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**THESIS**

**PAKISTAN IN THE ERA OF GREAT POWER  
COMPETITION**

by

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June 2020

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**PAKISTAN IN THE ERA OF GREAT POWER COMPETITION**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
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## **ABSTRACT**

After the Global War on Terrorism, the world entered a multipolar system of power distribution due to the resurgence of Russia and the rise of China. In this new system, Asia is at the center of the strategic competition between the three great powers. The United States desires allies in the region that are capable of supporting its global strategy; this desire has caused Washington to become increasingly dissatisfied with Islamabad—a historical ally since the Cold War—which has proven unwilling to support the United States in achieving its objectives. This dynamic explains Washington’s current desire to make India its preferred partner in the region. As the United States grows closer with India, the future of the United States’ relationship with Pakistan is becoming unclear. Therefore, Pakistan has searched for more reliable partners, creating uncertainty among experts, who are divided on how Pakistan will be situated among the great powers in this multipolar system. By examining Pakistan’s past behavior during the Cold War (bipolar power distribution), the Global War on Terrorism (unipolar power distribution), and the present situation (multipolar power distribution), this research concludes that Pakistan will most likely balance the great powers against one another to maximize the benefits it receives to meet its own strategic goals.

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CFR	Council on Foreign Relations
CPEC	China Pakistan Economic Corridor
CRS	Congressional Research Service
CSF	Coalition Support Fund
DOD	Department of Defense
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas
GPC	Great Power Competition
GWOT	Global War on Terrorism
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOR	Indian Ocean Region
ISI	Inter Services Intelligence
NSS	National Security Strategy
PM	Prime Minister
UN	United Nations
UNSC	United Nations Security Council

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The world has entered a new era of great power competition (GPC) as U.S. hegemony and the liberal world order are challenged by the resurgence of Russia and the rapid rise of China. The emergence of these two great powers produced a shift in the system of power distribution from the unipolar to a multipolar world. The United States officially recognized the return of GPC with the Trump administration's release of its *National Security Strategy* (NSS) at the end of 2017. Policymakers and scholars have argued that Asia will be the focus of this emerging competition.<sup>1</sup> Since the Obama administration, U.S. policymakers have argued that the United States would have to move past the era of the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) and "pivot" its foreign policy to focus on Asia as a means to remain globally competitive.<sup>2</sup> According to Oriana Skylar Mastro, a senior political scientist at the RAND Corporation, unlike in the previous eras of GPC, which focused on control of Europe, dominance as a great power is now based on influencing and extending power to control over Asia.<sup>3</sup>

As Asia becomes the center of the new multipolar world, the importance of South Asia has increased in part due to the United States' desire to form a strategic partnership with India. The strengthening of Indo-U.S. relations is likely to impact the United States' long historical relationship with Pakistan, India's rival, which faces multiple points of tensions. First, the United States' need for a strong partnership with Pakistan declined due to its post-GWOT strategic outlook and the conclusion of U.S. military operations in Afghanistan.<sup>4</sup> Second, as its strategic importance to the United States has diminished, the Pakistani government's handling of U.S. foreign aid and Pakistan's provision of safe havens to terrorist organizations have amplified the United States' dissatisfaction with

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example: "Defense 2020: Great Power Competition," Center for Strategic and International Studies, January 15, 2020, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/great-power-competition>.

<sup>2</sup> *Financial Times*, "Obama's Pivot to Asia Remains Unfinished," May 25, 2016, ProQuest.

<sup>3</sup> Center for Strategic and International Studies, "Defense 2020: Great Power Competition."

<sup>4</sup> White House, *National Security Strategy* (Washington, DC: White House, 2017), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NSS-Final-12-18-2017-0905.pdf>.

Pakistan.<sup>5</sup> Lastly, the Pakistani government has felt increasingly threatened by the United States' desire to grow a stronger relationship with India, a relationship it believes compromises Pakistan's security.<sup>6</sup>

The weakening of U.S.-Pakistani relations creates an opening for other states to form or further their own relationships with Pakistan, leaving the future of Pakistan in the new GPC setting unclear. Several scholars state that India would be the best partner in the region for the United States: India's similar democratic values make it a good partner to compete with Russia, and because India desires parity with China in the India Ocean Region (IOR), India and the United States have a mutual strategic goal in the GPC against China.<sup>7</sup> The recent strengthening of Indo-U.S. relations pushes China further away from India and has left Russia uncertain of its relationship with this former ally, creating the potential for Russia and China to look to Pakistan to balance the growing U.S. presence in Asia. Pakistan has had prior interactions with all three great powers and continues to interact with them in the emerging multipolar world.

#### **A. MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTION**

This history, along with Pakistan's continued need for stability, poses the question of how Pakistan's relationship with great powers will play out in the future. To provide further insight into this important issue, this research investigates the following questions:

- How has Pakistan historically been situated in the strategic goals of great power states?
- How has Pakistan leveraged great powers to address its stability concerns?

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<sup>5</sup> *The Future of U.S.-Pakistan Relations: Hearing before the Committee on Foreign Relations, House of Representatives*, 114<sup>th</sup> Cong. 1 (2015), 1–2, <https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/2015/12/future-us-pakistan-relations>.

<sup>6</sup> Moeed Yusuf, "U.S.-Pakistan Relations," February 14, 2018, in *On Peace*, produced by United States Institute of Peace, podcast, iTunes, 8:34, <https://www.usip.org/publications/2018/02/moeed-yusuf-us-pakistan-relations>.

<sup>7</sup> Suzelle M. Thomas, "India's Grand Strategy: Ambitions and Capacity" (master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2019), 1, <http://hdl.handle.net/10945/62755>.

## **B. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH QUESTION**

Current literature suggests that whether great powers desire to partner or compete with India in the emerging multipolar system, India is at the center of great power alliance formation in Asia. By comparison, the literature pays inadequate attention to Pakistan's strategic placement, as a nuclear power and the nemesis of India, in the complex system of Asia as a whole. Most experts currently focus on how great powers' interactions with India have affected their relationships with Pakistan on an individual level, but few take into consideration the wider role Pakistan plays in the competition among great powers. This research fills that gap by investigating Pakistan's role as an object of and an active participant in GPC.

For the first time since the end of the Second World War, the United States is competing in a multipolar international system; this is also an uncharted territory for Pakistan, which gained its independence in 1947, as well as for the world's strategic environment. The character of the polarity of GPC might dictate the dynamics of the behavior of small states like Pakistan. This research thus contributes to a deeper understanding of how great and non-great power states form alliances in the new system of multipolar power distribution and specifically why Pakistan has pursued relationships with great powers. First, understanding how great powers and non-great power states form alliances in system of various polarities provides insight into the emerging debate about future relationships in the new multipolar GPC. Secondly, an understanding of how Pakistan has pursued relations with great powers in the past gives insight into small states' impetus to form alliances with great powers, specifically with those powers that are concerned about aid dependency and/or instability of developing states. Finally, how Pakistan will be situated in the new GPC and how Pakistan has leveraged its instability concerns will influence U.S. foreign policy in South Asia as it competes in GPC.

## **C. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Answering the question of how Pakistan has historically been situated in the strategic goals of great powers and how it has leveraged great powers to address its stability concerns requires drawing upon literature that addresses the processes and means by which

great powers and Pakistan have formed relationships. This section first draws upon theories on the interaction between great and small (non–great power) states to explain why Pakistan has historically behaved in certain ways—specifically, why Pakistan has balanced against competing powers rather than bandwagon with the regional hegemon, India. The second section describes how instability in Pakistan affects its relationships with great powers, which is critical to understanding why, and in what manner, Pakistan seeks support from these states to address its instability concerns.

### **1. Interaction between Great Power and Non–Great Power States**

According to scholars within most international relations circles, small states will choose between two fundamental actions when they face competing powers: either they will cede their sovereignty to bandwagon with competing powers or they will protect their sovereignty by forming alliances, most often with great powers, to balance against competing powers.<sup>8</sup> While experts disagree about which action better fulfills small states’ strategic interests, most argue that because countries wish to maximize their autonomy and protect their sovereignty, they are more likely to balance. Stephen Walt, a leading scholar in the realist school, agrees that states generally prefer (and that it is more common) to balance than bandwagon because they are able to gain more leverage by balancing dominant competing states than by ceding to their hegemony.<sup>9</sup> He explains that hegemons and competing powers scare smaller states by forcing them to “join alliances [to] avoid domination by stronger powers.”<sup>10</sup>

Some experts, however, believe that states prefer to bandwagon. Robert S. Ross argues that small states “tend to [bandwagon] rather than balance [against rising] powers” because small states are “sensitive to local variation” in the capabilities of nearby rising powers.<sup>11</sup> Critics of bandwagoning argue that the minority of states choose to do so only

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<sup>8</sup> Stephen M. Walt, “Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power,” *International Security* 9, no. 4 (1985).

<sup>9</sup> Walt, “Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power,” 5.

<sup>10</sup> Walt, 5.

<sup>11</sup> Robert S. Ross, “Balance of Power Politics and the Rise of China: Accommodation and Balancing in East Asia,” *Security Studies* 15, no. 3 (2006): 355, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09636410601028206>.

because they have no other options.<sup>12</sup> Walt does agree that bandwagoning makes sense under these conditions, because he believes that small states cannot afford to be left vulnerable but likely have nothing meaningful to contribute in a balancing alliance.<sup>13</sup> Only in later work does Walt concede that bandwagoning may be preferable to balancing, but only when the decision is based solely on conditions of war and peace. He derives this conclusion from Winston Churchill, who first stated that while balancing is favorable during peacetime, states prefer to bandwagon during times of war.<sup>14</sup> Churchill's belief is premised on the fact that smaller states wish to "share the fruits of victory" achieved primarily by great power states.<sup>15</sup> Schweller agrees with this view in that states choose to bandwagon because they want to share these spoils.<sup>16</sup>

Scholars argue that due to the historic rivalry and tension between Pakistan and India, Pakistan has chosen to balance India's hegemony in South Asia by partnering with great powers to receive essential resources and support. Sumit Ganguly, Robert McMahon, and Andrew Small all illustrate how, since its history following partition, Pakistan has chosen to balance India to satisfy its internal and external security needs through its partnership with great powers.<sup>17</sup> Sumit Ganguly and Feroz Hasaan Khan disregard the possibility that Pakistan has ever considered bandwagoning by describing the extreme lengths to which it has gone to resist bandwagoning with India.<sup>18</sup> Munir Akram believes that even the idea that Pakistan would have or might bandwagon with India is farfetched because such behavior would directly contradict the "very raison d'être for the creation of

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<sup>12</sup> Walt, "Alliance Formation and the Balance of World Power," 17.

<sup>13</sup> Walt, 17.

<sup>14</sup> Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, Cornell Studies in Security Affairs, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987), 21.

<sup>15</sup> Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, 21.

