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ДИПЛОМАТИЧЕСКИХ ОТНОШЕНИЙ МЕЖДУ СССР/РОССИЕЙ И ПАКИСТАНОМ»**
ПАКИСТАН, РОССИЯ И СТРАНЫ РЕГИОНА В МЕНЯЮЩЕМСЯ МИРЕ

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PAKISTAN-RUSSIA RELATIONS IN A CHANGING WORLD

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This article attempts to explore the evolution of Pakistan- Russia relations' development in the context of historical retrospective and current scenario of the World Order, which has been gradually going through transformation. This process is considered to be a positive development by a majority of developing states. The demise of Soviet Union led to the end of bipolar system. The emergence of US as sole super power led to an era of turmoil, military domination and even US occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq. Russia's reemergence as a major military power coupled with the rise of China as an economic giant and growing cordiality in their relations has paved the way for changes in global political system. The new world order is expected to be multipolar based on cooperation rather than conflict. Trade will grow leading to dividends in the form of poverty alleviation. Pakistan is eager to take advantage of this new situation. Pakistan-China relations have been cordial ever since the emergence of Peoples Republic of China. Now Pakistan is eager to develop close relations with Russia. There is a scope to develop trade between the two countries. Cooperation in energy sector, industry and agriculture is also expected to grow.

Keywords: Cold War, conflict, cooperation, changing world order, biolabs, military-industrial complex, natural resources, weaponisation of climate

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ПАКИСТАНО-РОССИЙСКИЕ ОТНОШЕНИЯ В МЕНЯЮЩЕМСЯ МИРЕ

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В данной статье предпринята попытка исследовать эволюцию развития пакистано-российских отношений в контексте исторической ретроспективы и текущего сценария мирового порядка, который постепенно претерпевает трансформацию. Большинство развивающихся государств рассматривают этот процесс как позитивное событие. Распад Советского Союза привел к концу биполярной системы. Становление США как единственной сверхдержавы привело к эпохе потрясений, военного господства и даже оккупации Афганистана и Ирака США. Возрождение России как крупной военной державы в сочетании с возвышением Китая как экономического гиганта и растущей добросердечностью в их отношениях проложили путь к изменениям в глобальной политической системе. Ожидается, что новый мировой порядок будет многополярным, основанным на сотрудничестве, а не на конфликте. Торговля будет расти, что приведет к получению дивидендов в виде сокращения масштабов нищеты. Пакистан стремится воспользоваться этой новой

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ситуацией. Пакистано-китайские отношения были добросердечными с момента образования Китайской Народной Республики. Сейчас Пакистан стремится развивать тесные отношения с Россией. Существуют возможности для развития торговли между двумя странами. Ожидается также расширение сотрудничества в энергетическом секторе, промышленности и сельском хозяйстве.

Ключевые слова: Холодная война, конфликт, сотрудничество, меняющийся мировой порядок, биологические лаборатории, военно-промышленный комплекс, природные ресурсы, климатическое оружие

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The victors of World War II established a world order more favorable to themselves. The US emerged as the leader of capitalist countries; it was able to bring West European states under its sway. It was not a difficult task for two reasons: (i) US military-industrial complex² had gained more influence during the 2nd World War and its control over domestic policy making was unprecedented. (ii) The US could exploit the fear of Communism, thus gaining an upper hand.

Soviet Union was an ideological state and the appeal of Communism the ideology it adhered to was increasing. The Eastern European states experienced Socialist revolution as a result of the challenges which they faced. Several Asian states also experienced a wave of Socialist movements as the young and educated people considered this ideology to be indispensable for facing the challenge of neo-imperialism.

The Cold War which emerged as a result of ideological divisions resulted in the emergence of two rival military camps. The US administration used the opportunity to win allies in the third world, drawing newly independent states into a web of military alliances which only superficially addressed the challenges facing these states. The long-term challenges remained largely unaddressed.

Pakistan and Soviet Union decided to establish diplomatic relations on 1st May 1948. However, the two envoys assumed their positions in 1949–50. The relationship appeared to be moving in the right direction but Soviet Union refrained from supporting India or Pakistan at the UN on Kashmir issue. The relationship declined when Pakistan decided to join US sponsored military alliances. Pakistan had to pay a heavy price, as Soviet Union started using veto power in the UN against issues of importance for Pakistan.

At this stage it might be appropriate to examine the factors which led to Pakistan's entry into military alliances launched by the West. The logic of ideology being a motivating factor for Pakistan is on weak grounds for two reasons. Firstly, Pakistan did not feel any threat from a communist country, had that been the case Pakistan-China relations would have also soured.

