the US/NATO for launching retaliatory action against both "the regime and terrorist organization". A CNN report expounds, "the Taliban offered to hand over Bin Ladin for trail but to third country guarantor" but the US demanded that he must be directly handed over to them (Griffiths, 2017). See, this minor misunderstanding between the US and Taliban brought the peaceful and happy country under devastating air strikes and ground operations.

In the words of senior journalist and expert on Afghanistan, Raheemullah Yousafzai:

Pakistan [got] involved in this war on terror because of U.S pressure, because of the events of 9/11. Something unbelievable had happened; the only super power in the world America was attacked and America was going to take revenge thereby decided to invade Afghanistan because they said Al-Qaeda was behind the 9/11 attacks and Al-Qaeda leadership is based in Afghanistan and Taliban regime is protecting Al-Qaeda leadership so Pakistan was asked to support the American war against terror (Personal communication, December 14, 2019).

The UNSC through his "resolution 1267" created the Al-Qaeda and Taliban sanctions committee which declared both of them as terrorist organizations, freezing their assets/funds, banning travel and arms shipments. The US-retaliatory move was strongly backed by the UNO, calling upon the UN-Members to facilitate the countering terrorism efforts by the US. Pakistan was approached by the US authorities to support them in this war, which Pakistan accepted without hesitation. "Pakistan being an immediate neighbor of Afghanistan and a historical U.S. ally became frontline state not only in combating terrorism but a victim of aggression itself in multiple forms" (Sunawar, 2015).



But, this time Pakistan paid heavily on account of her proximity with Afghanistan and becoming prey of the wrath of Jihadist which were once created by her with the support of US. "Pakistan has played a vital role by sacrificing more than 8,500 of its security personals and almost 35,000 civilians" (Sunawar, p. 43) According to a report, over 80,000 Pakistanis "including civilians, security forces, journalists and others" were killed due to terrorism in Pakistan ("80,000 Pakistanis killed," 2015). At this point, one can conclude that Pakistan had no immediate threat from the Al-Qaeda and Taliban but she did create it after her support to the US/allies who created threats for her survival.

According to Journalist and expert on Afghanistan, Raheemullah Yousafzai, "Then after 9/11 American invasion, in October, 2001 again Pakistan supported the US but in the past we supported the US policy of backing the Afghan Mujahideen but this time Pakistan supported the US policy of fighting the Taliban [former Mujahideen] in Afghanistan" (Personal communication, December 14, 2019).

There is a big difference of "priorities and cooperation" in the nature of Pak-US security alliance of 1980s and 2001. During the 80s, there was better level of trust and coordination between the CIA and ISI due to which the Soviets were bound to leave Afghanistan. But the new alliance looks like "a forced marriage" and a reluctant alliance. The US-Pak war on terror partnership, specially their joint venture with military dictator; is according to some analysis "sealed the fate of democracy" in the country for a decade to follow.

Raheemullah Yousafzai, journalist, expert on Afghanistan stated:

The military dictator [Musharraf] decided to support the US without taking parliament into confidence, and without caring about the views and aspirations of Pakistani people. That's why we are still facing problems because Pakistan became a divided society, less people were backing the decision of supporting US; may be the majority was not supporting (Personal communication, December 14, 2019).

According to Hanif (2011): "When George W Bush embraced General Pervez Musharraf <sup>3</sup> he was doing exactly what his predecessors had done when they propped up another military dictator, General Zia-ul-Haq, to fight the Soviets in Afghanistan" (Hanif, 2011). President Musharraf was prompt in extending full support to America in the ensuing war against terrorism. Indeed, President Musharraf has been frequently criticized within Pakistan for cooperating too readily and conceding too much to the United States without adequate recompense (Gilani, 2006).

Pakistan had cordial relations with the Taliban government earlier to 9/11 happenings but under pressure from US and UN Pakistan decided to go against her friends. The realist notions of IR explains that national interests and survival are most important things than others. "Pakistan's support for Taliban regime of Kabul was aimed at keeping its arch enemy India due to her close alliance with former Soviet Union and her designs of taking control of the Indian Ocean, keen to acquire permanent security council seat, sabotaging Pakistan nuclear program and dominating the

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<sup>3</sup> The Army general who made military coup on October 12, 1999, imposed martial law and toppled the elected government of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and sent him behind the bars.

