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**TRUMP'S GLOBAL VISION AND ITS IMPACT ON PAKISTAN'S
STRATEGIC CALCULUS**

Shumaila Abbas

Lecturer in Political Science, Government Associate College (W)
Shahdara, Lahore

<https://orcid.org/0009-0009-1053-6363>

Dr. Muhammad Naveed Ul Hasan Shah

Assistant Professor Political Science, Abasyn University Peshawar

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7525-1769>

Doa Binte Yousaf

M.Phil Scholar Political Science, Abasyn University Peshawar

<https://orcid.org/0009-0002-1695-336X>

ABSTRACT

The Trump Administration marked a significant shift in U.S. foreign policy, introducing the "America First" doctrine, which emphasized unilateralism, strategic competition, and a focus on the Indo-Pacific region. This study examines how these policy shifts influenced Pakistan's strategic calculus and its regional dynamics. The Trump Administration's pro-India tilt, coupled with a reduction in U.S. engagement with Pakistan, created a volatile geopolitical environment in South Asia. The research highlights key aspects of this policy shift, including the suspension of U.S. military and civilian aid to Pakistan and a re-evaluation of its role in counterterrorism efforts. Trump's approach underscored Pakistan's dual role as both an ally and a perceived source of regional instability. Additionally, the administration's strategic alignment with India strengthened New Delhi's regional ambitions while marginalizing Islamabad's influence, compelling Pakistan to recalibrate its alliances and strategic priorities. The study also explores the implications of U.S. policies on nuclear dynamics, counterterrorism cooperation, and economic partnerships, particularly through the lens of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). While U.S. concerns over CPEC's potential to deepen Pakistan's dependency on China were evident, the initiative also served as a counterbalance to U.S. strategic disengagement. In addressing regional implications, the paper delves into how U.S. policies during Trump's presidency impacted Pakistan's relations with India and Afghanistan, fostering increased tensions and strategic recalibrations. The interplay of state and non-state actors further complicated bilateral relations, underscoring the need for nuanced engagement strategies. The analysis concludes that while Trump's global vision

significantly altered U.S.-Pakistan relations, it also created opportunities for Pakistan to diversify its strategic partnerships and assert its regional significance. This study underscores the importance of recalibrating U.S.-Pakistan relations to balance emerging geopolitical realities and foster regional stability.

Keywords: U.S.-Pakistan Relations, Trump Administration, Strategic Calculus, Indo-Pacific, Pro-India Bias, Counterterrorism, CPEC, Nuclear Dynamics, Regional Stability, South Asia.

Introduction

Trump's worldview, which promised "America first" and aimed to put an end to former President Obama's Global Engagement Policy of overextending all endeavors and resources across the world through unnecessary wars like those in Iraq and Afghanistan, had a significant impact on international relations (Singh2021). In stark contrast to Obama's approach, Trump fervently convinced his electorate that his government would take powerful measures to promote and protect American interests by focusing primarily on its immediate neighborhood. This bold and unprecedented policy shift had extensive and far-reaching consequences, particularly in Pakistan, causing not only Afghanistan but also neighboring countries and beyond to adapt to the new paradigm shaped by Trump's transformational shift (Rabbi et al.2022). Against this dynamic geopolitical backdrop, this paper firmly argues that the historic change in the US global vision during the Trump era, characterized by a clear pro-India bias in foreign policy priorities and bilateral engagements, fundamentally and irreversibly altered the strategic landscape in these countries. Consequently, these nations were compelled to realign their own policies and adjust priorities as they navigate the turbulent currents of emerging global power dynamics. While a large pro-India lobby hailed this as a long-overdue adjustment to contemporary realities, Trump's strategic alignment with India and gradual distancing from Pakistan inadvertently unleashed a treacherous and uncertain path filled with violent confrontations, low-intensity conflicts, and fierce strategic competitions (Grinin and Korotayev, 2021). However, it is crucial to exercise caution and acknowledge the multitude of international and regional factors contributing to the heightened tensions in this volatile region. Therefore, any significant surge in violence must be examined within the broader geopolitical context, considering the complex interplay of diverse actors and their intersecting interests. Only through a comprehensive understanding of these intricacies can we grasp the true nature of the challenges faced and comprehend the intricate web of consequences stemming from the Trump enigma. By recognizing the intricacies and complexities involved, it is imperative that we now take a retrospective view and critically analyze a series of events in a fresh light. Diligently reflecting upon these events will enable us to determine whether they can genuinely be attributed to the enigmatic and polarizing leadership of Donald J. Trump. Only through such an objective examination can we hope to unravel the intricate tapestry of cause and effect and

