

**ADVANCE SOCIAL SCIENCE ARCHIVE JOURNAL**Available Online: <https://assajournal.com>

Vol. 03 No. 02. Apr-Jun 2025. Page#.2250-2261

Print ISSN: [3006-2497](#) Online ISSN: [3006-2500](#)Platform & Workflow by: [Open Journal Systems](#)**Pakistan and US Relations under the Shadow of PTI from 2018 to 2022: Divergence****Rooma Noor**

Visiting faculty at Department of History and Pakistan studies

International Islamic University Islamabad

rooma.noor.vt3564@iiu.edu.pk**Prof Dr. Amna Mahmood**

Department of History and Pakistan Studies

International Islamic University Islamabad

Abstract

During Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leadership from 2018 to 2022 a lot happened in the world of international relations. This article conducts a comprehensive examination of Pakistan relation with US from 2018 to 2022. It delves into the evolving dynamics of aid, geopolitical factors and Pakistanis involvement in peace talks in Afghanistan examining how these factors influenced its relationship with the United States. Decisions made by Imran Khan such as his meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin in 2022 sparked debates and discussions. Additionally, this article explores the approach of the Trump, Joe Biden administration towards Pakistan including ties, security cooperation and foreign aid provided by the United States during PTIs governance. It also looks at how Pakistan got along with the United States during this time what important things happened as well as how their relationship changed because of Pakistan role in Afghanistan as well as whether the change in the U.S. administration from Trump to Joe Biden had an impact on relations with Pakistan or whether this change was influenced by the Afghan interest. This study employs both exploratory and explanatory research designs to examine the dynamics of Pakistan-US relations during the tenure of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government from 2018 to 2022, using Realist Theory as the theoretical framework to contextualize and interpret bilateral interactions and strategic interests.

Keywords: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, Afghanistan, United States, Joe Biden, Trump, Relationship, Imran Khan

Introduction:

From 2018 to 2022 Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was led by Imran Khan as its chairman and the Prime Minister of Pakistan (Zeidan, 2023, para.1). Diplomatically Pakistan transitioned from isolation, addressing the Kashmir dispute, engaging in Afghan peace talks at the same time strengthening ties with China through CPEC as well as fostering economic partnerships with African nations while facing strong opposition and protests (Jamal, 2020, para.2). The Afghan peace negotiations' intents considerably influence future security structures both locally and globally. With the United States and China observing besides Pakistan moderating, there is unique opportunity for Pakistan to showcase its commitment to peace in Afghanistan and its surrounding regions (Abdullah et al., 2023). Pakistan seeks to enhance its relations with key

regional players by reengaging in diplomatic negotiations. This aligns with one of the Pakistan's primary foreign policy goals which are to establish a network of regional allies (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Pakistan, n.d.).

During PTI's leadership from August 2018 to April 2022 under Imran Khan Pakistan faced numerous challenges first the government tried to diversify foreign aid sources and also mediated in the U.S-Taliban peace process. PTI also played an important role in mediating between the Taliban and the United States which contributed to the 2021 U.S. troop withdrawal from Afghanistan and also improved Pakistan-Taliban relations (Ali, 2023, para.1). Also meanwhile The 'Cypher Case. Imran Khan P.M of Pakistan Decision to meet with Russian President Vladimir Putin shortly after Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 sparked different controversy and international isolation (Al-Rabbi, 2024).

In the meantime, the US government changed from Trump to Biden raising interesting questions about the nature of our relationships following the transition. Similar to the Trump administration the Biden administration views Pakistan through the lens of Afghanistan. The Special Envoy, American diplomat is still meeting with officials at the army headquarters in Rawalpindi and Islamabad on a daily basis to discuss peace negotiations. However, in contrast to the Trump administration, which gave Pakistan priority over all other third parties in Afghanistan, the Biden administration has not (Afzal, 2021). Pakistan's already struggling economy and the government's militant crackdown and its attempts to assert foreign policy independence from the military strained relations between the PTI and the military establishment. In 2022 the National Assembly's political opposition moved to hold a vote of confidence in PTI's government leading to his removal from office which was successful. ("The Economic Times News," 2023, para.1).

