

- Global Regional Review (GRR)
- URL: [http://dx.doi.org/10.31703/grr.2022\(VII-IV\).02](http://dx.doi.org/10.31703/grr.2022(VII-IV).02)



Cite Us



## Alignment with the West: Pakistan's Motives

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| ▪ Vol. VII, No. IV (Fall 2022) | ▪ Pages: 12 – 20    | ▪ DOI: 10.31703/grr.2022(VII-IV).02 |
| ▪ p-ISSN: 2616-955X            | ▪ e-ISSN: 2663-7030 | ▪ ISSN-L: 2616-955X                 |

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**Abstract:** After few years of independence Pakistan established diplomatic ties with the US and opted for alignment with the west. In this way, Pakistan joined SEATO and CENTO, two military alliances supported by the US. As a result, the US consented to give Pakistan financial and military support. Pakistan's participation in CENTO and SEATO improved ties between the two countries. The paper aims to explore Pakistan's alignment with the west and the US strategic interest in Pakistan. Secondary data has been collected from books, articles and newspapers. This article relies on qualitative methods of research to describe the motives behind Pakistan and US partnership. The findings of the study suggest that the relationship between the two was not based on confidence, trust, and loyalty but on interest and expediency. The USA has always manipulated Pakistan in the context of alignment for its own interest.

**Key Words:** Pakistan, USA, Foreign Policy, Alignment, Convergence of Interests

### Introduction

On August 14, 1947, upon separation from the British Colonial Empire, both India and Pakistan got independence. In those nearby areas with a predominance of Muslim citizens, the division of the Indian subcontinent along ethno-religious lines with Pakistan was established. In other words in India, Hindu community was in majority but Muslims were second in the majority that were minority as compared to Hindus but was indeed the second dominant community that was in need of an independent state that inhabited the current State of Pakistan today. The provinces of Sind, Punjab, Baluchistan, Northwest Frontier Province (N.W.F.P.), on India's western border, and East Bengal Province, on its eastern border, were all included in Pakistan. 1000 miles of Indian Territory separated the two parts Eastern and Western Pakistan. India inherited much of the colonial establishment's infrastructure and

Pakistan received a little share of India and had limited administrative infrastructure. Following World War Two, both countries recovered some of the military assets left over. Pakistan's main issues after independence were its security concerns, poor infrastructure, and its constrained financial resources (Hilali, 2006). Widespread migration between the two nations had been caused by the creation of two independent states. The division of assets and territories between India and Pakistan between the two countries had been a contentious disaster, and both nations had contested it. As both India and Pakistan asserted state claims, Kashmir state was a major source of contention. The conflict resulted in a limited war in 1948, with India annexing the remaining two-thirds of Pakistan's occupied Kashmir territory and Pakistan regaining one third of it. Pakistan's relationship with the west has been of great

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significance in the context of conflict with India (Abbas, Kharl, & Xiaoxing, 2018).

Following independence in 1947, Pakistan joined the British Commonwealth of Nations (Rizvi B. B., 1986). Post-independence Pakistan adopted a pro-west policy while, the Indian government adopted a non-aligned foreign strategy, moving closer to the Soviet Union. Pakistan tried to establish strong alliances with the US against its neighbor, India. India was neutral at this time and was part of the Non-Aligned Movement. Liaqat Ali Khan served as the first Prime Minister of Pakistan, and the seaport of Karachi served as its administrative center. Pakistan's founder, Jinnah, was appointed governor-general and head of state. The government faced a number of difficulties when establishing new judicial, political, and economic systems. The Mohajirs (refugee Indian Muslims) were resettled, the military and bureaucracy were organized, and the power structure and balance between the national and provincial governments were preserved. These efforts were undermined and criticized by provincial leaders, who often challenged central government authority, and frequent protests, communal riots, and disturbances among the masses. Jinnah's untimely demise in September 1948 further escalated the situations and the government could not resolve these difficulties. Liaqat Ali Khan established good ties with the United States when visited Washington in 1950. Prior to this, Pakistan's foreign policy was non-aligned and had no official ties with the USSR as well as the US who were indulged in cold war during that era. However, Pakistan formed an alliance with the United States in 1953 and started getting financial and military support. In the context of the Cold War, Pakistan's relationship with the United States of America developed (n.d, History of Pak-US Relations, 2011).