gain a comprehensive understanding of the era defined by the Trump phenomenon (Reyes, 2020).

Historical Background of US-Pakistan Relations

Since the emergence of Pakistan on the global map, its relations with the superpower of the day have run the gamut. Initially, the United States chose to back India more often than not during the Cold War, penning defense agreements, trade and cultural relations, cutting off aid, and implementing military embargoes. Bipartisan US-Pakistan defense deals were critical for Islamabad during the 1950s and 1960s, and Washington passed legislation favoring Pakistan during the 1970s. President Jimmy Carter placed Pakistan on the human rights watchlist in 1978 and supported Afghan fighter's post-Soviet invasion. Then, President Ronald Reagan dropped anti-Pakistan legislation during the 1980s. Then, President George H.W. Bush reemployed sanctions on Pakistan in 1990, and George W. Bush chose to back Pakistan post-9/11 in 2001. (Resnick2022)

Meanwhile, the realm of defense and trade policy also witnessed constant fluctuations with changing alliances. As myriad complex political trends impacted security alliances, political loyalties, as illustrated through trade and military relations, doled out a mixed bag of signals to the world. What is more interesting is that the leaders' policies did not necessarily guide these bipartisan relationships. While presidents signed agreements in other spheres, resolutions in Congress and executive orders were being passed sabotaging those very accords, and vice versa. Unitary and bipartisan groups did not always exhibit political cohesion. The functions mentioned dealt with trade relations, aid, debt accumulation, defense alliances, and foreign investment; yet each phenomenon catered differently to political affiliations between the two states. (Erixon et al., 2022)

Trump Administration's Foreign Policy Priorities

The Trump administration, under its "America First" and "unleashing American power" doctrines, has developed new strategies and approaches in foreign policy. These themes have become the guiding principles of the administration's diplomatic agenda and are crucial in understanding its foreign policy decisions. The Trump administration has emphasized bilateralism as the cornerstone of its approach to foreign policy, downplaying the significance of multilateral institutions. While not outright rejecting multilateralism in official documents, the administration's focus on bilateralism has gradually diminished the role of international organizations and cooperation (Ünsal, 2023). In this context, unilateralism has become a defining characteristic of the United States' relationships with other nations in a world dominated by a single superpower. In particular, President Trump has openly acknowledged the strategic competition between the United States and Russia and China, focusing on "promoting markets instead of socialism" and championing American values and principles. According to Trump, the United States' vision in the Indo-Pacific region is shaped primarily

by China and its policies, rather than Russia and its current regime (Winkler, 2023). The shift from an Asia-centric to an Indo-Pacific-centric perspective signifies a deepening connection and interdependence between these regions.

Geographically, the Indo-Pacific region holds significant importance for the United States due to its access to key waterways such as the Bay of Bengal, Malacca Strait, South China Sea, as well as various island chains. These maritime routes allow for force projection and provide commercially advantageous transit corridors. Additionally, the region serves as a gateway to the Middle East and plays a vital role in energy transportation. The Trump Administration's foreign policy priorities are likely to focus on strengthening alliances with key partners in the region, such as Pakistan, to address security challenges and promote economic development. As Asia assumes the role of the pivot in global dynamics, primarily due to the rise of China, ensuring security and stability in the region has become imperative. The United States recognizes the need to safeguard its interests in this increasingly competitive environment, where genuine rivalry and strategic considerations are in play. To address these challenges, the Trump administration is committed to prioritizing security and stability in the Indo-Pacific region.

