



## Impacts of 9/11 on the Foreign Policy of Pakistan

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### Abstract

*This study aims at describing and analysing the impacts of 9/11 incident on Pakistan Foreign Policy that occurred in USA. Pakistan from its very inception always inclined towards the super powers especially USA for its security challenges. The USA has a strong influence on the foreign policy of Pakistan. The incident of 9/11 affected Pakistan severely and Pakistan revised its foreign policy objectives as advised by the USA. The country went against Taliban in the favor of USA despite the fact that it was among those countries who recognized the Taliban government in Afghanistan. Pakistan became a frontline state due to USA pressure in the war against terrorism. This shift in the foreign policy of Pakistan provided short-term benefits but had heinous impacts on the overall foreign policy of Pakistan. The posing capacity of the right to self-determination on Kashmir declined due to the hatred created by media against terrorism. The presence of terrorists on Pak-Afghan border created concerns at international level that they might reach and take the nukes of Pakistan. Due to the presence of USA in Afghanistan, the sovereignty of Pakistan compromised due to drone attacks on the territory of Pakistan. In spite, the fact that Pakistan was a major non-NATO ally but the USA and India blamed Pakistan for supporting Taliban, so the international status of Pakistan declined. In view of all these developments, this study summarized that 9/11 incident weakened Pakistan at every level especially at international for which Pakistan's government struggled hard to recreate a better position in the comity of nations. This study uses qualitative research design and analyzes the impacts of 9/11 incident on the foreign policy of Pakistan.*

### Keywords

Al-Qaeda, Foreign Policy, Isolation, Right to Self-determination, War on Terrorism, Taliban.

### Introduction

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 commonly known as **9/11** incident was one of the tragic and shocking event in modern history. On that day, the United States targeted by Al-Qaeda, resulting the deaths of nearly 3000 people. The attacks not only caused a deep sorrow and fear of the whole world but also provided a new direction to the global politics. All the countries around the world, especially Muslim countries came under intense pressure to take a clear stand against terrorism and one of those countries was Pakistan.

Foreign policy refers to the goals and strategies that guide a nation's interactions with others states. A country's geography, history, security needs and economic interests commonly shape it. Historically Pakistan's foreign policy focused mainly on its regional interests, especially relations with neighboring countries like India and Afghanistan as well its ties with major powers, like China and United states, however **9/11** attacks changed the situation drastically.

After 9/11 U.S launched “global war on terror” and asked the whole world that either you are with us or with terrorists. Pakistan, due to geographical location and strong connections with Afghan Taliban was compelled to make an important decision and to reconsider its international stance. As a result, Pakistan chose to become a “Front line state” in U.S war on terror and quickly aligned with Washington.

When U.S made Al-Qaeda responsible for 9/11 attacks and ordered Taliban regime to handover Osama Bin Laden (Leader of Al-Qaeda) to the U.S government. Taliban refused and rejected the handover of Laden so; they exposed as complicit in harboring terrorists. In the response, U.S decided to target terrorist Al-Qaeda as a retaliation of 9/11 attacks and eradicate the roots of terrorism. After that U.S government issued an order to Pakistan, “Either you are with us or terrorists” and warned Pakistan if you side the terrorists we will throw you to the Stone Age. Pakistan responded positively that we are ready to support you against terrorists. Pakistan provided unlimited support to the U.S against terrorism such as, provided intelligence and military bases, worked with CIA to target terrorists in Afghanistan, started operation in the tribal areas against terrorists.

This decision had many impacts on the foreign policy, which discovered by our thesis. The impacts that we have found in our research gap are; changed afghan policy from pro-Taliban to anti-Taliban, changed Kashmir policy and weakened Kashmir stance due to anti-terrorists stance and banned jihadi groups under international pressure. Pakistan’s foreign policy focused mainly on anti-terrorism policies and actions as well to fight against terrorists. Pakistan became front line state in the war on terror and provided unlimited support to U.S against terrorism. Pakistan was declared as major Non-NATO Ally (MNNA), reshaped Pak-U.S relations, Pakistan ended isolation in international arena and became the center of world’s attention, challenged and violated Pakistan’s sovereignty, long term regional effects, challenge nuclear capacity of Pakistan, economic aids and military cooperation and strategic shifts etc.

This research aims to study the various ways in which 9/11 influenced the foreign policy of Pakistan. It will explore how diplomatic relations, strategic shifts, security strategies and international reputation affected after 9/11. This research hopes to provide a clear and deep understanding of how one global event (9/11) reshaped and influenced Pakistan’s foreign policy.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The 9/11 attacks significantly changed the global politics, especially the foreign policy of many countries, Pakistan being a key player in the rejoin, was compelled to align its foreign policy with the interest of United States and the global war on terror. The attacks of 9/11 reshaped the foreign policy of Pakistan and brought many changes in Pakistan’s diplomatic relations, Security concerns and strategic shifts. This study addresses the lack of clear understanding of how 9/11 attacks influenced and affected the foreign policy of Pakistan. This research will also systematically analyze that how did 9/11 force shifts in Pakistan’s partnerships and military strategies.

### **Objectives of the study**

1. To find out the impacts of 9/11 attacks on Pakistan’s foreign policy.
2. To analyze the changes in post 9/11 foreign policy of Pakistan.

### **Research Questions**

1. What are the impacts of 9/11 attacks on Pakistan’s foreign policy?
2. How did 9/11 incident influence the foreign policy of Pakistan?

### **Research Methodology**

This research adopts a qualitative method to examine the impacts of 9/11 attacks on the foreign policy of Pakistan. The data drew from secondary sources including academic journals, Articles, news reports and theses of different researchers regarding our topic. This research hopes to provide authentic and valid information about how did 9/11 influence Pakistan’s diplomatic relations, strategic shifts, security needs and others strategic and military interests. This research project completed within a period of four months from March to June.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study is very important because it provides authentic and valid information about how 9/11 attack forced Pakistan to change its foreign policy. This study will enhance readers’ understanding about 9/11 and its impacts on the foreign policy of Pakistan. By analyzing the impacts of 9/11 on the foreign policy of Pakistan, the readers will know about how 9/11 influenced Pakistan’s diplomatic relations, international image, security needs, strategic shifts and others interest in the region. It will

also increase reader's knowledge that how a global event and great powers can force Pakistan's foreign policy to achieve their interests.