Literature Review:

Rasool, Khan, and Mustafa (n.d.) in their article *"Pakistan Strategic Prospect with USA during PTI Government"* provide a descriptive Analysis of Pakistan-US relations during PTI government. The study sketches the historical complexities of the bilateral relationship, focusing on areas such as diplomatic ties, economic cooperation as well as military collaboration, and regional security concerns. While the article offers useful context and highlights important developments during the PTI government it lacks a critical analysis of the divergent aspects that defined the relationship between 2018 and 2022. The study does not sufficiently explore the tensions, policy misalignments, or strategic shifts, differences over Afghanistan, regional alliances, and geopolitical recalibrations which are essential for understanding the divergence in Pakistan-US relations during this period (Rasool, Khan, & Mustafa, n.d.).

Congressional Research Service, dated May 22, 2023, discusses the evolving nature of U.S.-Pakistan relations, stress the United States' long-standing policy goals of promoting a stable, democratic, and prosperous Pakistan that actively combats religious militancy. It highlights the Biden Administration's continued interest in engaging with Pakistan on critical issues such as terrorism, nuclear proliferation, regional stability, democratization, human rights, and economic development. Though, it does not sufficiently address the underlying issues that have strained Pakistan U-S relations or the strategic policy shifts in Washington that replicate growing skepticism about Pakistan's role as a reliable partner (Congressional Research Service, 2023).

Aslam, Hussain, and Mujahid (2022) provides a qualitative analysis of Pakistan's foreign policy under the PTI government from 2018 to 2022. It highlights the government's stress on diplomacy

over military engagement, mainly in managing regional conflicts such as the Kashmir dispute with India and efforts to mediate between Iran-Saudi Arabia, Tehran-Washington, and the Taliban-U.S. The study also stresses Pakistan's attempts to maintain balanced relations with major powers like the U.S. and China, particularly in the aftermath of the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan. While the article discusses the PTI government's foreign policy priorities but it does not critically examine how these policies affected Pakistan's long-term strategic standing with major powers, nor does it explore the gradual policy shifts and growing mistrust that have shaped recent U.S.-Pakistan relations. This presents a key gap in understanding the broader implications of Pakistan's foreign policy on its relations with the United States, mainly in the context of increasing diplomatic strain and shifting U.S. strategic priorities. (Aslam, Hussain, & Mujahid, 2022).

Abid, Naseem, and Bilal (2023) discovers how Pakistani multiple TV news channels such as, framed Pak-US relations during the tenure of the PTI government from 2018 to 2022. Using a Descriptive Content Analysis method, the study observes primetime news bulletins from August 2018 to January 2022, focusing on issues such as military cooperation, the Afghanistan situation, regional disputes, the War on Terror, and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The research highlights that news channels presented positive coverage of Pak-US relations, portraying bilateral cooperation between the two nations during this period. Through the application of Agenda Setting and Framing approaches. Though, the study does not fully address the developing divergence in Pak-US relations under the PTI government, mainly the shifts in U.S. policy towards Pakistan as diplomatic and strategic dynamics changed, which remains a key gap in understanding the broader complexities of these relations during this time (Abid, Naseem, & Bilal, 2023).

Methodology:

This study employs an explanatory as well as exploratory research design to delve into dynamics of Pakistan-US relations during the tenure of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) from 2018 to 2022. Data is collected through Primary Sources such as tweets, diplomatic correspondences, speeches, and press releases from both Pakistani and US government entities is collected to provide firsthand insights into diplomatic interactions and policy decisions. For Secondary Sources use Academic journals, Articles, reports, news's, books scholarly publications will supplement the primary data, offering diverse perspectives and contextual information on the subject.

Realist Theory in Context: Understanding Pakistan-US Relations under PTI Leadership

Realism is a set of theories in international relations that highlights the importance of the state as well as national interest, and power in global politics. Ever since the aftermath of World War II, realism has been a prevailing framework in understanding international affairs. Realists claim that it provides the most precise explanation of state behavior and also offers policy prescriptions, particularly emphasizing the balance of power among states to address the inborn elements in international relations.