Another factor which is also mentioned in this context is the approach of Western educated ruling elite in Pakistan. It is assumed that the elite had a tilt towards the West. This argument is also devoid of logic since the same elite established cordial relations with China much against the wishes of the US and other Western powers.

In my opinion, the geo-political environment prevailing at that time shaped Pakistan's policy more than anything else. There was agreement between civilian and military leadership that India posed major threat to Pakistan's security. Since Pakistan was much smaller in size compared to India the threat assumed serious consequences. Pakistan joined the pacts in order to get financial and military assistance from the Western camp. It was a gamble which harmed Pakistan as Soviet Union supported India in 1965 and 1971 Wars. Ironically, the US refrained from supporting Pakistan as it did not want to displease India.

Another complicating factor in Soviet-Pakistan relations was the beginning of ideological tussle between Soviet Union and Peoples Republic of China. For Pakistan ideological factor was irrelevant,

² President Eisenhower in his farewell speech in January 1961 mentioned the problem. He believed that increase in the influence of military-industrial complex could carry serious consequences for the future.

but China was a close friend who had helped Pakistan in its hour of need. Even the US had failed to dissuade Pakistan from developing close relations with China. When Soviets launched the Asian Collective Security Pact in June 1969, Pakistan did not join it as it was seen as an attempt to encircle China. This further widened the gulf between the two States. Soon after this in August 1971 Soviet Union and India decided to sign the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace Friendship and Cooperation. Under its Frame-work India received full Soviet support in its war against Pakistan in 1971.

Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan in December 1979 further aggravated an already tense relationship. During that time a non-democratic government was in power in Pakistan. It was not difficult for the US to manipulate the situation and involve Pakistan in a proxy war which hurt Pakistan in more ways than one. Terrorism became rampant, economy was ruined and at the end of it US also turned its guns on Pakistan. Pakistan has not been able to come out of the adverse consequences of this US launched war using Pakistani territory.

This was a period of severe tension in Pak-Soviet relations. Soviet Intelligence Agency along with the Afghan agency (KHAD) launched several terrorist groups against Pakistan as retaliation. The US was not using Pakistani soil for the first time. In 1962 a US spy plane was shot down by the Soviet forces. On this occasion Pakistan received stern warning from Soviet leadership, a few years later Pakistan closed down US air base, but by then damage had been done. Hostile relationship between Pakistan and Soviet Union overshadowed the few positive aspects of the relationship. During 1960's Soviet Union offered Pakistan 3 million dollars. It is also well known, that Pakistan Steel Mill (PSM) was established by Soviet Union during 1970's when Mr. Bhutto paid a visit to USSR. PSM was expected to become the backbone of industrial development. The US had never offered any such help to Pakistan even during the peak years of Pak-US relations. My assessment of the relationship so far suggests, that during democratic governments tenure relations with the Soviet Union/Russia improve, where as during dictatorial regimes the relationship nosedives. During non-democratic governments relations with US thrive.

In 1991 the Soviet Union launched series of economic and political reforms, which resulted in abandonment of communism. Emergence of Russian Federation was a momentous development, but initial years were marked by turmoil. The country was preoccupied with the internal problems therefore it could not give its full attention to political situation at international level. The United States wanted to seize the opportunity to develop a new balance of power before Russia gained stability. There was a lot of discussion in the West regarding the emergence of a new world order [Kissinger, 1994, p.23]. The US launched a war against Iraq, as it was perceived to be an ally of Russia. Its natural resources were also occupied by the US. Civil wars were launched by the United States against Libya and Syria, regime was changed in Libya and a pro-US government was installed. However, US machinations failed in Syria and President Bashar al Asad survived. It is difficult to spell out the real objectives of the West, however, economic and strategic objectives cannot be ruled out. The Western states also tried to isolate Iran, the Iran-Saudi Arabia rivalry proved to be quite lucrative for arms manufacturing companies belonging to the US and other Western nations.

The US foreign policy formulators tried to take advantage of Russia's temporary absence from word scene, they tried to rewrite the global balance of power in their favor. In the West Asia and North Africa, it took the form of replacing regimes friendly towards Russia with the US puppets. Resources of these nations are still under US control. The US followed a similar policy against Russia in Europe and Central Asia. Regime change in Ukraine and expansion of NATO were provocative developments³. The US and its Western allies were trying to encircle Russia, it is obvious that they have not been able to come out of the Cold War mentality.

³ According to several accounts US gave verbal assurances to Russia that Ukraine will not be offered inclusion into NATO but later reneged on its word saying that there was no written agreement.

India has been selected by the West as its strategic ally. When India became an overt nuclear power in May 1998, US accepted that as they were grooming India as counter weight against China. The US was however, interested in stopping Pakistan from going nuclear.