US-Pakistan Relations under the Trump Administration

While US-Pakistan relations tend to go through their ups and downs during different administrations, several changes and shifts have occurred in the period since Trump has been president of the United States. Trump's uncompromising approach towards most matters has been dismissed by many, sometimes justifiably, as mere bombast. Yet, the fact that he is ensconced in power in the United States and has made his mark on the world stage for a considerable while has led Pakistan and others to wonder how much reliance should be placed on Trump's predilections. In the case of Pakistan, there have been several events and changes that have defined the contemporary state of US-Pakistan relations during the Trump administration. (Ambreen and Zaheer2024)

Trump set the stage for a combative and difficult relationship with Pakistan at the very beginning of his administration by clearly questioning Pakistan's commitment and cooperation on Afghanistan. From peace talks with the Taliban, where Pakistan is an essential player, to the actions taken against Pakistan-based terror groups, Trump has given his advice to and expectations from Pakistan in the clearest of terms (Qadir and Kasi). The United States has treated Pakistan as both an ally in its 'war on terror' and as a conduit for terrorism in the Afghanistan-Pakistan theaters, thereby affecting the United States and, more specifically, the Indian-held parts of the South Asian region. However, Trump came into the Oval Office opting for a more cynical strategy and policy.

The United States has several tactical levers to nudge Pakistan or take necessary action. The United States suspended military assistance and parts of civilian aid to Pakistan, outraged at Pakistan's alleged inaction against the Afghan Taliban and

the Haqqani network. Pakistan has taken different actions in response over the years, showing a mix of cooperation and confrontation in its calculus. Military and intelligence cooperation with the United States has been present, with Pakistan being part of important US initiatives such as intelligence-sharing alliances. A complete expulsion of US military personnel or the closure of logistics for the US military moving to Afghanistan has not been addressed. Pakistan's Prime Ministers and Foreign Ministers have visited the United States in these years with a peaceful demeanor; these are signs of confrontation in action but not in hyperbole. (Yaqoob and Sattar2021)

Pakistan's Strategic Calculus

As far as Pakistan's strategic calculus is concerned, the recent shifting of strategic sands presents an interesting case on which considerable literature is required to discuss various dimensions of shifts. The latest vision talks of the so-called '2002 Global' rethinking and consideration for alliances and containment policy, especially against strategic competitors (Buch, 2024). As it is observed, the change in U.S. strategy towards Pakistan has eventually changed the overall Pakistani strategic objectives and alliances in the region. It is also worth noting that due to the change in regional alliances, Pakistan's lobbying strategies have also undergone a major transformation (Muzaffar et al., 2021).

It is of paramount importance to discuss Pakistani strategic objectives in this time of repositioning strategic pawns on the chessboard. It is pertinent to note that it is not change but the management of change that was and is relevant to reach the 'shores of security.' The period, which was supposed to be friendly towards non-state actors, is no longer beneficial to opt for at least value suffering cost. Broader economic and strategic linkages with one country and deep speculation with another have provided a shift in the vector of security management in these shifting sands. It is also pertinent to mention that the influence of the military is also considerable in that policy change. (Elahi et al., 2023)

It is interesting and amusing to note that a bipolar with a difficult sandwich interplay of internal settings becomes more relevant today with the proto-trigger on the border. However, the future changes in security policy forecast the domineering tendency of economic security over the classical notions of territorial defense and regional high policy-making. Not only is persistence important, but now change, the managing of new 'future equilibriums' involving new alliances amidst new threats, is relevant in the rich man's game. The potential to inject a prolonged lift into the sluggish and less than world average economic growth engine of Pakistan is also a contributing factor in evaluating the strategic calculus. (Slawotsky, 2024)

