

Pakistan's foreign policy objectives in the post-September 11, 2001 era

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The tragic events of September 11, 2001 were a watershed in international politics which not only changed the international system, but also fundamentally transformed the basic fabric of foreign policy in different countries of the world. The U.S. sidelined “moral superiority” and started flexing its military muscle without diplomatic consensus or the backing of its allies and involved itself in an unending war on terror. For Pakistan, the events also marked a turning point as the U.S. accused that the extremists who had successfully conducted terrorist attack in the U.S. had allegedly received training in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan. Left with little choice, Pakistan was forced to change its policy and side with the U.S. to topple the Taliban regime in Afghanistan.

Pakistan's foreign policy after 9/11

The foreign policy of Pakistan is shaped largely by geographical and historical considerations, by its political and social system, by virtue of economic dependence and military vulnerability, by its relative power position with reference to the adversary, by the policies of other countries and by the world contemporary environment. Historically, Pakistan's foreign policy was primarily focused on India, but the events of 9/11 made Pakistan a front-line State in defending U.S. interests in the region. The country had already suffered due to the Cold War; this new situation placed Pakistan in a position where it had to defend itself against the barrage of allegations and look for closer cooperation of friendly countries to avoid international isolation.

Besides, it is also believed that the country's elites decided to support the U.S. because of their desire to receive economic and military assistance and also to gain political support to legitimize the then undemocratic regime of General Parvez Musharaf.¹ Given all that, Gen. Musharaf laid the foundation of a strategic partnership between the U.S. and Pakistan, and promised to cooperate on the issues of terrorism and to prevent nuclear proliferation.

Change in Afghan policy

The events of 9/11 also made it impossible for Islamabad to continue its

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diplomatic support to Taliban in Afghanistan. Thus, Pakistan carefully evaluated the pro-Taliban policy which was perceived to be costly, and changed its Afghan policy which was isolating the country within the entire region, both among its friends and foes. On the other hand, Pakistan had a fundamental national interest in Afghanistan's stability, unity and territorial integrity as decades of war had furthered terrorism and extremism which posed significant threats to Afghanistan's transition to a modern democratic State and to its fragile economy.

During his official visit to Kabul on December 4, 2010, Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani, the then Prime Minister of Pakistan, said that Pakistan had always wanted a peaceful, stable and friendly Afghanistan. The destinies of the people of Pakistan and Afghanistan were deeply interlinked. Pakistan had been aspiring closer economic and commercial ties with the resource-rich Central Asian States and had plans for establishment of energy and trade corridors with them. But all of them invariably depended on a peaceful Afghanistan.²

Similarly, General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, Chief of Army Staff, during his visit to Brussels (Belgium), made it clear that Pakistan has a traditional stand on Afghanistan and that is the well-being of the people of Afghanistan. He said, "We cannot wish for Afghanistan anything that we don't wish for Pakistan."³ Pakistan is making a significant contribution to the socio-economic development of Afghanistan as peace and prosperity of the two countries could only be ensured through their economic progress.

Change in Kashmir policy

The events of 9/11 and the global "war on terror" not only changed the fundamental fabric of Pakistan's foreign policy, but also complicated Pakistan's diplomatic stance on the Kashmir dispute. The new situation made it difficult for Pakistan to provide diplomatic and moral support to Kashmiri indigenous freedom movement as the circumstances provided India an

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Subsequently, in an effort to handle the matter diplomatically, President Musharaf addressed the nation on September 20, 2001. He said that:

Our main concerns are they [USA] can be hurt and harmed. And they can also devastate our main power, our main cause, Kashmir ... They are to see what the intentions of our neighboring countries are. They [India] have offered all their military facilities to the United States. Very conveniently, they [India] have offered their logistic support and all their facilities to America. They want that America should come and side them and they want Pakistan to be declared a terrorist State, and thus damage our Kashmir cause.⁴

The government under President Mushararf defined the parameters for Kashmir struggle and pledged that “no organization will be allowed to indulge in terrorism in the name of Kashmir and strict action will be taken against any Pakistani individual, group or organization found involved in terrorism within or outside the country.”⁵ At the same time, Musharaf also asserted Islamabad’s commitment to Kashmir struggle and said: “Kashmir runs in our blood. ... We will continue to extend our moral, political and diplomatic support to Kashmiris. We will never budge an inch from our principled stand on Kashmir.”⁶

Similarly, Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani also stated, “Pakistan remains firmly committed to its principled stance on Jammu and Kashmir, based on the relevant UN Security Council resolutions.”⁷ On another occasion, he stated that “the just struggles of people for self-determination and liberation from colonial or foreign occupation cannot be outlawed in the name of terrorism.”⁸

Thus, Pakistan acted according to the U.S. desire and also maintained its traditional stand that “Kashmir problem needs to be resolved through dialogue and peaceful means in accordance with the wishes of the Kashmiri people and the UN resolutions.”⁹ Pakistan also urged the international community, especially the U.S., to play an active role in resolving the Kashmir dispute for the sake of durable peace and harmony in the region.