The US has signed 'Civilian Nuclear Deal' with India, which is civilian only in name. India might try to give the impression that it is interested in keeping good relations with the US as well as Russia. The context behind the scenario will not allow India to succeed in this venture. India looks upon China as a rival and would therefore try to drive a wedge between China and Russia. If this happens it will be detrimental to the interests of both China and Russia.

Pakistan which was known as the most allied ally of the US has lost faith in this relationship. Pakistan was used by the West during Cold War era and then abandoned when Cold War was over. After Socialist revolution in Afghanistan the US again knocked on the door of Pakistan and got it involved in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. There are two reasons in my opinion why Pakistan got involved in this dangerous war. Afghanistan had claims over Pakistani territory and was behind Pashtunistan stunt of 1950's. It was considered to be under Indian influence and therefore a threat to Pakistan's security. Soviet Union was also seen as an ally of India. But above all, there was a non-democratic government in power in Pakistan.

After Soviet forces pulled out of Afghanistan the US once again abandoned Pakistan. Pakistan remained engulfed in the adverse consequences of this conflict and it has not come out of the crisis even now. After 9/11 the US launched yet another war, the so-called "war on terror"⁴. Pakistan was invited to become an ally of the US and because the country was again under the spell of a dictatorship it agreed to cooperate. The US defeat in Afghanistan brought the war to an end, but by this time many Muslim countries had been destroyed. Pakistan's economy was shattered and the nation was in the grip of terrorism. As usual, the US once again abandoned Pakistan to face the consequences. For those who wonder why Pakistan committed the same mistake again and again, Daniel Markey's *No Exit From Pakistan* would be a real eye opener. He has given an in depth analysis of US goals and objectives against Pakistan and clearly stated that US policy is designed to keep Pakistan in a state of regulated destabilisation [Markey, 2020]. As a result of this policy Pakistan's economy is in perpetual crisis which is then exploited by the US. If and when Pakistan becomes economically stable US will lose its leverage over Pakistan.

The political elite in Pakistan has learnt many lessons in the past few decades, it is another matter that the lessons were learnt the hard way. Many public opinions surveys held in Pakistan indicate that public opinion in Pakistan regards US to be an adversary and not a friend⁵. The goals and objectives of a nation are defined by the national interest. There can be no long-lasting understanding between Pakistan and the US in the absence of convergence of national interest. An assessment of past developments has been going on. The desire to improve relations with Russia and other countries has gained momentum.

The changing international environment is conducive to the development of Russia-Pakistan relations. Among changes in global politics realignment of forces and relationships is important. Pakistan as an erstwhile ally of US has decided to adopt a course of action more conducive to its interests. India from being non-aligned country has become US's strategic ally. There are other nations who are also in the process of reformulating their policies; they are opting for less dependence on the West. Iran has been out of the US influence since February 1979. Now Turkey, although still a member of NATO, is also charting a course of action which would ensure greater freedom of action. The days of the US dominance in

⁴ Since Soviets were busy putting their house in order the US tried to exploit this opportunity to rebuild the world order according to its own interests. 9/11 attacks were staged giving US the opportunity to occupy Afghanistan and later also Iraq.

⁵ According to public opinion survey conducted in 2019 in major cities of Pakistan the majority of Pakistanis (65%) do not consider US to be a friend of Pakistan.

economic and strategic spheres are over. A multi-polar order is emerging with greater focus on economic cooperation, rather than conflict and war.

Other positive developments are the rise of China as a major economic giant focusing on infrastructure development and means of easy communication between nations. Russia's assertiveness to protect its interests and stop the US onslaught is also a positive development. It carries long term benefits for Russia and for the stability of international system. However, the factor which carries greatest significance for the future is China-Russia rapprochement. The two powers are cooperating with each other in economic and political spheres. As already mentioned, this is a positive development for the emerging international order. The growing China-Russia understanding augurs well for the future of Eurasian region.

Pakistan is planning to focus on promotion of economic cooperation and CPEC has provided an ideal platform. Pakistan would like to develop closer relationship with Russia while maintaining the extremely friendly ties it already enjoys with China. There is no contradiction in these objectives under the new scenario. Pakistan's first priority would be to promote trade ties with Russia. Comparatively cheaper oil and gas from Russia can help revive Pakistan's economy. PTI government took a big step when ex-Pakistani PM Imran Khan visited Russia in February 2022. MOUs were signed, but before formal deals could be signed his government was removed.

