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# **Pakistan-US Relations after 9/11: Points of Divergence**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The research has explored the nature of US-Pakistan relationship particularly after the major event of 9/11 of 2001 in United States. It has highlighted the major points between Pakistan and the United States that have diverted them from each other in case of gaining their common goals in the region ranging from the containment of terrorism to the assurance of security and democracy. Through describing and analysing the facts and figures, mentioned in the published books, research articles, newspapers and other prevailing and relevant data and literature, the research has attempted to mention drone attacks by America in Pakistan's Tribal Areas, US-India strategic partnership, US covert military actions in Pakistan, US do more policy, nuclear proliferation, US' pressure tactics, US policy towards the Muslim world and America's anti-Islamic propaganda as the points of divergence due to which Pakistan and United States are experiencing the lowest ebb of relations. The research is helpful for the students of foreign policy of Pakistan, current affairs and the American Studies. In addition to that, the reader will be able to know about the initiatives taken by the Pakistani and the US leadership that have caused deterioration to the cordial relationship of cold war, of late 1980s and mutual concerns to get rid of terrorism and militancy in the 21st century. The last section of this research paper prepared some of the recommendations which can be followed to restore the lost prestige of Pak – US relations based on the mutual understanding for achieving the common goals and to find a better position in the comity of nations.

**Key word: -           Pakistan, US, India, Divergence, 9/11 Events, Drone Attacks**

## **Historical narration of Pak-U.S relations**

In order to go through the US diplomacy towards Pakistan it is necessary to describe the historical background of ups and downs in relations both the countries. Pakistan came into being when most of the countries were trying to rebuild their shattered economies and military blocks were being formed soon after the Second World War. Then, started the Cold War scenario that divided the world into three main groups; contributors of Warsaw Pact, participants of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and non-aligned group of European colonialist powers (Sheikh, 2004). Pakistan received invitations from both Soviet Union and the United States to visit the particular states but the Godless concept of communism diverted the attention of the Pakistani leadership and caused inclination towards the Americans. Later on, Pakistan joined SEATO and CENTO

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in 1954 and 1955 respectively. After joining these two pacts Pakistan was expected to secure the motives of the Americans to restrain Communism in the region and to strengthen its defence against the most dangerous enemy India. The success was achieved in fulfilling the former objective but the latter was not covered (Sheikh, 2004). The mutual aid treaty was also signed in this connection. All these treaties paved the way for the Pakistani foreign policy to get its features open to international level although these treaties imposed domestic constraints on Pakistan. Arguably, Pakistan was in search of security and the Americans were interested in geo-strategic location of Pakistan that could be used to contain the expansion of communism particularly in Middle East and Southeast Asia. “Pakistan was the most allied ally for US against the Soviet expansionism in 1950s” (Akhtar, 2012). These alliances made Pakistan the recipient of ‘military hardware’ and economic aid from America since the Korean War to the early 60s that not only created effective military deterrence against India but also proved a step towards the industrial base for technological advancement (Sheikh, 2004).

In 1960s, Pakistan-America relations took a new turn Pakistan was favouring China and US showed its support towards India and assured military support during Sino-India War of 1962. The relations further experienced the lowest ebb when in 1964, senator Humphery declared India as the most important American ally to counter Communism in Southeast Asia (Akhtar, 2012). Additionally, United States increased the amount of aid Pakistan was designated to receive from the consortium of Pakistan, half a billion dollars of which were lost in 1965 Indo-Pakistan war—war staged to cause a rebel in Indian occupied Kashmir but “the war also led US to place economic and military embargoes on Pakistan, which resulted in an economic collapse” (Dawn, July 04, 2012) .

During 1971 war between India and Pakistan, US is speculated to have provided Pakistan with arms and military aid, in order to discourage India from penetrating further into the cities of Pakistan because losing Pakistan meant losing an important ally in the Soviet war. Moreover, as per the elections result, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was elected as the president of Pakistan and later on became the prime minister. In 1974 1971-1974 being an important ally for US during the cold war, United States supported Pakistan, despite the arms embargo. Pakistan also assisted President Richard Nixon in making his first visit to Peoples’ Republic of China. The amendment banned major military and economic aid to Pakistan unless the state was able to justify and provide sufficient evidence that the funds are not being used for nuclear proliferation. During 1979-1988 Zia ul Haq’s regime, Pakistan and United States enjoyed a warm and congenial relationship, which was primarily based on military ties and advancements (Sheikh, 2004).