Change in India’s policy

The history of Pakistan-India relations is full of distrust since independence in 1947. Both the countries have fought three wars (1948, 1965, and 1971) and also have had hostilities in Kargil in 1998. The outstanding issues such as

Siachen, Sir Creek, Kishanganga Dam and above all the core issue of Kashmir have remained unsettled to date. On top of it all, the situation is alarming because of the presence of nuclear weapons in both the countries.

Their relations received a serious blow after the suicide attack on Indian parliament in December 2001; and got further worsened after the Mumbai carnage in November 2008. India referred to the Mumbai attack as “India’s 9/11” and described the city as a hub of commercial and entertainment activities and a symbol of modern India.¹⁰ New Delhi blamed Pakistan for the terror incidents and was ready to attack Pakistan, but Islamabad denied the charges and matched India’s military moves.¹¹

Tensions between the two countries were defused with the help of the international community, particularly the U.S, as hostilities between the two countries could have had a negative impact on Pakistan’s efforts in the war on terror. Demands were also made that Pakistan should stop supporting groups operating in Kashmir like the Lashkar-e- Taiba (LET). Pakistan assured India that it would extend full cooperation to unearth the Mumbai conspiracy, but that also did not stop India from severing the ongoing dialogue process with Pakistan.

The U.S. expressed disappointment on this Indian decision. Voicing the Pakistani desire to restart the dialogue process with India, former Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani appeared on India’s CNN-IBN and said that “Pakistan and India must not be held hostage to the Mumbai attack because the beneficiaries will be terrorists and dialogue is the only best solution”.¹²

The quest for national security

Following the events of 9/11, Pakistan found itself in an extremely vulnerable position as former President George W. Bush declared that “every nation, in every region, has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists.”¹³ He also mentioned that “from that day forward, any nation that continues to harbour or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime.”¹⁴ Bush further stated: “We will meet aggression and bad faith with resolve and strength.”¹⁵ At that time, the U.S. required the airspace, bases, and logistical support of the neighbouring countries to conduct a successful invasion of Afghanistan.

As Pakistan borders both the Indian Ocean and Afghanistan,¹⁶ America sought to gain Pakistan’s support through coercive diplomacy and Wendy Chamberlain (U.S. Ambassador to Islamabad) was assigned the task of

negotiations with President Pervez Musharraf.¹⁷ America made it clear to Pakistan that it wanted intelligence support, the use of Pakistan's airspace, and logistical support.¹⁸ Liam Collins has mentioned in the Irish daily, *Sunday Independent* that a senior officer of the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad told President Musharraf that Pakistan should either abandon support to Taliban or be prepared to be treated like the Taliban.¹⁹

On September 16, 2001, Islamabad announced that it would join the global coalition against terror²⁰ Three days later, Musharraf addressed the nation and explained the country's position by saying:

We in Pakistan are facing a very critical situation. Perhaps as critical as the events in 1971. If we make the wrong decisions our vital interests will be harmed ... Our critical concerns are our sovereignty, second our economy, third our strategic assets (nuclear and missiles), and fourth our Kashmir cause. All four will be harmed if we make the wrong decision. We have to save our interests. Pakistan comes first, everything else is secondary ...²¹.

Following Musharraf's declaration, America lifted the economic and military sanctions that had been imposed under the Pressler, Glenn, and Symington Amendments and also Section 508 of the Foreign Assistance Act. All these sanctions were waived by Bush under the authority of Brownback II,²² and in response, Pakistan extended cooperation for Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). Pakistan agreed to provide blanket flyover and landing rights, access to naval and air bases, and critical petrol supplies. Much of the logistical support was initially provided without any formal agreements or user fees that are normally required for such privileges; thus demonstrating Pakistan's full support.²³

This support provided by Pakistan played a critical role in the success of the OEF. Furthermore, it is also pertinent to highlight that Pakistan captured more terrorists and committed and lost more troops than any other nation in the world.²⁴

Pakistan's place in the regional and international system

Pakistan has been actively involved in international affairs both within and beyond the South Asian region. The country has continued its partnership with the United States and the industrialized Western world based on strategic affinities and common interests in economic and trade affairs.

In this regard, Dr. Abdul Hafeez Shaikh, Finance Minister of Pakistan, elaborates Pakistan's economic foreign policy objectives and mentions that "as a set of commitments, those objectives constitute the broad aspirational tenets of the country's approach to its economic development and, if consistently adhered to, it will render the policy predictable and in line with our perception of the kind of nation we seek to be, and the kind of world we wish to live in. Thus, there must be one yardstick which is the quality of economic development and that is the only useful policy tool."²⁵

India, being a largest democracy in the world, is taking full advantage of its image in the world and is on the path to economic development, whereas Pakistan has repeatedly seen long years of political unrest and military takeover, thereby discouraging foreign investors.