<sup>16</sup> Randall L. Schweller, "Bandwagoning for Profit: Bringing the Revisionist State Back In," *International Security* 19, no. 1 (1994): 82.

<sup>17</sup> Sumit Ganguly, *Conflict Unending* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001), 10; Robert J. McMahon, *The Cold War on the Periphery: The United States, India, and Pakistan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 3–10; Andrew Small, *The China-Pakistan Axis: Asia's New Geopolitics* (London: Oxford University Press, 2015), 1–25.

<sup>18</sup> Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*; Feroz Hassan Khan, *Eating Grass: The Making of the Pakistani Bomb*. (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2012).

Pakistan” as a separate homeland for South Asian Muslims in the partition of British India.<sup>19</sup>

Since its founding over 70 years ago, Pakistan scholars have shown that the country has actively taken measures to restrict India’s ability to dominate the region. Feroz Hasaan Khan concludes that this desire led Pakistan to go as far as to devote a majority of its resources and effort to develop a nuclear weapon as a deterrent to India.<sup>20</sup> With the understanding that Pakistan has chosen to balance against India, the literature suggest that this behavior can be expected to continue in the new emerging multipolar competition.

## **2. Pakistan’s Past and Potential Alliance Formation with Great Powers**

While there are undoubtedly many variables that contribute to how Pakistan has formed alliances with great powers, most scholars agree that Pakistan’s instability has been the primary driver of its efforts to obtain support from great powers in previous systems of power distribution and that a similar trend exists in the emerging multipolar system. Ian Talbot states that internal and external issues in Pakistan’s relatively short history can best be described as a “fruitless search for stability,” which has contributed to its insecurity complex.<sup>21</sup> Khan summarizes that this insecurity has cemented Pakistan’s alliances with great powers,<sup>22</sup> stating that this dependence on great powers has placed Pakistan in a never-ending cycle of instability.

Although written primarily for a U.S. audience, Hilary Synnott argues that Pakistan’s complex and troubled history is relevant to all great powers and should be taken into consideration when great power states develop their strategies for partnering with Pakistan.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, some literature does support the idea that Pakistan promotes its

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<sup>19</sup> Munir Akram, “Pakistan & Sino-US Cold War,” *DAWN*, June 9, 2019, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1487040/pakistan-sino-us-cold-war>.

<sup>20</sup> Khan, *Eating Grass*, 71.

<sup>21</sup> Ian Talbot, *Pakistan: A Modern History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 4.

<sup>22</sup> Khan, *Eating Grass*, 23.

<sup>23</sup> Hilary Synnott, *Transforming Pakistan: Ways out of Instability*, Adelphi 406 (London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2009).

economic, political, and military insecurities when soliciting partnerships with great powers.

Pakistan's instability has played a prominent role in the development of U.S.-Pakistani relations. Robert McMahon explains how this alliance formed, specifically through the lens of the Cold War, because Pakistan needed support from the United States to recover from three wars with India early in its history.<sup>24</sup> Hussain examines how Pakistan's complex relationship with the United States around the time of GWOT created challenges for the relationship between both states; however, he suggests that providing Pakistan with U.S. foreign aid and eliminating sanctions addressed Pakistan's instability concerns and were the foundation of Pakistan's alliance with the United States during the unipolar system of power distribution.<sup>25</sup>

As the United States has moved past GWOT and its involvement in Afghanistan, experts believe that the relations between the United States and Pakistan have soured, raising questions about the future of their partnership. Scholars such as Moeed Yusuf believe that the mutual distrust between the United States and Pakistan has escalated tensions, causing both countries to act more inimically towards each other.<sup>26</sup> More optimistic experts, such as Salman Bashir, believe that if steps are taken to address the differences between Pakistan and the United States, it could operationalize a new framework for U.S.-Pakistani relations.<sup>27</sup> Syed Hussain Shaheed Soherwordi believes that Pakistan will always remain a vital ally of the United States in the region due to its unique geographic location and the cultural bridge it can provide for Western states.<sup>28</sup> However,

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<sup>24</sup> McMahon, *The Cold War on the Periphery*.

<sup>25</sup> Touqir Hussain, *U.S.-Pakistan Engagement: The War on Terrorism and Beyond*, Special Report 145 (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2005), <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/pur1.32754077529208>.

<sup>26</sup> Yusuf, "U.S.-Pakistan Relations."

<sup>27</sup> Salman Bashir, "The Way Forward for Pakistan-U.S. Relations: A Pakistani Perspective," Pakistan Policy Symposium: Wilson Center Asia Program, February 21, 2019, <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/the-way-forward-for-pakistan-us-relations-pakistani-perspective>.

<sup>28</sup> Syed Hussain Shaheed Soherwordi, "An Estranged Client and an Annoyed Patron: Shift in the Pakistan-US Relations during the 'War on Terror,'" *Journal of Political Science* 18, no. 2 (2011): 72, ProQuest.

Soherwordi asserts that the relationship between the two will transform into a partnership that will evolve on a conditional basis; whenever issues of its national interest arise and the United States and Pakistan are not cooperating based on clear mutual interests, Pakistan will take the opportunity to diverge from and perhaps oppose the United States. Literature on U.S.-Pakistani relations come up short on providing an in-depth analysis on the implications of Russia's growing influence in the region as the literature currently tends to focus on how the U.S.-Pakistani relationship is affected by China's actions in the region. Current literature on the effects of Russia's quest in GPC on U.S. foreign policy tends to focus on the West and in Europe.

With the potential weakening of U.S.-Pakistani relations, Pakistan appears to seek other partners to rely on, such as Russia and/or China. According to Andrew Small, not only has China been a historic partner of Pakistan since 1947, but, since the Trump administration froze U.S. military assistance to Pakistan, China has been strategically positioned to become a more reliable partner to Pakistan than the United States, especially as Pakistan seeks an alternative source for military and weapons procurement.<sup>29</sup> Minhas Majeed Khan and Mirwais Kasi not only acknowledge that the Sino-Pakistani relationship is "time-tested, multi-dimensional, and unique," but also argue that, unlike Pakistan's relationship with the United States, the Sino-Pakistani relationship may be stronger, or at least more stable, as the relationship has "sustained the shifts in regional and international politics [and] remained unaffected [by the various] changes of governments and leaderships in both countries."<sup>30</sup>

The Sino-Pakistani relationship has maintained its stability in part because of China's disdain for India since the 1962 war between these countries and continues now as China desires parity with India in the IOR. However, Sino-Pakistani relations are not limited to this commonality. Umbreen Javaid believes that in the future, the "Afghanistan conundrum" will provide another basis for their relationship to grow: he states that China

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<sup>29</sup> Small, *The China-Pakistan Axis*, 1–7; Nivedita Kapoor, "Russia-Pakistan relations and its impact on India," *Rasina Debates* (blog), *Observer Research Foundation*, July 3, 2019, <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/russia-pakistan-relations-impact-india-52715/>.

<sup>30</sup> Minhas Khan and Mirwais Kasi, "Pakistan–China Relations: Developments in Economic and Security Areas in the 21st Century," *Strategic Studies* 37, no. 3 (Autumn 2017): 74, ProQuest.

will continue to provide resources to help stabilize Pakistan because Beijing needs its help to prevent the Taliban and other extremist groups from creating internal instability in China by supporting Chinese Muslim separatist groups.<sup>31</sup> Similar to the literature regarding U.S.-Pakistani relations, the literature pertaining to Sino-Pakistani relations does not analyze in depth the implications of Russia's growing influence in Pakistan in the context of the emerging GPC.

Although Pakistan does not have a history of a strong relationship with Russia, some recent literature claims that Russia may potentially meet Pakistan's need resulting from its instability should the uncertainty in U.S.-Pakistani relations continue. Literature on this topic is limited; nevertheless, the arguments presented by scholars for this relationship are just as convincing as those for the relationship between Pakistan and other great powers. Almas Haider Naqvi and Yasir Masood point out that neither country has had a single bilateral dispute, and the tensions in their relationship were a product of each state acting "against each other to damage" the other's interest indirectly in "the pursuit of [each's] geopolitical goals and security imperatives."<sup>32</sup> They acknowledge that despite Russia not having a clear strategy in the region, there are several areas today in which Russia and Pakistan can find common ground, leaving the opportunity available for Pakistan to benefit from yet another great power alliance it previously did not have. Vinay Kaura disagrees only in that he believes Russia does have a significant strategy, which gives Pakistan greater influence in the formation of the potential alliance.<sup>33</sup> Sarah Akram is also optimistic that a bilateral relationship can form between the countries due to the proactive actions each state has taken thus far. Each state, she says, recognizes the potential

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<sup>31</sup> Umbreen Javaid, "China-Pakistan Future Prospects and Their Strategic Compulsions," *Journal of Political Studies* 22, no. 1 (Summer 2015): 259-260, ProQuest.

<sup>32</sup> Almas Haider Naqvi and Yasir Masood, "Rejuvenating Pakistan-Russia Relations: Discernable Trends and Future," *Strategic Studies* 37, no. 4 (Winter 2017): 19, ProQuest.

<sup>33</sup> Vinay Kaura, "Russia's Changing Relations with Pakistan and Taliban: Implications for India," *Jadavpur Journal of International Relations* 22, no. 1 (June 2018): 73, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0973598418761727>.

for economic and political cooperation, and specifically Pakistan, which can benefit in the energy domain.<sup>34</sup>

Tahir Amin writes that, unlike in the case of China, it is still uncertain how Afghanistan and the end of GWOT affects whether Pakistan can use the opportunity to extract more resources from its relationship with Russia. Nevertheless, he does argue that this dynamic could lead to a “potential convergence of interests” between Pakistan and Russia “in terms of [Russia’s desire to build] a defense capacity around Afghanistan so as to prevent the spreading of unrest” to surrounding areas, specifically Russia’s borders.<sup>35</sup>

Some scholars suggest that Russo-Pakistani relations will flourish due to the decline in strength of Indo-Russo relations. Kaura recognizes this as both Russia and India appear to be heading in different directions, which is the basis of his argument as to why Russia wants Pakistan to yield greater influence in the region.<sup>36</sup> Naqvi and Masood also agree as they conclude that India’s “tilt toward the U.S. and the West” has caused the Russo-Pakistani alliance to recently form.<sup>37</sup> However, experts believe that Russia does prefer a relationship with India, if given the opportunity, should the emerging Indo-U.S. partnership diminish. They suggest that despite Russia’s growing distrust of India, its true desire remains to partner with India once again because it wants to take advantage of its economic growth.<sup>38</sup>

Other than this dynamic, the most likely obstacle to a fruitful partnership between both states is the distrust between Moscow and Islamabad due to their historical relationship. Amin states that the progression of Russo-Pakistani relations are modest at

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<sup>34</sup> Sarah Akram, “Pakistan Russia Relations: Future Trends,” *Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad*, March 24, 2016, <http://issi.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Final-Issue-brief-Sarah-Akram-dated-24-3-2016.pdf>.