Counterterrorism Cooperation

With the Trump presidency came new initiatives under the rubric of the security relationship between the two countries. The contours of the security relationship

are determined by three broad areas, including the policy and strategy in counterterrorism, counterinsurgency or low-intensity conflict, and the policy between the two countries in overt and clandestine operations, be it autonomous, joint operations, combined operations or bilateral operations against the militants, who share a common enemy and thus need to dismantle the terrorists' pied-à-terre and support base to safeguard their own national, regional and global interests and locales (Kyoi et al., 2024). Although Pakistan and the United States may have joined hands to put into place a coordinated effort to dismantle like-minded or different variants of militant groups, both have diverse narratives and have differed in bringing the Taliban to the table for peaceful dialogue.

As a politico-military policy, the Pakistan Army has developed and sustained policy measures to cater to their own domestic, regional needs and global standing as the number one non-NATO and non-major category ally, observer or associate (Naz, 2020). Counterterrorism cooperation, as a major component of Pakistan's security relationship with the US, has failed to navigate the relationship of trust and confidence, since the US and Pakistan have different perspectives on the numerous militant and terrorism groups operating from the area of Pakistan known as the erstwhile tribal areas, autonomous tribal areas, or the Khyber province. The disparate national interests of the US and Pakistan military cannot but pursue their seek-and-destroy policy for their own national security, peace and stability in their respective nations (Zaidi and Ahmad, 2022).

Nuclear Dynamics in South Asia

The US-Pakistan relations during the Trump administration witnessed substantial change and evolving controversies. One of the main reasons was the 'nuclear dynamics,' particularly the nuclear proliferation and deterrence-related debate, politics, and discourses about the regional strategic balance of power (Ambreen and Zaheer2024). Furthermore, the strategic pursuits of India aimed to cover India's strategic advancements. At the same time, the United States pursued a South Asian non-proliferation top-down approach to manage the regional strategic competition and confrontational relations between India and Pakistan. Pakistan's emphasis on nuclear safety, security, and the policy of strategic discipline was used to enhance its importance. President Trump called Prime Minister Imran Khan to assure Pakistan that the United States is highly interested in ensuring 'terrorist control.' This initiates the 'nuclear discussion' because 'nuclear' and 'terrorist' are two interwoven subjects in the case of South Asia in general and in the case of Pakistan in particular (Hassan and Bukhari2020). Pakistan's nuclear and missile program, their levels and advancements, as well as Pakistan's nuclear doctrine, policy, and strategic politics, have an impact from 'external' powers, such as the United States, especially those who are not members of the Nuclear Suppliers Group.

The nuclear equilibrium in the South Asian region, particularly India-Pakistan relations, reveals a sensitive, fragile, intimidating, complex, and dangerous

spectrum. The 'nuclear dynamics' of South Asia consist of two immediate partners, India and Pakistan, both of whom have commonalities in their cases to see their 'nuclear weapons' as a direct function of national security (Karnad, 2020). The nuclear policy of 'minimum deterrence' of Pakistan has been widely debated, analyzed, and critiqued, though it is a strategy in a broader sense. In the case of South Asia, especially regarding Pakistan, the nuclear issue is multi-dimensional, such as Pakistan's provision of nuclear technology to state and non-state actors, nuclear technology proliferation, the spread of extremism and terrorism, and sabotage of nuclear installations, among others. Thus, it is of prime importance to be kept under ultra-safe conditions in any case, whether in war, peace, or conflict. This explanation is also synthesized with regard to the international concerns and alarm regarding 'nuclear security' and 'nuclear terrorist agenda' in the case of Pakistan. In particular, the United States is committed to 'Pakistani cooperation and assistance' in adapting to 'new conditions'; rather, it threatens that due to 'extremism' and 'terrorism,' especially 'nuclear terrorism,' it destroys 'the U.S.-South Asian relations.' These evolving concerns and US strategies affect Pakistan's calculus. The multi-dimensional theory of 'diversions' (defense, deterrence, diplomacy, and developmentalism) needs to be kept up-to-date by the evolving patterns, determined through cost-benefit and perception management from the current as well as emerging challenges, relative relationships, and status quo states. (Basrur, 2020)