### **Literature Review**

(Tabassum, 2003), conducted this thesis that Pakistan's nuclear capability remains one of the most contentious aspects of its foreign policy, especially in the post-9/11 international environment where global attention intensified on weapons of mass destruction. As the only Muslim-majority country to possess nuclear weapons, Pakistan has faced heightened international scrutiny and pressure, particularly from the United States. This concern is not new; Washington has historically expressed discomfort with Pakistan's nuclear development, while India's similar advancements received comparatively less opposition. More recently, unverified media reports citing anonymous intelligence sources have alleged that Pakistan may have shared nuclear technology with North Korea, further complicating its diplomatic standing. These allegations substantiated or not, have contributed to an environment of mistrust and placed additional strain on Pakistan's foreign policy efforts. Even before the events of 9/11, Pakistan had been cooperating with the United States in combating terrorism, despite facing numerous international sanctions. Notably, Pakistan handed over suspects like Amil Kansi and Ramzi Yusuf to U.S. authorities for their alleged involvement in terrorist acts. After 9/11, Islamabad faced immense pressure to support the U.S., largely due to its proximity to Afghanistan. Despite public discontent and a history of mistrust, Pakistan's military government aligned with the U.S. in its campaign in Afghanistan. Meanwhile, India seized the moment to rally international opinion against Pakistan, accusing it of backing terrorism in Kashmir. Following the U.S. invasion of Iraq, India even tried to use the global anti-terrorism stance to justify potential aggression against Pakistan. Thus, Islamabad faces the dual challenge of cooperating with the West while also countering India's persistent accusations.

(Hilali, 2012), This thesis examines that Pakistan's foreign policy heavily influenced by a combination of geographic and historical factors, along with domestic political and social structures. Economic dependence and military vulnerabilities have also played major roles in shaping Pakistan's international strategy. Historically, Islamabad's foreign policy was largely oriented toward India; however, the September 11, 2001, attacks shifted this focus, positioning Pakistan as a frontline state in support of U.S. The post-9/11 scenario compelled Pakistan to abandon its diplomatic backing of the Taliban, recognizing that this policy was isolating it both regionally and globally. Islamabad shifted its approach, realizing that Afghanistan's stability and unity were in its own national interest, given the shared threats of extremism and terrorism. Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani affirmed during a 2010 visit to Kabul that Pakistan desired a peaceful and cooperative Afghanistan, as the future of both nations are closely tied. Pakistan's broader ambitions—such as expanding economic and energy ties with Central Asia—also hinge on stability in Afghanistan. Echoing this sentiment, General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani emphasized that Pakistan seeks for Afghanistan the same peace and progress it envisions for itself. Through economic aid and development efforts, Pakistan continues to support Afghanistan's transition and regional stability. Interests in the region as in the war against terrorism. The events of 9/11 and the subsequent U.S War on terror significantly altered Pakistan's foreign policy and complicated its diplomatic position on Kashmir. The new geopolitical climate made it harder for Pakistan to support the Kashmiri movement, as India leveraged the situation to frame it as "Islamic militancy," gaining international sympathies. After 9/11 the foreign policy of Pakistan was mainly focused on the fight against terrorism.in this concern, Pakistan provided huge support to USA and started many operations in tribal areas to eradicate terrorism from the roots.

(Ahmad, 2013), This thesis studies that, On September 11, 2001, Pakistan faced an extremely difficult situation. The world changed suddenly after the 9/11 attacks, creating new challenges in politics, security, and the global economy. Terrorism became the biggest concern for the world, pushing aside other important issues like peace and development. Pakistan, already struggling with many internal and external problems, shocked by these events. The country had to make tough decisions quickly. While 9/11 brought new dangers, it also gave Pakistan a chance to rethink its strategies and take a new direction. In this thesis we studied that 9/11 attacks marked a pivotal turning point in Pakistan's foreign policy. As President Musharraf described, the event struck "like a thunderbolt," presenting both significant challenges and strategic opportunities. Faced with intense external pressure, Musharraf sought to realign Pakistan's policies with the emerging global order while managing domestic opposition. His decision to support the U.S.-led war on terror rather than

risk confrontation with a wounded superpower proved critical, positioning Pakistan as a key ally in the international counterterrorism coalition.

The shift elevated Pakistan's geopolitical standing, as it pledged to dismantle terrorist networks within its borders. The U.S. and European nations responded with renewed diplomatic engagement and economic incentives. To bolster Musharraf's government, Washington swiftly lifted sanctions imposed after Pakistan's 1998 nuclear tests and the 1999 military coup. By October 2001, substantial U.S. aid began flowing into the country, spanning sectors such as health, education, border security, and governance reforms. Additionally, the U.S. backed Pakistan's debt relief and facilitated loans through international financial institutions. During a visit to Islamabad in October 2001, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell praised Musharraf's "bold and courageous" stance against terrorism, signaling a long-term commitment to bilateral ties. He emphasized the Bush administration's intent to deepen cooperation on regional and security issues, calling it the start of a "strengthened relationship."