<sup>35</sup> Tahir Amin, “Pakistan-Russia Relations and the Unfolding ‘New Great Game’ in South Asia,” in *The Regional Security Puzzle around Afghanistan*, ed. Helena Rytövuori-Apunen (Stuttgart, Germany: Verlag Barbara Budrich, 2016), 192, JSTOR.

<sup>36</sup> Kaura, “Russia’s Changing Relations with Pakistan and Taliban,” 73.

<sup>37</sup> Naqvi and Masood, “Rejuvenating Pakistan–Russia Relations,” 37.

<sup>38</sup> Naqvi and Masood, 19.

best, compared to how other relations in the region have changed.<sup>39</sup> He explains that the “problematic legacy of their most hostile relationship with each other...continues to cast its shadow” on the future of this relationship because Pakistan appears to be reluctant to commit to Russia as a partner so long as Russia supports India.<sup>40</sup>

As this review has shown, there is ample literature that describes Pakistan’s relationship with great powers; however, current literature lacks sufficient insight on the implication of these dynamics and leaves unexplored the implication of a multipolar context on Pakistan as great powers compete in Asia.

#### **D. POTENTIAL EXPLANATIONS AND HYPOTHESES**

It is conceivable that, given Pakistan’s uncertain relationship with the United States and its historical reliance on great power partnerships to resolve its economic, political, and security concerns, Pakistan might favor a relationship with China and/or Russia.<sup>41</sup> In the multipolar world, the nature of this GPC polarity will determine how Pakistan responds to the new global order and how it will forge its relationship with great powers to ensure its survival. Previous literature suggests that Pakistan has chosen to balance its insecurities with great powers in past systems rather than bandwagon with India due to the historical tensions between the states, which have largely shaped Pakistani foreign policy. Because of the uncertainty of the multipolar world, Pakistan remains strategically insecure, so the question this thesis answers is: how will Pakistan balance with great powers in the multipolar system of power distribution?

This research examines three possible outcomes of Pakistan’s approach to balancing within the emerging three-power multipolar system.

1. It will reestablish its strong relationship and partnership with the United States to balance Russia’s resurgence and China’s rise in South Asia.

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<sup>39</sup> Amin, “Pakistan-Russia Relations,” 191.

<sup>40</sup> Amin, “Pakistan-Russia Relations,” 191.

<sup>41</sup> Bashir, “The Way Forward for Pakistan-U.S. Relations”; Soherwordi, “An Estranged Client and an Annoyed Patron,” 1–31.

Pakistan's relationship with the United States could tighten as it continues to interact with other great powers due to its historical on again–off again relationship with the United States.

2. It will balance the United States by forming a stronger partnership with Russia and/or China. As the United States continues to deepen its relationship with India, and as India's relationship with Russia deteriorates, this thesis examines if a shift of alliances might occur, analyzing whether China and Russia are more suited to fulfill Pakistan's security and stability needs in the new multipolar environment.
3. Pakistan may circumstantially decide which great power state to balance with based on what it needs in order to maximize its potential gains, refusing to exclusively align itself to one great power over another. Pakistan might potentially take this action because each great power has historically played a complementary role in addressing Pakistan's instability concerns.

## **E. RESEARCH DESIGN**

The research design is based on a historical method, utilizing primary and secondary sources to account for the ways Pakistan has formed alliances in GPC under varying systems of polarity. It also examines the actions Pakistan is currently taking in the multipolar system. Books, news articles, government and think tank reports, and academic journals are the majority of the sources used, while this thesis also integrates firsthand accounts, government policy documents, official transcripts, and other work from political scientists that help provide an analytic perspective on the concepts discussed in this research.

While there is abundant research that defines the elements that make a state a great power, for the purposes of this research, great power states are defined as the United States, China, and Russia, as outlined in President Trump's *2017 National Security Strategy*.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> White House, *National Security Strategy*.

China and Russia are considered great powers because both countries have the capability to challenge to the United States economically, diplomatically, and militarily to influence and shape the current global order as each desires.

#### **F. THESIS OVERVIEW AND DRAFT CHAPTER OUTLINE**

This thesis is divided into five chapters, which show the evolving relationship between Pakistan and each of the three current great powers. The next two chapters are historical in nature: the second chapter examines Pakistan's interactions with great powers during a bipolar system of GPC, and the third chapter examines Pakistan's relationship with the United States (the sole global hegemon) in a unipolar system during GWOT. The fourth chapter examines Pakistan's relationships with the United States, China, and Russia, in the context of the current global environment. The fifth and final chapter applies the findings from the previous chapters to test the hypotheses under the balance of power theory to examine how Pakistan will likely interact with great powers in the current multipolar system. Aside from accepting or rejecting each of the three hypotheses, the final chapter provides an analysis of the significance of the findings and the greater implications of each of the possible outcomes. In doing so, this research gives a more comprehensive understanding of which great power Pakistan will likely align with in the future.

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## **II. BIPOLAR SYSTEM OF POWER DISTRIBUTION: PAKISTAN IN THE COLD WAR**

Understanding how Pakistan has sought to satisfy its stability concerns and how Pakistan became an ally in fulfilling the strategic needs of great power states begins by understanding how Pakistan and great powers both were situated in the bipolar system of great power competition during the Cold War. From the end of the Second World War until the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, the world was in a system of bipolar power distribution caused by the great power competition between the United States and the Soviet Union. The tensions between the great powers also spread into South Asia, promoting an alliance between the United States and Pakistan. While the United States needed an ally in South Asia in close proximity to the Soviet Union, Pakistan needed an ally due to economic and political instability produced by the partition of British India and new state consolidation.

This chapter provides an overview of Cold War politics and the goals of each superpower in a global context, which is necessary to understand how an alliance emerged between Pakistan and the United States. It also provides a timeline of both the United States' and the Soviet Union's interactions with South Asia to show how Pakistan geopolitically aligned with U.S. Cold War strategy. The next section discusses what caused the instability in Pakistan that led to an increase of tensions within South Asia to understand why Pakistan needed great powers to satisfy its security and stability dilemmas from the time it became a sovereign state in 1947 until 1991. Lastly, the chapter argues that the key takeaways of the bipolar system of power distribution produced during the Cold War are that the United States and Pakistan formed an alliance because the United States deemed South Asia strategic, the United States could not align simultaneously with both Pakistan and India, and the U.S.-Pakistani alliance was one of convenience and strategic necessity rather than mutual goals.

## A. THE BIPOLAR WORLD AND SOUTH ASIAN ALLIANCES

Competition between the United States and the Soviet Union started during and became prevalent towards the end of the Second World War in the 1940s.<sup>43</sup> Thereafter, states that aligned with the United States became known as the Western Bloc, while those that aligned with the Soviet Union were referred to as the Eastern Bloc. Each superpower designed its foreign policy strategy to win the Cold War. For the United States, this policy was the doctrine of containment, which sought to contain the expansion of communism. Containment was first introduced in 1947 by diplomat George F. Kennan, who articulated the importance of preventing the spread of communism to ensure American prosperity and security.<sup>44</sup> As for the Soviet Union, its foreign policy strategy was based on the concept of spreading and strengthening the position of socialism throughout the world.<sup>45</sup> The two diametrically opposed strategies provided the framework for competition within a bipolar system of power distribution and future conflict between the two world superpowers.

### 1. Significance of South Asia for Great Powers

The Cold War competition between the United States and the Soviet Union spilled into South Asia. At the onset of the Cold War, it became apparent that South Asia would play an important role in the global bipolar competition.<sup>46</sup> According to McMahon, the subcontinent contained “one-fifth of the total world population on a land mass equal to that of Europe,” and the region’s proximity to the Middle East and to the major sea routes that connected Europe to East Asia made it a strategic location.<sup>47</sup>

For these reasons, preventing the Soviets from obtaining influence in South Asia quickly became a top priority for the United States, which sought to contain the expansion

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<sup>43</sup> McMahon, *The Cold War on the Periphery*, 1–10.

<sup>44</sup> George F. Kennan, “The Sources of Soviet Conduct,” *Foreign Affairs* 65, no. 4 (Spring 1987): 852, <https://doi.org/10.2307/20043098>.

<sup>45</sup> Erik P. Hoffmann, “Soviet Foreign Policy Aims and Accomplishments from Lenin to Brezhnev (Soviet Foreign Policy),” *Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science* 36, no. 4 (Winter 1987): 29, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1173830>.

<sup>46</sup> McMahon, *The Cold War on the Periphery*, 4.

<sup>47</sup> McMahon, 13.

of communism in the large, populated, and strategic subcontinent. McMahon says that U.S. policymakers were “convinced that the Soviet Union stood poised to capitalize [on] the political instability, economic distress, and social chaos” that was occurring throughout the world.<sup>48</sup> He also states that U.S. intelligence agencies warned that unless the United States could “secure the goodwill of these newly liberated [countries, South Asian states might] become aligned with the U.S.S.R.”<sup>49</sup> Indeed, at that time, the region was “particularly susceptible to Communist penetration”: a U.S. State, Army, Navy, Air Force Coordinating Committee position paper added that, without British oversight, both India and Pakistan faced a myriad of political and economic problems that created a vacuum of power regionally.<sup>50</sup> Likewise, a National Security Council (NSC) position paper warned that communists’ penetration into South Asia could leave the United States and its allies vulnerable and without a “foothold on the Asian mainland.”<sup>51</sup> Although these various reports and assessments made it clear that South Asia added strategic value to the United States’ foreign policy goal of containment, it was still unclear which country, India or Pakistan, would be willing to form an alliance with the United States and the Western Bloc.

## **2. Difference Between India’s and Pakistan’s Cold War Foreign Policy Strategies**

The different approaches that India and Pakistan took towards the Cold War great powers brought about the alliance between the United States and Pakistan. While India declared neutrality, Pakistan quickly aligned itself with the Western Bloc. As the rise of the two superpowers became imminent, on September 7, 1946, in a national radio address, Indian Prime Minister (PM) Jawaharlal Nehru proclaimed India’s foreign policy to be non-alignment.<sup>52</sup> Domestically, Nehru enjoyed popular support, and he did not want to alienate the Indian left by aligning with either the United States or the Soviet Union.<sup>53</sup> Nehru also

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<sup>48</sup> McMahon, *The Cold War on the Periphery*, 4.

<sup>49</sup> McMahon, 16.

<sup>50</sup> McMahon, 15.

<sup>51</sup> McMahon, 16.

<sup>52</sup> McMahon 3.