Realism includes numerous elements, with classical realism and neorealism being the most distinctive. Classical realism, drawing from varied sources such as Marxism and American civic republicanism, stresses the constraints posed by human nature, political institutions, as well as the anarchic structure of the international system on progress, reform. On the other hand, neorealism, initiated by scholars like Kenneth Waltz, reconfigures realism as a difficult social-

scientific theory rooted in microeconomics. Neorealism emphasizes on states as rational actors operating in a self-help system, where survival is paramount, and behavior is formed by the distribution of power. (Bell, n.d.).

Anarchy in the International System

The failure of the United States to recognize Pakistan's significant contributions in the war on terror despite Pakistan's considerable sacrifices demonstrates the anarchic nature of the international system. Despite Pakistan's assistance, the US always prioritized its own interests, overlooking Pakistan's efforts and also concerns in the process.

Classical Realism - Constraints and National Interests

Classical realism underlines the constraints imposed by the international system on Pakistan's efforts to secure acknowledgement for its contributions. Pakistan's pursuit of its national interests, including security concerns as well as regional stability, was overshadowed by the US's unilateral approach, which line up its own agenda without adequately considering Pakistan's perspective.

Neorealism - Power Dynamics and Self-Interest

Neorealism places of interest the power dynamics and self-help nature of states in international relations. In spite of Pakistan's role in facilitating the Doha agreement, which aimed to bring peace to Afghanistan, the US's failure to acknowledge Pakistan's efforts reflects its focus on proceeding its own interests, irrespective of Pakistan's strategic significance.

Balance of Power

The instable priorities in US-Pakistan relations, where Pakistan was a priority during the Trump administration but not during the Biden administration, can be viewed through the lens of the balance of power. Pakistan's engagement with other powers, for instance Russia, for economic development was observed as a threat to US interests, leading to a recalibration of US-Pakistan relations under the Biden administration.

Realism and its subtypes help contextualize the divergence in Pakistan-US relations during the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf government. The failure to recognize Pakistan's contributions, the prioritization of national interests, ALSO the implications of power dynamics underscore the difficulties of international relations and the challenges faced by Pakistan in navigating its relationship with the US.

Pakistan US relation during PTI government 2018 to 2022: Divergence

During PTI Government the relationship between Pakistan and the US remained subdued. Imran Khan's divergence from US policies mainly regarding the War on Terrorism which he perceived as serving American interests rather than combating terrorism efficiently led to consistent criticism of Pakistan's alignment with the US. Consequently, prospects for bilateral improvement were limited (Javed, 2022, para 2).

Pakistan US relations during Donald Trump administration

when Donald Trump became the US president after that Pakistan started to step back also turn out to be less responsive to US demands causing diplomatic strain between the two nations relations this altered dynamic has created challenges as well as disagreements between Pakistan and US particularly evident PTI's ideological stance coupled with his criticism of Pakistan's role as a U.S. ally in the War on Terrorism contributed to this tension more. Despite having support among Pakistani Americans PTI was unable to effectively leverage this support for lobbying

efforts in the U.S. The Trump administration's decision to suspend aid to Pakistan in 2018 increases this mistrust. The U.S. suspended approximately \$900 million in security assistance and also citing Pakistan's insufficient actions against extremist groups like the Afghan Taliban as well as the Haqqani network. This move was seen as a reflection of the Trump administration's frustration with Pakistan perceived support for these groups. (Javed,2022, para 3).

Donald Trump new plan did not work out. The people of Afghanistan had already suffered a lot with 1.5 million lives lost since 1980. In July 2018 the U.S agreed to have direct talks with the Taliban for peace because the Taliban then wanted that. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo went to Kabul and a senior official from the State Department also went to Islamabad to check things out there. The U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan, , met with the Taliban and thought that they might sign a peace agreement by April 2019 (Sattar ,2020).

In 2018 President Trump criticized Pakistan especially in a tweet on New Year's Evening blaming Pakistan of dishonesty as well as deception. The United States has given Pakistan more than 33 billion dollars in aid over the past 15 years. However, Pakistan has not been honest or helpful in return. They provide shelter to the terrorists we are trying to catch in Afghanistan, but they do not do much to help us. We cannot keep giving them aid if they would not cooperate (Trump, 2018).