To promote soft image of Pakistan

Pakistan's diplomatic and moral support to Taliban has badly damaged its global image and its own multi-cultural society. The violence began when Taliban introduced strict interpretation of Islam and propagated that America and the West is the root cause of all evil. Following the 9/11 incidents, elements with similar views gained ground in Pakistan that resulted in increased militancy in society with suicide blasts becoming almost a routine matter for the people in Pakistan. The brutal acts of Taliban not only brought a bad name to the country but also tarnished the image of Islam.

Their nefarious and immoral activities have led many to believe that Islam is a religion of intolerance, militancy and terrorism. As Rahul Bedi has written in *Asia Times*, "Due to the activities of Taliban and militants, it has led increasing numbers of Western people to link Islam with fundamentalism, extremism, and terrorism."²⁶ Pakistan is struggling with its limited resources to restore peace and security in the country not only because the international community wants it to take on the militants, but also because these elements are bent upon destroying the social fabric of the country and impose their ideas and way of life on the people of Pakistan. These efforts by Pakistan have been acknowledged by the international community which has helped in improving Pakistan's image across the world.

To gain economic assistance for development

Since independence, Pakistan has never enjoyed a stable economy and is an economically dependent country. Therefore, Pakistan's foreign policy has been

traditionally driven either by the quest for security or to receive massive economic assistance.

In the early years of 2000, Pakistan was close to an economic default. The country had been subjected to a wide range of U.S. sanctions under the Pressler, Glenn and Symington Amendments to Section 508 of the Foreign Assistance Act. The military coup of General Musharraf in 1999 also limited all economic and military assistance to Pakistan.²⁷ According to the World Bank, Pakistan was in a “position of extreme vulnerability” due to its immense debt and was categorized as a low-income economy which failed to maintain the development growth and progress.²⁸

From 1998 to 2001, foreign exchange reserves were not sufficient and financial indiscipline was downgraded.²⁹ It also pointed out that Pakistan had severe economic shortcomings, notably its failing education system, growing inequality between the rich and the poor, faltering public infrastructure and lack of investment in private and public sector including research and development.

However, the events of 9/11 bailed-out Pakistan from political and economic difficulties. In response to Islamabad’s cooperation to the U.S.-led war on terror, the Bush administration waived sanctions under the authority of Brownback II and awarded around \$18 billion tangible economic and military aid including \$11.5 billion as military assistance.³⁰ The U.S. administration provided legitimacy to General Musharraf’s military regime and Washington showed willingness to reschedule Pakistan’s outstanding \$400 million debt.³¹ It also supported loan rescheduling for Pakistan by various financial institutions, including the World Bank, IMF and ADB, and helped alleviate Pakistan’s \$38 billion foreign debts.

The Bush administration announced \$1 billion aid package to Musharraf government for the purpose of border control, refugee assistance and poverty alleviation.³² During 2001-2002, IMF and the Paris Club were pleased with Pakistan’s economic progress and rescheduled much of its foreign debt and extended fresh credits.³³ From 2002 to 2008, the U.S. provided approximately \$5.174 billion and also estimated that an additional \$80 - \$100 million would be given each month in coalition support fund, a total of \$ 4.75 billion till August 2006.³⁴

The Barak Obama administration in its latest annual budget has approved \$1.6 billion in military assistance (2009) and about \$1.4 billion (2010) as civilian assistance.³⁵

According to the Department of Defence (DoD), the military assistance which has been provided to Pakistan is approximately \$7.345 billion as Coalition Support Fund (CSF) for its support of the U.S. military operations in Afghanistan.³⁶ The Obama administration has also increased non-military assistance to Pakistan, which is mainly attributed to the Kerry-Lugar-Berman bill which grants \$7.5 billion in five-year (2009-2014) programme.³⁷ Since the war on terror began, the policy makers have formulated an agenda that “War on Terror” is one of the factors which can enrich Pakistan across the board and the country will get foreign aid for socio-economic uplift or institutional development.

Thus, achieving sustainable economic growth in the country is the civilian government's priority and its international dimension is important for all departments in State sector. To attain its objectives, the government has proper coordination at the policy and working levels and they are working towards an integrated “economic foreign policy.”³⁸

For this purpose, the government has formulated a comprehensive programme for international interaction in the fields of trade, commerce and technological exchange and cultural exchange as well. Pakistan's prosperity has always depended on its international economic links. A large part of the country's financial resources are based on international donors, foreign trade and investment.

In this regard, the country's agricultural industries completely depend on access to international markets. As a result of the “war on terror” the country's trade and investment has increased and barriers to trade have got lowered down. Taxation reforms have enhanced productivity, deregulation, and strengthened infrastructure, the rate of inflation and a low interest rate climate.

All these became vital factors to enhance foreign investment. Pakistan equally needs to utilize the concept of globalization for rapid growth and poverty reduction and for economic competition in the world market. The country can afford favourable impact on the overall growth rate of the economy because the process of globalization cannot only increase the GDP and GNP but also benefit both big and small businesses, together with the people.