<sup>53</sup> McMahon, 39.

was seeking to separate India from foreign influences after years of colonial rule. Ayesha Jalal writes that India had the luxury of exercising this policy while Pakistan did not, due to the former's greater military and economic strength.<sup>54</sup> Because Pakistan could not sustain a non-aligned policy, it eagerly sought great-power partners to address its internal and external security concerns. The Soviet Union was not necessarily an option for the Jinnah, who was deeply opposed to the communist parties in India during the drive for independence.<sup>55</sup> Zaidi states that Pakistan's entry into the collective defense and military alliance organizations Southeast Asia Treaty Organization and Central Treaty Organization, founded to prevent further communist aggression in South Asia and the Middle East, respectively, solidified its position as a potential partner with the Western Bloc.<sup>56</sup>

### **3. The United States' Search for a South Asian Partner**

Despite initially trying to form an alliance with both India and Pakistan, the United States eventually found a South Asian partner in Pakistan because it did not trust India's non-alignment policy and considered Pakistan to be strategically well-located. The United States initially faced little resistance from the Soviets for influence in South Asia, as the Soviets were also skeptical of both India and Pakistan due to both states' ideological ties to the West, which were rooted in British imperialism.<sup>57</sup> By the late 1940s, the Kremlin summarized this criticism and Soviet sentiment by stating that non-alignment policies were an "imperialist device [designed] to slander the U.S.S.R. by placing it on the same level with American imperialism."<sup>58</sup> As a result, the Soviets were cautious about South Asia countries, which initially left the United States as the sole great power seeking influence in the region.

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<sup>54</sup> See, for more information: Ayesha Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule: The Origins of Pakistan's Political Economy of Defence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 32–37.

<sup>55</sup> Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule*, 10–39.

<sup>56</sup> S. Akbar Zaidi, "Who Benefits from U.S. Aid to Pakistan?" *Economic and Political Weekly* 46, no. 32 (August 6, 2011): 104, ProQuest.

<sup>57</sup> McMahon, *The Cold War on the Periphery*, 46.

<sup>58</sup> McMahon, 46.

The United States' position in South Asia and its friendship with Pakistan was brought about by India's non-alignment policy, which it considered as unacceptable.<sup>59</sup> McMahon claims that initially the United States was willing to work with India despite its non-alignment policy and avoided showing favoritism towards either India or Pakistan because it was unsure which country would be more useful to achieve its national security goals.<sup>60</sup> He notes that India held a stronger appeal for the United States due to its natural resources, larger military, and prestige in the international arena, while the United States viewed Pakistan as a liability that was unlikely to significantly contribute to an alliance. Truman took initiatives to ensure both countries remained loyal to Western causes, and Kennedy provided special offers to support India's development projects in hopes that India would abandon its non-alignment policy to more actively support Western causes. However, providing special offers proved unsuccessful as India was not responding to U.S. efforts to court it, because local disputes prevented India from abandoning its non-alignment policy. The result of India's decision caused the United States to focus on Pakistan as a closer ally.

Pakistan's strategic location also made the country a better fit for United States in achieving its Cold War objectives. Soherwordi states that because of Pakistan's geographic location, it was more ideal for the containment strategies of both the Truman and Eisenhower administrations because it could be used as a "pawn in the larger struggle" in the Cold War competition with the Soviet Union.<sup>61</sup> Additionally, McMahon explains that Pakistan's strategic geographic location was significant enough to form an alliance, even considering Pakistan's internal troubles.<sup>62</sup> His reasoning focuses on the fact that Pakistan's borders were closer to Soviet territory and were a desirable location for air bases and intelligence-gathering bases for military purposes. He also believes that Pakistan's proximity to the Middle East was geopolitically significant due to the region's oil fields and petroleum resources; Pakistan also possessed influence over Middle Eastern states as

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<sup>59</sup> See, for more information: McMahon, *The Cold War on the Periphery*, 40.

<sup>60</sup> McMahon, 36–37.

<sup>61</sup> Soherwordi, "An Estranged Client and an Annoyed Patron," 57.

<sup>62</sup> McMahon, *The Cold War on the Periphery*, 37.

the world's largest Muslim nation.<sup>63</sup> Pakistan's strategic geographic location and discontent with India's non-alignment policy shaped the United States' decision to pursue a partnership with Pakistan in South Asia.

#### **4. Effects of the UNSC's Involvement in Kashmir on Relations between South Asia and Great Powers**

The likelihood that the two South Asian states would each align with a great power increased when India referred the Kashmir issue to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) in 1948. Because the United States used the opportunity to solidify its alliance with Pakistan in the Kashmir conflict by supporting it diplomatically, it paved the way for the development of Indo-Soviet relations as India relaxed its non-alignment policy.

On January 1, 1948, following the advice of British Governor-General Lord Mountbatten, India claimed that Pakistan was complicit in an act of aggression by arming Kashmiri rebels and attacking the princely state.<sup>64</sup> The UNSC agreed to take up the matter based on Articles 34 and 35 of the United Nations (UN) Charter, which both deal with "threats to international peace and security."<sup>65</sup> The viewpoints between Pakistan and India concerning Kashmir were so irreconcilable that little was accomplished after the first resolution other than the formation of a UN Commission. Meetings that followed merely issued relatively meaningless resolutions that included a series of poorly enforced cease-fires and troop withdrawals.

The failure of bilateral negotiations between India and Pakistan empowered the superpowers to use their positions on the UNSC to create alliances. The Pakistani government began soliciting Western powers to take its side on the UNSC. Pakistani leaders appealed to Eisenhower administration officials in 1953, most notably Secretary Dulles,<sup>66</sup> by promoting their willingness to support American priorities in the Cold War.

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<sup>63</sup> McMahon, *The Cold War on the Periphery*, 17.

<sup>64</sup> Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, 20.

<sup>65</sup> Ganguly, 20.

<sup>66</sup> John Dulles served as the 52<sup>nd</sup> United States Secretary of State under President Dwight D. Eisenhower from 1953–59; see, for more information: Khan, *Eating Grass*, 21.

Throughout the 1950s, the United States was impressed with Pakistan's promise of manpower and bases and with the Pakistani people themselves (in particular, their new leader, General Ayub Khan, who successfully led a coup d'état in 1958).<sup>67</sup> The United States in return served as a surrogate for Pakistan diplomatically on the UNSC. Fewer than five months after Nehru and Bogra met, the Eisenhower administration announced that it would provide military assistance to Pakistan.<sup>68</sup> Two months later, the United States and Pakistan signed a military pact.<sup>69</sup> The United States would later rely on Pakistani military bases to conduct surveillance on the Soviet missile program: beginning in 1956, the U-2 reconnaissance aircraft were launched from these bases, giving the U.S. the ability to collect intelligence on the Soviets.<sup>70</sup>

As UNSC discussions progressed, India negatively perceived the favoritism among Western powers towards Pakistan. Various agreements and the relationship between the United States and Pakistan further politicized the Kashmir question in the UNSC. From India's perspective, the UNSC was no longer a viable outlet to resolve regional issues. India's perception of pro-Pakistani sentiment on the part of the United States increased diplomatic tensions between India and the West. Ganguly states that due to the partiality of the UNSC, India pushed back against the United States when PMs Nehru and Bogra met on August 20, 1953, to discuss the future plebiscite in Kashmir.<sup>71</sup> He identifies that one of the informal agreements requested by India was that U.S. Fleet Adm. Chester Nimitz be replaced as the UN-appointed plebiscite administrator. According to Ganguly, India feared that the Second World War hero possessed a pro-Pakistani bias, and India did not want him to be involved in the negotiations any further. Ganguly illustrates that India's concerns were about more than the biases of one man, as Indian leaders believed Nimitz acted on behalf of the U.S. government at the UN.

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<sup>67</sup> Khan, *Eating Grass*, 21–2.

<sup>68</sup> Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, 25.

<sup>69</sup> Ganguly, 25.

<sup>70</sup> See, for more information on the U-2 program: Robert McMahon, *The Cold War in the Periphery*, 213, 254.

<sup>71</sup> Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, 24.

The United States tried to suppress India's fears by offering to sell it similar weapons that it offered Pakistan and by reassuring India that the military training and equipment provided to Pakistan would not be used by Pakistan against India.<sup>72</sup> By this point, India viewed the United States negatively due its relationship with Pakistan, and the negotiations over the plebiscite deteriorated, further increasing tensions in the region.

In response, the Soviet Union saw this as an opportunity, despite India's non-aligned status, and began to exercise its power on the UNSC to undermine the growing U.S.-Pakistani relationship. Nikita Khrushchev publicly declared that India possessed the rights to Kashmir, and the Soviets issued the first veto in the UNSC's Kashmir debate when the council sought a resolution to demilitarize Kashmir and secure the state with UN forces.<sup>73</sup> Ganguly reveals that later, during the 104th UNSC meeting over the Kashmir conflict, a Soviet veto practically ended the UNSC's involvement in the dispute.<sup>74</sup>

The politicization of the Kashmir conflict in the UNSC led to a failure to reach an agreement on the bilateral and multilateral levels. To counter the support Pakistan was receiving from the United States, India increasingly softened its non-alignment rhetoric and welcomed a partnership with the Soviet Union to remain competitive and to ensure its security. Elements within the United States government grew increasingly distrustful of India as its relationship with the Soviet Union flourished.

## **B. COLD WAR AND U.S.-PAKISTANI RELATIONS**

At the start of the 1960s, the United States increased its aid to Pakistan significantly because it needed Pakistan to support its Cold War efforts. This aid reached nearly \$2 billion, which would be the most given by the United States to Pakistan until after 9/11 when it expanded its aid again.<sup>75</sup> However, due to the Pakistani government's aggression toward India in Kashmir in 1965, the United States significantly reduced Pakistan's military and economic aid because it did not wish to "become entangled in an India-

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<sup>72</sup> Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, 25.

<sup>73</sup> Ganguly, 26.

<sup>74</sup> Ganguly, 27.

<sup>75</sup> Zaidi, "Who Benefits from U.S. Aid to Pakistan?" 104.

Pakistan conflict.”<sup>76</sup> Not only the Johnson administration but the U.S. Congress also changed its attitude towards Pakistan and passed legislation suspending aid, infuriating then-Foreign Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto.<sup>77</sup> The cost of the Vietnam War, which was occurring during this time, also contributed to the Johnson administration’s strategic decision to suspend aid in order to save money.

With the loss of U.S. aid, Pakistan reached out to China for economic and diplomatic support. Even though China was more understanding of Pakistan’s aid request and more willing to help than the United States due to its declining relationship with India, it did not actively help Pakistan secure Kashmir as Pakistan had originally hoped.<sup>78</sup> However, China did take a stronger stance against India on other issues. For example, China condemned India for displaying “criminal aggression” at the Tibetan border and issued its recent foe with an ultimatum to remove its military within a few days.<sup>79</sup> Regardless of Pakistan’s perception of China’s commitment, India was threatened enough by Chinese engagement in the region, especially after the 1962 war, that it sought security assurances from both the United States and the Soviet Union should China attack.<sup>80</sup>

Frustrated with the growing situation in the region and still preoccupied with the Vietnam War, the United States backed off from playing a strong role in South Asia.<sup>81</sup> The Soviet Union used the United States’ frustration as an opportunity to expand its influence in South Asia and build a stronger relationship with India. In 1966, the Soviets led negotiations between India and Pakistan at Tashkent,<sup>82</sup> which “essentially returned the [Kashmir] situation back to the status quo.”<sup>83</sup> A year later, the Soviet Union would seize

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<sup>76</sup> Zaidi, “Who Benefits from U.S. Aid to Pakistan?” 104; quote from Khan, *Eating Grass*, 47.