(Rabbi, 2012), This thesis examines that, Pakistan's decision to cooperate with the United States in the war on terrorism marked a significant shift in its foreign policy, ending its international isolation and reinstating its position as a frontline state. This partnership led to Pakistan designated as a "Major Non-NATO Ally", the resumption of its Commonwealth membership, and the provision of financial and military assistance. However, the benefits of this alliance overshadowed by growing anti-American sentiment, particularly due to the escalation of U.S. drone strikes in Pakistani territory after 2008. These unilateral attacks were widely perceived as a violation of Pakistan's sovereignty, fueling public outrage and providing militant groups with propaganda to portray themselves as defenders against foreign aggression. The strikes not only damaged U.S.-Pakistan relations but also undermined Pakistan's own counterterrorism efforts by eroding public trust in the government's policies. Domestically, Pakistan faced deep political divisions over its alignment with the U.S. While the Musharraf government and some political parties supported the alliance, others, particularly religious groups, condemned it as an attack on Islam rather than a genuine fight against terrorism. The lack of a unified national stance created instability, with some factions capitalizing on anti-American sentiment to gain political influence. The 2002 elections saw the rise of religious parties like the MMA, which opposed military operations in tribal areas and framed Pakistan's counterterrorism actions as a betrayal of Kashmiri independence. This polarization made it difficult to sustain a coherent strategy against extremism, even as terrorist attacks within Pakistan surged, resulting in thousands of civilian and military casualties. The war also intensified regional tensions, particularly with India. Following the 2001 Indian Parliament attack, New Delhi seized the opportunity to pressure Pakistan on Kashmir, leading to a dangerous military standoff that nearly escalated into full-scale war. Although U.S. mediation helped de-escalate the crisis, India continued to strengthen its influence in Afghanistan, opening multiple consulates near Pakistan's border. This development raised security concerns in Islamabad, as it feared Indian-backed insurgent activities in its western regions. Meanwhile, Pakistan's traditional influence in Afghanistan diminished with the fall of the Taliban and the rise of a pro-Indian government in Kabul, leaving its western border increasingly vulnerable. Militarily, Pakistan paid a heavy price for its role in the war. Thousands of troops deployed along the Afghan border, suffering significant casualties in counterinsurgency operations. Despite receiving substantial U.S. military aid, including advanced aircraft, the human and economic costs were staggering. The conflict also exacerbated internal security challenges, with suicide bombings and militant attacks becoming frequent occurrences. Additionally, Western suspicions about the safety of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal further strained its international standing, even as the government assured global powers of its secure command and control systems. The long-term repercussions of Pakistan's involvement in the war on terror continue to shape its geopolitical landscape. The alliance brought short-term strategic gains but at the cost of long-term instability, radicalization, and regional insecurity. The erosion of public trust, the rise of anti-Americanism, and India's growing influence in Afghanistan have left Pakistan in a precarious position. Moving forward, Islamabad must reassess its foreign policy to balance international partnerships with domestic stability, ensuring that its security and sovereignty did not compromise in the pursuit of global counterterrorism objectives.

(Ahsan, 2008), From, this thesis we have concluded that, the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, targeting the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, marked a significant turning point in Pakistan's relationship with the United States. These events had far-reaching consequences for

Pakistan, influencing both its internal affairs and its global standing. While the day itself passed without incident in Pakistan, its aftermath reshaped regional and international dynamics. Before 9/11, Pakistan faced international isolation, economic stagnation, and a military-led government, with weakened political and social institutions. However, the attacks ushered in a new phase in U.S.-Pakistan relations, prompting shifts in domestic policies and foreign engagements. Following the attacks, the United States reassessed Pakistan's strategic significance. President Pervez Musharraf's decision to align with the U.S. abandoning his predecessors' support for the Taliban and complying with American requests for logistical aid, intelligence cooperation, and airspace access led to improved bilateral ties. In return, Pakistan received financial, military, and economic assistance from the U.S. However, India also gained advantages from the U.S.-led counterterrorism efforts in Afghanistan, particularly in its approach toward Kashmir. By labeling Kashmiri freedom fighters as "terrorists," India reinforced its control over Jammu and Kashmir while undermining Pakistan's position. Meanwhile, India's attempts diplomatically to isolate Pakistan faced challenges. New Delhi had long opposed closer U.S.-Pakistan relations, fearing that external support would strengthen Pakistan. Historical records, such as statements by British officials like Lord Listowel, indicate India's resistance to any foreign assistance to Pakistan. This aligns with India's broader strategy of discouraging international backing for Pakistan while fostering anti-Pakistan sentiments abroad and anti-American views within Pakistan.

(Syed Muhammad Saad Zaid, 2022), In this thesis, we have studied that, The September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks marked a turning point in Pakistan's foreign policy, particularly its relationship with the United States. Although Pakistan was not a direct target, the event had far-reaching consequences for its domestic politics, economy, and global standing. Before 9/11, Pakistan faced international isolation, economic instability, and weakened democratic institutions under military rule. However, the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan following the attacks forced Pakistan into a critical geopolitical role. The Bush administration sought Islamabad's cooperation in its "War on Terror," leading to a sudden shift in bilateral relations. Under pressure, General Pervez Musharraf's government severed ties with the Taliban and provided logistical support to U.S. forces. In return, Pakistan received substantial military and economic aid, temporarily improving its international image. However, this alignment also intensified domestic unrest, as many Pakistanis opposed siding with the U.S. Meanwhile, India leveraged the post-9/11 global counterterrorism narrative to its advantage. By framing the Kashmir conflict as part of the broader fight against terrorism, New Delhi gained diplomatic advantage while undermining Pakistan's position. Historically, India has viewed strong U.S.-Pakistan ties as a threat, fearing they would enhance Pakistan's military and economic capabilities. Declassified documents reveal that Indian leaders consistently discouraged Western support for Pakistan, while simultaneously promoting anti-Pakistan narratives abroad. This strategy aimed to isolate Pakistan diplomatically and fuel anti-American sentiment within the country. Pakistan-U.S. relations worsened when the U.S. began drone strikes inside Pakistan, violating its sovereignty. The first attack was in South Waziristan on June 19, 2004, killing Taliban leader Nek Muhammad. Over 12 years, around 414 drone strikes killed roughly 3,700 people, including civilians. The last known strike was in Baluchistan on May 21, 2016, killing Taliban chief Mullah Akhtar Mansour. The U.S. justified these attacks as necessary for its security, following realist foreign policy prioritizing its interests above all. It targeted militant bases in Pakistan's tribal areas to prevent another 9/11. Initially, Pakistan's government secretly allowed these strikes but publicly condemned them to avoid backlash. After the 2001 war in Afghanistan, the U.S. struggled to defeat the Taliban. Instead of admitting failure, it blamed Pakistan for allowing militants to cross the border and for supporting groups like Al-Qaeda and the Taliban. The U.S. pressured Pakistan to take stronger action, especially against the Haqqani network, TTP, and groups like LeT and SeS. However, Pakistan resisted immediate military action, as these groups had local support, and banning them abruptly could cause unrest. Over time, Pakistan launched operations against these militants and banned extremist organizations.