Alignment with the global economic system radically pushes forward reforms in favour of a more open and market oriented economy which will strengthen the country's position. Moreover, newly opened markets around the

world will create new opportunities for economic growth and hopefully the benefits of globalization will offset any costs. Globalization will also increase prosperity through trade, aid, investment and technological change and as a result employment opportunities will enrich society.

To maintain minimum deterrence

Since inception of the country in 1947, Pakistan has been facing grave security problems from India. The international community has failed to play a decisive role against Indian aggression, particularly in 1971 when the Eastern wing of the country was severed. At the same time, the detonation of Indian atomic devices in 1974 and later in May 1998 made Pakistan realise that in order to maintain minimum deterrence, Pakistan had no choice but to go nuclear. Indian reluctance to settle disputes, particularly the core dispute of Kashmir, was also a factor.

This situation is best described by Avery Goldstein that “Nuclear deterrence will remain at the core of the security policies of the world’s great powers and will continue to be an attractive option for many weak or less powerful States worried about adversaries whose capabilities they cannot match.”³⁹ The situation has become even more complicated with the signing of a comprehensive nuclear deal between India and the U.S. Pakistan has repeatedly made it clear to the world that it does not want to indulge in an arms race with India.

Former Prime Minister Gilani dismissed Western media perceptions about Pakistan’s nuclear programme and said: “Pakistan would continue to follow a responsible policy of maintaining credible minimum deterrence capability commensurate with regional environment and future requirements. Pakistan is not in arms race with India but would never compromise on its national security.”⁴⁰ On another occasion, he reiterated that “Pakistan believes in peaceful co-existence; nevertheless, it is the government’s policy to maintain minimum credible deterrence that is imperative for safeguarding the frontiers of the

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country.”⁴¹ Thus, in view of the situation prevailing in South Asia, it is imperative for Pakistan to maintain its minimum deterrence policy.

To fight terrorism

Immediately after the attacks on the Twin Towers, Pakistan strongly condemned and unequivocally declared that terrorism is never sanctioned by Islam. A prominent Pakistani religious scholar, Mufti Nizamuddin Shamzai, condemned terrorists' activities, and while giving an interview to the *New York Times*, he said: “It is wrong to kill innocent people and it is also wrong to praise those who kill innocent people.”⁴² Another Muslim scholar, Shaykh Hamza Yusuf, also stated that “terrorism is a perversion of religion, and those who attacked the Twin Towers have also hijacked the faith.”⁴³ In this context, Pakistan's decision to fight against terrorism marked the beginning of a new era in Pakistan-U.S. relationship.

President Bush also made it clear that taking U.S.-Pakistan relationship on a higher plane was one of his administration's highest priorities. After Musharaf, the new civilian government under President Asif Ali Zardari also made it clear that “democratic government will not let terrorism to hijack the country's foreign policy,” and voiced his government's commitment “to pursue a full international agenda against terrorists.”⁴⁴

U.S. Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, also praised the “valuable” Pakistani cooperation in fighting extremism and said that Pakistani leadership has “recognized that standing firm against the threat was important for the country's future.” She further said: “The horrific events of September 11 have required a broad-based, long-term strategic support from Pakistan and the civilian government in Islamabad has contributed more meaningfully towards the unprecedented global effort to prevent terrorism.”⁴⁵

In an interview with CNN, President Zardari said: “Pakistan and the United States will together root out and bring to justice those who use terrorism to damage both countries' relations. We need no convincing that the killers and their accomplices are trying to pervert Islam to use it for justifying their appalling crimes.”⁴⁶

Pointing out that terrorism was posing a serious threat to the social fabric of Pakistan, Prime Minister Gilani declared: “War against terrorism is our own war because threat of terrorism to Pakistan's national interest is most acute; it has jeopardized the country's stability and solidarity”.⁴⁷ The then Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi also stated that Pakistan itself is a victim of terrorism

and is not allowing and would not allow anyone to use its land against any country.⁴⁸

While praising Pakistan's efforts in the war against terror, *The Wall Street Journal* advised Washington: "Pakistan is facing blowback of the international effort to contain terrorism in the globe, but the U.S. and its Western allies must have to realize that Pakistan alone cannot defeat terrorism and concrete results are also not possible without active support and assistance to Pakistan."⁴⁹ The Mutahidda Ulema Council of Pakistan comprising different factions of Islam condemned the militant acts at home and abroad, issued a fatwa against a deformed concept of jihad and the use of suicide-bombing in Pakistan, described Taliban's acts as counter to the teachings of the divine religion and opposed to the message of Islam.⁵⁰ In this regard, capacity-building of the security institutions in Pakistan will be important as mentioned by Leon Hadar: "It is necessary to strengthen Islamabad's counter-terrorism capacity because without that it is hard to achieve objectives."⁵¹

Bilateral relations and multilateral cooperation

Pakistan is a country which depends on the strength of its bilateral relations around the world to advance its national interests. The market access outcomes of the Uruguay Round (1986-94) and the Doha Conference (2001) of multilateral trade negotiations are essentially a series of bilateral agreements. In joining the war against terrorism, one of Pakistan's main objectives was to encourage other countries to help Pakistan financially and develop the capabilities needed to deal with terrorist groups. Similarly, Pakistan is playing a vital role in the United Nations and is focusing its effort on the issues directly relevant to its interests.