<sup>77</sup> Khan, *Eating Grass*, 47.

<sup>78</sup> Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, 66–67.

<sup>79</sup> Khan, *Eating Grass*, 47.

<sup>80</sup> Khan, 47.

<sup>81</sup> Khan, 48.

<sup>82</sup> Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, 45.

<sup>83</sup> Khan, *Eating Grass*, 48.

the opportunity to expand its relationship with India by signing a Treaty of Friendship after the Pakistanis denied the Soviets' request to build a trade route through South Asia.<sup>84</sup>

With the potential failure of U.S. containment policy in South Asia, the United States once again prioritized its partnership with Pakistan with the incoming favorable U.S. presidential administration of Richard Nixon in 1969.<sup>85</sup> Feroz Khan states that with the election of Nixon, Pakistan would once again become a priority in the U.S. containment strategy.<sup>86</sup> Margaret MacMillan explains that Pakistan was important to Nixon because it could serve as the intermediary for improving U.S. relations with China due to Yahya Khan's close relationship with Beijing.<sup>87</sup> She states that with Yahya Khan's help, Nixon's national security advisor, Henry Kissinger, was able to arrange the meeting between Nixon and Mao through China's premier, Zhou Enlai. As part of his plan to normalize relations with China, Nixon supported Pakistan during the 1971 Indo-Pakistani War by sending the USS *Enterprise* task force to the Bay of Bengal to express to Beijing the United States' commitment to its alliances.<sup>88</sup> To express its dismay over the growing Sino-American relationship and to send a message of its support for India, the Soviets countered the U.S. naval fleet in the bay with its own naval forces.<sup>89</sup> The growing Sino-American relationship made the Indo-Soviet relationship even more relevant because it served as a counterweight to the Soviet influence.

Although the United States had serious disagreements with Pakistan during the Carter administration over Pakistan's nuclear program, narcotics, and human rights violations, the administration saw past these differences to maintain its containment policy when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan in December 1979. First, expanding the U.S. relationship with Pakistan concerned the Carter administration because, since the

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<sup>84</sup> See, for more information: Khan, *Eating Grass*, 73.

<sup>85</sup> See, for more information: Khan, 22, 49.

<sup>86</sup> See, for more information: Khan, 22, 49.

<sup>87</sup> Margaret MacMillan, *Nixon and Mao: The Week that Changed the World* (New York: Random House, 2007), 168–87.

<sup>88</sup> See, for more information: Khan, *Eating Grass*, 79.

<sup>89</sup> See, for more information: Khan, 79.

Eisenhower administration, the United States had maintained a policy of nuclear nonproliferation that included Pakistan.<sup>90</sup> Secondly, Pakistan was a producer and consumer of opium, and, according to Baxter, one in every two hundred Pakistanis were heroin addicts.<sup>91</sup> In addition to the health concerns and law enforcement problems, Baxter contends that the Carter administration was concerned that these drugs would find their way into the international drug trade. Lastly, specifically under Zia's regime, Pakistan committed several violations of basic human rights by targeting women and the press and by implementing the rule of martial law.<sup>92</sup> With the increase of Soviet encroachment again in South Asia, the U.S. government began to take the threat more seriously by providing Pakistan with resources and funding, which was used to help prevent communist progression.

Despite President Jimmy Carter's concerns with the Pakistani government, he reverted to previous U.S. Cold War ideology and placed Pakistan at the forefront of containment policy after the Soviets invaded Afghanistan on December 27, 1979.<sup>93</sup> In Carter's 1980 State of the Union Address, he referred to Pakistan as a key state in containing Soviet aggression in Afghanistan and offered it aid and assistance to hinder Soviet progress.<sup>94</sup> The Carter administration entertained the idea of providing clandestine support to the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI), as it knew that the loss of Iran as an ally meant the United States relied on Pakistan as its partner in the region.<sup>95</sup> Clandestine operations were favored by the Pakistani government because it believed these types of operations were more effective than conventional methods.<sup>96</sup> The U.S. Congress also

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<sup>90</sup> Craig Baxter, "The United States and Pakistan: The Zia Era and the Afghan Connection," in *Friendly Tyrants: An American Dilemma*, ed. Daniel Pipes and Adam Garfinkle (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1991), 499, <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-21676-5>.

<sup>91</sup> Baxter, "The United States and Pakistan," 500.

<sup>92</sup> See, for more information: Baxter, 502–503.

<sup>93</sup> Steve Coll, *Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan, and bin Laden, From the Soviet Invasion to September 10, 2001* (New York: Penguin Press, 2004), 51–52, 62.

<sup>94</sup> Baxter, "The United States and Pakistan," 479.

<sup>95</sup> Coll, *Ghost Wars*, 44.

<sup>96</sup> Coll, 44.

looked past its concerns and waived the nuclear inspection requirement so that assistance packages could be delivered to Pakistan.<sup>97</sup>

Correctly hedging his bets for a potentially more favorable Republican presidential administration in the future, Zia rejected Carter's "peanuts" offer of \$400 million in foreign aid. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan significantly worried Pakistan because it was surrounded by hostile neighbors, and it expected the regime of Afghan President Babrak Karmal to add to the hostility.<sup>98</sup> In Afghanistan, communist factions gained traction, causing over a million Afghan Pashtuns to migrate into Pakistan.<sup>99</sup> Pakistan grew concerned that migration might initiate ethnic calls for independence or threaten domestic instability, as Pakistan, too, had a large Pashtun population.<sup>100</sup> Zia was particularly worried about secret operations the Soviets and Afghans were conducting in the Pakistani regions that opposed his rule, especially in the Bhutto family stronghold Sindh region.<sup>101</sup> Even more worrisome for Pakistan, causing a rise in tensions with India, was that the pro-Soviet government in Afghanistan favored India and that many of those in PM Indira Gandhi's government were becoming increasingly more pro-Soviet and disgruntled over the U.S.-Pakistani partnership. In return for India agreeing to diplomatically support the Soviets' action in Afghanistan, Gandhi expanded India's relationship with the Soviet Union by orchestrating a massive weapons transfer for India.<sup>102</sup>

With Reagan in office, Pakistan would resume receiving economic and military assistance, aid for the Afghan mujahidin,<sup>103</sup> and the ability to work with a more tolerant U.S. administration that was willing to look past the actions of the military dictatorship in

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<sup>97</sup> See, for more information the Symington and Glenn amendments: Baxter, "The United States and Pakistan," 499–500.

<sup>98</sup> Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, 79.

<sup>99</sup> Coll, *Ghost Wars*, 62.

<sup>100</sup> Coll, 62.

<sup>101</sup> Coll, 62.

<sup>102</sup> Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, 82.

<sup>103</sup> The Mujahidin (or mujahideen) were Islamic Afghan fighters who engaged in guerrilla-type military warfare during the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan. Later this group would transpire into what became the modern Taliban military organization and other Islamic terrorist groups; see, for more information: Talbot, *Pakistan: A Modern History*, 379.

Pakistan.<sup>104</sup> Zia governed Pakistan with a tight leash, but his government was able to produce tangible results in helping the United States deter the Soviets in Afghanistan.<sup>105</sup>

Unlike Carter's "peanuts" offer, U.S. President Ronald Reagan offered Pakistan a \$3.2 billion aid package.<sup>106</sup> This package was for official and clandestine purposes: foreign assistance to increase the lethality of Pakistan's military and measures designed to covertly support and arm the mujahidin, respectively. Coll notes that the package significantly increased the capabilities of the conventional Pakistani military.<sup>107</sup> This included the authorization to sell Pakistan the F-16 jet, an offer that previously had been exclusively given to NATO members and Japan,<sup>108</sup> and the Hawkeye EC-2 aircraft.<sup>109</sup> The U.S. government also used the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to funnel money and resources to the mujahidin through the ISI.<sup>110</sup> Supplying the mujahidin was just as important as providing military equipment to help stabilize Pakistan: multiple sources acknowledge the mujahidin's contribution to not only helping keep the fight against the Soviets alive but also making the battle no longer worth fighting for the Soviets.

### **C. INSTABILITY IN PAKISTAN DURING THE COLD WAR**

While the United States and the Soviet Union were competing for global influence in the Cold War, economic, political, and internal and external security issues caused instability in Pakistan, driving it to seek alliances with great powers. This section explains how the partition of British India led to an uneven distribution of economic resources, assets, and a strong military that undermined civilian institutions, causing Pakistan to rely on resources from great powers to mitigate its economic and political instability. Finally, the last section shows how internal insurgencies from dissident ethnic groups and

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<sup>104</sup> Baxter, "The United States and Pakistan," 480.

<sup>105</sup> See, for example: Baxter, 482–84.

<sup>106</sup> Coll, *Ghost Wars*, 62.

<sup>107</sup> Coll, 62.

<sup>108</sup> Coll, 62.

<sup>109</sup> Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, 83.

<sup>110</sup> See, for more information: Baxter, "The United States and Pakistan," 498.

numerous military conflicts with India over the princely state of Kashmir caused instability in Pakistan, generating its need for military support and resources from great powers to deal with its internal and external security imperatives.

### **1. Economic Instability in Pakistan between Partition and the End of the Cold War**

The partition left Pakistan economically disadvantaged because Pakistan received less infrastructure, industries, assets, and resources than India and it received a disproportionate amount of the public debt. These disadvantages caused it to rely on financial aid and support from great powers. According to Jalal, not only did Pakistan inherit actual material inequality in partition compared to India, it also incurred negative sentiments about the processes of partition, which led to further instability as it sought to equalize the partition. Ayesha Jalal states that the partition left Pakistan unstable because Pakistan felt the process and the result of partition was not fair or equal.<sup>111</sup>

According to Jalal, Pakistan's economic disadvantages were rooted in the division of resources and debt; Pakistan received only 17.5% of British India's total financial assets in partition, which was insufficient to meet all its needs to establish a new sovereign state. Jalal adds that because Pakistan was the agrarian backwater of the British Empire, it lacked the industrial infrastructure necessary to develop a sustainable economy because it historically had received little attention with regards to development.<sup>112</sup> Pakistan's economic troubles derived from its need for money to "pay for the upkeep of its [defense] forces, build an administrative structure, [resettle] the millions fleeing into its territories [and to] set up a workable taxation structure and operational money market."<sup>113</sup>

In addition to not having enough assets, Pakistan felt that it carried a disproportionate amount of the public debt.<sup>114</sup> Pakistani leaders argued that the percentage of public debt owed should have been representative of the past economic contributions of

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<sup>112</sup> Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule*, 32.

<sup>113</sup> Jalal, 33.