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and US Concerns

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is widely recognized as a transformative force in Pakistan, with the potential to drastically reshape the country's infrastructural landscape, ignite unparalleled economic growth, and position it as a crucial transit and trade nexus connecting China, the Middle East, and Central Asia. Beyond its immense domestic significance, CPEC carries far-reaching geopolitical relevance that extends well beyond the national borders of China and Pakistan. Indeed, the anticipated benefits of CPEC are expected to radiate throughout the immediate region, fortifying the nascent regionalism supported by substantial investments. As we delve into the perceptions of CPEC worldwide, it becomes apparent that the criticisms voiced both domestically and internationally serve as a poignant reflection of the global perspective on this ambitious undertaking. (Wolf, 2020)

There are two principal concerns underpinning these views. One, CPEC is a project largely steered by the People's Liberation Army. It is being constructed and will be maintained by nationals. This raises fears that it would deepen Pakistan's strategic dependency on China to a point where disengaging from China would be almost impossible. Two, CPEC may potentially ratchet up Pakistan's vulnerability and seize its decision-making spaces vis-à-vis China. The latter could happen due to the mounting external debt that Pakistan would accumulate as it joins the expanding league of national development and investment. It is believed that

CPEC will progressively invade Pakistan's decision-making spaces and place Pakistan in a strategic cul-de-sac. In order to mitigate positions on CPEC, there are often calls for Pakistan to watch reforms in CPEC and safeguard its currency. These are clear expressions of the concerns that have been outlined above. Ergo, in this schema, CPEC is a pernicious act in the making, not a promise of a new, reformed South Asia. (Baig, 2022)

Regional Implications of US Policies

The previous chapters extensively delved into the comprehensive and multifaceted aspects of United States policy towards the region during the tenure of former President Donald Trump, scrutinizing its implications and repercussions. Equally significant were the numerous cooperation programs initiated between the United States and Pakistan throughout this consequential period. However, this chapter aims to illuminate a distinct facet, namely, the profound influence of these established US policies towards Pakistan on Islamabad's strategic calculus concerning other nations within the region. Such exploration emphasizes the undeniable interconnectedness that characterizes regional politics and underscores the consequential reactions of neighboring states to external influences. The strategies employed in these engagements hold immense relevance for adjacent countries, as they exert a discernible and tangible impact on regional stability. The overwhelming, and some might argue unparalleled, extent of United States power that permeated the subcontinent, along with its far-reaching influence, particularly in shaping Indian foreign policy and permeating elite public discourse, undeniably underscored Washington's unassailable dominance over regional security dynamics. (Derks, 2021)

The Westphalian nation-state system, in which nations are politically sovereign and resident to serve the national interest of their citizens, no longer applies to the nervous, angry, and resource-grabbing units of global power (Hickey and Hickey2020). Countries either support or resist the US in its foreign engagements and thus form factions together with allies and competitors. There are conflicting alliances and conflict opportunities. States react to changes in the system by calibrating friends and foes. Efforts to change the world order have consequences reaching the opposite side. US responsible behavior towards the Lok Sabha forces China to cooperate with India against the US to keep the Americans busy on its western front. Other US activities force countries on its periphery to bandwagon. These are important areas also discussed in this chapter.

Pakistan's Relations with India and Afghanistan

Pakistan's relations with neighboring countries, India and Afghanistan, are characterized by their mutual close relations with the US, which have had a direct impact on Pakistan's foreign policy. The strategic importance of Pakistan's evolving global vision necessitated a comprehensive and profound revision of relations on a bilateral basis with its neighbors. In recent years, the nature of

Pakistan's ties with India and Afghanistan has become even more multifaceted and consequential, fueled by a myriad of factors. One pivotal factor is the Indian military doctrine, which seeks to exert influence and consolidate its regional power. This has intensified the sense of urgency for Pakistan to fortify its strategic partnerships and bolster its defensive capabilities (Taye and Ahmed, 2021).