The decade of 1990s changed the political gains of America in the region and Pakistan had to face a number of restrictions in order to search for its security at regional level. US tilt towards India was the driving force behind the deterioration of Pakistan-USA relations. Dr. Umbreen Javed is of the view, “On October 1, 1990, however, the United States suspended all military assistance and new

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economic aid to Pakistan under the Pressler Amendment which required the President to certify annually that Pakistan 'does not possess a nuclear explosive device' (Javed, 2014). Later on, the relations between Pakistan and India further got disturbed when the Indians conducted their nuclear tests in May, 1998 and Pakistan decided to respond. Second Clinton administration suspended the economic aid, military assistance, credits and loans to Pakistan under the Glenn Amendment (Javed, 2014). Then comes the most prominent year 2001, famous for attacks in USA, changed the political and strategic orientation of the world. Most of the states started searching for allies. USA turned its face towards Pakistan again to contain militancy in the region. But, there are so many points of divergence that have widened the gulf between Pakistan and the USA. These points are elaborated one by one in the following way.

### **Points of divergence**

#### **Drone attacks**

The 9/11 attacks in US changed the global political scenario and United States started searching allies in the world specifically in South Asia, Southeast Asia, Central Asia, Arab and Africa. The Americans assured most of these countries their economic aid in return co-operation with security forces, intelligence agencies and governments of these countries. It was clearly reflected from the statements of the American officials that being with America meant more and more funds for the participants of the 'war on terror'. Tom Carothers of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace said. "That's just an unpleasant aspect of the war on terror that we're still living with today" (Usmani, 2011). Unmanned, high flying aircrafts controlled by remote from distant places, loaded with missiles and bombs, were launched by the Americans in Tribal Areas of Pakistan in 2004 for 'precision' strikes to target the high valued Al-Qaida leaders. The then President Musharraf gave permission to the Americans 'for a few strikes'. Later on, Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gillani told the US ambassador that Pakistani political leadership did not have any reservations against the strikes 'so long they got the right people'. Protest began not only in Pakistan but all over the world against the collateral damage in shape of the murder of innocents (Sattar, 2016). As per one estimation, 118 drone strikes occurred only in 2010 more than any preceding years collectively. The excessive use of drones infuriated the militants and Islamist extremists and this infuriation caused these groups to be more active than they were in the past. Civilians had to pay the price more than any community in the world (Kronstadt, 2011). No doubt the drones were used in Pakistani territory to crush the militant groups like Haqqani Network, Al-Qaida and the Taliban, but most of the civilians had to lose their lives under the frequent and regular attacks that caused an irritant behaviour from the side of Pakistani public. In this way, Pakistan and U.S had to observe disturbed relations that restrained long term strategic understanding between the allies (Hasnat, 2014). The number of drone strikes was decreased on the demand of Pakistan after the raid in

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Abbotabad which raid? But the issue came to fore again in 2013 when a drone strike killed the chief of Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan Hakeem Ullah Mehsud that brought Pakistan to the point of reviewing its foreign policy towards the Americans. The killing received different views from the side of the religious political parties in Pakistan. Chief of the Jamaat-e-Islami Munawar Hassan called Mehsud a martyr (Shaheed) while JUI chief Maulana Fazalur Rehman countered these views and blamed Mehsud for the murder of hundreds of people in the region. PTI leader Imran Khan decided to blockade the supply to the air strikers through of KP (Khyber Pukhtunkhwa) province. Additionally, Pakistani public and political elite reflected hatred towards the US policy of air strikes. As a result, President Obama imposed 'prudent limits'. But the damage was done as 3852 casualties had been recorded in 522 drone strikes from 2004 to 2015 (Sattar, 2016). Furthermore, US air strikes in Tribal areas of Pakistan without informing the local agencies, security forces and political leadership reflected that it had no trust in Pakistan and vice versa. Currently, U. Shas observed violence regarding the territorial identity of Pakistan and has challenged its sovereignty. On the other hand' Pakistanis are of the view that the Americans would leave the region after indulging Pakistan into the so called 'war on terror' and would place Pakistan in the list of those countries who considered responsible for sponsoring the terrorist activities in the region (Sattar, 2016).