### **Motives behind Establishing Relations with the United States**

The decision of Pakistan to join the Western alliance program was made for a variety of reasons, but the issue of insecurity and survival was the most pressing one. Pakistan's security dilemma A community,

society, nation, and state must have the ability to survive and be independent. The nation's standing in world politics is used to manage both through security mechanisms and policies. Hence, security is a multifaceted phenomenon dependent on the intermingling entities ' requirements, expertise, and qualms (Rizvi, 1986).

The goal of one state is ascertained with the other, parallel to the protection of a state's national interests. Security is fundamentally justified by the need for a state to be resilient and to avoid external aggression. A state's foreign policy is largely determined by its geostrategic position in relation to both global and regional contexts (Alagppa, 1998).

The state's location determines the enemy and allies and shapes all other factors. The hostile stances and hegemonic designs of Indian foreign policy also caused Pakistan to create a problem of insecurity in regional politics right after independence in 1947 (Rizvi H. , 2011).

### **India as a Threat**

After the brutal division of the Indian subcontinent, which allowed each side to declare itself aggressive and hostile towards the other, Pakistan was born. As a result, India was not only against this partition but also posed a threat to Pakistan's territorial integrity. Pakistan saw India as its formidable foe in the backdrop of the bitter past. Following the establishment of Pakistan, India not only opposed the existence of Pakistan but also made constant and intense efforts to encroach upon the territory of Pakistan and generated economic problems for the newly born state through the influx of refugees, property issues, and the threat of distraction and hitch of Indus River water. In short, the two states were plagued by different economic, social, political, and psychological factors (Hussain, 2019).

Relations between Pakistan and India commenced on a sour note following the division of the Indian subcontinent. Millions of Muslims, Hindus, and Sikhs who had fled across the new frontiers to either settle in India or Pakistan had been killed, and this was the main cause of the unrest. The basis for Pakistan and India's ongoing future rivalry

was laid by riots and communal violence. The study of competition, blatant conflict, and confrontation in the political histories of India and Pakistan is similar to playing a zero-sum game. Their relationships have not completely recovered from the 1st Himalayan War in Kashmir to date. Pakistan and India battled over Kashmir shortly after partition in 1947. The majority-Muslim state was ruled by a Hindu Maharaja Hari Singh, who disregarded popular opinion and announced the accession of Kashmir with India on October 26, 1947, under their terms and conditions (Alagappa, 1998). It caused unrest and upheaval. The Pakistani tribesmen who fought an armed conflict to free Kashmir from India were with the local Kashmiris during this time. India dispatched its standing army to handle the situation. The first Kashmir war between India and Pakistan broke out in May 1948 as a result of increasing pressure on Pakistan's government to intervene in the unrest. The UN stepped in and prevented the potential for war. However, Kashmir remained divided between the two countries.

The two nations demanded control of all of Kashmir and were accused of starting the war. In the meantime, both nations supported a UN resolution that called for a plebiscite to determine Kashmir's final status. However, following the signing of a security agreement between Pakistan and the US in May 1956, India has decided not to hold the plebiscite (Malik, 2019).

### **Afghanistan as a Threat**

Pakistan-Afghanistan relations are based on mutual mistrust. There were never amicable terms between the two neighboring countries. Afghanistan was the only State which opposed Pakistan's admission to the United Nations. The Durand line and the Pakhtunistan issue turned out to be the two issues that strained bilateral relations (Omrani, 2009).