Furthermore, another crucial element shaping Pakistan's relationship with its neighbors is the substantial Chinese investment in Pakistan, particularly through the transformative Gwadar Port project (Aziz, 2024). This game-changing endeavor has not only solidified economic ties between the two countries but has also paved the way for enhanced regional connectivity and security. With the port serving as a strategic gateway, Pakistan's significance as a vital geostrategic link in the regional landscape has been further accentuated. In this complex geopolitical milieu, the notion of an encirclement threat posed by India through Afghanistan and the Indian Ocean has become increasingly palpable. Pakistan is acutely aware of the potential ramifications of such encirclement, which would not only compromise its security but also distort the regional balance of power. It is therefore imperative for Pakistan to carefully navigate these circumstances, fostering cooperative relations with both India and Afghanistan while simultaneously safeguarding its national interests (KHAN, 2023). Through diplomatic dialogues, confidence-building measures, and concerted efforts towards regional peace and stability, Pakistan aims to foster an environment of mutual trust and cooperation among its neighboring countries. Acknowledging the significance of sustainable peace in the region, Pakistan advocates for inclusive dialogue, de-escalation of tensions, and the promotion of shared economic prosperity. By adhering to these principles, Pakistan seeks to advance its broader global vision while ensuring the welfare and security of its people and the region at large (Haider and Azad, 2021).

US strategy might have remained unchanged towards Afghanistan had it not been for the Pakistan factor, which has significantly affected relations with other regional countries, such as India and Afghanistan. A major initiative by the new US administration was to start a peace and reconciliation process with the Afghan Taliban in order to bring an end to the endemic Afghan War. The prospects of Pakistan-India relations are grim. On the diplomatic front, no meeting took place between the two militaries for resolving border skirmishes in 2017. India has grappled militarily with China and Pakistan in the Sikkim and Kashmir sectors, respectively. Civil and military aviation exercises with the UAE, participation of the Indian Navy in strategic cooperation with the US are part of the Indian strategic cooperation. Whereas resolution of the Siachen and water disputes was considered by the two countries informally, the Indian confrontation with Pakistan has deepened over Kashmir. (Herd2021)

Role of Non-State Actors in US-Pakistan Relations

The influx of non-state actors in inter-state relations and the conflictual dimensions of state policy has marked a regional power game between Pakistan and the United States. Non-state actors include intelligence agencies posing quid pro quo, militant groups fighting a superior state, and international non-governmental organizations propagating their visions and prejudices. Despite their disruptive discourses, non-state actors weave the intricate tapestry of sincerity and impact. These actors have marked the contours of US-Pakistan relations following the attacks, thereby defining the relationships. They greatly influence US policy where special interests align with the multilateralism of international terrorism. The modes of operation and tactics used have altered bilateral relations in various dimensions. Militancy involving both state-sponsored collective actors and non-state actors has considerably altered the main patterns of politics and security dynamics. (Shabbir, 2022)

On a topical level, in order to understand the disequilibrium in national opinion regarding the US, it must be understood that the US plays to the tune of "political calculus," which is operational and not an unadulterated incident. However, in the case of Pakistan, it is very important to understand the interplay of two actors in defining the relationship between the two sides, that is, state and non-state actors. Terrorism and the consolidation of social movements and trends deeply impact the policy-making formulation at the national levels (Verhoeven and Woldemariam, 2022). However, the state response to these challenges often defines the degree of perseverance. The interaction of policies and security in triangular configurations involving different actors operating simultaneously can destabilize not only the concept of sovereignty but also political governance. The accommodation of contentious issues in defining state behavior is influenced by internal power configurations in subverting national policy interests. State behavior can then be discussed as negotiated cooperative enterprises rather than rigidly opposing forces. State policies are not only responsive to functional channels of aggregated politics but also bounded in the regional geopolitical environment. Therefore, the response to external ones could vary from polity to polity.