<sup>114</sup> Jalal, 33.

the areas that now made up Pakistan during the colonial era.<sup>115</sup> Jalal notes that based on this approach, Pakistan would only have been responsible for less than a tenth of the total financial liabilities resulting from partition.<sup>116</sup> She explains that the Pakistani position caused conflict with India's representatives because they disagreed, believing that the Pakistanis were grossly underestimating their share of the debt and that they overinflated the amount of assets to which they were entitled. Thus, not only did the fair-share debate leave Pakistan economically disadvantaged, but it also contributed to instability in the region as tensions increased between the two countries.

Due to such disadvantages, Pakistan's economic stability became dependent on foreign aid, particularly from the United States. The ebbs and flows of economic growth and prosperity in Pakistan are directly correlated to it receiving foreign aid. Together, Khanna and Zaidi show a correlation between foreign aid and Pakistan's economic growth by explaining that the economy did extremely well throughout the 1960s when U.S. aid was abundant.<sup>117</sup> During this period, Pakistan had high growth rates and the poverty level declined. Khanna highlights that during these decades, GDP grew by 6–7% per year and that trade excelled; in 1965, Pakistan's exports exceeded those of "South Korea, Turkey and Indonesia" combined.<sup>118</sup> Zaidi states that economic prosperity in Pakistan during both decades was tied to U.S. financial aid, which composed 5% of Pakistan's GDP and was critical to the initial industrialization of the country by way of financing development projects.<sup>119</sup> Later, however, as a result of a decline in U.S. aid to Pakistan in 1965, due to Pakistan's aggression towards India, Pakistan faced economic decline.<sup>120</sup>

In the years following partition, Pakistan's economic stability faced further challenges as its economic policy constantly changed. Sushil Khanna argues that Pakistan's

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<sup>115</sup> Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule*, 33.

<sup>116</sup> Jalal, 33.

<sup>117</sup> Sushil Khanna, "Growth and Crisis in Pakistan's Economy," *Economic and Political Weekly* 45, no. 51 (December 18, 2010): 43, ProQuest; Zaidi, "Who Benefits from U.S. Aid to Pakistan?" 104.

<sup>118</sup> Khanna, "Growth and Crisis," 43.

<sup>119</sup> Zaidi, "Who Benefits from U.S. Aid to Pakistan?" 104.

<sup>120</sup> Khanna, "Growth and Crisis," 43.

ineffective economic policy produced ebbs and flows of growth in the Pakistani economy throughout its early years.<sup>121</sup> In 1971, the secession of East Pakistan<sup>122</sup> had a detrimental impact on Pakistan's ability to set effective fiscal policy because the loss of East Pakistan caused Pakistan to need to replace the internal markets it had lost and its primary source of export dollars.<sup>123</sup> Khanna shows how Pakistan's need for new markets caused it to desire state-run enterprises and influenced PM Zulfikar Ali Bhutto to enact populist economic policies. Bhutto's policies included an increased emphasis on large-scale manufacturing and an industrialized public sector, and he promoted greater government control over the private sector.<sup>124</sup> However, according to Khanna, although many of Bhutto's economic policies would prove to be effective, the oil crisis of 1973 followed by the global economic recession demanded the implementation of new capitalist economic policies in Pakistan. The resulting decline of economic growth in the late 1970s contributed to General Zia-al-Haq's ability to consolidate power in 1977 after launching a military coup that overthrew Bhutto's socialist democratic regime. Zia rallied against nationalization and received the support of the private sector.<sup>125</sup> During his tenure, Pakistan experienced high growth rates of 6 to 7% and declining poverty.<sup>126</sup>

These constant changes of economic policy prevented the policies from having the opportunity to produce positive effects. Khanna associates the completion of Bhutto's national projects begun during the early 1970s to the increase in economic growth during the 1980s to show that, in fact, some of the economic policies were actually effective.<sup>127</sup> He states that during the 1980s, growth rose 6–7% per year and poverty declined, and he attributes Pakistan's unprecedented agricultural growth to the national Indus Basin Tarbela Dam project completed in 1976. Nevertheless, Pakistan's inability to achieve sustainable,

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<sup>121</sup> Khanna, "Growth and Crisis," 39.

<sup>122</sup> After the 1971 civil war in Pakistan, East Pakistan became an independent country: The People's Republic of Bangladesh.

<sup>123</sup> Khanna, "Growth and Crisis," 43.

<sup>124</sup> Khanna, 43.

<sup>125</sup> Khanna, 43.

<sup>126</sup> Khanna, 43.

<sup>127</sup> Khanna, 43.

effective economic policy created its reliance on great powers for financial aid and resources.

## **2. Political Instability in Pakistan between Partition and the End of the Cold War**

In the realm of political instability, Pakistan experienced three military coups against its civilian-led government, causing the need for the new military regimes to acquire resources from great powers to reduce its instability. Although there is a connection between economic instability and political instability, some political factors also played a role in destabilizing regimes in Pakistan. Some scholars claim that Pakistan's political instability resulting from the military coups in 1958, 1969, and 1977 was a product of Pakistani civilian-led bureaucratic incompetence.<sup>128</sup> However, the more precise way to explain the problems faced by the civilian authorities is to understand the institutional balances Pakistan inherited during the partition.

According to Jalal, Pakistan's military strength derives from the inheritance it received as a consequence of partition: after partition, Pakistan's military strength was 140,000 people, which included 30% of British India's army, 40% of its navy, and 20% of its air force.<sup>129</sup> Jalal claims that Pakistan's civilian institutions were by contrast relatively weak because the country lacked an administrative center, and various inconsistencies in the government administration created confusion and inefficiency after partition.<sup>130</sup> Pakistan only received 121 civil servants, when Pakistani officials felt that a more reasonable amount would have been a minimum of 200 to start its administration after partition.<sup>131</sup>

Some authors argue that the strength of Pakistan's military also came from its historical relationship with the Western world. Cohen states that the military was a more competent institution than Pakistan civilian institutions because Western ideals had a

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<sup>128</sup> Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule*.

<sup>129</sup> Jalal, 42.

<sup>130</sup> Jalal, 31.

<sup>131</sup> Jalal, 31–2.

strong influence on Pakistan's military due to its historical ties with Britain.<sup>132</sup> He notes that the British helped develop a professional officer corps in Pakistan and that many Pakistani officers who fought for the British during the Second World War had previously attended the prestigious British military training school at Sandhurst. He maintains that Pakistani military leaders believed Great Britain to be the standard for successful military models and he asserts that Britain's greatest contribution to Pakistan's military strength was its "extensive military links with [other] countries," which contributed to Pakistan's relationship with the United States.<sup>133</sup> However, Zaidi adds that the implication of the military links between the Pakistani and British militaries is that Pakistan's military greatly benefited from U.S. foreign aid at the expense of development projects and weakening its civilian institution.<sup>134</sup> He claims that the military's greater competence arose from the fact that it received more aid from foreign powers than did the civilian governments, who ruled at the time of economic crisis and decline in foreign aid.

There is no doubt, however, that civilian institutional failure strengthened the military further. C. Christine Fair argues this point by blaming civilian institutions for the continual growth of the military's power since partition because the power was derived from society's "acceptance of [the military] as a political arbiter, compounded with its prominent role as the guardian of the country's security, sovereignty, and ideology."<sup>135</sup> Fair explains that to obtain legitimacy and power, Pakistan's political leadership and the civilian bureaucracy went out of their way to decrease democratic values, in favor of promoting further military control in order to get the military to back them. Furthermore, the Pakistani Supreme Court has not opposed the military leaders who have ascended to the presidency. Instead, the court has used the "doctrine of necessity" to legitimize the coups against Pakistan's democratically elected government.<sup>136</sup> Fair concludes that the

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<sup>132</sup> Stephen P. Cohen, *The Pakistan Army* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1998), 63.

<sup>133</sup> Cohen, *The Pakistan Army*, 63.

<sup>134</sup> Zaidi, "Who Benefits from U.S. Aid to Pakistan?" 104.

<sup>135</sup> C. Christine Fair, "Pakistan's Democracy: The Army's Quarry?" *Asian Security* 5, no. 1 (2009): 76, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14799850802611552>.

<sup>136</sup> Fair, 76.

decision by civilian-led institutions to support the military has led to the creation of a national security state.

The Pakistani military's relative strength over its civilian institutions led to three successful coups during the Cold War when the military decided that it could run the country more competently and was not willing to give up power it inherited as part of the British empire. Ayub Khan, Yahya Khan, and Muhammed Zia-al-Haq decided to suspend the constitution and institute martial law during their respective coups due to civilian moves to make the military subservient.<sup>137</sup> Because of political instability, the military regimes then needed great powers to validate the coups, provide resources to keep up economic stability, and gain legitimacy.

### **3. Internal and External Security Apparatus in Pakistan: 1947–1990**

During the Cold War, Pakistan's internal and external security imperatives required it to seek great power support and resources. Internally, insurgencies from dissident domestic groups led to security concerns that created instability in Pakistan. Externally, military conflict with India over the state of Kashmir also led to security concerns that caused instability in Pakistan. Together, Pakistan's need for financial and military resources to control domestic unrest enhanced its desire to seek willing and capable great-power partners.

Domestic uprisings created internal security concerns as they led to a rise of insurgencies and instability in Pakistan; this rise caused the state to expand its internal security to implement state-making processes in the early years. While Pakistan experienced an array of insurgencies during the Cold War, Adeel Khan suggests that the most prominent internal threat during the Cold War era was ethno-nationalism in Baluchistan.<sup>138</sup> The Pakistani government launched armed operations in Baluchistan on four separate occasions between Pakistan's creation and the end of the Cold War. The first

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<sup>137</sup> Khan, *Eating Grass*, 318–20.

<sup>138</sup> Adeel Khan, "Renewed Ethnonationalist Insurgency in Balochistan, Pakistan: The Militarized State and Continuing Economic deprivation," *Asian Survey* 49, no. 6 (November 2009): 1071, <https://doi.org/10.1525/as.2009.49.6.1071>.

three operations occurred in 1947, 1958, and 1962, respectively.<sup>139</sup> The fourth operation, from 1973 until 1977, indicates the severity of this insurgency; it required 80,000 Pakistani troops to quell over 55,000 Balochi insurgents.<sup>140</sup> Khan's findings state that the basis for the government's actions against Baluchi insurgents were that local leaders and tribes rejected the government's development projects aimed at stabilizing the country. By contrast, he emphasizes that the Balochi insurgents believed that the government, then controlled by the Punjabis, wanted to exploit Baluchistan's vast resources and did not provide enough benefits to the locals. While causing political clashes, this issue was at the heart of stabilizing the country's economy. In the 1970s, the Pashtun parties and radicals supported the Baluchi claims, leading to expansion of instability in the country and a crack-down by the PM. To cope with this level of domestic unrest, Pakistan needed great power partners to provide military resources so its military could suppress the insurgents and financial support so that Pakistan did not have to rely on Baluchistan's natural resources. When Zia-ul-Haq overthrew Bhutto in 1977, he was able to gain these resources.