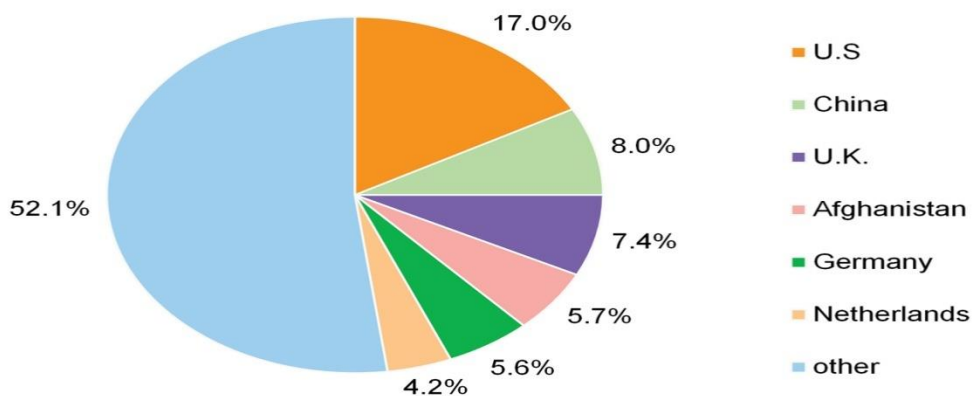
South Asian region” (Sultana, 2015) A researcher explaining Pakistan’s move remarked: “among the three countries that recognized the government of Taliban in Afghanistan in 1994, Pakistan had to take a U-turn in its foreign policy, and had to fight against its own supporter” (Kayani, 2011). Once Pakistan saw that it could be best served by the Taliban but after September, 11 she saw them as a threat; Pakistan had also vitality for serving US interests in a best way due to geography. One can also understand the importance of US for Pakistan’s economy and weapons supply. So, “despite divergences they have been compelled to be allies” (Khan, Khattak, & Marwat, 2014). According to World Bank data, US has been on the top of major trading partners of Pakistan, China being the second, followed by the gulf countries (see the table below):

Market	Trade (US\$ Mil)	Partner share(%)
<b>United States</b>	<u>4,030</u>	<u>16.97</u>
<b>China</b>	<u>2,037</u>	<u>8.58</u>
<b>United Kingdom</b>	<u>1,677</u>	<u>7.06</u>
<b>Germany</b>	<u>1,341</u>	<u>5.65</u>
<b>Afghanistan</b>	<u>1,180</u>	<u>4.97</u>

**Source:** <https://wits.worldbank.org>

Thus economic compulsions and priorities also compelled Pakistan to turn against the Taliban. Beside all other things, the US left the sanctions and Pakistan was made able to get economic doses from the western monetary institutions and access to the European markets (the most favorite destination of Pakistani goods) was made possible. “The United States has been one of the largest sources of foreign direct investment in Pakistan and remains Pakistan’s largest export market” (U.S. Relations With Pakistan: Bilateral Relations Fact Sheet , 2021). See the chart below:

**Pakistan major export destinations (2018–19)**



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Pakistan had threat perception (which could be translated to a geostrategic compulsion to facilitate the US invasion). Pakistan securitized the issue (9/11 incident) while under its securitization move she allied itself with the US camp. Analyzing the US invasion of Afghanistan Sultana (2015) put that,

“The Afghan war is the second longest war of United States after Vietnam War”. According to another analysis, “the counter insurgency efforts by US and allied powers have been failing the threat of terrorism which has not diminished from the region and the only gain that Americans must celebrate today is the elimination of Bin Laden” (Shah, 2013).

Musa Khan Jalalzia (London based journalist, expert on Afghanistan) when asked, what repercussion did he see for Pakistan after becoming non-NATO ally in war on terror? He replied:

Pakistan’s alliance with the United States since 1980’s and its war against terrorism resulted in social divide, political turmoil and economic breakdown – the country gained nothing but destroyed its social and political stratification; Its relationship with Iran, Afghanistan, India and China remained underwhelming and at present Pakistan is on the brink while its economy is in decline and its existence is at stake-hanging between rouge and a failed state, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) sword is tumbling over Pakistan with changing position (Personal communication, November 6 to 7, 2019).

An analyst of the Guardian puts that no single figure since the Second World War has made so profound an impact on world events as Osama bin Laden - Even the Taliban were known to have been shocked by 9/11, when almost the entire Muslim world came out in sympathy with America (including the PLO in Palestine) (Jenkins, 2011). Jenkins further puts that it was a brief moment of American moral supremacy yet by launching armed aggression, first against Afghanistan and then against Iraq, America wholly squandered this gain. The aggression led to a tide of anti-Americanism and surge of support for fanatical Islamism across the Muslim world (Jenkins, 2011).

### **AREAS OF SECURITY COOPERATION IN WAR ON TERROR**

Pakistan and U.S has been cooperating in the following areas since Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) was launched: a) Intelligence sharing; b) Logistic supply; Pakistan provided airbases and Naval facilities; c) Stopping border terrorist movements; d) Targeting and eradicating terrorist sanctuaries in Pak-Afghan border areas; e) Banning terrorist networks operating outside, having sanctuaries inside Pakistan; and f) anti-Money Laundering initiatives for stopping illegal financial activities abroad by terrorist networks.