### **Durand Line Issue**

Pakistan and Afghanistan share an estimated border of 1200-mile. The British were fearful of Russian annexation as it provided an easy route to subcontinent through the northwest

Frontier Region. To avoid Russian encroachment the British government attempted to negotiate a border deal with Afghanistan. Finally, both sides decided to establish a team composed of members from both sides. The British government appointed Sir Mortimer Durand who was an expert in boundary matters. After negotiations, the mission concluded a boundary agreement on 12 November 1893 (Malik, 2019). The Amir of Afghanistan and his heirs formally ratified this agreement in 1948-1949. Afghanistan, however, in no way acknowledged the frontier as an international border. Afghanistan reacted negatively to the subcontinent's division when it became apparent in 1944. The Afghans were eager to try and regain control of the Pushtun regions before their independence in 1947. With their query regarding the Durand Line's status, they provided the British Indian government with information, but the British government disregarded their worry that it was an international boundary.

The British Government's suggestion that the 1947 border agreement expire immediately upon its departure from the region was rejected by the Afghan government. They stated that their objections were not just due to the ethnicity of the Pakhtun people, but also because of the sea channel, which they saw as being crucial to their commercial operations. This boundary was a major concern for Pakistan's successive governments (Hilali, 2006). The lack of an established border with Afghanistan was Pakistan's government's weakness, making Pakistan vulnerable. As a result, the border dispute with Afghanistan continued to play a significant role in the region's foreign policy. The British government appeared to be less protective of the Indian Subcontinent's territory, especially in the northwest, where they perceived Soviet Union expansion threats against Central Asian states as well as Soviet attempts to exert control over Afghan rulers. Pakistan had to deal with the same issue of having the same frontier after gaining independence. Early in 1948, the Afghan government requested that Pakistan redraw its borders. However, the Pakistani government completely rejected this request. The Afghan government repudiated all of its



agreements, including the Durand Line Agreement, with the British Indian government in June 1949, which caused Pakistan, then a young state, to face enormous difficulties (Omrani, [2009](#)).

### **Pakhtunistan Issue**

Afghanistan has steadfastly resisted Pakistan's control over its northern regions since Pakistan's creation and has pushed for the realization of its own right to self-determination. They put forth the demand to establish "Pakhtunistan" as an independent state. The dispute over Pakhtunistan has persisted between Pakistan and Afghanistan throughout history.

On September 30, 1950, Pakistan asserted that Afghan tribesmen had attacked its northern border and that regular Afghan troops had entered Pakistan 30 miles to the northeast of Chaman in Baluchistan. After only six days of fighting, Pakistan was able to drive the invaders from Afghanistan back across the border. This low-key invasion was quickly put an end to by Pakistan. Afghanistan, on the other hand, claimed that it had no part in this attack, which it claimed was carried out by Pashtun tribesmen who were pushing for an independent Pashtunistan. 1955 saw a sharp increase in tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan. On March 29, 1955, Afghan Prime Minister Mohammed Daoud Khan responded by denouncing and criticizing Pakistan's actions. In Kabul, Kandahar, and Jalalabad, protests that were allegedly instigated by the Afghan government erupted (Rose & Hussain, [1985](#)).

The Pakistani government made the decision to alter the nation's administrative structure in 1954–1955. To balance out East Pakistan, which is now Bangladesh, they sought to establish a single, cohesive West Pakistan Administrative Region rather than creating separate provinces like Punjab and Sind. Afghanistan saw it as denying them the chance to exert influence over the tribal regions. In the end, there were riots at Pakistani consulates in Kabul, as well as counter-demonstrations in Pakistan. There were military mobilizations and call-ups. Although there was no war, the two nations' diplomatic relations became very tense

(Kumar, [2006](#)). The British ambassador to Kabul at the time, Sir Daniel Lascelles, had distressing correspondence with London. He was concerned that the Line's legal standing was not entirely certain and that, if the case went before an international tribunal, Britain might not be able to support Pakistan. The Russians recognised an opportunity in 1960 when Pakistan formed alliances with the United States to address these issues. They had a very good reason to form an alliance with Afghanistan thanks to the Pashtunistan dispute. In addition to calling for a referendum, Pravda reported on Pakistan's horrifying bombing raids against the populace of the tribal areas. According to reports, a significant number of civilians who supported the self-determination movement suffered fatal injuries (Omrani, [2009](#)).

