

## **The United States-Pakistan Security Complex and Genesis of Counter Terrorism Strategy: An Analysis of Distrust and Interactivity in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

**Dr. Muhammad Iqbal Roy\*<sup>1</sup> Abdul Rehman<sup>2</sup> and Farhan Khalid<sup>3</sup>**

1. Chairperson Department of Political Science, Govt. Murray Graduate College, Sialkot, Punjab Pakistan
2. Ph. D Scholar, Department of Political Science & International Relations University of Gujrat, Gujrat Pakistan
3. Lecturer, Department of Political Science, Government Murray Graduate College Sialkot, Punjab Pakistan

**\*Corresponding Author:** dr.roypolsc97@gmail.com

### **ABSTRACT**

The qualitative study focuses on the genesis of counter terrorism ground and strategy towards the Pakistan–United States relationship during the 20th century. Pakistan emerged as a front-line state at the junction of major powers. There were some major factors that led the historical relationship to be transformed into contemporary workable transitions. The paramount objective of the study narrates old and new security matrix between America and Pakistan in the perspective of neo international environment. The study emphasis on different elements like trust deficit and diplomatic connectivity ever remained parallel determinants of bilateral relations between the United States and Pakistan in the historical perspective during 20th century. The historical and dynamical developments have guided Pakistan and United States towards the cultivation of future diplomatic course of action as one of the major concern of the study. It reflects the US-Pakistan strategic and regional working relationship on certain issues like security, regional stability, and socio-economic infrastructure building, leading to the solution of different challenges, conflict resolution, and countering terrorism in the forthcoming future.

**Key Words:** Counter Terrorism Mechanism, Frontline State, Geo-Strategic, Historical Imperatives, Security Matrix

### **Introduction**

United States-Pakistan relations have been considered significant in the context of bilateral interaction and understanding both from the perspective of cooperation and due to environmental and eventual factors. The mutual ties have seen many ups and downs throughout bilateral diplomatic history. The United States and Pakistan have shown the favorable disposition towards each other, but interactions and linkages between Pakistan and America have not always progressed smoothly. The reciprocal relations of Pakistan and the United States have been based on unequal partnership and patron and client states. The direction of these relations was determined by the national interests of the senior partner. On the other hand, Pakistan sought a substantial amount of US economic and military assistance in multiple forms due to certain geostrategic and socio-economic factors. Pakistan remained truly dependent on the United States due to political instability, a lack of commitment to the national cause, inconsistent economic planning, and a leadership crisis. A bulk of administrative and managerial problems were faced by the newly born state of Pakistan, which made it much more dependent on the capitalist world led by America due to certain historical, imperialist, and political reasons. The partnership was so uneven that it kept fluctuating like a roller coaster. The complexity of mutual relations took place because the US-Pakistan had converging interests and goals. The United States had been much concerned about the Communist threat to the region during the Cold War period (1950–1990), whereas Pakistan's interests were linked with security issues from its western border, the Durand Line (2250 km), which stretched with Afghanistan, and the eastern border (1650km) with India, as its major adversary cultivated close ties with Russia. Thus, the major problem of bilateral relationship between the US and Pakistan stemmed from the differences of their role and positions in the regional and international environment. Therefore, during the early years of the US- Pakistan Diplomatic

linkages, the major interest of Pakistan was to secure economic support for political stability and development in Pakistan and to get military assistance for protecting its borders, especially the eastern side. A democratic and stable Pakistan remained vital to the United States foreign policy-making process. Pakistan and the United States- Pakistan stepped forward towards each other after the dreadful event of 9/11 in 2001. Both the states made potential efforts against terrorism, particularly in the global coalition against terrorist's activities around the world. The Islamabad administration repeatedly appreciated for its major contribution and cooperation to contain and counter the activities of terrorists in the region and around the world. Resultantly, Pakistan had to face immense domestic pressure, criticism, and public protest against the decision to become the part of the global coalition and frontline state to pullout the sanctuaries and activities of the dissidents who were the major posing threat to humanity and global peace.