The United States has decided to considerably reduce military aid to Pakistan allotting only \$100 million for the 2018 fiscal year. However, it's up to the State Department to agree whether this aid will be given as a grant or a loan. Last year Pakistan received \$534 million in assistance from the US in which including \$225 million in foreign military funding. The White House aims to convert its Foreign Military Funding (FMF) program to loans for many countries including Pakistan. This decision reflects a shift in US engagement with Pakistan particularly concerning counterterrorism efforts. The US is dissatisfied with Pakistan's alleged support for militant groups such as the Taliban which undermines stability in Afghanistan. Consequently, US-Pakistani relations have deteriorated and pushing Pakistan closer to China and potentially Russia. President Trump's recent remarks in Saudi Arabia emphasized Pakistan as a problem rather than a solution in South Asia signaling a change in US priorities. Pakistan's isolation is evident as it faces tensions with its neighbors including Afghanistan as well as India, and Iran, due to its alleged support for militant organizations. With diminishing US support and increasing pressure Pakistan may need to reconsider its foreign policies (shams,2017, para 1,2,3,5).

During PTI government in 2019 President Trump aims to convince Prime Minister Imran Khan to stress the Taliban into negotiating a peace deal with the Afghan government. However, Imran Khan emphasized the importance of political negotiations over military solutions in Afghanistan, opposing Trump's approach. Thus create more tensions between the two nations stem from disagreements over counterterrorism efforts and US accusations of Pakistan supporting militant groups. Despite this Imran Khan seeks mutually beneficial ties with the US while criticizing US anti-terrorist tactics (BBC News, 2019).

Trump's push for India to take on a larger role in Afghanistan is concerning for Pakistan's military leaders. Zahid Hussain a Pakistani security analyst, proposes that Donald Trump's policy could unintentionally constrain Pakistan and have unintended consequences. Trump's blame of Pakistan for protecting terrorist organizations serves as a warning to Islamabad about potential consequences for supporting insurgents against the U.S.-backed Kabul government. Rustam Shah Mohman, Pakistan's former ambassador to Kabul, expects challenging relations ahead,

describing Trump's approach as a notice to Pakistan. There were voices within the administration supporting for a quicker and more aggressive stance against Pakistan. The U.S. relies on Pakistani roads to resupply troops in landlocked Afghanistan, raising concerns that combative relations with Pakistan could further destabilize Afghanistan as well as endanger U.S. soldiers. Daniel Feldman, a former special representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan under Obama, suggests that addressing Pakistan's safe havens is more effective through private pressure rather than public hostility, pointing to prevent the Indo-Pak rivalry from escalating in Afghanistan (Jorgic & Hassan, 2017).

This made PTI leader and Prime Minister Imran Khan Advise Trump to reconsider the reasons for failure in Afghanistan. Despite having 140,000 US and NATO troops there arming 250,000 Afghan soldiers and spending a trillion dollars Imran Khan pointed out that Pakistan had assisted the US at a significant cost with 75,000 people losing their lives and \$123 billion in damage as well as the destruction of tribal areas and millions of people being displaced (Sajjd, 2021).

In December 2018 in a complete about turn president Donald trump acknowledged in a letter to Prime Minister Imran khan that Pakistan too had suffered in the war on terrorism in Afghanistan and also requested Pakistan cooperation in promoting negotiations with the Taliban for a peaceful settlement. Islamabad said that it was already its policy. Pakistan obliged and also played a part in persuading the Taliban to join talks with the US in December 2018 (Sattar ,2020).

US-Pakistan Policy Shifts Trump to Joe- Biden

The relationship between the United States and Pakistan has faced some challenges in the last two years. One of the major issues was the fallout from the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan as well as the Taliban taking control (Mir, 2021). The Biden administration has come up with a new way of handling its relationship with Pakistan. The White House is not very involved while the State Department is actively engaging with Pakistan. Moreover, the long-standing military and defense connections between the two countries continue. This new approach is different from what we have seen before between US and Pakistan. President Joe Biden is the first U.S. president in a while who has not had direct talks with a Pakistani prime minister whether it is Imran Khan or his successor Shehbaz Sharif. Before August 2021 the relationship was mostly focused on America's interests in Afghanistan but now both countries are trying to expand it to cover more areas of mutual interest (Afzal, 2023).