Multilateral policy and objectives

In recent times, the traditional concept of a nation State has changed and most countries are constantly losing some degree of sovereignty. Pakistan is no exception to that. It is therefore the responsibility of the country's missions abroad to focus on multilateral issues in formulating their objectives and should forge a link between bilateral and multilateral relations. In fact, the new global environment, more than ever before, requires Pakistan's foreign and defence policy to be harmonized in a comprehensive security policy. Involvement in international forums such as the UN, the NAM, SAARC, ECO, OIC, and the Commonwealth, however, requires preparations and deliberations of a different nature. To develop consistent and comprehensive policies is the need of the hour which will help Pakistan explain its view point in a better way at political forums abroad.

The international community is expecting Pakistan to assume an important role in some organizations. It has been recommended by experts that Pakistan should wholeheartedly support and participate in the newly formed economic and socio-cultural organizations under the charters of UN. Such associations with the new regional institutions will provide an important forum within which issues such as political dialogue, the strengthening of democracy and threats to peace and stability of the sub-region can be addressed. Moreover, Pakistan has a leadership role to play in the multilateral forums. It needs a clear vision as well as a clear set of objectives.

Struggle for access to European markets

The country's elites must remember that the arena of economics is highly competitive and irreversible because once the country loses the opportunity; the time will never come back. Globalization has generated significant options for Pakistan because this phenomenon has provided opportunities for foreign investment by providing facilities to foreign companies for investing in different fields of economic activity. For this purpose, the removal of constraints and obstacles for MNCs in Pakistan, allowing local investors to enter into foreign collaborations and also encouraging them to set up joint ventures abroad; carrying out massive import liberalization programmes by switching over from quantitative restrictions to tariffs and import duties are all imperative. To engage with globalization is also necessary to avoid any major economic crisis because the country has earlier faced a foreign exchange crunch which dragged the economy close to default.

Commitment to Non-Proliferation

Pakistan remains firmly committed to global disarmament with the conviction that the world should get free of the atomic danger. The country is

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also supporting the principle of equal and legitimate security for all. Pakistan has a logical stand for the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), including nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, and is firmly against the proliferation of such weapons and their means of delivery. The country firmly supports international non-proliferation efforts. For this purpose, Pakistan has suggested that the international non-proliferation mechanism should be constantly improved and proliferation issues should be dealt with through dialogue and international cooperation. The fundamental purpose of non-proliferation is to safeguard and promote international and regional peace and security, and non-proliferation measures should be meaningful.

Pakistan supports the United Nations to play its due role in the area of non-proliferation and has signed all international treaties and joined all the relevant international organizations. The country joined the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in 1957 and voluntarily placed its civilian nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards. Pakistan was the country which asked the United Nations General Assembly to declare South Asia nuclear weapon-free zone.⁵² It ratified the International Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Chemical Weapons Convention in 1997 and also ratified Amended Protocol 11 of the Certain Conventional Weapons Convention, which regulates the use of landmines.⁵³

Pakistan has been elected (1997) to the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency for a two-year term and supported the IAEA's efforts to prevent potential nuclear terrorist activities. Pakistan also played an active and constructive role in amending the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials. In addition, Pakistan is party to Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) which are disarmament treaties.

Pakistan agreed to the Convention (1984) on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their destruction (BWC), and has strictly observed its obligations under the Convention. The country also supports the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and has earnestly fulfilled its obligations under the CWC. Islamabad has promulgated and implemented relevant law, has established the National Authority for the implementation of the CWC, and has submitted initial declarations and various annual declarations.

Furthermore, Pakistan participated in the universal non-proliferation efforts with the view that global rules must be fair, impartial and non-discriminatory and the non-proliferation regime must be ensured. For this purpose, Pakistan has demanded a balance between non-proliferation and international cooperation for peaceful use of nuclear technology. It demanded of the developed nations to provide scientific know-how to developing countries to utilize and share dual-use of scientific and technological achievements and products for peaceful purposes.

Although Pakistan is not a party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and is opposed to the Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT), the country has the official stand that it would join the global non-proliferation treaty if the world community formally recognize Islamabad as a nuclear state.⁵⁴ Pakistan has also played an active and constructive role alongside China in amending the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials.

Since the War on Terror has started, the U.S. and Western media has initiated psychological warfare against Pakistan's nuclear programme and its nuclear scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan that he established extensive illicit nuclear supplier network in the 1990s⁵⁵ and provided nuclear enrichment technology to Iran, Libya, and North Korea. They also express the fear that Pakistan's nuclear assets will fall into the hands of extremists. Pakistan's policy makers have continued their struggle to counter Western propaganda against its nuclear programme and have introduced multilayered, foolproof system of internal monitoring.