Likewise, conflict over Kashmir caused external instability as it led to rising tension between Pakistan and India. The reason for Pakistan's attachment to Kashmir was that the princely state had a Muslim-majority population but a Hindu Maharaja.<sup>141</sup> Although there was no consensus among Kashmiris for joining either India or Pakistan, some tribal Muslims in Kashmir revolted against the Maharaja because they supported accession to Pakistan. Ganguly states that in October 1947, the Pakistani Army armed the Muslim rebels in the southwestern Poonch region of Kashmir.<sup>142</sup> He writes that because the Hindu Maharaja was threatened by Pakistani-backed forces and unable to defend himself, the Maharaja requested military assistance from PM Nehru in return for an agreement of accession to India. Along with the Maharaja, Sheikh Abdullah of the National Conference, a Kashmiri political party, signed the accession document under autonomy framework on

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<sup>139</sup> Khan, "Renewed Ethnonationalist Insurgency," 1072.

<sup>140</sup> Khan, 1072.

<sup>141</sup> Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, 15–16.

<sup>142</sup> Ganguly, 18.

the condition that it would be revisited soon after war ended. The Indian army then moved in to prevent Pakistan's attempt to take Kashmir.

Pakistan made another failed attempt to annex Kashmir in 1965 when its military initiated an uprising in Kashmir because it believed that India was weak and vulnerable due to its losses in the Indo-China War of 1962.<sup>143</sup> Ganguly points out that, after Pakistan's two failed attempts, India used the same discrete and clandestine tactics that Pakistan had previously and unsuccessfully used to deliver Pakistan a catastrophic defeat in the 1971 Indo-Pakistani War. He makes the case that all three of Pakistan's wars against India only increased tensions between both countries and did little to relieve Pakistan's fear of being able to deter Indian regional hegemony.<sup>144</sup>

Some scholars believe that Islam connected Pakistan to Kashmir. Pakistan's identity crisis arose because without Kashmir, the very reason for Pakistan's existence as the homeland for South Asia's Muslim population was compromised. Ganguly quotes Bhutto, who, as foreign minister, wrote that, "Pakistan is incomplete [territorially] and ideologically" without Kashmir.<sup>145</sup> According to Cohen, Pakistan has faced an Islamic identity crisis since the partition. Although Jinnah sought to establish a secular state in 1947, some Pakistani leaders were attracted to the idea of Pakistan as an Islamic country.<sup>146</sup> Cohen provides multiple anecdotes of Pakistanis who acknowledged that they prioritized their Islamic faith above all else.<sup>147</sup> He says that later, the Islamization movement in the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s emerged to bridge the gap between the country's majority Islamic faith and the rule of law under Zia's leadership. He contends

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<sup>143</sup> India had lost a war to China in 1962; see, for more information: Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, 36–38.

<sup>144</sup> Ganguly, 46–50.

<sup>145</sup> Ganguly, 32.

<sup>146</sup> Cohen, *The Pakistan Army*, 59.

<sup>147</sup> When deciding whether or not to leave India during the partition, a senior soon-to-be Pakistani officer stated that he would "rather live in a small country as a free man than as a sweeper in a large country," and he added that he wished to not "see [his] children serve under Hindus." Another lieutenant colonel in the army desired to move because he was motivated by the idea that Muslims could "have a homeland of [their] own where [they] could model it according to [their] own ideology." See, for more information: Cohen, 59.

that Pakistan's shift towards non-secularism during this period legitimized Islam as a sustainable alternative to the Western secular models that Zia felt failed Pakistan in the past. This shift made finding powerful partners that could supply the resources Pakistan needed to obtain Kashmir even more critical as Pakistan revitalized its identity as an Islamic nation. Pakistan's new identity only increased tensions in the Kashmiri conflict and led to instability in Pakistan. Pakistan's need for support became more urgent than ever.

According to Feroz Khan, the result of the three wars with India caused Pakistan to develop an inferiority complex, as it felt unable to challenge India conventionally and therefore believed it required great power partners to obtain the resources required to build nuclear weapons necessary to challenge India's conventional defense superiority.<sup>148</sup> As he states, subsequent to the loss to India in 1971, Pakistan adopted the sentiment of "never again" as it promised to not let another embarrassing military outcome occur in the future.<sup>149</sup> Feroz Khan's research shows that the inferiority complex solidified PM Bhutto's hardline position that Pakistan should nuclearize to counter India, even if it meant that Pakistanis had "to eat grass" in order to survive.<sup>150</sup> These wars strengthened Pakistan's belief that it could not challenge India on its own and therefore would always need great-power partners for resources and support.

Nuclear weapon development in South Asia contributed to further internal instability as the Pakistani military strengthened its domestic position as it acquired more state resources. The defense budget took up more resources than the educational and other developmental budgets. Externally, more conflicts with India, such as the Brasstacks Exercises and the Siachen Conflict during the mid-1980s, occurred, increasing tensions and contributing to instability as Pakistan sought to fulfill its nuclear ambitions.<sup>151</sup> Because of a lack of resources, Pakistan was unable to nuclearize on its own; it required support from external powers to achieve its own nuclear aspirations

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<sup>148</sup> Khan, *Eating Grass*, 7–8.

<sup>149</sup> Khan, 70.

<sup>150</sup> Khan, 7.

<sup>151</sup> Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, 83.

#### **D. ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION**

Cold War competition between the two global superpowers provided the incentive for great powers to interact and form alliances in South Asia, enabling Pakistan to be awarded the aid and resources it needed to address its instability concerns. The two South Asian states were of immense strategic value as the United States and the Soviet Union competed for influence in the region in pursuit of their greater Cold War strategies. This competition provided both India and Pakistan an opportunity to secure a great power partner capable of responding to each state's respective security concerns. Although India remained a non-aligned state throughout the Cold War, the Soviet Union backed India diplomatically and militarily in order to ensure balance in South Asia.

There are three key takeaways from the dynamics between Pakistan and great powers within the context of the bi-polar system. First, the United States deemed South Asia a strategically significant region in the U.S. Cold War strategy of containment. Due to its geographical location, size, and instability created by partition, the region was susceptible to communist influence. To counter this influence, the United States actively sought partnerships in South Asia to contain Soviet influence. Second, the United States could not align and partner with both India and Pakistan. Although it tried, the United States' goal to effectively leverage a meaningful relationship where both countries advanced the U.S. containment strategy was unattainable. This result was indicative of the immense animosity between India and Pakistan and showed that both India and Pakistan perceived the other's great power partnership as a threat. Lastly, Pakistan's relationship with the United States was based on convenience rather than shared mutual values and goals. The United States provided aid and resources to Pakistan when it had something to gain from the partnership because it did not want its containment policy to fail. The Americans supported Pakistan during military dictatorships and even turned a blind eye as Pakistan was developing its nuclear weapons program and abusing human rights because it was more concerned about using Pakistan to deter Soviet aggression in South Asia. Meanwhile, Pakistan needed a strong and a resourceful ally to secure itself against regional and internal threats. For these reasons, the United States and Pakistan formed an alliance during the Cold War.

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### **III. UNIPOLAR SYSTEM OF POWER DISTRIBUTION: PAKISTAN IN THE WAR ON TERRORISM**

Following the end of the Cold War with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the world entered a unipolar system of power distribution with the United States as the sole world hegemon. In order to understand Pakistan's position in the new emerging competition between great powers, it is important to understand why and how Pakistan and the United States again formed an alliance in the unipolar system. This chapter uncovers the relationship formed between Pakistan and the United States from the end of the Cold War, when the United States distanced itself from Pakistan, until 2017, when U.S. president Donald Trump announced the United States' return to great power competition. Specifically, this chapter focuses on how the relationship between these two countries transitioned from post-Cold War distancing to extensive cooperation during the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT), when the United States used Pakistan to fulfill its strategic objectives and Pakistan needed the United States for support and resources to once again satisfy its stability concerns.

To establish the context of the unipolar system after the end of the Cold War, this chapter begins by describing the global environment when the United States emerged as the world's sole global hegemon. Then, it discusses how Pakistan was situated in the strategic goals of the United States' counterterrorism plan during the GWOT. Next, the chapter describes the economic, political, and security challenges Pakistan faced that contributed to its instability and created its need to receive great power support between 1991 and 2017. This chapter concludes that although Pakistan's strong military institution made it a desirable partner for the United States to achieve its counterterrorism objectives, Pakistan undermined the United States by prioritizing its own strategic objectives. Furthermore, this chapter finds that Pakistan was willing to seek support from other partners in the absence of the United States, setting the stage for the emergence of the multipolar system of great power distribution.

## A. THE STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT OF THE UNIPOLAR WORLD AND ITS EFFECT ON U.S.-PAKISTANI RELATIONS

In the beginning of the unipolar system of power distribution, U.S. foreign policy focused on expanding its liberal world order by building stronger ties with democracies and mending Cold War relationships. By the end of the unipolar system, U.S. foreign policy shifted its focus to counterterrorism. While the first Bush administration pushed Pakistan away, the Clinton administration went a step further and began irritating Pakistan by strengthening U.S. relations with Pakistan's rival, India.<sup>152</sup> After September 11th, the second Bush administration again turned to Pakistan to be a close ally and to help the United States achieve its counterterrorism goals.

During the first Bush administration, as the Soviets ended its occupation of Afghanistan and as the Cold War was coming to an end, the United States suspended aid to Pakistan under the provisions of the Pressler Amendment, which prohibited the U.S. government from providing financial aid to Pakistan if the U.S. president could not annually certify that Pakistan was not enhancing its nuclear program.<sup>153</sup> Most scholars agree that the United States suspended financial aid to Pakistan because the United States no longer needed Pakistan's assistance. The United States had turned a blind eye to Pakistan's nuclear developments during the Soviet aggression in Afghanistan. However, after the Afghan-Soviet War, the United States refused to accept Pakistan's nuclear program. Zaidi explains that, as result of the Pressler restrictions, U.S. aid to Pakistan "was almost negligible" and, in 1990, USAID closed its offices in Pakistan.<sup>154</sup> Feroz Khan explains that along with suspending economic aid, the amendment froze \$300 million of military supplies to Pakistan and prevented the continued sale of F-16s, which were crucial for Pakistan as a "reliable method of delivery" for its nuclear arsenal.<sup>155</sup> According to a

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<sup>152</sup> Aparna Pande, "Natural Allies? The India-US Relations from the Clinton Administration to the Trump Era," *Asia Visions* no. 104 (December 2018): 10, <https://www.ifri.org/en/publications/notes-de-lifri/asia-visions/natural-allies-india-us-relations-clinton->

<sup>153</sup> See, for more information on the Pressler Amendment: Khan, *Eating Grass*, 226, 235; Hussain, *U.S.-Pakistan Engagement*, 4-5.