The Role of Leadership Change in the US

The Biden Administration has been actively involved with the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, or "Quad," involving India, Japan, and also Australia with a primary focus on countering China. This shift in U.S. attention away from Afghanistan has raised concerns among some Pakistani leaders. They worry that Pakistan's importance to Washington has decreased Pakistan assume this is partly due to the perception that Pakistan is aligning more closely with Beijing in terms of geopolitics. In response, Pakistani officials as well as independent analysts have called for a "reset" in their relationship with the Biden Administration. This reset would move away from a predominant focus on security matters and towards a more comprehensive partnership. They envision a "geo-economics" approach, where Pakistan and also the United States work together on regional integration to achieve sustainable development. Pakistan aims to be an economic partner for the United States with cooperation in key sectors like information technology, agriculture, health, energy, and climate change. Pakistan is rapidly embracing digital

technology has a growing middle class, including numerous tech professionals, as well as aspires to become a regional technology hub. However, the Biden Administration has not shown clear signs of embracing this broad reset also President Joe Biden has yet to engage directly with a Pakistani prime minister since taking office. Some Washington-based analysts recommend a more modest as well as pragmatic relationship tempering expectations on both sides. Public opinion surveys indicate that anti-American sentiment remains widespread among Pakistanis (Congressional Research Service, 2023).

As the U.S. administration changed the bilateral relationship continued to center around Afghanistan. Pakistan played a role in facilitating negotiations with the Taliban but the fall of Kabul in 2021 led to U.S. blame being directed at Pakistan. The U.S. expected more from Pakistan but Pakistan argued that it had already done much by bringing the Taliban to the negotiating table. President Joe Biden's administration viewed Pakistan through the lens of its regional neighbors such as Afghanistan, India, and China, limiting its focus on Pakistan beyond Afghanistan-related issues. This made it challenging to reset as well as broaden the relationship during Imran Khan's tenure. Both Pakistan and the U.S. have a mix of positive and negative memories in their relationship but they share economic ties and mutual interests. Fostering sustained trade relations and engaging with each other independently of third-party considerations could be a positive starting point for improving bilateral ties (Congressional Research Service, 2023).

Pakistan's Role in Afghan Peace Talks and its Impact on Pakistan-US Relations during PTI's Government

Pakistan plays a vital role in the current Afghan peace process. This is because Pakistan and Afghanistan share a long border and also have cultural connections as well as are geographically close. Another important factor is the historical ties between Pakistan's military and the Taliban. These connections make Pakistan an important player in the peace talks happening now. Pakistan's leaders are working firm to bring peace to Afghanistan.

The United States fought a long war in Afghanistan spending almost 1 trillion dollars. After all, that they agreed with what Pakistan had been saying all along is that war cannot bring real peace in Afghanistan. Instead of trying to defeat the Taliban the U.S. decided to negotiate to them. Getting peace in Afghanistan would not have been possible without Pakistan's help. Pakistan went through a lot during the War on Terror with many Afghan refugees coming in Pakistan and terrorist's crossing over from Afghanistan into Pakistan. The U.S. appreciated Pakistan's role in making a deal with the Taliban in February 2020 and starting talks among Afghans. But things slowed down when President Joe Biden took over in January 2021 (Mir, 2021).

After the months of strained relationship between US and Pakistan now U.S. officials approached Pakistan for assistance in indirect peace talks with the Taliban acknowledging Pakistan's consistent efforts toward peace as well as recognizing the importance of a peaceful Afghanistan for Pakistan's own internal security (Gul, 2018).

An Agreement for Bringing Peace to Afghanistan which is commonly known as the US-Taliban deal or the Doha Accords was a [peace agreement](#) signed by the [United States](#) and the [Taliban](#) on 29 February 2020 in [Doha](#) Qatar. Pakistan has been trying so hard to get the Afghan Taliban to agree to a peaceful solution. But with more violence in Afghanistan as well as peace talks not going well Pakistan is getting worried. If Afghanistan falls apart it could make Pakistani terrorist groups stronger like the Pakistani Taliban as well as cause more Afghan people to run away as

refugees. The Taliban in Afghanistan are still using violence to get what they want and also the Afghan government is not giving in easily. On top of all this President Biden's plan to pull out all U.S. troops by September 11, 2021, means they need to make peace quickly before things get worse in Afghanistan (Mir, 2021).