**America's covert military actions inside Pakistan**

US covert military actions in Pakistan have further fuelled to the fire to the already complex relations with Pakistan. Raymond Davis case, 'Operation Neptune Spear' and attack on Salala Airbase are the prominent examples of the covert US military actions in Pakistan. These covert military actions have not only infuriated the Pakistani people, who have given birth to the anti-America sentiments, but also have doubted the services of Pakistani military and security force. The Raymond Davis affair has paved the way for the analysts that US was involved in this covert military action (Manzoor Ahmad , Naveeda Yousaf & Zahir Shah, 2017). Akin to that, Pakistan has been aiding Washington to combat terrorism, militancy and extremism since 2001. Pakistan has assured its intelligence support to target the most wanted terrorists belonging to the prominent militant group's al-Qaida and Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan. But from the side of US the signals of mistrust appeared when US military, with the support of CIA, launched 'Operation Neptune Spear' at Abbottabad (near Islamabad) in May, 2011 without coordinating and informing the Pakistani intelligence agencies and military (Musarat, 2013). The operation proved that US had violated the sovereignty of Pakistan and caused an embarrassment for the Pakistani army in the eyes of the public. In addition to that, it has tarnished the image of Pakistan in the comity of nations to such an extent that most of the political leaders around the world started doubting about Pakistan as a sponsor of terrorism. Viewing all the unexpected

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situation, then Chief of Army Staff Gen. Ashfaq Pervaiz Kayani warned the Americans that repetition of the violation of Pakistan's sovereignty would not be tolerated and Pakistan could break ties with America if such events occurred again (Musarat, 2013). On the other hand, the Americans were celebrating the death of Osama Bin Laden as a signature achievement of Obama Administration. When they got aware of the public opinion both in US and Pakistan they adopted the aggressive policies to deal Pakistan. US ignored this unilateral military action and started creating hurdles in the way of long term commitment, political support, economic and security assistance (Sattar, 2016). Pakistan-US relations got deteriorated when US airstrike killed twenty four Pakistani soldiers at Salala Airbase near Afghan border on 26 November. Pakistani leadership ordered the vacation of Shamsi base which was being used by the Americans to launch drone attacks in the Tribal Areas of Pakistan. "It suspended transit facilities for US and NATO forces, and downgraded co-operation between intelligence agencies" (Sattar, 2016).

### **US India strategic partnership**

The US strategy to deal the South Asian nations has been controversial at international level. In case of Pakistan and India, the Americans showed leniency towards the Indians that gave birth to the disturbed Pak-US relations. The fastest developing Indian relations with US has made both the countries able to cooperate in attaining advance technology, nuclear proliferation, educational uplift, availability of health facilities, containment of terrorism, soared trade links and prevention of drug trafficking. In the eyes of the American policy-makers, India is the stabilizing force in South Asia that can play a vital role in securing the US global interests in the region (Ejaz, 2016). The Bush administration paid full attention towards accelerating the 'transformation processes of strengthening India- US strategic partnership to make their nuclear engagement effective. The major objectives of the new diplomacy were to pressurise India either to sign CTBT (Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty) or to rollback its nuclear programme, to remove the economic sanctions and resumption of economic interaction, to facilitate the labourers and farmers and to ensure the "cooperation against all forms of cross-border" terrorism (Ejaz, 2016). In 2002 and 2003, President Bush showed inclination towards India when he put pressure on Musharraf to eliminate cross-border terrorism and declined Musharraf's request for playing a key role to resolve the Kashmir issue. By and large, US was favouring India and moving towards strengthening their strategic ties. For that purpose, the Americans were showing sympathies towards the Indians and putting pressure on Pakistan to 'do more to stop cross-border infiltration' (Ejaz, US Security Policy towards South Asia and Kashmir Dispute , 2016). Pak-US relations got a reverse direction in 2005 and 2008 when US signed US-India Defence Agreement and US-India Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement respectively. Pakistani leadership was of the view that these defence agreements between India and America would disturb the