Future Prospects and Recommendations

So the paradigms are changing where, in light of evolving geopolitical dynamics, new exigencies are arising from the international community, which necessitates adjusting foreign policy to align with new optics. Presently, too many stakeholders seem to be influencing US policy towards Pakistan, giving them the opportunity to do some small acts to please the US rather than going for concrete milestones (Salman et al.2024). So, the cooperation is at a minimal level between the countries, and it is yet to be seen how they would cooperate as functional partners. The coalition that ought to be strategic has been reduced to a mere tactical and transactional relationship. There is no trust between each other, and they are only interested in their own interests. There is no question of breaking the relationship;

neither can either of the two change the policy each and every day. So, the only choice is to recalibrate and re-engage to rebuild the relationship and the lost trust. Ensuring peace and security in South Asia and stability and progress in Afghanistan is our shared responsibility. Moreover, the two countries can capitalize on the geopolitical ramifications of the project in general in the region (Asmussen et al.2021).

Nonetheless, attitudes and policies are constantly evolving and adapting to the ever-changing circumstances of our world. In this particular moment, the United States, Pakistan, and Afghanistan find themselves standing at a crucial turning point where adaptation and cooperation would undeniably serve the best interests of all parties involved. Taking a closer look at the broader scope, if a remarkable turnaround can occur in the historically strained relations between the US and Iran, then it becomes entirely plausible to expect a significant breakthrough in the relationship between the US and Pakistan. It cannot be stressed enough just how vital it is for both countries to remain vigilant and conscientious in order to control any potential damage that may arise. By doing so, we can safeguard our national interests and simultaneously reap the benefits of our international investments, as an increasing number of global actors are likely to approach us for mutual cooperation and partnership.

It is paramount to acknowledge that the unification of potentially antagonistic countries has the profound ability to bring the United States and another nation one step closer towards achieving common goals and shared aspirations. At this juncture, it is imperative to maintain a certain degree of engagement between the United States and Pakistan. This essential presence will effectively prevent the negative consequences of strategic disengagement and ultimately pave the way for a transformative paradigm shift in the realm of US-Pakistan relations. The importance of fostering this engagement cannot be overstated, as it holds immense potential to open up avenues for constructive dialogue, collaboration, and the establishment of a steadfast partnership that will undoubtedly contribute to the stability and progress of both nations. (Bakare et al.2024)

Conclusion

In conclusion, the essay argues that U.S. foreign and security policy shifted significantly in the first two decades of the new millennium, traversing from unilateral approaches to selective internationalist policies. This paper critically analyzes the potential implications of this shift in the U.S. Global Vision for Pakistan's strategic calculus. The critical inquiry is based on historical analyses of U.S.-Pakistani relations, as well as comprehensive scholarly and policy literature. Besides, the discussion is embedded in a thorough understanding of global power transition, the particular role of regional dynamics in shaping local policies, as well as various theoretical traditions of foreign policy analysis. Drawing on the paradigm task of theory, history, and policy, the essay concludes three important arguments about U.S.-Pakistan relations during the Trump era: U.S.-Pakistani

relations appear to be very transactional and may take decisive shifts in policies as new external and domestic influences assert themselves; second, the relative increase in U.S. security cooperation with India during the Trump presidency challenges Pakistan and may render the U.S. role in Afghanistan less viable; and third, regional stability, peace, and security are important objectives for U.S. strategy that may leverage rewards or lead to punitive measures against Pakistan. In general, the conceptual and historical analyses suggest that U.S.-Pakistan ties are deeply rooted, but outcomes-based analysis is sobering; in the future, U.S.-Pakistan relations will generate two-way trade-offs necessary for both sides to avoid brinkmanship. In light of the analysis in this paper, Pakistan needs to recalibrate its U.S. policy very carefully, while the U.S. needs to re-evaluate historical negative stereotypes and adopt more cooperative policies to manage significant challenges and possible rewards in South Asia and the wider Indo-Pacific.

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