However, the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Afghanistan has raised concerns about security in the region. The vacuum created by this withdrawal may empower extremist groups posing a direct threat to Pakistan's national security as well as potentially triggering regional conflicts. Pakistan has already witnessed an increase in terrorist attacks exemplified by the TTP's actions following the U.S.-led peace agreement in Afghanistan. This has further strained Pakistan's economic as well as political reputation, particularly its inclusion on the FATF's grey list. (Congressional Research Service, 2023).

Imran Khan Visit to Moscow Meeting with Russian President Putin amid Ukraine Crisis: US Reacts

The United States responded to PM of Pakistan's Imran Khan Visit to Moscow by saying that every "responsible" country should express concern about what Russia is doing in Ukraine. Ned Price, a spokesperson from the US State Department mentioned this that The US had conveyed its position to Pakistan about Russia's recent actions in Ukraine which they referred to as a "renewed invasion. Price highlighted that it is the duty of each nation to voice their concerns regarding Russian President Vladimir Putin's plans (The News International, 2022).

Prime Minister Imran Khan's trip to Russia aims to discuss economic cooperation and promote the construction of a major gas pipeline in collaboration with Russian companies he was not aware about Russian invasion on Ukraine when he decided to visit. The visit coincided with Western nations imposing sanctions on Russia for its military involvement in eastern Ukraine. Price stated that it's crucial for every country to clearly express their concerns about Putin's intentions for Ukraine (Shams ,2022).

In a meeting held by the US State Department on March 7 last year, it was revealed that they urged Pakistan to remove Imran Khan as Prime Minister due to his neutral stance on Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The meeting sparked significant attention and discussion in Pakistan (Dawn News, 2022). About a month later, a no-confidence motion was raised against Khan's leadership in Parliament. The report also disclosed a document titled "Secret," revealing the US objection to Khan's foreign policy regarding the Ukraine war. This meeting happened shortly after the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Furthermore, during a Senate hearing on March 2, a US official mentioned Imran Khan's recent visit to Moscow and expressed a need to engage with him, especially after Pakistan abstained from voting on a UN resolution critical of Russia's involvement in the conflict (MENAFN, 2023).

Imran Khan has also blamed foreign interference in the no-confidence motion against him. The US denied involvement in the no-trust move also stated support for Pakistan's constitutional process. Imran Khan's visit to Moscow was criticized due to its timing during the Russia-Ukraine conflict. And which was clear by PTI that the Imran Khan's meeting with Putin had been planned years in advance and was unrelated to the Ukraine conflict. And the purpose of visit was to sign economic agreements, particularly to purchase agricultural products like wheat to address shortages in Pakistan at that time. During the visit Imran Khan expressed regret over the situation and also hoped for a peaceful resolution between Russia and Ukraine. Despite Pakistan

assertions, US remained steadfast in his position, expressing concern about the potential negative impact of Imran Khan's visit on US-Pakistan relations and EU-Pakistan partnerships (Dawn News, 2022).

Pakistan-U.S. Economic Disparity: A Potential Barrier to Mutual Benefit

Pakistan sells the 55th most goods to the United States and is the 57th largest market for what the United States sells. The United States has special trade deals with more than 20 countries, but not with Pakistan. Compared to other places like the Philippines, Taiwan, and Thailand, Pakistan is not among the top 10 places where the United States invests a lot of money. In fact, in terms of foreign investment, Pakistan is way behind. In 2020-21, the money the U.S. invested in Pakistan was only one-fifth of what China invested there. Most of China's investment was for projects related to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. This situation makes us wonder if there could be a relationship where both the United States and Pakistan benefit, not just in terms of military and strategy.¹ Americans trust Pakistan less than any other country tested on the poll including Russia as well as China and Saudi Arabia (Ijaz et al., 2023).