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balance of power and strategic balance in Asia. Obama administration, too, selected as their 'important strategic partner' in the region (Ejaz, 2016). President Obama's agreement with the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2015 for bilateral trade discouraged the Pakistani leadership in aiding the US to contain terrorism in the region. Furthermore, US Defence Secretary, Ashton Carter signed a deal with his Indian counterpart to sail out American military equipment, worth \$14 billion, to India in the same year and US permitted Washington to build a big nuclear power project in India with six reactors. India was granted permission to join Nuclear Supplier Group (NSG) while ignoring the concerns of strategic stability in South Asia (Sattar, 2016). In short, there is the dread that any US-India commitment risks Pakistan. Pakistan believes that the growing US-India relationship further undermines its security. India keeps on requesting that the United States should announce Pakistan a terrorist state and grab its atomic weapons. Such a demand just adds to Pakistan's fear of Indian-roused plans within US actions. The Pakistani Ambassador, Husain Haqqani, noted "the United States should understand Pakistan's security concerns, and with better understanding we will be able to evolve a partnership to bring the two countries further closer" (Koehlmoos, 2010). Pakistan's atomic ability and China's atomic and military predominance were the principle that to some degree gave shared view to the India-United States vital organization. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit to the US and their concurrence on the development of six atomic reactors in India by an American organization, Nuclear Power Corporation of India and Westinghouse Electric Co, a US unit of Toshiba Corp, will likewise start building and site-plan work for the reactors. Modi's visit is a piece of Barack Obama's undertaking to turn the US outside arrangement towards Asia (Ispahani, 2016).

**Demand to do more**

Pakistan is a non-NATO ally of the US in the continuous war on terrorism and effectively battling for taking out Al-Qaeda and different fanatics, capturing terrorist activists, prohibiting the associations that help radicalism, and undertakes military tasks against militants in different parts of the country. In spite of all Pakistan's efforts, the US senior authorities pressurize it to do more. The US secretary of state Hillary Clinton, during her visit to India in May 2012, warned Pakistan to do more and clear its region from psychological oppressor. The US continually pressurizes Pakistan to extend its military efforts to other areas particularly North Waziristan and other Tribal Areas regardless of the fact that security forces are engaged in numerous fronts. It is troublesome for Pakistan to fulfill the increasing U.S. demands (Manzoor, 2015). Today U.S and Pakistan are making efforts to restore their cordial relations. Most of the American officials perceive that after reviewing the strategic measures in the region they would encourage Pakistan to work only for regional security and balance of power.

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“We’ve never really fully articulated what our strategy towards Pakistan is. The strategy will more clearly say what we want from Pakistan specifically,” the official said. “What Pakistan says is that we are already doing a lot and that our plate is already full” (Dawn, US likely to Toughen its Policy on Pakistan, 2017). There are unlikely desires from Pakistan, and when those desires are not ensured there is always a blame game going on the opposite side. The US has been accusing Pakistan for not acting against militants. The US is likewise making a tilt towards India as a regional hegemon. Then again, the US has an agreement with India on civil nuclear co-operation, yet it will not offer Pakistan a comparative arrangement. After the Cold War time, US and India began chipping away at their relationship and enlarged the extent of collaboration and trades. “The US considers India as a more important partner in political, strategic and economic sense” (Ispahani, 2016). Viewing all the regional developments in Indo-US relations current Pakistani leadership has made it clear that further extension of peaceful relations between Pakistan and United States depends upon the revision of the Trump’s ‘do more policy’. They are of the view that Trump’s demand has created tension particularly after the date when he decided to suspend the economic aid to Pakistan. In return, no doubt, Pakistan has stopped cooperating with the Americans in some important issues but the Americans are using backdoor diplomacy to initiate so-called dialogue. But, Pakistani leadership has clearly declared that they are not going to conduct any joint operation within their territory not even with US. The Americans are stick to their present policy and there is a chance that Pakistan can block the supply to NATO that has lead led Pakistan to review its foreign policy as well. Furthermore, present leadership in Pakistan is going to consult the present situation with the stakeholders including the National Security Committee either to fulfill the US demand to do more or to revisit their policy in this regard (Tribune, 2018).