### **Weak Economic Conditions**

When Pakistan was founded, the majority of its territory was in underdeveloped and economically backward regions. The outdated and obsolete agricultural system contributed to the economic backwardness of Pakistan's constituent regions. With the assistance of the British Government, the Hindus had gotten a complete monopoly on trade and commerce prior to partition. The Hindus controlled the entire capital. Unfortunately, the Indian Territory was where the banks and other financial institutions were situated. The major industries were located in the areas that India was given. In addition to these factors, all of the technical experts and employees who ran the industries were Hindus because Muslims were significantly less educated and financially capable than Hindus. The country's economic growth was also negatively impacted by the insufficient transportation and communication infrastructure. East Pakistan's railway and river transportation systems were in disrepair. The roads were broken and beyond repair. In comparison, western Pakistan had better communication and transportation infrastructure. To meet the national requirement, the two wings' power resources were insufficient and insignificant (Shah, [2016](#)).

## US Intents Behind Establishing Relations with Pakistan

The United States of America established relations with Pakistan to contain Russian expansion in the region. Initially Pakistan was encamped in the Capitalist bloc by the US to contain Communism, but later on, it brought significant changes in its foreign policy goals regarding the region due to its multi-facet interests in Asia (Hussain, [2019](#)).

## Multi-facet Interest of US in South Asia Since 1945

The industrialized nations, especially the United States, have placed a great deal of importance on South Asia. It always served as a stage for the management and play of great power competition. The region's importance as the starting point for the routes connecting Europe, Africa, and Asia has led to recognition of its significance. South Asian region is significant and situated between two strategically significant regions, namely the Persian Gulf and Southeast Asia. It also shares connections with the Indian Ocean (Alagppa, [1998](#)).

South Asia is a region that Americans know little about, are not particularly interested in, and is not high on the list of US priorities. The US replaced Britain as the dominant Western power in the region, but it did not establish itself as an imperialist force in South Asia. The US followed the British as they engaged in the "Great Game" against Russia in an effort to prevent the czarists from advancing into the region through the northwest (Khyber Pass). The main factor influencing United States approach towards South Asia has been the country's view of its significance for advancing its global geopolitical and strategic objectives. After World War II, the United States rose to become the world's leading power. Since the nineteenth century, there had only been sporadic commercial and cultural connections prior to that time (Hilali, [2006](#)).

## Political Interests

After the World War II, the communist aggression grew more serious, making it imperative that the US take the lead globally.

Africa, Asia, and Europe all experienced economic and military weakness, as well as political instability. Only the US was in position to face the new challenges in the world's bipolar structure because Britain was no longer able to exercise global leadership. In this case, the US gave up its traditional "isolationism" policy and took the initiative to lead the "free world" by launching a global anti-communism campaign.

The Truman Containment Doctrine, which he signed in 1947, vowed to "support free peoples who resist attempts at subjugation by armed minorities or by external aggression," marked the beginning of the US anti-communist policy. Following the adoption of the containment strategy, the US focused on Europe through the Marshall Plan (1947) and the Truman doctrine. The Truman administration signed bilateral defense agreements with a wide range of nations, including those with Japan, Thailand, Taiwan, and the Philippines, in 1952 (Rose & Hussain, *United States-Pakistan Forum: Relations with the Major Powers*, [1987](#)). Pakistan, who was actively seeking international allies to counter Indian threats responded in favor of US search for allies. In their eyes, Pakistan was in a good position to handle its issue.