Conclusion:

In terms of Pakistan and the United States relations these were characterized by tensions especially due to Imran Khan's ideological stance and also criticism of Pakistan's role in the War on Terrorism. The Trump administration's suspension of aid to Pakistan in 2018 intensified this mistrust. Despite some attempts at mediation such as offering to mediate the Kashmir issue between Pakistan and also India the relationship continued to be influenced by the situation in Afghanistan. Pakistan sought to shift its focus to geo-economics but progress remained limited. As the Biden administration engaged in the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) with a focus on countering China concerns arose in Pakistan that its importance to the U.S. had diminished. Pakistani officials as well as analysts called for a reset in bilateral relations emphasizing geo-economics and regional integration. However, the Biden administration has not yet embraced this broad reset.

The U.S.-Pakistan relationship was largely defined by the situation in Afghanistan and also with the withdrawal of U.S. forces this relationship faced uncertainties. While Pakistan sought a broad reset with the U.S. focusing on geo-economics the Biden administration's priorities shifted elsewhere. This dynamic underscores the need for both countries to adapt their foreign policy approaches and rebuild trust as well as explore avenues for sustained cooperation beyond the Afghan context.

¹ Hamza Ijaz, Imran Khan, Maryam Kiyani, and Adnan Rafiq, "Rethinking US-Pakistan Relations in the Age of Great Power Competition," Discussion Paper 23-002 (Washington, D.C.: USIP, March 10, 2023).

References:

1. Zeidan, A. (2023, September). Imran Khan. *Britannica*. Retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Imran-Khan>
2. Jamal, S. (2020, August 18). Pakistan: Two years on, what has the PTI government achieved? *World, ASIA. Gulf News*. Retrieved from <https://gulfnews.com/world/asia/pakistan/pakistan-two-years-on-what-has-the-pti-government-achieved-1.1597717457122>
3. Abdullah, S. S. A., & Nafees, M. (2023). Role of Pakistan as a Facilitator in the Intra-Afghan Dialogues. *Global Political Review*, Page 1. Retrieved from <https://www.humapub.com/admin/alljournals/gpr/papers/Ai38mVQO4Y.pdf>
4. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Pakistan. (n.d.). Foreign Policy. Retrieved September 2023, from <https://mofa.gov.pk/foreign-policy>
5. Ali, S. M. (2023, December 7). Managing US Relations with Pakistan in Uncertain Times: Opportunities and Obstacles. *Middle East Institute*. Retrieved from <https://www.mei.edu/publications/managing-us-relations-pakistan-uncertain-times-opportunities-and-obstacles>
6. Chowdhury Taoheed Al-Rabbi. (2024, February 8). The Imran Khan Saga: Everything that is wrong with modern day Pakistan. *The Business Standard*. Retrieved from <https://www.tbsnews.net/thoughts/imran-khan-saga-everything-wrong-modern-day-pakistan-789714>
7. Afzal, M. (2021, April 12). Under Biden, Pakistan and the US face a dilemma about the breadth of their relationship. Retrieved from <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/under-biden-pakistan-and-the-us-face-a-dilemma-about-the-breadth-of-their-relationship/>
8. Basit, A. (2022, April 25). Pakistan's Military Ends Its Experiment With Hybrid Democracy. *Foreign Policy*. Retrieved from <https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/04/25/pakistan-military-imran-khan-hybrid-democracy/>
9. "The Economic Times News. (2023, September). A Timeline of How Imran Khan Ousted in No-Confidence Vote. Retrieved from <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/international/world-news/a-timeline-of-how-imran-khan-ousted-in-no-confidence-vote/articleshow/90755603.cms?from=mdr>"
10. Javed, T. (2022, October 17). Pak-US Relations During the PTI's Tenure. Center for Strategic and Contemporary Research (CSCR). Retrieved from <https://cscr.pk/explore/publications/articles/pak-us-relations-during-the-ptis-tenure/>
11. Sattar, A. (2020). *Pakistan's Foreign Policy 1947-2019: A Concise History* (p. 290). Oxford University Press.
12. Trump, D. [@realDonaldTrump]. (2018, January 1). [Tweet]. Twitter. Retrieved from <https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/947802588174577664>
13. Shams, S. (2017, May 5). Pakistani Military Feeling the Trump Pressure. *DW*. Retrieved from <http://www.dw.com/en/pakistani-military-feeling-the-trump-pressure/a-38980975>
14. BBC News. (2019, July 23). Imran Khan: Pakistan PM meets Trump in bid to mend ties. Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-49032495>
15. Jorgic, D., & Hassan, S. R. (2017, August 23). Trump talks tough on Pakistan's 'terrorist' havens, but options scarce. *Reuters, Asia Pacific*. Retrieved from