#### **Pressure tactics**

One of the major causes of the deteriorated relationship between Pakistan and India, in early quarter of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, is the pressure tactic of the America. Now and again, the US has declared their economic, nuclear and military aid on the condition that Pakistan should build good relations with India. It is the pressure tactic for which US gained its motives at minimum cost. Time and again, statements of the American officials reflect the realities of these pressure tactics that has caused frustration among the Pakistanis. Pakistanis consider themselves pressurized due to these intensive and overbearing pressure tactics (Review, May 2011).

#### **US policy towards the Muslim world**

It has been said time and again that the world has changed since 9/11 and stopped to be what it was before this occurrence. History will uncover whether this is a

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myth or a reality. Be that as it may, for intellectuals and the general population who are worried about themselves and humankind, it is vital to consider all elements of this challenge. In this unique circumstance, it is essential to comprehend that, "the US," doesn't speak to a solid circumstance in light of the fact that inside the US there are numerous perspectives, numerous measurements and numerous reactions. The same is the situation with the Muslim world ([www.ips.org.pk](http://www.ips.org.pk)). Giacomo's statement gives the clarity that "The underlying problem for the West is not Islamic fundamentalism. It is Islam, a different civilization whose people are convinced of the superiority of their culture and are obsessed with the inferiority of their power. Thus, from Huntington's Clash of Civilizations logic, we derive the prediction that Muslim publics would be wary of the Western norms of individualism, pluralism and relativism, and would be opposed to all America is and does, as America is the most pristine incarnation of the ideals of freedom, democracy and opportunity" (Giacomo, 2004).

## **America's Anti-Islamic propaganda**

Islam is a religion of harmony and went for improving mankind. For quite a long time, the West has completed a continuous campaign trying to command the rich characteristic assets of the Muslim World, which has prompted boundless enemy of American notion in the Muslim world (Yuram, 2012). The Western nations, particularly the US is endeavouring to disfavour the divine religion of Islam. The ongoing hostile attitude of the Euro-American Zionist alliance is the counter Islam. US-made publicity film 'The Innocence of Muslims' which is an assault against the Holy Prophet (PBUH), Islam and the Muslims. The Innocence of Muslims really exasperated the Muslims of the world as they consider it to be an assault on the picture of their dearest Prophet (PBUH) and as a part of arrangement of assaults on their religion (Bari, 2012).

## **Nuclear weapons**

Historically, United States has undermined Pakistan's security concerns and thought little of its strong commitment to its atomic program. The ceaseless US concerns about Pakistan's atomic program enrages the Pakistani public, military, and lead to mistrust between the two nations (Manzoor, 2015). Nuclear issue between America and Pakistan has been a main factor to deteriorate their relations. The US efforts of non-proliferation of South Asia rolled back in May, 1998 when Pakistan tested its ballistic missiles followed by the Indians. President Clinton imposed non-humanitarian restrictions on India and Pakistan under section 102 of the Arms Export Control Act which were removed in October, 2001 soon after the event of 9/11. US put pressure on both the states to join Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and CTBT but none is the signatory of these treaties. Now, the Americans diverted all of their attentions towards Pakistan and started blaming it for providing uranium enrichment material and technology to South Korea since 1990s. A press release in 2003 reflected that North Korea, Iran and Libya were also benefiting from the nuclear proliferation of Pakistan under the command of Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan. In addition to that, China's planning to build two nuclear reactors in Pakistan furthered curiosity among the Americans to review their foreign policy towards Pakistan (Akhtar, 2012). In 2006, US showed discrimination towards lifting sanctions imposed in 1998 when US observed nuclear co-operation in case of India and Pakistan had to face same restrictions in this connection. Washington justified the decision on the grounds of Pakistan's 'flawed non-proliferation record' as compared to India's efforts towards non-proliferation of nuclear weapons (Sattar, 2016). Most of the analysts are of the view that Pakistan is rapidly growing the number of its nuclear weapons perhaps in response of the recent Indo-US nuclear deals. The American co-operation towards the traditional rival of Pakistan can be a major cause for the disturbed regional balance of power that is being contained by Pakistan through promoting its nuclear programme. China's deal with Pakistan in this regard has created a ray of

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disturbance among the major powers and allies. That is why they are emphasizing Beijing to justify their nuclear deals with Pakistan internationally (Kronstadt, 2011).