Besides, Islamabad has over the past initiated many advanced security mechanisms, from tightened physical safety to technical controls on the nuclear weapons. This fact has been recognized by the international regulatory authorities and they have acknowledged the efficacy of Pakistan's comprehensive command-and-control structure, which has made the country's nuclear assets impervious to any internal or external threat.⁵⁶

Furthermore, the Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority (PNRA) was established on January 22, 2001 under the obligation of International Nuclear Safety Convention's Article 8(2) to ensure effective separation between the functions of the regulatory body (PNRA) and those of any other body or organization concerned with the promotion or utilization of nuclear energy.

The National Assembly separately adopted the Nuclear Export Control Bill on October 5, 2004 with the purpose of preventing the proliferation of sensitive technologies in accordance with UNSCR Resolution No. 1540.⁵⁷ Pakistan also

prepared the Nuclear Security Action Plan and joined the IAEA's Illicit Trafficking Data Base (ITDB) information system, and showed its willingness to share data on seizures with the Agency.

In this regard, Pakistan endorsed the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism initiative in the UN General Assembly and issued fresh lists of technologies and materials related to the nuclear and biological weapons that will be subject to an intrusive export control system.⁵⁸ Pakistan also issued a comprehensive National Control List (NCL) of various controlled items based on the European Union (EU) system of classification and the lists drawn up by the Australia Group, the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), and the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR).

Additionally, Pakistan established a Strategic Export Control Division in 2007 under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which also has an Oversight Board that would independently supervise the implementation of the Export Control Act 2004 and other laws relating to the illicit trafficking and export control mechanisms. In this context, Pakistan joined the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, which demonstrates its determination to effectively uproot the menace of nuclear proliferation.

During the Inter-Sessional Process Meeting of Experts to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, Islamabad endorsed the basic objectives of the Convention regime.⁵⁹ In addition, the country has also established a number of institutions and mechanisms to oversee nuclear power generation and to manage safety and security issues in accordance with the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) requirements.

The Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and Nuclear Facilities document was used as the model for inspection and enforcement objectives.⁶⁰ Pakistan has adopted highly responsible policies and measures to prove itself a responsible country and has consistently striven to fulfil UN obligations under the diverse elements of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime, including specifically with respect to the United Nations Security Council Resolution.

Stable regional security

A stable regional security environment is fundamental to Pakistan's national security interests. The country has established defence relationship with the United States to ensure a balanced security environment in the region which will enhance bilateral diplomatic dialogues on economic and security issues and

would help promote greater understanding with and shared interests in the region. For this purpose, Islamabad is strengthening counter-terrorism links with the neighbouring countries and using its established network of bilateral counter-terrorism experience to help others detect threats and prevent further terrorist attacks.

Pakistan's understanding with India and Afghanistan and other regional countries has built extensive cooperation between the regional countries which will help contain transnational threats to Pakistan and the region's security. In this context, Pakistan's relationship with the U.S. involves wide-ranging anti-terrorist activities. The U.S.-led war on terror provided opportunities for the civil-military establishment to train and operate the forces in the war torn areas. For this purpose, Pakistan is taking an incremental approach to build defence relationship with the U.S. and European countries on the basis of shared interests. So, Pakistan's security ties with U.S., Britain, France, Germany, Belgium and other European countries are important. In this regard, Pakistan shares exchange programmes with different European countries such as visits to the Staff College (Quetta), the National Defence University (NDU) and offers professional courses.

Furthermore, the relationships among the major powers are fundamental to the security interests in the region because these powers have the ability to shape the regional security environment. In this regard, the U.S. strategic presence in the region is the most significant and perceived by some to be productive. Pakistan has a strong desire to resolve all outstanding issues with India through peaceful means including the Kashmir dispute which is a flashpoint of the world and without its resolution it is difficult to defuse tension in South Asia. According to Ramneek Mohan, an Indian peace activist, the day the Indian establishment would resolve disputes with Pakistan, that consequent situation would give the two countries a strong mutual stake in the region's stability. Even understanding between New Delhi and Islamabad is also important to counter terrorist threats in the region, and India should help regional countries including Pakistan to take necessary steps to build their counter-terrorism capacities.⁶¹

In this context, the international community has only limited influence over the seemingly intractable tensions between nuclear-armed neighbours whereas, a stable relationship is important for the success of the war against terrorism. However, Pakistan has already done a lot and could do more but Pakistan's responsibility is confined to ensuring that its territory is not being used by Al-Qaeda or Taliban against any other country. Let it be absolutely clear that Pakistan cannot afford to alienate its own people to --- the United States.