(Siddiqui, 2016), conducts to study that Pakistan before the event of 9/11 was facing many of the problems at internal and external fronts. The soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan caused the international focus shift from the region as well as from Pakistan. Pakistan was no more necessity for international community. In the year of 1990, the USA enforced sanctions on Pakistan because of the USA nuclear non-proliferation program.<sup>112</sup> However, Pakistan was working on its nuclear program

since 1970s. In the year of 1991, the USA also withheld its foreign aid to Pakistan, which allocated for economic, and defense capacity building of Pakistan. Further, actions of Pakistan for instance; recognition of Taliban Regime in Afghanistan, Nuclear Tests in 1998 and Pakistan-India Kargil War 1999, caused Pakistan's international isolation and brought economic woes. The war began in 2001 when General Pervez Musharraf, Pakistan's President and Army Chief, implemented a dual counterterrorism strategy. Domestically, he launched large-scale operations against militant groups, yet ignored factions involved in terrorism abroad. While targeting Al-Qaeda as a global priority, Musharraf's regime overlooked the Taliban leadership. He also called for international reconciliation efforts. Pakistan seen as an important ally in the global fight against terrorism. However, some countries, including India, Afghanistan, the USA, and NATO members, accuse Pakistan of supporting terrorist groups to achieve its foreign policy goals. According to Daniel Bayman's study, 'The Changing Nature of State Sponsorship of Terrorism' Pakistan is a major supporter of international terrorism, with some areas acting as safe havens for militants. India claims that Pakistan backs insurgent groups in Indian-controlled Kashmir, such as Lashkar-e-Tayyaba (LeT), Jaish-e-Muhammad, and Jamat-ut-Dawa. These groups accused of attacks like the 2008 Mumbai attacks. Although banned in Pakistan since 2002, LeT's leader, Hafiz Saeed, was released due to lack of evidence. India alleges that Pakistan still supports these groups under different names. Internationally, Pakistan accused of aiding Al-Qaeda and the Afghan Taliban. Al-Qaeda, founded by Osama bin Laden during the Soviet-Afghan war, later turned against the West, notably with the 9/11 attacks. The Taliban, representing Afghanistan's Pashtun majority, ruled from 1996 to 2001 and later fought against coalition forces.

(Jamsheed Ali Baloch, 2014), This thesis examines that, the 9/11 attacks marked a major shift in U.S. foreign policy, leading Pakistan to once again become a key ally in America's counterterrorism efforts. However, the U.S. has also strengthened its ties with India, particularly through the "civil nuclear deal," which has raised concerns across the region. Military experts warn that this agreement could trigger a new nuclear arms race, disrupting the existing balance of power in South Asia. The U.S. National Security Strategy emphasizes the need for a stable balance of power to promote global freedom, stating that all nations must act responsibly. It urges freedom-loving countries to combat terrorism and calls for international cooperation in controlling weapons of mass destruction despite these principles; the U.S. appears to be disregarding its own strategy in South Asia to pursue its strategic interests. Many believe that the post-9/11 era has worsened regional security dynamics, with countries participating in the U.S.-led war on terror primarily for their own gains. India, for instance, pledged strong support to enhance its influence in South Asia, while Pakistan joined the war to safeguard its strategic assets and protect its stance on Kashmir.

(Muhammad Abid Nazir, 2021), This studies that, Pakistan's image badly damaged because of its role in the War on Terror (WOT). The country faced constant fear, large-scale displacement, and threats from the Taliban, which weakened its stability. Foreign media repeatedly highlighted these problems, making Pakistan look worse internationally. Most countries believe Pakistan did its best to fight extremism, but the U.S. kept pushing for more action ("do more" policy), putting heavy pressure on Pakistan. Harsh statements from U.S. officials further hurt Pakistan's global reputation. Pakistan also accused of helping North Korea with its nuclear program. India often claims Pakistan supports fighters in Kashmir. Some Pakistani military officials even blamed for secretly aiding the Taliban.

(Kuszevska, 2016), This thesis conducted to examine that, the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, became a defining moment for Pakistan's foreign policy, fundamentally altering its geopolitical trajectory in the early 21st century. Given Pakistan's critical geographic position bordering Afghanistan the U.S. swiftly sought its cooperation in the emerging "war on terror." General Pervez Musharraf (Pakistan's military ruler) was among the first foreign leaders to receive a stark demand from Washington. President George W. Bush's administration, through Secretary of State Colin Powell, delivered an uncompromising stance; Pakistan had to choose between alignment with the U.S. or opposition. Faced with intense diplomatic pressure, Musharraf opted for strategic realignment, cutting ties with the Taliban regime and permitting U.S. forces to operate from Pakistani soil. This decision marked a dramatic reversal for a leader previously isolated by the West as an authoritarian figure. Overnight, Pakistan transitioned into a key U.S. ally in the region, gaining political and economic concessions in exchange for its cooperation. However, this partnership came at a cost. Critics contend that Musharraf's concessions undermined Pakistan's sovereignty, allowing the

U.S. to dictate security policies and conduct operations with minimal oversight. The alliance, though pragmatic, fueled domestic backlash and long-term instability, illustrating the precarious balance between strategic necessity and national autonomy.

(Muhammad Ahmad, 2021), according to this thesis, Pakistan's geostrategic importance has long positioned it as a key player in shaping regional and global political dynamics. Following the events of September 11, 2001, Pakistan's strategic location made it a crucial ally in the United States' counterterrorism strategy, particularly with respect to military operations in neighboring Afghanistan. The success of these operations heavily depended on Pakistan's logistical cooperation. In the immediate aftermath of the attacks, the United States engaged directly with the Pakistani leadership to secure its support. Then-Secretary of State Colin Powell presented a list of strategic demands to Pakistan, reflecting Washington's urgency in forming a broad-based coalition against terrorism (Lim, 2015). In response, General Pervez Musharraf, the head of Pakistan's military-led government at the time, pledged full cooperation by agreeing to these demands. His decision can be understood through the lens of rational choice theory, which suggests that actors make decisions that best serve their national interests under given circumstances. Subsequent accounts suggest that the U.S. made it explicitly clear that non-cooperation would result in dire diplomatic and possibly military consequences for Pakistan (Talbot, 2009). Furthermore, the global discourse led by President George W. Bush framed the conflict in binary terms: nations either with the U.S. or against it, thereby limiting Pakistan's strategic flexibility (Makhdoom, 2018). Faced with international pressure, regional proximity to Afghanistan, and potential threats to its own security, Pakistan had limited viable alternatives but to align with the U.S.-led coalition. This alignment resulted in significant military and financial cooperation. Pakistan provided air and naval facilities, as well as land routes that were critical for sustaining NATO operations in Afghanistan. Over the following years, the country received considerable international aid and military assistance, reinforcing the perceived short-term benefits of its strategic alignment. However, the long-term consequences of this decision both domestically and internationally remain a subject of ongoing academic debate.