### **Historical Imperative of Pakistan's Geostrategic Significance**

Pakistan possesses great significance due to its peculiar socio-political, military and demographic outlook in south Asia. Pakistan located in the region as the "Fulcrum of Asia" (Rizvi, 2001; Sen Gupta Bhabani, 1970). Pakistan is situated between 24 and 36.75 northern latitudes and between 61 and 75.05 longitudes. Pakistan possesses 7,966,096 sq. km. of territory. China is a major power in Asia and an important player in regional and international politics, sharing a border of 895 km with Pakistan towards its north. (Gupta, 1970) Tajikistan, an independent state of the Common Wealth Central Asian Republics (CARs), also stretches beside the Wakhan Strip, 80km to the north of Pakistan. Whereas Pakistan's 1650km eastern border is sensitive and significant due to its hostile and antagonistic neighbor, India, Pakistan shares a 2250km Durand Line border with Afghanistan towards its west, a war-prone country and a frontier land for the invaders of India. The Durand Line has mountainous terrain and runs from the Sharikal range of the Pamir in the north to the Iranian border of Koh-i-Malik Siah. A number of passes in the mountain ranges divide the two countries (Askari, 1987). Pakistan's southern belt lies near the Persian Gulf (65% of the world's oil-producing zone), Arabian Sea, and Indian Sea. This coastal belt describes the 700-kilometer Pak-Iran border. Therefore, Pakistan's geostrategic significance can be perceived in the context of regional and global prospects i.e neighboring states, seas, passages, trade routes, and the hidden and obvious interests of the major powers. Pakistan is vital not only for Afghanistan, Iran, China, India, and the commonwealth of Central Asian States. It has also been the center of interaction and interest of the superpowers. Pakistan remained a hub of activities for these core states throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Malik,1991). It has also witnessed the intervention of Russia in Afghanistan towards its western border from December 1979 to April 1988 and American direct involvement after the horrible terrorist attacks on its soil in September 2001. Pakistan has great political, economic and geo-strategic significance due to its role as a front-line state" since the incident of 9/11 to counter terrorist activities as an active partner of the global coalition led by the United States .(Anwar, 1998)

### **Pakistan at the Junction of Major Powers: Developing a Frontline State**

The geographical outlook of Pakistan is valuable due to its direct land access to the great powers of Russia and China. Therefore, any alliance or conflict among world powers enhances Pakistan's strategic significance. Pakistan has utilized its location at the junction of major powers, especially after the terrorist attacks on America. The United States involved Pakistan directly and indirectly to gain its targeted interests in the region. Pakistan has been rigorously fighting against the Taliban and al-Qaida to curb and combat international terrorism. Moreover, the US concern about Pakistan is related to the stabilization of Afghanistan and pulling out and countering all types of terrorist activities, whether domestic or international. The United States holds a firm belief in preventing the proliferation of nuclear

weapons and democratizing the region for stability in the South Asia region by normalizing India-Pakistan relations as best as possible with the consent and cooperation of Pakistan. The eventual cracks in Pakistan-US relations are filled by mutual commitment to cooperation against the war on terror, which cannot be conquered in the circumstances of isolation.

### **Pakistan in US perceptions of historical factors towards contemporary transitions**

The American National Security Council prepared a draft that defined US objectives and areas of influence in the region. It was decided by the American security policy authorities that the threat of South Asia protecting the region from Russian expansion exists. The US security decision makers elucidated the geographic significance of Pakistan in light of its proximity to the Soviet Union. Pakistan's major air bases, i.e. Lahore, Karachi, and Rawalpindi are quite useful, being quite close to Moscow (Arif, 1984). The demographic, military and security significance of Pakistan obtained abundant prestige and value in the eyes of the policy-making authorities in Washington. The instable political and domestic affairs of Pakistan created a critical issue of reliability. The deterioration of economic conditions and the increasingly weaker position of Liaqat Ali Khan led the US administration to cultivate diplomatic interaction and military alliance with Islamabad administration. (Venkatarmani, 1982).