Participation in international and regional organizations

Pakistan has always played an active and constructive role in accordance with its commitment to the principles and purposes of regional and international organizations. The stature that Pakistan enjoys as one of the leading Muslim countries is manifested by its consistent success in elections to various global and intra-regional organizations including the United Nations (UN), the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC), Economic Cooperation Council (ECO), Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) and Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

Thus, Pakistan was elected to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (1998), the Non-Governmental Organizations Committee (1999), Commission on Human Rights (1999), UNICEF Executive Board, Commission on Human Settlements (2002), the Inter-governmental Working Groups on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting (2003), the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (2004), member of executive boards of United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (2005), UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (2005), and the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (2006).

Pakistan is also an active member of NAM which represents the voice and political and economic interests of the developing world. At the NAM forum, Pakistan has helped the evolution of consensus on disarmament and arms control issues and the United Nations reform process. Pakistan is also a member of SAARC because it provides a useful framework to its eight member states (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka) collectively to promote peace, stability, cooperation, and progress in South Asia. At all SAARC gatherings, Pakistan has advocated its conviction that a peaceful and secure environment in the region is indispensable for the promotion of economic development, progress and prosperity. Pakistan believes that SAARC would receive a tremendous boost if the underlying causes of tension are removed. At the 10th SAARC Summit in Colombo, Sri Lanka, in July 1998, and at the 16th Summit held at Thimphu, Bhutan, in 2010, Pakistan launched a Peace, Security and Development Initiatives which essentially underscored the need for promoting a regional process on security and cooperation.⁶²

Pakistan, Iran and Turkey are the founding members of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), the successor organization of the Regional

Cooperation for Development (RCD). ECO has played an important role in strengthening and promotion of multi-dimensional cooperation and sustained socioeconomic growth among the member states. The other members are: Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan. Besides strengthening the centuries old ties that exist between the people of these countries, ECO is intended to build infrastructural links, and promote business exchanges and economic development. In terms of infrastructure, the ECO is focusing on the development of a modern transport and communications system, a network of gas and oil pipelines and interconnection of power grids within the region. Pakistan's interest in ECO reflects its belief in regional cooperative arrangements which foster regional development and economic progress and prosperity through collective endeavours. On the other hand, the SCO is an intergovernmental international organization founded in Shanghai on 15 June 2001 by six countries, i.e., China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. However, the organization has also granted observer status to three additional regional countries, that is, Pakistan, India, and Iran. It seems that the SCO is set to play a major role in the emerging geo-political scenario in the region, and indeed, in the world.⁶³ Pakistan, which currently is an observer, cannot remain distant from such an important organization. In fact, geo-political and geo-economic realities necessitate that Islamabad should be a member of this vital organization because the country can be an energy corridor for the SCO member countries.

Pakistan calls for the establishment of a new international order based on fair distribution of resources and transfer of modern technology and skills to the developing countries. Pakistan believes that the new international order can surely safeguard world peace and promote common development and human progress in the world.

Equitable international economic order

The establishment of a new international economic order is a universal desire and in common interest of the people of all developing countries. Pakistan is working jointly with all other developing nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America to bring about a just and equitable new international economic order and for creating a new world of lasting peace and common prosperity. Pakistan calls for the establishment of a new international order based on fair distribution of resources and transfer of modern technology and skills to the developing

countries. Pakistan believes that the new international order can surely safeguard world peace and promote common development and human progress in the world. Furthermore, developing countries have the view that advanced countries have to rebalance the unbalanced world economic system, especially in Asia and Africa where debt crisis has badly damaged economies of many countries.

Pakistan is committed to the promotion of an equitable international economic order and requires restoration of stable and sustained global economic growth, especially in the developing world. This can be attained through more balanced and non-discriminatory trade relations, enhanced economic and technological cooperation, including transfer of technology, resolution of the debt burden, monetary stability and food security. Pakistan desires that the principles of the United Nations Charter and other universally recognized principles governing international relations should become the basis of the new international economic order.

Furthermore, it must be based on equality and mutual benefit of all the peace loving countries and peoples. Yousaf Raza Gilani, former Prime Minister of Pakistan, explicitly pointed out that “it is imperative to build a new international economic order with the aim of putting an end to economic hegemony of some countries, and the new international economic order should be based on equality and should meet the needs of the countries with different systems and different levels of development.”⁶⁴

Thus, the new world economic system should meet the fundamental interest of people of all countries of the world as it is the need of the time and the urgent desire of all nations. In this regard, Pakistan has played an active role. As a member and Chairman of Group of 77, Pakistan has supported the Northern-South dialogue as a means of creating a more just and equitable international economic order, through joint efforts of the developed and developing nations. In order to overcome the economic crisis affecting the developing countries, it is imperative to bring about rationality and equity in international economic relations, particularly in the international monetary and trade systems and also in technological and industrial cooperation.