#### **Intelligence Sharing**

Pakistan provided intelligence information about terrorist movements and sanctuaries thus making possible the arrest of major terrorists and helping avert terrorist attacks, thus breaking the back bone of major terrorists’ organizations.

#### **Air Support and Airbases**

Beside intelligence sharing, Pakistan provided airbases to U.S air force and NATO for launching strikes against Al-Qaeda and Taliban in Afghanistan-making the early successes possible for U.S and NATO against the terrorist’s networks inside Afghanistan. Pakistan allowed the U.S and coalition forced to use the bases of Pasni, Jacobabad, Shamsi, Dalbadin, Kohat and Zhob(Safdar, Budiman, & Hamid, 2016).

#### **Naval Support and Facilities**

Beside, providing aerial support and airbases to the allied forces OEF, Pakistan Navy extended its full support to U.S and coalition air force at Pasni. Pakistan Navy suspended its operations for

facilitating the U.S and coalition naval forces. It is reported that twenty-five thousand Pakistan Navy personnel, 50 aircraft and 2,000 Coalition military personnel were imbedded in these locations, using up to 100,000 gallons of fuel a day (Khan, 2013, p. 45).

### **Logistic Support and Supply Route**

Pakistan provided Karachi port to U.S and NATO for logistic and supply purposes to support OEF in Afghanistan. The supply was continued through two main supply routes from Pakistan's Karachi Port to Afghanistan. First route goes through Khyber Pass to Kabul via Torkham border crossing while the second route goes through Balochistan province of Pakistan via Chaman border to Kandahar Afghanistan.

## **IMPACTS OF POST 9/11 ALLIANCE ON PAKISTAN'S INTERNAL SECURITY**

### **Spillover of Afghan War into Pakistan**

Pakistan has faced high intensity of terrorism during the last decade. Varying factors are responsible for growing internal instability and rise in extremism and terrorism inside Pakistan e.g. OEF and GWOT, domestic issues and Jihadist tribal background. Many factors domestic and international are responsible to drag the country into such a menace e.g. the International pressure on the country's leadership after 9/11 to support this war and the history of Pak-US historical military cooperation during Counter-Communism phase (1979-1990); last but not the least was Pakistan wanted to securitize her interests in Afghanistan by playing active frontline role in Global-WOT.

During the Counter-Communism phase, Pakistan and United States had shared strategic interests in Afghanistan and great military and intelligence coordination. The US authorities were aware of the importance of Pakistan's geographical location and strategic genius. Explaining these attributes, a research identified, "The country's role in WoT was inevitable due to multiple factors such as geography, supply routes and intelligence sharing" (Khattak & Mushtaq, 2015). United States and NATO were fighting a war distant and far away from their homeland but for Pakistan this war was not distant and far away but fought in her backyard. Pakistan did not escape the consequences associated with 'geography and anarchy' and received direct spillover of this war into her bordering regions and jeopardized the very authority of the state for a long span of time. When the OEF was started with Pakistan's active intelligence and strategic support it brought some risk 'miscalculated' by Islamabad.

Pakistan's support and active frontline role in WoT initially meant for Islamabad to facilitate the US war in Afghanistan, but it very soon realized "that the real war was here" (Hussain S. , 2019). The affiliates of different terrorists' organizations escaping the US-OEF in Afghanistan hid themselves in Pakistan's tribal belt (FATA) adjacent to Afghanistan. That was how the country went into the most challenging era of religious extremism and terrorism in the first decade of the 21st Century. But the international community was judging Islamabad's contribution to WoT in Afghanistan only "fully ignoring the country's internal and regional security challenges and meager resources to tackle them" (Hussain, 2019, p. 5).

The internal security situation had started deteriorating since 2001 OEF but it intensified greatly after 2005-06 respectively. The main reasons behind such hike in militancy inside Pakistan were:

the formation of TTP; its expansion into FATA and settled areas; the sudden rise in Baloch nationalism and separatism (formation of BLA and BLF); and the nationwide spread of anti-State and terrorist activities of Baloch insurgents, TTP and its affiliates. The research of the PIPS-institute (2009) provides a detailed description on the growth and fatalities of the TTP in KPK province of Pakistan. According to the institute report-2009, militants of the Pakistani Taliban were at first restricted to North Waziristan and South Waziristan and Bajaur regions only but gradually the militants spread into settled districts of Bannu, Kohat, Karak, Dera Ismail Khan, Dir, Lakki Marwat Swat and Tank. In the year 2008, the anti-state activities of the group affiliates brought havoc in districts Peshawar, Charsadda and Mardan.