(Qadr, 2016), This thesis studies that, the post-9/11 period marked a significant turning point in U.S.-Pakistan relations, characterized by intense cooperation, mutual dependency, and underlying strategic tension. Pakistan's swift alignment with the United States under President Musharraf, driven by both pragmatic survival instincts and a desire to reposition the country as a responsible international actor. While this partnership yielded substantial military and economic benefits such as counterterrorism support, foreign aid, and debt relief, it also came with complex challenges. The growing American footprint in Pakistan's internal affairs, coupled with controversial operations like drone strikes and intelligence sharing, eroded public trust and sparked domestic backlash. The duality of Pakistan acting as both a key ally and a suspect actor in the War on Terror created an uneasy alliance defined by cooperation as well as deep mistrust. Ultimately, the Musharraf era illustrates the dilemmas faced by states navigating post-9/11 global politics, particularly those at the crossroads of great power interests and regional instability. While the immediate foreign policy choices made by Pakistan secured international legitimacy and economic relief, they also exposed structural weaknesses in civil governance and national consensus. The long-term implications of this era remain visible today, as Pakistan continues to balance external alliances with internal sovereignty and regional aspirations. The literature reflects that any sustainable foreign policy for Pakistan must be grounded in transparent institutions, balanced civil-military relations, and a clear articulation of national interests that transcend individual leadership or short-term strategic gains.

(1 Muhammad Subtain, 2 Dr. Mazher Hussain, 3 Muhammad Anwar Farooq, 4 Mumtaz Khan, 2016), Furthermore, the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, perpetrated by the Islamist extremist network Al-Qaeda, precipitated a profound transformation in the international political landscape. This pivotal event fundamentally reshaped U.S. foreign and defense policy. Under President George W. Bush and with Congressional authorization, the United States initiated a comprehensive global "War on Terrorism." While primarily targeting Al-Qaeda, this campaign broadly encompassed the challenge of transnational Islamist militancy. Following the Taliban government's refusal to extradite Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden, the U.S., supported by NATO forces, launched an invasion of Afghanistan. Prior to 9/11, Pakistan had cultivated a policy of engagement toward the Taliban regime. The geopolitical rupture caused by the attacks, however, placed Pakistan under unprecedented pressure. Facing President Bush's stark ultimatum to choose

alignment ‘are you with us or against us’ Pakistan’s military leader, General Pervez Musharraf, strategically abandoned the Taliban and formally joined the U.S.-led coalition. This realignment secured Pakistan the status of a Major Non-NATO Ally. Consequently, Pakistan is foreign and defense policy underwent significant reorientation, with counterterrorism cooperation emerging as the central pillar of the Musharraf regime’s security strategy. This shift necessitated adaptations to address complex regional and domestic challenges stemming from Pakistan’s role in the U.S.-led war on terrorism.

(Ahmed Awais Khaver, Muhammad Awais Umar, Dr Shafqat Munir Ahmad , 2022) Following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, U.S. foreign policy took a decisive turn, particularly in its approach toward South Asia. Pakistan came under intense scrutiny, with the United States accusing it of offering safe havens to Islamic militants, particularly the Taliban and affiliated groups operating along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. The American response involved not only the deployment of additional troops to Afghanistan but also the exertion of diplomatic and economic pressure on Pakistan. The demand for Pakistan to “do more” became a recurring theme in U.S. rhetoric, implying that Pakistan’s support was conditional and that failure to comply would result in serious consequences.

(Khan, 2015), Although, the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, marked a turning point in Pakistan’s foreign policy, compelling a reassessment of its strategic priorities. As noted by former President Pervez Musharraf, the event arrived unexpectedly and forced Pakistan to navigate significant external pressures while managing domestic public opinion. The post-9/11 environment presented Pakistan with complex diplomatic challenges, particularly in its relations with the United States. Despite Pakistan's substantial sacrifices in the global war on terror in terms of both human lives and economic losses, it continued to face persistent demands from the United States to "do more." This recurring narrative suggests that Pakistan struggled effectively communicate its perspective and counter-narratives to the U.S., leading to a persistent trust deficit. Nonetheless, the ongoing instability in Afghanistan has necessitated strategic engagement between Washington and Islamabad. Moving forward, Pakistan must ensure that its core national interests safeguarded in any negotiated settlement or post-conflict arrangement in Afghanistan. There is a pressing need for Pakistan to adopt a more strategic and forward-looking foreign policy approach—one that balances its security imperatives with diplomatic engagement. Given the evolving U.S. tilt towards India, Pakistan’s policymakers must pursue a more nuanced and proactive diplomacy to maintain relevance in regional dynamics, especially after the drawdown of U.S. involvement in Afghanistan. The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, marked a turning point in Pakistan’s foreign policy, compelling a reassessment of its strategic priorities. As noted by former President Pervez Musharraf, the event arrived unexpectedly and forced Pakistan to navigate significant external pressures while managing domestic public opinion. The post-9/11 environment presented Pakistan with complex diplomatic challenges, particularly in its relations with the United States. Despite Pakistan's substantial sacrifices in the global war on terror both in terms of human lives and in terms of economic losses, it continued to face persistent demands from the United States to "do more." This recurring narrative suggests that Pakistan struggled effectively communicate its perspective and counter-narratives to the U.S., leading to a persistent trust deficit. Nonetheless, the ongoing instability in Afghanistan has necessitated strategic engagement between Washington and Islamabad. Moving forward, Pakistan must ensure that its core national interests safeguarded in any negotiated settlement or post-conflict arrangement in Afghanistan. There is a pressing need for Pakistan to adopt a more strategic and forward-looking foreign policy approach one that balances its security imperatives with diplomatic engagement. Given the evolving U.S. tilt towards India, Pakistan’s policymakers must pursue a more nuanced and proactive diplomacy to maintain relevance in regional dynamics, especially after the drawdown of U.S. involvement in Afghanistan.

### **History of 9/11 Attacks**

The attacks of 9/11 was a horrific event in modern history, which shocked the whole World and gave s new direction to the global politics. It is essential to explore the historical background of 9/11 attacks specially, the rise of Al- Qaeda, Osama Bin Laden, Al-Qaeda operations before 9/11 attacks, main incident of 9/11, its responsibility and consequences.



### **The Rise of Al-Qaeda**

The word Al-Qaeda has derived from Arabic language, which means, the foundation or the base. It is a militant and pan-Islamist organization founded by Osama Bin Laden in the late of 1980s. Its origin can trace back from Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The unlimited support during Soviet-Afghan war motivated him to form an organization against the enemies of Islamic world. In the beginning of 1980s, Bin Laden and Palestinian religious scholar Abdullah recruited thousands of trained mujahedeen or holy warriors from more than fifty countries, which gave birth to the rise of Al-Qaeda in the late of 1980s. Al-Qaeda has no single headquarter but after 1996 during Taliban rule, it shifted its base to Afghanistan.