### **The Eisenhower Doctrine: Constructing a New Matrix**

Dwight Eisenhower took charge in Jan, 1953. President Eisenhower emphasized collective security pacts against the communist threats of the Soviet bloc. John Foster Dulles was given the task of developing favorably in an American bloc of states from South Asia that would contain the communist threat. Dulles visited Delhi and Karachi in May 1953. During his visit, he received a positive impression of Pakistan's anti-communism and a negative view of India's neutralism. After his return home, Dulles said he was 'immensely impressed by the moral and political support of Pakistanis' and characterized India's Pundit Nehru as an 'utterly impractical statesman.' (Malik, 2003). The US Secretary Dulles glowed about the Pakistanis in a closed-session testimony that Pakistan received high and sufficient appreciation due to its geographic significance, which could play a valuable role against the Russian-led communist group. Washington could make the newly born Pakistan compatible with its interests; it would be a greater contribution to lasting global peace. The Indian Prime Minister Nehru strongly reacted to the Pakistan-US defense nexus, warning both Pakistan and America against the arrangements of security measures. As a result, Dulles put the issue before US President Eisenhower and focused more on the consequences of backing down in the face of Nehru's strident and public opposition than on the benefits of military ties with Pakistan (Kux, 1993).

### **SEATO-CENTO, The Strategic Defense Alliances, and Pakistan's Position**

The US establishment approved and decided to extend a comprehensive economic assistance package to its new partner. The US took the decision to enhance Pakistan's economic assistance by \$104.9 million for the ongoing fiscal year (\$75.6 million in commodity assistance and \$5.3 million in technical assistance that could be used for economic development purposes), being an important participant in the defense pact, the SEATO (Khan, 1972). Pakistan expressed its primary reservations. Pakistan sought to be protected from any other noncommunist threat, especially from its eastern border. The United States didn't agree with Pakistan's stance. Bogra then the prime minister of Pakistan went on his official visit to America in October 1954 where he agreed to join SEATO-CENTO the defense arrangement with Mr. Dulles at Washington. US Secretary of State again refused to agree that the SEATO umbrella included any attack or aggression by India against Pakistan (Burke, 1973). An

ambivalent Pakistani cabinet ratified SEATO membership formally in January 1955. The entrance of Philippines and Thailand into the SEATO alliance sought the military strength of member states. Therefore, Pakistan also wished to participate in the discussion on the defense of Southeast Asia. The draft and charter of SEATO were discussed in September 1954 in Manila. The participant members prepared and drafted the revised article four of SEATO after an exhaustive discussion to combat any external aggression against any member country of the military alliance. After an exhaustive discussion, the conference agreed to prepare a redraft so as to cover the entire territories of the Asian parties. (Dawn, 1954, May 20). Pakistan had to face severe criticism and negative propaganda due to its involvement in SEATO-CENTO defense pacts from many Arab states, India, and the Soviet Union. India staunchly opposed the defense pacts of Pakistan with the West led by America (Khalid, 2013).

### **External Turmoil and Internal Chaos**

Pakistan had to face internal troubles followed by external criticism and turmoil after its participation in defense alliances. The political instability and circumstances have an impression and have implications for Pakistan-US relations. The 2nd Governor General of Pakistan, Mr. Ghulam Muhammad toppled the cabinet of Muhammad Ali Bogra to reduce its powers in October 1954. Iskander Mirza took charge as the Governor-General of Pakistan in August 1955 after the demise of Ghulam Muhammad. The new Governor General was pro-Western and supported the US-led alliance. Iskandar Mirza was appointed Ch. Muhammad Ali, an inexperienced non-political civil servant, was elected Prime Minister of Pakistan in September 1955. The US administration was much concerned about the instable political conditions in Pakistan and had reservations about the implementation of MEDO. The Washington admiration approved military and economic assistance package to Pakistan to secure the defense of the Middle Eastern region. (Rais, 1990). The American government did not alter its posture on the Kashmir conflict when the foreign minister of Pakistan Hamid-ul-Haq Chaudary asked for US support in SEATO meeting of March 1956. The US administration affirmed that they cannot change the nature of links with Pakistan because the relations are more significant.

### **The Post-Soviet Invasion Environment**

America presented different offers to Pakistan, i.e. strengthening Pakistan's defense and economy, and also wanted maximum cooperation in terms of information and logistics from Pakistan to resist the soviet troops. Afghanistan is important not only due to its landmass but also its geostrategic location. The Russian invasion of Afghanistan became a playground of the new great game. America waged a proxy war against Russia through the freedom fighters with the help of Pakistan, which awarded it the status of a frontline state (Weekly, 1982). Mr. Ronald Spiers the American ambassador to Pakistan stated that "the major concern of the United States aims to stopped and combat the soviet invasion in Afghanistan which has changed the geo- strategic and geo- military outlook of the region". Therefore the United States looks at Pakistan as a frontline state against the Russian aggression in the region". President Carter talks to general Zia-ul-Haq on the issues of security and solidarity in Pakistan. The Reciprocal visits of high-ranking officials were made. In February 1980, a US delegation paid a visit to Islamabad to erase doubts and distrust in their bilateral relations. Another purpose of this visit was to understand the defense needs of Pakistan in the perspective of dynamics of regional and global environment. (Ikram, 1980). The US administration offered military and economic assistance packages to Pakistan during 1981 to 1987 to enhance its defense and military capability along with the infrastructure development. The sale of F-16 aircraft to Pakistan was a major incentive for Pakistan from the United States in lieu of the provision of military basis to the United States. (Cohen & Weinbaum, 1982).