- <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trump-afghanistan-pakistan/trump-talks-tough-on-pakistans-terrorist-havens-but-options-scarce-idUSKCN1B21NW>
16. Islamuddin Sajid. (2021, July). Pakistani premier says US 'messed it up in Afghanistan'. Anadolu Agency. Retrieved from <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/pakistani-premier-says-us-messed-it-up-in-afghanistan/2316812>
 17. Mir, N. A. (2021, November 9). Issues and Mistrust in US-Pakistan Relations. SouthAsiaSource. Retrieved from <https://southasiasource.org/issues-mistrust-us-pakistan-relations>
 18. Afzal, M. (2023, March 2). The Biden administration's two-track Pakistan policy misses the mark. Brookings Institution. Retrieved from <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/the-biden-administrations-two-track-pakistan-policy-misses-the-mark/>
 19. Congressional Research Service. (2023, May 22). Pakistan and U.S.-Pakistan Relations (pp. 1-2). Retrieved from <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R47565>
 20. Mir, A. (2021, July 9). Pakistan in Afghan Peace Process. Daily Times. Retrieved from <https://dailytimes.com.pk/pakistan-in-afghan-peace-process/>
 21. Gul, A. (2018, June 8). The US asks Pakistan to facilitate Afghan-Taliban peace talks. Voice of America. Retrieved from <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/news/2018/06/mil-180608-voa01.htm>
 22. "Imran Khan Russia Visit: US Says Position on Ukraine Crisis Communicated to Pakistan." (2022, February 24). The News International. Retrieved from <https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/936376-us-reacts-to-pm-imrans-moscow-visit-amid-ukraine-crisis>
 23. Shams, S. (2022, February 25). Why Imran Khan's Russia trip will further isolate Pakistan. DW.com. Retrieved from <https://www.dw.com/en/ukraine-crisis-why-imran-khans-russia-trip-will-further-isolate-pakistan/a-60916130>
 24. Dawn News. (2022, April 5). US sought to punish 'disobedient' Imran Khan, says Russia. Retrieved from <https://www.dawn.com/news/1683565>
 25. Bell, D. (n.d.). Realism. In Encyclopædia Britannica. Retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/realism-political-and-social-science>
 26. MENAFN. (2023, August 10). US urged Pakistani govt to oust Imran Khan over neutral stance on Ukraine: Report. Retrieved from <https://menafn.com/1106828387/Us-Urged-Pakistani-Govt-To-Oust-Imran-Khan-Over-Neutral-Stance-On-Ukraine-Report>.
 27. Dawn News. (2022, April 5). US sought to punish 'disobedient' Imran Khan, says Russia. Retrieved from <https://www.dawn.com/news/1683565>
 28. Ijaz, H., Khan, I., Kiyani, M., & Rafiq, A. (2023, March 10). Rethinking US-Pakistan Relations in the Age of Great Power Competition (Discussion Paper 23-002, (p. 9). Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace.
 29. Rasool, K., Khan, Q. Z., & Mustafa, G. (n.d.). *Pakistan strategic prospect with USA during PTI government*. Department of International Relations, Government College University, Faisalabad.
 30. Congressional Research Service. (2023, May 22). *Pakistan and Pakistan-U.S. relations* (CRS Report) Retrieved from <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/row/R47565>
 31. Aslam, M., Hussain, Z., & Mujahid, F. (2022). Pakistan's foreign policy from 2018 to 2022: The PTI government's contribution to the development of foreign relations with major

- powers. *Pakistan Languages and Humanities Review*, 6(III), 1045–1061. [https://doi.org/10.47205/plhr.2022\(6-III\)67](https://doi.org/10.47205/plhr.2022(6-III)67)
32. Abid, S., Naseem, N., & Bilal, M. Z. (2023). Media coverage and Pak-US relations: Analysis of TV news framing during PTI's regime. *Pakistan Journal of Social Research*, 5(1), 230–237. <https://doi.org/10.52567/pjsr.v5i01.994>