### **Osama Bin Laden**

Osama Bin Laden was born in 1957 in Riyadh (Saudi Arab). He was the founder of a militant Islamist organization (Al-Qaeda). He played crucial in Afghan war against USSR and considered the invasion as an act of aggression against Islam. After Soviet withdrawal, he returned to Saudi. Osama Bin gave birth to the foundation of Al- Qaeda in the latest of 1980s against the enemies of Islamic world. Laden also strongly condemned Saudi reliance on U.S troops during Gulf war. In 1991, he left Saudi and moved to Sudan where he began to formulate agenda of violent struggle against the U.S dominance in the Muslim world after that Saudi Arabia cancelled his citizenship. In 1996 under heavy international pressure, Sudan expelled him and he settled in Afghanistan. Osama Bin Laden received huge support and protection from Taliban rule. Under protection of Taliban regime, Laden declared fatwa of jihad against U.S that he accused for looting and exploiting the resources of Muslim world, occupying holy sites of Islam and interference in Middle East. After the attacks of 9/11, U.S accused him for coordinating the attacks and ordered Taliban regime to handover him to U.S. In the response, Taliban refused to hand over him, which resulted the U.S invasion of Afghanistan and overthrowing Taliban regime. During war on terror he was the most wanted person by U.S and CIA and U.S military spent almost 10 years tracking him, ultimately, he was killed by U.S military and agencies on 12 May 2011 in Abbottabad (Pakistan) during operation Neptune Spear.

### **Al- Qaeda Operations before 9/11**

Al- Qaeda is not only accused for coordinating the attacks of 9/11 but it has made responsible for coordinating different terrorist attacks in the last of 1990s and early of 2000s including attack on U.S embassy in Kenya, attack on U.S embassy in Tanzania, first world trade center bombing (1994) and U.S Cole bombing in Yemen. These attacks conducted to expel U.S influence from Muslim countries and to establish cohesion in Islamic states.

### **First World Trade Center Bombing**

On February 1993, a truck bomb detonated in the underground parking garage of world trade center in New York City. The attackers intended to collapse the towers and cause mass destruction and casualties. This attack resulted the deaths of six people and injured over 1,000. This attack was coordinated by Ramzi Yousef (Kuwait born) strongly affiliated with Al-Qaeda.

### **Attack on the U.S Embassy in Kenya**

On August 7, 1998, a truck bomb exploded near to the entrance of U.S embassy in the capital of Kenya (Nairobi). This attack resulted the deaths of 213 people including 13 Americans and injured over 4000, after investigation it revealed that the attack planned and executed by Al- Qaeda (East Africa cell) under the supervision and command of Osama Bin Laden.

### **Attack on U.S Embassy on Tanzania**

On the same day 7 August 1998 simultaneously with Nairobi bombing, a truck bomb exploded outside the U.S embassy in the capital of Tanzania (Dar es-Salaam) which killed 11 people and injured more than 85. This bombing extensively damaged the surrounding area of embassy this attack also carried out by Al- Qaeda.

### **Attack on USS Cole in Yemen**

On October 12, 2001 USS Cole (a guided missile destroyer of the U.S Navy) while it was refueling in the port of Aden, suicide bombers approached them with small boat which heavily damaged the ship and resulted the death of 17 American sailors and injured many others. Investigations showed that the suicide bombers trained and deployed by Al- Qaeda as a revenge of U.S intervention in the Middle East.

### **Main incident of 9/11**

It was the morning of September 11 when American airline, flight 11 (one one) takes off from Boston's international airport the destination of that flight was Los Angeles, almost 92 people were on board in the plane (11 of them were crewmembers and 81 were passengers). After 15 minutes of take-off, it comes to know that 15 of 81 passengers are hijackers. The hijackers hijacked the plane by overpowering the passengers and forcing their ways into cockpit. One of the hijackers was Muhammad Atta who was a trained pilot. He takes the control of the plane from Pilot and co-pilot and flies the plane straight towards the world trade center. The hijackers' pilot crashed the plane into the North Tower of world trade center at 8.46 A.M.

17 minutes later of first crash, it comes to know that the united airlines flight 11, 7, 5 has also hijacked by five hijackers. Once again, hijackers hijacked the plane; they turned the plane to towards world trade center and crashed into the south Tower of world trade center. Few minutes later of the second crash news came the two more planes hijacked, one of them was American airline 7, 7 that has taken off from Washington international airport and its destination was also Los Angeles, five hijackers hijacked it. The second flight was united airlines flight 93, which taken off from New Jersey to California; four hijackers hijacked it. Both the flights rerouted to Washington DC (U.S capital). The flight 7, 7 was hijacked towards Pentagon (The headquarter of the U.S defense) and crashed the plane into the iconic building of Pentagon at 9:37 A.M. which destroyed significant portion of the pentagon.

It suspected that the flight 93 would crash into the White house or Capitol Hill building (Congress). Some people in the plane turn on their mobile phones when the plane was hijacked, they started getting calls from their family members and they informed them that what actually happening in America. All the passengers realized that their plane will also be crash like others and they started fight with hijackers and showed full courage (it is not clear that either passengers overpower the hijackers or not). Eventually the plane crashed into the field of Pennsylvania at 10:03 A.M.

The attacks of September 11 had profound and enduring repercussions and consequences across the world in different aspects. The attacks resulted the deaths of 3,000 and wounded over 6,000 innocent people, economic cost range from \$83 billion to \$190 billion, increased security measures, global war on terror, Afghanistan war, foreign policy and military inventions and the rise of Islamophobia etc.

U.S made Al- Qaeda responsible for September 11 attacks, even the founder of the organization denied it. However, three years later in Oct 2004 Osama bin Laden released a public tape recording in which he clearly takes the responsibility of the attacks. He claimed that we were trying to teach a lesson to USA for interference in Middle East, supporting Israel and supporting actions against Muslims in Lebanon.