## **The Geneva Negotiations as a Security Vacuum**

President Daoud was overthrown under the Saur revolution in April 1978 and was succeeded by Muhammad Taraki in Afghanistan. The Taraki government cultivated close relations with Moscow and was well supported. The Taraki administration signed almost two dozen agreements with Russia for the uplift of political, socio-economic, and institutional development in Afghanistan. Taraki, being the chairman of the armed forces, issued certain decrees that proclaimed him as the chief executive of Afghanistan. Whereas, Babrak Karmal was appointed as vice president of Afghanistan. The previous constitution of Afghanistan was abolished, and the Afghan flag and emblem were redesigned following the Russian style of flag. A wide-spread popular unrest, especially among the clergy, had been observed throughout Afghanistan. Moreover, forced marriages and the abolition of the mortgage system were also severely criticized. On the whole, the Afghan people did not accept the implementation of pro-communist Taraki reforms and started an agitation throughout Afghanistan. The Taraki administration initiated and encountered strategies to tackle the ongoing rebellious activities. President Taraki stepped down from his position when an upheaval broke in Herat in March 1979 killing 40 soviet advisers by the Afghan insurgents. Amin became the prime minister of Afghanistan after the surrender of Muhammad Taraki, another pro-Soviet and hard-line communist. The new Kabul administration had to face severe opposition, especially from the religious leadership of Afghanistan. Therefore, the Afghan political scenario became more critical with the assumption that if Amin was overthrown, the Soviet forces would capture power in Kabul, which would further deteriorate the situation in Afghanistan against the aspirations of the Soviets. Therefore, only a military coup could prevent such threats. Resultantly, the Soviet Union decided to contain 'jihad, a big menace to communism, and invaded Afghanistan on December 27, 1979. (Hyman, 1984).

## **The policy paradigm shift in the Post-Cold War era**

The Washington changed policy paradigms towards Pakistan and Afghanistan just after withdrawal of Russian troops from Afghanistan and particularly after the disintegration of Russian federation in Dec, 1991. The period from 1992–96 is one of the most controversial. It led the Afghan people to indulge in civil war by acquiring power to rule, rebuilding the political system, rehabilitating refugees, and creating new political warlords who divided society into territorial, racial, and ethnic groups. A conflicting struggle was started among the warring groups of Afghanistan for acquiring political power. Peshawar Agreement of April 24, 1992, not only gave birth to a new government in Kabul but also provided the process and structure of governance to officiate Burhanuddin Rabbani as the president of Afghanistan through the mediation of Pakistan. After Rabbani's refusal to hold a fresh election in Afghanistan, the situation became more critical. The Afghan war lords were agreed to accept the Islamabad formula of a new political government in Afghanistan (Malik, 2008). Professor Rabbani continued to rule as president and engineer. Hekmatyar was appointed as the prime minister of Afghanistan. Although the Afghan leaders reconfirmed the Islamabad agreement, it was not implemented, and the domestic socio-political circumstances of Afghanistan remained quite uncertain, critical, and dissatisfactory to the Western world and the United States.