**Dr. Shakeel Afridi and Pak-US relations**

Dr. Shakeel Afridi was a doctor and had been working with the American Spy Agency, CIA. He endeavored to gather DNA tests of Osama bin Laden in Abbottabad where American troops struck to pursue Osama in May 2011. In May 2012, a tribal court sentenced him to 33 years in jail (The News, Jan 12, 2012). Congress responded extremely reflecting significant outrage at news of Afridi's detainment. Soon after one day to this, Senate Subcommittee 127 affirmed a change to the State and Foreign Operations Appropriations 2013 that United States would withhold \$33 million (\$1 million for every year of the sentence) of asked for Foreign Military Financing help to Pakistan (Epstein, 2013). Representative Rand Paul was among the members who have requested to stop all remote help to Pakistan until Dr. Shakil was liberated and the charges dropped moreover he pushed for the Subcommittee to incorporate the arrangements in his bill (\$ 3576) (State Department, September 20, 2012). In September 2012, the bill was defeated by the proportion of 10-81. A few members of the Congress apprehended to the issue. In Senate, facilitate authorize were issued like the pending \$ 158 would naturalize Dr. Afridi as a US resident, and \$ 164 would deny promote US help to Pakistan until it discharged and the charges dropped. A pending House resolution with 18 co-supports (H.Res. 86) expressed the feeling of the House that Afridi was an American „hero“ and should to be immediately released from Pakistan. In April 2013 House meeting on the Administration's FY2014 foreign affairs, one member asked Secretary of State John Kerry to what extent the United States would utilize "quiet diplomacy" in an effort to see Afridi freed. The Secretary answered that cutting off aid to Pakistan would not be a solution; instead of a lot of differences in the relationship Pakistan was supporting the American interests (State Department, April 17, 2013).

**Recommendation**

Both the United States and Pakistan should consider the following things to restore cordial relations:

- 1- The Americans should give importance to the territorial sovereignty of Pakistan and try to coordinate with the armed forces and intelligence agencies of Pakistan particularly in case of launching campaign against the most wanted terrorists and the events of killings by Raymond Davis, ‘Operation Neptune Spear’ and Salala Airbase should not be repeated. On the other hand, Pakistan should build a strong network of communications

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through which movements and developments regarding heinous act of terrorism can be observed and considered clearly by the American authorities that will lead automatically towards the promotion of good relations.

- 2- USA should not adopt the dual policy and backdoor diplomacy to deal the Pakistanis. It should not create a threat to the balance of power in South Asian Region through showing tilted towards the Indians. Sanctions, regarding nuclear proliferation should be imposed on Pakistan and India on equal footings that will minimise the level of cross-border implications.
- 3- Pakistan and USA should be on the same page in case of Kashmir issue as it is issue of the violation of the human rights instead of the deprivation of a community of the basic right of liberty. The solution to the Kashmir issue can pave the way for the betterment of the Pakistan-USA relations as it will be supportive for the Americans to secure their interests in the region.
- 4- The American should not interfere the polity of the Muslim states as ideologically Pakistan has emotions for these states. Whenever USA interferes the political affairs of any Muslim state, Pakistani officials show their grudges in shape of condemning the American interference. In addition to that, to avoid this type of tension, US should not exploit the economic resources of the Muslim states.
- 5- The USA should encourage the Pakistani leadership for sacrificing thousands lives for attaining security for the region rather pressurizing them for further advancement in this connection. It is a crystal clear fact that Pakistan has lost the more than any participant of the 'war on terror' since the event of September, 2001. The American as well as the international media has named Pakistan as 'safe heavens' and 'sponsor of terrorists' that have tarnished the image of Pakistan in the comity of nations. In short, all the misconceptions and mistrust can be removed through mutual cooperation in mentioned areas.

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