Pakistan and Russia signed bilateral trade agreement with the aim to facilitate trade and reduce the cost of trade. Russian Federation has agreed to reduce the tariff on Pakistani goods and Pakistan will reciprocate the concession. The deal was signed in Tatarstan (Russia) conference which brought together representatives from 85 countries⁶. Under this deal, Pakistan will be able to import oil and gas in order to revive its economy. Even Saudi Arabia and India have been benefiting from the availability of cheap oil and gas from Russia. Under the deal Russia has offered to sell wheat at a discount for flood affected people of Pakistan. Wheat production in Pakistan has declined due to a number of factors including "water terrorism" launched by India⁷. Non-availability of food or high cost of food items has the capacity to undermine political stability in a country of 225 million people. Russian Federation's assistance will help Pakistan avert this major crisis. Pakistan should focus on improving its agricultural sector by learning from the experience of other countries.

Pakistan Steel Mill could play a vital role in regeneration of Pakistan's economy if other conditions are met. Good managerial skills, cheap electricity and availability of raw materials are required. Russian expertise would be valuable in reviving PSM. It needs to be modernized and put back on track. Machinery for the PSM should initially be imported from Russia with ultimate objectives of co-production under license. This would give a boost to development and open the door for export of machinery to developing states in BRI. Russian and Chinese companies' assistance can be sought to develop the mining sector in Baluchistan and other provinces of Pakistan.

Pakistan is rich in resources like Copper, Lithium, Rare-earth elements and others which are required by specific industries. Pakistan's experience with the Western companies so far has been less than satisfactory⁸. The Russian companies could help Pakistan in oil and gas exploration as well. All these ventures should be designed to create jobs and to contribute towards poverty alleviation. Skill development is

⁶ Pakistan, Russia sign deal to boost economic cooperation — World — DAWN.COM. URL: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1754513> (accessed: 16.10.2023).

⁷ India is depriving Pakistan of 25% of its share of water in violation of Indus water Agreement signed in 1960. India's Dams and Pakistan's Water Crisis — The Diplomat. URL: <https://thediplomat.com/2022/10/indias-dams-and-pakistans-water-crisis/> (accessed: 16.10.2023).

⁸ The deal signed with Tethyan Copper Company a joint venture between Barrick Gold (Canada) and Antofagasta (Chile) is a typical example.

also necessary for improving the quality of workforce. This can be achieved through training programmes financed by private sector and government of Pakistan, technical support of Russia will be imperative.

The young people who constitute the majority in Pakistan would come up to international standard. Pakistan needs to develop its higher education model on new lines. Access to the US and European universities should continue, but efforts should be launched to achieve diversification. There is a dire need to promote academic cooperation with centers of higher learning in Russia and China. Under CPEC, for example, specific universities in Pakistan and China have been linked together [Wizarat, 2023, pp. 30–31]. It can be expanded to include Russian universities. Think Tanks in the three countries should also work together and supplement each other. Russia's S400 has earned repute as the most modern and effective system. Pakistan suffers from several layers of Western sanctions, instead of approaching them every now and then to lift the sanctions; Pakistan should evolve independent new approaches to meet its defense requirements. Pakistan could supplement the defense equipment in the use of its defense forces through purchases from Russia, China and other non-Western countries.

In the past China and Pakistan co-produced JF-17 Thunder aircraft and Al-Khalid tank both of which have earned the reputation of being very effective and less expensive. Russia and Pakistan can work on these lines for mutual benefit. There is a ready market for effective military equipment which does not carry too high a price tag. The US monopoly in production and sale of weapons needs to be checked in order to build a more peaceful world.

My Research carried out over a two-year period suggests that two areas might pose a formidable threat to humanity in future. Weaponisation of climate is a real possibility. The US launched HAARP programme has been there for several years [Wizarat, 2023, p. 293.]. After further research on this subject a joint strategy should be adopted by leading states in the international system. The Ukraine operation launched by Russia has unearthed the US biological labs in that country. It has been reported that some other countries are also hosting the US biological labs. The whole concept has been designed by the US to achieve an edge over its rival states [Blum, 2002, Pp.113–119]. This could pose a serious threat to human civilization. The use of nuclear weapons in Japan and nuclear tipped weapons by UK and US against Iraq have led to deformities and birth defects in newborns⁹. However, the use of biological agents to promote Western pharmaceutical companies and bioweapons for military purposes are two sides of the same coin. Countries which could be likely targets of these attacks should be in a position to at least defend themselves.

There can be two approaches to settle these threats. By acquiring the ability to control climate or develop bioweapons a kind of deterrence can be created. The other approach can take the form of opposing weaponisation of weather and bioweapons. This would require working with other nations to create an understanding of the emerging threats. By launching a strong movement at global level to prevent future threats to humanity we could unite a large number of states for a good cause.

⁹ The occurrence of Cancer particularly among children in Iraq after the use of depleted Uranium weapons by UK and US became wide spread.

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