## **Emergence of Taliban & US Counter Terrorism Connectivity**

The Taliban movement rose to power in Afghanistan and flashed across the Afghan horizon almost in late 1994. Mullah Umar was proclaimed and recognized as the leader of the newly emerged Taliban group. The pro-Taliban crowd of Afghans yearned for release from the warlords, and Umar found himself at the head of a popular revolt (Sahabudin, 2008). On September 27, 1996, the Taliban claimed to have captured Kabul and announced they would promulgate an Islamic regime in the

country. Najibullah, the former President of Afghanistan, was executed by the Taliban. The Taliban government restricted the provision of education and employment on its female population. They imposed anachronistic Islamic laws, including amputating thieves' cutting of hands and feet, stoning adulterers to death. Pakistan was the first State to recognize the Taliban government, along with the UAE and Saudi Arabia. Mr. Robin Raphael, the US representative for South Asia, expressed conflict and clash within the context of their political status. It had been argued by US officials during the Clinton administration as well (Maley, 2002). The American administration developed some new concern in Afghanistan even after the Soviet war was over was a major blundering from a future perspective. By mid-1998, the Washington administration developed new interest in Afghanistan due to attacks on American embassies in Tanzania and Kenya which led 200 people killed by a suicide car bomber carried out by the organization Al-Qaida belonging to Osama bin Laden, a Saudi national living in Afghanistan. As a reactionary move, the Clinton administration ordered the attack on the terrorist camps in Jalalabad. The Washington administration desired an influential role of Pakistan against the Taliban government to handover the culprits to the United States. The US government imposed sanctions on the Taliban and halted their commercial and financial links to operate in an international environment. The declining US-Taliban linkages pressurized Pakistan while the United States still believed in Pakistan, which could change the mindset of the Taliban from fanatic to moderate. Another conflict was beginning in the region as the Taliban refused American Demand. However, the US wanted Pakistan to use its influence on the Taliban to make them hand over the culprit to the United States.

### **Understanding the Counter terrorism Vacuity in the Pre-9/11 Environment**

The Pakistan-United States relations can be observed clearly in the context of the issue of nuclear proliferation by the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The main hurdle between Pakistan-America was the imposition of Pressler Amendment was US Congress in 1984. The Pressler sanctions were imposed on Pakistan, and the latter was not allowed to have nuclear weapons. On the other side, Pakistan considered the Pressler Amendment by the US Congress a discriminatory policy that created security threats in Pakistan and weakened the defense of the country. Pakistan was a sharply dependent state on the United States, both economically and militarily. The United States ceased the provision of military assistance to Pakistan just before the beginning of post-Cold War Pakistan-US relations. The United States also stopped \$564 million in economic aid to Pakistan in October 1990. The US Congressional decision to cut off Pakistan's economic assistance created certain hurdles for Pakistan's economic infrastructure because Pakistan was third in position among countries receiving maximum American economic aid. The Islamabad administration was trying to cultivate a close relationship with the Taliban government in Afghanistan and was also committed to getting nuclear power. The Washington administration was concerned with the affairs of the Middle East, letting Pakistan face the problem of Afghan refugees alone (Arnold,1981).

### **The Brown Amendment: Increasing distrust in Pakistan-US Relations**

The reciprocal visits of diplomats, delegations, and top-ranking politicians were made during the 1990s, favoring the strengthening of Pak-US ties and also facilitating the relaxation of Pressler sanctions. (Mehmood, 1991). The American senate and state department expressed altogether that the nuclear sanctions over Pakistan through the pressler amendment was another obstacle between Pakistan and united states and considered the possible review on the wavier of pressler sanctions against Pakistan. Moreover, the very amendment could not curtailed Pakistan from advancing its nuclear capabilities. The tour of Senator Hillary R. Clinton to Pakistan on March 25, 1995, also played a significant role in Pak-US relations. Benizir Bhutto then the prime minister of Pakistan negotiated with the Clinton administration for the release of 38 F-16 fighter jets, defense assistance and military

equipment on the terms and conditions of payments which Pakistan had already completed for which Pakistan had made payments before the imposition of sanctions under the Pressler Act. President Clinton agreed to support the idea of removing sanctions. The US President Clinton considered that the Washington administration should not keep the equipment and money paid by Pakistan (Rubin, 1995). The US Congress passed an amendment called the Brown Amendment, initiated by Hank Brown on September 28, 1995, to permit military training program rather than to provide defense assistance to Pakistan. The above mentioned Amendment enabled Clinton administration to provide the fighter plans F-16 to any other state and return money to Pakistan which had been paid for the purchase of F-16 aircraft jets. The lifting of sanctions removed an irritant in Pak-US relations through the Brown Amendment in September 1995 (The Nation, 1995, October 30).