The war erupted into Pakistan's bordering regions where the fleeing militant of Al-Qaeda, Taliban, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) and East Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM) were taking refuge with the local tribes in FATA (Khattak & Mushtaq, 2015, p.31). Pakistan's active support in WoT and miscalculated risks associated with such cooperation brought loss of thousands of soldiers, civilians and heavy economic loss. Research Studies reveal that the rise in terrorism inside Pakistan was a reaction of her stance to support WoT and go against the Jihadists who were previously supported and admired by the authorities. "By and large, the militant jihadi groups were not directly involved in terrorist activities against civilian targets inside Pakistan until October 2001" (Khan, 2005).

Pakistan has banned almost 32 major militant and jihadist organizations consequently after 2001 onward, according to data provided by South Asia Terrorism Portal (South Asian Terrorism Portal, 2020) although the NACTA – a counter terrorism authority of Pakistan to unveil the affiliate social and humanitarian organizations were also banned under anti-Terrorism Act 1997 and the total strength of banned organization is almost 80 (NACTA, 2020). But the most lethal of them in terms of fatality for state authorities are TTP, TNSM, TTP-affiliated groups and BLA and BLF.

### **TRADITIONAL AND NON-TRADITIONAL SECURITY CHALLENGES**

Pakistan has always rejected terrorism in all its form and manifestations. Terrorism in the world and Pakistan must be differentiated by understanding the dynamics of both versions. The events of 9/11 were viewed by the world as an extremist interpretation of Jihadist. Islam also referred to by some as conservative version of Islam. This conservative or Jihadist orientations have been rejected by the west very aggressively. But in Islam there is a big demarcation within the subject of Jihad; the 'defensive Jihad' and the 'offensive Jihad'. Defensive Jihad is waged by the Muslim state when it is attacked by an aggressor or adversary that is permitted by Islamic Law (Shah N. , 2013). The offensive form is that one which is referred to as 'Terrorism'. Here the OJ means the insurgent activities of militant non-state actors against a Muslim state (Shah N., 2013).

Terrorism may be offensive actions by 'Offensive Jihadists' when it challenges the legitimacy of the state authority. In case of the Muslim states e.g. in Pakistan it is taken to dismantle the moderate or modern Islamic state and government and impose their version of Islam (the conservative form) or to challenge the writ of government and undermine the state authority because the state support infidel state's action against their support base e.g. Pakistan's support in GWOT for US and NATO operations against Al-Qaeda and Afghan-Taliban. In the non-Muslim states, the aim of terrorist activities is to oppose the liberal democratic and capitalist systems specially the monopoly of



western format of politics, economy and institutions. Terrorism, Extremism and Sectarianism all has posed traditional security challenges to Pakistan when it is measured under the 'national security perspective' (Javaid, 2006).

There is multi-facet of NTSC e.g. gender issues, population hike, drug trafficking, environmental degradation and arm smuggling etc., but this study considers terrorism and extremism resulting to create higher sustainability issues for the state of Pakistan. These challenges according to Afzal (2012) "have made the national security landscape more complex and vulnerable than ever before." These vulnerabilities have shaped a rough face of the country within the comity of nations of the world in the early 21st Century. The challenges have also led to sectarian violence and ethnic divide in the country. This way threatens not only national security-linked to traditional security paradigm, but also human security. "Violence has gravely increased in Pakistani society due to non-traditional security threats" (Afzal, 2012). The rising internal insecurity within Pakistani society posed as big challenge not only to the human security but also to the state-security having negative impacts on economy. The most fatal security challenges the state faced were: a) Rising Sectarianism; b) Extremism and Terrorism; c) Internal Displacement; and d) Afghan Refugees.

## CONCLUSION

Pakistan's approach to US after gaining independence from the British Colonial Rule was based on the conception of strengthening her security position against India. During 1979, she supported the Mujahideen, (Islamic fighters) against the Soviet invasion because of the dominant and splashy "Warm Water Theory". The testing time of the relation was the aftermath of the Soviet withdrawal and disintegration of USSR, which established the US as the sole super power of the world but the US once again ignored Pakistan. The renewal of the relation came when the US was hit by terrorism (9/11). She approached Pakistan once again under her own threat perception (US invasion of Afghanistan, 2001), and Pakistan provided every sort of assistance but this time the costs of alliance were more than duplicity and un-reliability as Pakistan's internal security went at stake due the spillover of Afghan-type war into Pakistan. Now, when the US is withdrawing from Afghanistan, the country has once again left to the disposal of warlords. Pakistan faces almost the same situation as was during the Soviet withdrawal of Afghanistan and the US has once again proved her un-reliability by dragging Pakistan into FATF and suspending her assistance.

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