It was clear that the US strongly influenced the containment of communism in Southeast and Southwest Asia, and they viewed Pakistan as more suited to US strategic interests than India (Hussain, [2019](#)). Pakistan's advantages, including its affinity for Middle Eastern Muslims, its desire, capability, and readiness to serve as a regional counterbalance for India, as well as its proximity to communist rivals like the Soviet Union and China, were alluring (Saqib, [2015](#)). Additionally, there was a general belief among American policymakers that by providing military support, Pakistan could strengthen its opposition to the communist countries and win America's friendship. Pakistan was a significant country in South Asia and the Muslim world in the 1950s because it took part in all of the U.S.-sponsored military alliances. When the Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement was signed between the United States and Pakistan in May 1954, Pakistan also became an ally of the West. Pakistan subsequently joined SEATO and

became a member of CENTO. Pakistan and the US had signed a bilateral "Agreement of Cooperation" in 1959, and they were allied through not one but four mutual security agreements (Sattar, [2010](#)).

### **Economic Interests**

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The global raw material resources of oil, rubber, manganese, copper, tea, cotton, rice, jute, and gold are concentrated in the various littoral states of South Asia, giving the region economic significance. The industrially developed countries, such as Europe and Japan, rely heavily on this raw material, so any threats to the major supply routes could have an impact on the global economy. Therefore, the United States wanted to preserve peace, ensuring access to markets and raw materials as well as gaining commercial and economic benefits from South Asian economies (Hilali, [2006](#)).

### **Strategic Interests**

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Strategically, the interests of the major powers collide in South Asia. Maintaining freedom of navigation and the defense of European interests in strategically important areas around the world, i.e., the main strategic interest of the US in the region has been and remains the freedom to maintain the high seas open for navigation, not just for itself but also for allies. The US saw communism as the greatest threat to its survival in the 1950s and wanted other countries (such as India and Pakistan) to join it in promoting and organizing the free world's defense against communism (Rizvi H. , [2011](#)). In this regard, Pakistan was prepared to support US military alliances in Asia in an effort to contain communism, but it also hoped to win US support for its dispute with India. In terms of India, Pakistan received military assistance but the United States gave it to Pakistan in order to boost its military might and help defend the region in the event of a communist threat. This was done to enable Pakistan to counter any military threat to its stability and security from the communists (Kumar, [2006](#)).

### **Conclusion**

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There have been many ups and downs in

Pakistani-American relations; marked by convergence and divergence of interests. Each nation has made an effort to sway the other in order to further its own objectives and needs. When it suited US interests in the 1950s, Pakistan was regarded as the US's closest ally. However, by the 1970s, Pakistan had been sanctioned. Pakistan has a tendency to follow regional impulses, whereas the United States tends to base its relationships on global dynamics. The main goal of Pakistan's alliance with the US was to ensure its security in relation to India by receiving significant financial and military support from the US. The United States has consistently dismissed Pakistan's security worries as unimportant and has miscalculated how strongly Pakistan is committed to its nuclear program; while on the other hand, Pakistan has failed to understand that too much reliance on the U.S regardless of the costs and consequences can suffer it to a large extent. Pakistan has failed to see that the main motive behind this partnership is to attain its global dynamics and goals. The US is not concerned about Pakistan's security issues. Her principal objective is to maintain her global dominance and crush any forces which are a hindrance to her supremacy.

### **Findings**

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The following crucial aspects of this relationship become apparent if one makes an effort to study it in depth.

While the United States only sees this relationship as a marriage of convenience, it has great significance for Pakistan. Pakistan has played in the hands of the USA. The truth is, the relationship between the two is not based on confidence, trust, and loyalty but interest and expediency. Pakistan is sincere in its partnership and collaboration but the strategy of the United States is diverted by its interest. When she wants support from Pakistan, go for friendly relations, and when interests are fulfilled, cooperation turns into sanctions and coercive policies. Pakistan's fragile economic conditions and defense have made her dependent heavily on the United States. This reliance has cost Pakistan a great deal it has lost its liberty to diplomacy.