### **Precursors to Pakistan: The US Counter terrorism Mechanism**

A way forward to the Future: Washington had new concerns after the military coup of General Pervaiz Musharraf on October 12, 1999. The Clinton administration strongly opposed the overthrow of a democratically elected government and imposed economic restrictions on Pakistan. Despite the enforcement of military and economic sanctions on Pakistan, relations between Pakistan -United States remained unchanged except for a slight strain, which was concerned with Pakistan's tilt towards Afghan-Taliban government and its backing for Kashmir insurgency. President Clinton focused on these issues during his brief visit to Pakistan in March 2000. The Clinton administration also made objections to Pakistan's nuclear program, whereas the Bush administration had spoken of Pakistan as a longtime friend of the United States. Discussions during the visit of Pakistan's foreign minister, Abdul Sattar, focused on the issues of nuclear proliferation, regional and global security, and the return of democracy in Pakistan (Mirza, 2000).

### **Conclusion**

The United States-Pakistan relationship has always been marked by convergence and divergence of national interests, switching from friendship to friction from 1947 to 2000. The United States benefited more during times of converging interests from the geostrategic location of Pakistan and its traditional security dilemma of its eastern and western borders. Pakistan, on the other hand, gained less as it was not given the required support by the United States when needed, most notably during war crisis period that led to the disintegration of Pakistan. The United States also imposed severe penalties, embargoes, and sanctions on Pakistan. The unique geostrategic outlook and demographic significance remained as the key factor American interaction and interests in Pakistan and the region. The United States had shown flexibility and positive response towards Pakistan to acquire its support for carrying out the vested interest of Washington administration in the regional and global environment. The United States had protected its aims and objective in context of Middle East politics. The United States occasionally sought support from Pakistan to contain religious extremism and anti-American sentiments in the region. The American victory against Russian influence and hegemony in the area was possible through the marvelous intelligence and logistic support in the context of the US involvement in the Afghan war was the other important US policy objectives achieved through the maximum contribution and strategic support of Pakistan. Pakistan reaped the benefits of successful nuclear technology during the climax years of the Cold War. The Washington administration admired a strong Pakistani military to protect and preserve its interests in the region of Middle East. The US-Pakistan relations are one of the "three marriages and two divorces". The 'first marriage' was when Pakistan participated in the American led-military pacts SEATO-CENTO in the beginning of the 1950s. It was quickly followed by a first divorce when Pakistan came out of these mutual agreements in the late 1960s because of its severe reservations over the US's hesitance and inability to come to its defense

and economic rescue in the 1965 war against the much stronger and arch-neighboring India. Then, in 1979, when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, the US needed Pakistan in order to counter the invading Reds, and thus the two entered the 'second marriage'. However, this also culminated in a bitter second divorce when, once the Soviets were out of Afghanistan in 1989, Washington turned its back on Pakistan. The Clinton administration was going to label Pakistan as a terrorism-supporting state in the wake of its covert jihadist struggle in Kashmir. Then the two uneasy partners, Pakistan and the United States, entered a 'third marriage' after the dreadful 'events of 9/11'. The latest mutual alliance has been severely dented by different incidents, such as the Abbottabad operation, the Raymond Davis case, the Salala check post incident, the Memo-gate scandal, and its aftermath. It is yet to be seen whether the new US administration wraps up the shaky third marriage or continues it in historical context.

### **Recommendations**

The prime focus of the study remains on the United States- Pakistan security complex and genesis of counter terrorism strategy during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The exhaustive analysis of work provides way forward for both the state Pakistan and United States in the context of their bi- lateral diplomatic engagements. The United States-Pakistan partnership was quite uneven and fluctuating like a roller coaster due to the converging reciprocal interests and goals. Therefore, it is dire need to remove the element of distrust through the recognition of the respective role and status of the both countries particularly the Unites States must acknowledge and appreciate Pakistan potential efforts through logistic and diplomatic corridors to combat and counter terrorist's activities in the region and around the world. The US requires facing the immense diplomatic and external pressure with Pakistan as the part of global coalition and non NATO frontline state to diminish the hideouts of different non state actors which challenge humanity and peace in future. The historical imperatives of Pakistan's geo-strategic significance, its location at the junction of major powers, Pakistan's cooperation in US peace keeping and defense strategies are the major areas of future concern in the regional and global politics. The Unites States must consider Pakistan as an important factor in the shifting policy paradigms particularly under the umbrella of counter terrorism connectivity and vacuity in the pre and post 9/11 environment.

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