### **The Impacts of 9/11 on the Foreign Policy of Pakistan**

#### **The Foreign Policy of Pakistan Was Dominated and Controlled By Great Powers**

Pakistan, already economically weak and diplomatically isolated, had little choice but to comply, with the US following the 9/11 attacks, Washington pressed Islamabad to cut ties with Taliban and support counter terrorism operations in Afghanistan. Facing immense pressure from U.S and its allies, Pakistan was compelled to join the global war on terror. As a result, the country found itself being a key player in the war on terror not due to its own policy choices and regional imperatives, but because of the security and political objectives of external powers. Consequently, the strategic priorities of U.S and its allies increasingly dictated the agenda of Pakistan's foreign policy, with major decisions heavily influenced by strategic interest of great powers.

#### **Re-alignment in Afghan Policy**

Before 9/11 Pakistan was one of the few countries that recognized the Taliban regime, however the attacks of 9/11 made it difficult for Pakistan to maintain its diplomatic relations with Afghan Taliban, despite its core national interest in the stability of Afghanistan. Under intense international pressure, particularly from the U.S the country revised its pro- Taliban into anti- Taliban. Subsequent to the U.S led Invasion of Afghanistan, Pakistan officially abandoned the Taliban severed all diplomatic tie, withdrew its recognition and joined war on terror. The country provided intelligence, military and logistical support for U.S operations against Taliban, which shifted its policy from strategic depth in Afghanistan to counter terrorism.

### **Change in Kashmir Policy and Weakening Of Kashmir Stance**

The event of 9/11 made it increasingly difficult for Pakistan to support Kashmiris diplomatically and morally. Before 9/11, Kashmir struggle was widely regarded as a legitimate freedom movement against India; however, the attacks of 9/11 changed the narrative and all the freedom movement framed as terrorist organizations. India exploited this shift by labeling the freedom fighters as terrorists and linking the movement with Islamic militancy to gain international sympathy and support. Under huge international pressure, especially from U.S, the country reconsidered its stance over Kashmir policy; the government banned several jihadist organizations and established clear parameters for Kashmir struggle and agenda. The government declared that, no individual or group would allow involving in terrorist activities in the name of Kashmir and Strick action would take against any such involvement in terrorist activities. Because of post 9/11 global anti-terrorism stance, India further took the advantage of global anti-terrorism sentiments to label Pakistan as a state sponsor of terrorism. This narrative isolated Pakistan on Kashmir issue with limited options to support militant groups in Kashmir.

### **Pakistan's Foreign Policy Was Principally Devoted to the Fight against Terrorism and has played a Role as a Front-Line State in the Global War on Terror**

After the attacks of 9/11 the foreign policy of Pakistan became primarily focused on anti- terrorist efforts and strategies, the country swiftly joined the U.S led anti- terrorist bloc and positioning itself as a key plyer and "front line state" in the global war on terror (GWOT). As a part of its commitment, Pakistan joined counter terrorism bloc and immediately cut the diplomatic ties with Afghan Taliban, despite their historical close relations and sacrificing core national interests for the sake of counter-terrorism efforts and objectives. In the war on terror, Pakistan provided extensive support, including inelegance sharing, airspace access and military bases etc. The country also launched operations such as operation Rah-e- Haq, operation Zalzala etc in tribal areas to target Al- Qaeda militants and combat terrorism. Pakistan's inelegance agency, the ISI, collaborated closely with CAI to counter terrorist elements in the region. The country also adopted Strick anti-terrorist measures, banning all the jihadist groups in the country. As a part these efforts, the government of Pakistan handover Aimal Kansi and Ramzi Yousef to USA due to their terrorist activities. Consequently, due to its extraordinary contributions to counter terrorism, Pakistan designated as Major Non- NATO Ally (MNNA) by the United States in 2004.

### **The Attacks Of 9/11 marked An End to Pakistan's Isolation in International Arena**

In the late of 1990s, Pakistan faced diplomatic isolation, due to nuclear test and military rule. However, after the 9/11 attacks, the country welcomed back into international community after years of isolation. By providing extensive support in the global war on terror (GWOT), the, U.S withdrew all economic sanctions imposed after its nuclear test in 1998. This shift helped the country overcome international sanctions, regain access to multilateral forums and secure financial development opportunities. Because of its cooperation, Pakistan restored its membership in the common wealth, which suspended after the 1999 military coup; following the attack of 9/11, Pakistan ended its international isolation, received high-level visits from western leaders and became a vital ally of U.S in anti- terrorism coalition. Pakistan later designated with the status of Major Non- NATO Ally (MNNA). Consequently, the country received substantial economic and military aids, emerged as the focal point of global attention and transformed from pariah state (sanctioned and isolated) to a front-line state in international community.

### **Pakistan's Foreign Policy was primarily drive the Pursuit of National Interest through Economic Aids and Assistance**

After the attacks 9/11, the foreign policy of Pakistan heavily influenced by the pursuit of economic aids and assistance. In the global war on terror, Pakistan swiftly aligned with Washington, providing wholehearted support, including intelligence sharing, military cooperation and logistical access. In response, U.S provided massive economic aids (Almost \$10 billion including military and economic), debts relief (writ off \$ 1 billion debt) and coalition support funds (CSF). By joining the GWOT, Pakistan aimed to secure financial assistance, end its economic isolation and lift international sanctions imposed after 1998 nuclear test. Because of 9/11, Pakistan regained access to IMF loans, World Bank funding, Asian development Bank program, and bilateral aids from different western and gulf countries.

### **The Global War on Terror Raised Questions on Pakistan's Nuclear Capability**

The global war on terror (GWOT) significantly affected Pakistan's nuclear program. Following the attacks of 9/11, U. S led campaign against countries making weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), Pakistan being only Islamic nuclear power faced heavy pressure from international community, due to anti- nuclear global policy. After the event of 9/11 the safety of Pakistan's nuclear and strategic assets came under discussion, Particularly, by the western media and U.S officials, they raised questions about the safety Pakistan' nuclear weapons with the fears that extremist and terrorists' elements operating within Pakistan could gain access to nuclear weapons or materials. In the response, the government of Pakistan took strong measures and reassured the U.S. and the international community about the security and safety of Pakistan's nuclear weapons. However, in 2004 U.S suspected, that Dr, Abdul Qadeer, the founder of Pakistan's nuclear program cooperating a black- market nuclear proliferation network, further straining Pakistan's credibility. The global war on terror (GWOT), also led to U.S drone attacks in the territory of Pakistan, which raised serious questions on Pakistan' nuclear deterrence, the matters raised, that how a nuclear state subjected to such attacks. Additionally, several security breaches and incident in Pakistan raised serious questions on its nuclear capability.