Demand of a strong UN system for stable security

Since joining the United Nations, Pakistan has made constant efforts to strengthen the UN's role in safeguarding regional and global peace and promotion of socio-economic development and human security in the world. The country is also playing a constructive role in accordance with its commitment to

the principles and purposes of the UN charter. Pakistan, like many others countries, seeks to strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of the United Nations and has supported efforts for reform in the UN but also has serious reservations regarding enlargement of the Security Council.⁶⁵ Pakistan and a group of like-minded countries were successful in moving a resolution adopted through consensus in the UN General Assembly at its 53rd session, which called for the support of two-thirds of the UN membership for any decision relating to the expansion and reform of the Security Council.⁶⁶

After the end of the Cold War, the international system has radically changed which carries an important consequence for international security. This change has proved to be a watershed with regard to United Nations because nations have tended to reorient and redefine the world organization in a new strategic environment. Many UN members are demanding restructuring of the United Nations and asking for a more powerful General Assembly as compare to Security Council. In this regard, Pakistan has the logical perception that the nature and intensity of the new millennium desires reforms in the world body because without global cooperation, peace and stability would be meaningless. Moreover, the reforms for UN and for stronger General Assembly would better serve the interests of its members and particularly the interests of the weak and small states.

The UCP has logical stand that permanent membership for only some individual states would deny the opportunity for equitable representation to other countries of the world and the matter can be resolved through an acceptable formula with increase in non-permanent members and rotation can provide the means for such equitable representation for all the countries.

However, Pakistan has rejected the idea of expansion in the UN Security Council⁶⁷ and has supported a Uniting for Consensus Group (UCP)⁶⁸ that opposes new permanent members in the UN Security Council. Pakistan also has strongly advocated expansion in the non-permanent category. The UCP has logical stand that permanent membership for only some individual states would deny the opportunity for equitable representation to other countries of the world and the matter can be resolved through an acceptable formula with increase in non-permanent members and rotation can provide the means for such equitable representation for all the countries.⁶⁹ Such rotation, combined with regional representation, may also offer possibilities for a fuller representation of member countries of various groups of states.

Abdullah Hussain Haroon, Pakistan Ambassador in the UN, has mentioned that the UN position could be improved through working methods and only adding more permanent members to the body and expansion is not logical.⁷⁰ A larger number of permanent members will further aggravate the exclusive and elitist culture of the Security Council, and any expansion must be accompanied by re-balancing the representation of various regions of the world on an equitable basis.⁷¹ In this regard, the opponent countries have their own opinion that “the expansion of Security Council would serve to accommodate the interests of a few countries only, and conversely, alienate the small and medium sized countries, who constitute an overwhelming majority in the General Assembly.”⁷²

Raza Hayat Hiraj, Pakistan’s Minister of State, has also cleared Pakistan’s position during the plenary meeting of the UN General Assembly on the question of equitable representation and an increase in membership of the Security Council. He said, “Pakistan firmly believes that objectives of reform and expansion of the Security Council should be to promote greater democracy, and participation, and transparency, and accountability, in the work of the Security Council.”⁷³ Many experts and practitioners believe that there is neither a comprehensible criterion nor a definitive logic in the UN Charter for permanent members without veto power in the Security Council, and in the absence of veto power the addition of permanent members would undermine the leverage of the non-permanent members to keep the veto power in check.

Conclusion

In the literature of international relations, foreign policy of small or weak countries is the product of constraints and opportunities and it responds differently as compared to the great powers. By contrast, domestic political, economic and military vulnerabilities of small or weak countries assumed to play a greater role in the formulation of foreign policy and cannot afford the pressure of great power in any crucial circumstances. In this regard, the terrible incidents of September 11,2001 gravely influenced Pakistan’s foreign policy which has created far-reaching consequences for Pakistan.

In the changing circumstances, Pakistan divorced its cost oriented realist foreign policy and adopted the idealist policy with a view to avoiding confrontation with neighbours and the United States. Pakistan asserted that a rigid stance will provide a basis for the whole edifice of global pressure which might result to crumble the country’s national interest. This precludes the possibility of mature relationship with the United States in which Pakistan can protect its national values and national security.

In this context, a soft policy has not only significantly reduced the U.S. pressure but in turn also covered Pakistan's desperate economic and military needs by avoiding the country to become a possible victim of global isolation. The new policy considerably warmed U.S.-Pakistan ties and secured the country's economic and strategic interests vis-à-vis sovereignty and territorial integrity. It appeals, furthermore, to the imperialist rhetoric about Islam and on the regional front; it has resulted in less friction with neighbouring countries like India, Afghanistan and Iran. On the global front, the U.S. and Pakistan both are moving towards greater strategic cooperation against terrorism and both are engaged to establish durable permanent relations. They are gradually in the process of taking measures to reduce the level of trust deficit between the two unequal powers.

It has, in this writer's view, proved that the change in the foreign policy has served the security interests of Pakistan because Islamabad is effectively involved in curbing terrorist threats. Pakistan will continue following the soft policy option because it has restricted India's influence in Washington. Pakistan will also remain a cornerstone of the Western world and strategic interest of the latter lies in cooperation with Pakistan, not in fanciful attempts to contain it. However, Pakistan must remember that its political honeymoon with the U.S. is for short time and not for a blissful long duration.

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