The US is indirectly controlling Pakistan's foreign policy and domestic affairs through its aids and assistance.

Secondly, the United States and Pakistan have a limited alliance because each country has goals and interests that are more important than those that are similar. Similarly, the former USSR was more imperative for the United States during the Cold War phase than its ally Pakistan. It has nothing to do with the concerns and security problems of Pakistan. The changing shifts in Pakistan-U.S. Security ties and Pakistan's strategies and goals in its interaction with the United States can be understood in the context of Pakistan's perceptions of its regional environment and security system, and its perceived benefits or costs. The difficulties emerging in this relationship can be attributed to divergent views about the security of Pakistan. While the US maintains that Pakistan is attempting to involve it in regional conflicts that are unimportant compared to its global interests, Pakistan complains about America's lack of concern for its worries, particularly security threats emerging from South Asia. That explains why their bilateral ties exhibit predictable peaks and valleys.

### Policy Recommendations

Pakistan's alignment with the US has affected Pakistan in many ways. Weak economic conditions, threats to her survival, and other such factors compelled Pakistan to establish relations with the US but it has many costs than benefits. Pakistan is just like a tool for the US which it can employ whenever its interests demand. The following are some suggestions through which Pakistan can avoid such things.

### Relations on Equality Basis

Pakistan should establish relations with the US based on equality. There should be no concept major and minor. Their relationship must be based on confidence and trust. The relations with the USA should not have an imperial impact on Pakistan. The US should not interfere in the internal affairs of Pakistan. Pakistan should give priority to her national interests. There is a strong need for sincere,

honest, and patriotic leadership who could take the people of Pakistan into confidence that no power of the world can defeat and betray Pakistan.

### Balance Relations with all the Countries of the world

Pakistan should maintain a balance in having relations with other countries. It should foster friendly relations with all the major powers of the world like Japan, Germany, and Russia, etc. similarly it should also establish good relations with its neighboring countries and the Muslim world and for this purpose, it should promote trade and commerce with these countries which will not only boost its economic growth but also pave ways for friendly relations.

### Reduce Dependency on the US

Pakistan shouldn't have a sole focus on one nation; doing so will inevitably result in consequences, and those consequences will lead to demands and obligations from the other side as well. The USA through its aids and assistance has always indirectly controlled Pakistan's internal and external affairs. Therefore Pakistan should reduce its dependency on the US and maintain a balance in its relations. Pakistan is a weak state and it needs economic assistance to meet her challenges. So to cope up with these challenges Pakistan should establish economic cooperation with other states. It should focus on its economic growth only then it can reduce its dependency on the US and other international Institutions for financial assistance.

### Strategic Partnership with Enemies' States

Pakistan should develop a strategic partnership with India; it should peacefully resolve all conflicts through mutual negotiations. Similarly, it should settle its issue and grievances with the other states like Afghanistan and Iran. There is a need to normalize relations with all hostile states. Pakistan should look at and observe her policy goals and develop developmental projects with these states for giving boom to its economy. It should establish connections with the Gulf, China, Russia, and other nations.

### **National Morale and Good Image in the International Community**

Pakistan needs to enhance its national morale and earn an image of a good nation in the international community. It can be achieved by addressing its internal and external matters appropriately and should not compromise her sovereignty at any cost. It should harmonize its internal turmoil and bring stability to the country. The government should adopt appropriate steps for dealing

the issue of terrorism, militancy, insurgency, poverty, illiteracy, corruption, bribery, nepotism, sectarianism, racism, and other social evils. Pakistan should focus on its domestics as well as external peace. Policymakers of Pakistan should promote such policies which could earn an image of a sovereign and peace-loving nation for Pakistan. National morale and good images of a state play a vital role in determining its status and prestige in the international community.





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