### **The Event of 9/11 Posed Challenges to the Sovereignty of Pakistan**

After the event of 9/11, U.S pressurized Pakistan to align itself with Washington's agenda by any means. The U.S warned Pakistan, "If you sided the terrorist will throw you back to the stone age". Pakistan, economically weak and diplomatically isolated had no option but to comply, which challenged its right to self-determination and autonomy. Following the event of 9/11 U.S played crucial role in shaping Pakistan's foreign policy, compelling them, to cut ties with Taliban, despite they were the protectors of Pakistan's national interest in Afghanistan. During the global war on terror, the U.S forced Pakistan to provide its intelligence sharing, military airbases and air space access for its strategic interest in the region, raising serious concerns over Pakistan's sovereignty. The U.S further violated Pakistan's sovereignty in the global war on terror by conducting drone attacks on its territory, killing thousands of civilians. Pakistan was repeatedly compelled to "Do more" in the name of counter-terrorism to serve U.S strategic interest in the region. Further, the Raymond Davis case, in which a CAI contractor shot and killed two Pakistani citizens in broad daylight in Lahore, also challenged the sovereignty of Pakistan. Similarly, the U.S conducted Abbottabad Operation near to Pakistan' Military academy to kill Osama bin Laden, without considering Pakistan. Another grave violation of Pakistan's sovereignty occurred during the Salala checkpoints incident, where NATO forces attacked two checkpoints of Pakistani military, killing 24 soldiers. The incidents collectively represent that how the event of 9/11 posed challenges to the sovereignty of Pakistan.

### **Pakistan's Foreign Turned from India Centric to U.S Aligned**

The incident of 9/11 significantly altered the priorities of Pakistan's foreign policy. Since independence, the foreign policy of Pakistan was India centric, the country is foreign and security policies primarily shaped by its rivalry with India, especially, over Kashmir. Pakistan always supported militant groups in Kashmir to pressure India, as well-maintained strong ties with Taliban to secure strategic depth in Afghanistan against India. The relations between Pakistan and U.S remained dynamic, friendly during Soviet Invasion and hostile in the late of 1990s following atomic explosions. However, the incident of 9/11 dramatically reshaped the whole scenario of Pakistan's foreign policy. In the aftermath of attacks, Pakistan closely aligned itself with Washington and severed ties with Taliban to avoid U.S sanctions and gain economic and military aids. Following the incidents of 9/11, the country became a front-line state in the war on terror, provided extensive support to U.S in the counter- terrorism. This shift also changed Pakistan policy towards Kashmir, the issue was temporarily de-emphasized and it became increasingly difficult for Pakistan to support Kashmiri insurgents during anti- terrorism global stance.

### **Pakistan's Foreign Policy Became Highly Security Focused, Reactive and Externally Influenced**

As an aftermath of 9/11 attacks in 2001 the foreign policy of Pakistan became increasingly security focused, reactive and externally influenced, due to its geographical location, strategic shifts and international pressure. Following the attacks, Pakistan emerged as a front-line state in U.S led global war on terror. This alignment led to severe security challenges inside the country; including military operations in the tribal areas against Al-Qaeda, the Taliban, as well as the U.S drone strikes inside Pakistan caused civilian casualties, fueled anti- American sentiments, and contribute to the rise of militancy in the form of TTP, which retaliated against the state for its cooperation with U.S.

Pakistan's decision to sever ties with Taliban, become a front-line ally and provide huge support to U.S was a reactive shift, driven by fear of U.S sanctions and international isolation. Similarly, after the event of 9/11 the foreign policy of Pakistan increasingly influenced by the external powers, especially the United States, which heavily influenced Pakistan's foreign policy and used them for gaining its strategic interest.

### **Conclusion**

The terrorist attacks of September 11 marked a pivotal turning point in the global politics, significantly redefining and reshaping the foreign policy of Pakistan. Before the attacks of 9/11 the foreign policy of Pakistan largely influenced by regional priorities, particularly its rivalry with India, strategic interests in Afghanistan and aspirations for the leadership of Muslim World. However, the post 9/11 international environment compelled Pakistan to reconsider its foreign policy priorities and align itself with Wessington's counter-terrorism demands. Facing heavy international pressure, including the threat of sanctions and isolation, Pakistan swiftly joined the U.S led global war on terror, severed ties with the Taliban regime and restructured its foreign policy with a new emphasize on counter- terrorism. This shift marked a transition from India- centric security focus to U.S aligned counter-terrorism agenda, polices towards Kashmir were softened and de-emphasized under international pressure. Additionally, the country's nuclear program came under intense international scrutiny, as well as Pakistan faced severe challenges to its sovereignty and right to self- determination. During this period, Pakistan's foreign policy heavily controlled by the Great powers and the country's foreign policy was primarily devoted to the fight against terrorism. Furthermore, it principally driven by the pursuit of national interest through economic aids and assistance and it increasingly became security driven. Reactive and externally influenced. Despite the short-term gains of financial support and strategic partnership the event lasted long-lasting implications, include weakened national autonomy, strained civil- Military relations, raised anti- American sentiments, escalating internal militancy, enduring regional tensions, particularly with Afghanistan and overreliance on foreign aids and military alignment with Western powers. The long- lasting effects of the 9/11 attacks suggest that, Pakistan's foreign policy will remain caught between the competing interests of major powers and regional security imperatives. Therefore, Pakistan should navigate its complex history to forge a balanced and independent foreign policy.

### **Recommendations**

1. The scope of Pakistan's foreign policy should not be constrained only to security concerns alone, but should broadened to include economic diplomacy, global trends and broader national interest.
2. Pakistan's foreign policy should provide a clear framework that limits foreign intervention in its internal affairs and foreign military operations on its sole, while safeguarding its territorial
3. While maintaining close ties with the United States, Pakistan should adopt more balanced foreign policy that also deepens its relations with China, Russia, the European Union and others neighbouring countries.
4. Pakistan should work towards improving diplomatic relations with regional neighbors, Afghanistan, India and Iran- by reducing tensions through dialogue and confidence building measures.
5. Pakistan's foreign policy should prioritize independent economic policies and reduce aid dependency by expending trade routes, strengthening regional economic alliances and attracting both foreign and domestic investments. These steps will move the country toward economic independence, which will contribute to a more independent and effective foreign policy.
6. Pakistan's foreign policy should primarily focus on proactive measures, maintaining neutrality, fostering cordial relations with neighbours and major powers, protecting broader national interest, and safeguarding national sovereignty.

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