<sup>154</sup> Zaidi, "Who Benefits from U.S. Aid to Pakistan?" 104-5.

<sup>155</sup> Khan, *Eating Grass*, 235.

USIP special report, these “punitive measures” damaged U.S.-Pakistani relations more than anything else.<sup>156</sup>

This relationship further deteriorated during the Clinton administration as the United States pursued a relationship with India. The focus of U.S. foreign policy during the Clinton’s presidency was to expand the U.S. liberal world order by mending the relationships that had been negatively affected by the Cold War; in the context of South Asia, this meant that the United States sought to rekindle its relationship with India. Aparna Pande states that the Clinton administration did not want to choose between South Asian states, but, ultimately, it viewed India as the more useful partner going forward into the 21st century.<sup>157</sup> Clinton himself said that he wanted to build a long-lasting relationship with India because he believed that “with the Cold War over, [he finally] had the opportunity, as well as an obligation, to improve U.S.-India relations” as “the Cold War and clumsy diplomacy” unnecessarily kept India and the United States apart.<sup>158</sup> In pursuit of this goal, Clinton visited India and addressed the Indian Parliament, where he “spoke of [his] respect for India’s democracy, diversity, and impressive strides in building a modern economy.”<sup>159</sup> Stronger ties between the United States and India did not sit well with the Pakistani government, which viewed the relationship as having significant security implications.<sup>160</sup> The growing Indo-U.S. relationship further soured Pakistan’s perceptions of the United States.

Despite Pakistan’s nuclear development and U.S. desires to build a stronger relationship with India, Pakistan’s relationship with the Taliban gave an opportunity for the Clinton administration to partner with Pakistan. According to an Al Jazeera article, the Clinton administration wanted to work with the Taliban to set up an oil and gas pipeline from Central to South Asia, including Afghanistan, after the breakup of the Soviet

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<sup>156</sup> Hussain, *U.S.-Pakistan Engagement*, 4.

<sup>157</sup> Pande, “Natural Allies?” 10.

<sup>158</sup> Bill Clinton, *My Life* (New York: Knopf, 2004), 597.

<sup>159</sup> Clinton, 901.

<sup>160</sup> Farzana Shakoor, “Pakistan-US Relations: An Interpretation,” *Pakistan Horizon* 54, no. 1 (January 2001): JSTOR.

Union.<sup>161</sup> The article argues that the Taliban, which controlled the southern and eastern portions of Afghanistan and was supported by Pakistan, wanted the Union Oil Company of California (Unocal) to build the pipeline so it could receive the \$400 million earnings to invest into the development of the country. The article concludes that the Clinton administration supported the pipeline and facilitated discussions between Unocal and the Taliban because his administration viewed the pipeline as critical to stabilizing Afghanistan.

However, as the decade continued, although it initially had its benefits, the U.S. struggled to work with the Taliban due to its connections with Al Qaeda, and, therefore, its relationship with Pakistan, which protected the Taliban, deteriorated. Additionally, the United States felt that because of its 1999 military coup, Pakistan was failing to embrace the liberal world order. First, immediately following the end of the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, the United States made efforts to buy back Stinger missiles that Pakistan helped provide to Afghan rebels. The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) had given these missiles to Afghan rebels to fight off Soviet aircraft in the 1980s and now wanted to prevent them from falling into the possession of terrorist groups or Iran.<sup>162</sup> Coll suggests that, over time, the United States mistrusted Pakistan because the United States believed the Pakistani government was undermining American efforts to work with the Taliban to buy back these weapons.<sup>163</sup> He writes that by the middle of the decade, 600 out of the 2,300 Stingers that the CIA distributed were still missing, and he adds that of those Stingers, Iran was in possession of 100, Afghan warlords who possessed them valued them more than most currencies, and by the fall of 1996, most of the remaining weapons were in Afghanistan, the government of which was now under the control of the Taliban.

In addition to the Stinger weapons debacle, the United States was also disgruntled with Pakistan because it protected the Taliban even once it became apparent the group was

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<sup>161</sup> “Taliban Oil,” Al Jazeera, October 8, 2016, <https://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/specialseries/2016/10/taliban-oil-afghanistan-161004085739050.html>.

<sup>162</sup> See, for more information about Operation MIAS (Missing in Action Stingers): Coll, *Ghost Wars*, 11–13.

<sup>163</sup> Coll, 12.

connected to Al Qaeda — the terrorist group responsible for the 1993 World Trade Center and the 1998 Africa embassy bombings. The explosive techniques, timing devices, and plastic explosives used by Ramzi Yousef in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing were the same as those featured in the Inter Service Intelligence (ISI) camps the CIA had funded and trained during the 1980s.<sup>164</sup> Clinton recalls that some of the camps the Pakistani ISI used to train insurgents who fought in Kashmir were the “same camps that bin Laden and Al Qaeda [used] to train the Taliban.”<sup>165</sup> According to Coll, the Taliban were aided by the ISI even while the Taliban were connected with Osama bin Laden through its association with Al Qaeda, which was responsible for the deaths of over 200 people in the 1998 United States embassy bombings in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.<sup>166</sup>

As a result of these attacks, Clinton signed an executive order placing economic sanctions on the Taliban and froze their financial assets.<sup>167</sup> Clinton also believed that cooperation between Washington and Islamabad was inconceivable, because if the Pakistani government ever found out about planned U.S. counterterrorism attacks in advance, “it was likely that [the ISI] would warn [either] the Taliban or even Al Qaeda.”<sup>168</sup> The sanctions exemplified the American government’s growing concern about the Taliban, which generated increasing tensions in U.S.-Pakistani relations.

Second, the Clinton administration was also concerned that Pakistan was undermining democracy, which could undermine Clinton’s rhetoric of advertising the liberal world order in South Asia. Shenon writes that this concern justified the Clinton administration’s decision to issue a warning to Pakistan that it might be labeled by the administration as a state-sponsor of terrorism.<sup>169</sup> Clinton states that even before General

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<sup>164</sup> Coll, *Ghost Wars*, 249.

<sup>165</sup> Clinton, *My Life*, 799.

<sup>166</sup> Coll, *Ghost Wars*, 403–4.

<sup>167</sup> Clinton, *My Life*, 866; A USIP special report states that Congress “invoked Section 508 of the Foreign Assistance Act, prohibiting all U.S. economic and military aid toward Pakistan.” See, for more information: Hussain, *U.S.-Pakistan Engagement*, 5.

<sup>168</sup> Clinton, *My Life*, 799.

<sup>169</sup> Philip Shenon, “U.S. Warns Pakistan It May Be Branded a Sponsor of Terrorism,” *New York Times*, January 28, 2000, A8, ProQuest.

Pervez Musharraf came to power in 1999, he believed that the “Pakistani military was full of Taliban and Al Qaeda sympathizers.”<sup>170</sup> This concern contributed to his refusal to intervene in the Kargil conflict after Pakistani Prime Minister (PM) Nawaz Sharif specifically asked him to mediate with India to resolve the crisis.<sup>171</sup> When Musharraf overthrew Sharif on October 12, 1999, Clinton was concerned about the loss of democracy in Pakistan and “urged the restoration of civilian rule as soon as possible.”<sup>172</sup>

Just after the start of the new century, in 2001, U.S. foreign policy shifted to counterterrorism as the United States engaged in the GWOT after the terrorist attacks against the United States on September 11th. After the attacks, U.S. foreign policy shifted to counterterrorism under the presidency of George W. Bush (the second Bush administration). In his National Security Strategy that was released in 2002, Bush declared counterterrorism as the centerpiece of U.S. foreign policy moving forward into the 21st century.<sup>173</sup> Unlike the containment strategy of the Cold War, the “Bush Doctrine” made it clear that the U.S. government considered states that did not assist the United States to be complicit with terrorist organizations.<sup>174</sup> In his memoirs, President Clinton states that while his administration attempted to “work with Pakistan to defuse tensions on the Indian subcontinent,” Pakistan could not necessarily be trusted because it supported Al Qaeda by extension of its relationship with the Taliban.<sup>175</sup> Now, just as U.S. foreign policy was shifting and the United States sought useful partnerships to combat Al Qaeda and to defeat extremism in the region, the United States viewed Pakistan’s relationship with the Taliban as a critical resource.

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<sup>170</sup> Clinton, *My Life*, 866.

<sup>171</sup> Clinton, 864.

<sup>172</sup> Clinton, 873.

<sup>173</sup> White House, *National Security Strategy* (Washington, DC: White House, 2002), <https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/nsc/nss/2002/>.

<sup>174</sup> In President Bush’ address, he stated that the United States would “pursue nations that provide aid or safe haven to terrorism. Every nation in every region now has a decision to make: Either you are with us or you are with the terrorists.” See, for more information: “President George W. Bush’s Speech to Both Houses of Congress Thursday, 20 September 2001,” *European Security* 10, no. 4 (Winter, 2001): <https://doi.org/10.1080/09662830108407517>.

<sup>175</sup> Clinton, *My Life*, 799.

## **B. RELATIONS BETWEEN PAKISTAN AND THE UNITED STATES DURING THE WAR ON TERRORISM**

The United States actively sought useful and willing partners to join its counterterrorism operations in the GWOT. As a result, the United States once again desired Pakistan's assistance to fulfill U.S. strategic needs as it prepared to invade Afghanistan in October 2001. The United States deemed Pakistan an essential partner because the ISI had strong connections with terrorist groups and could therefore help the United States prevent extremists from going back and forth between Pakistan and Afghanistan's insecure and heavily disputed border. Pakistan's issues that had plagued the Clinton administration became advantageous in the United States' GWOT strategy. Musharraf, who took control of the Pakistani government through a coup d'état in 1999, volunteered Pakistan as a frontline state in the U.S. war efforts. Despite Pakistan's historical relationship with the Taliban, Musharraf saw forming an alliance with the United States as an opportunity to consolidate his power and receive necessary resources via a renewed relationship with the United States.

### **1. Relationships between the Bush Administration and Pakistan**

The experiences and the personalities of the second Bush administration played an important role in the resurrection of the U.S.-Pakistani relationship after the 9/11 attacks. Unlike the Clinton administration, the Bush cabinet was very familiar and had personal connections with Pakistan due to several members' previous government positions. Many of Bush's closest advisors, including his vice president, secretary of state, and secretary of defense, had served in the presidential administrations of Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan, and/or Bush's father, George H. W. Bush, all of which had significant relationships with Pakistan.

Dick Cheney, who served as vice president during the GWOT, was familiar with Pakistan as he served as chief of staff in the Ford administration and was a member of Congress during the Reagan years, when the United States authorized the sale of jet fighters and offered unprecedented amounts of economic aid to Pakistan due to the Soviet invasion

of Afghanistan.<sup>176</sup> Cheney saw the change in U.S.-Pakistani relations as he also served as secretary of defense in the first Bush administration, when U.S. sanctions ended the sale of those very same fighter jets and as U.S.-Pakistani relations began to deteriorate.

During the Zia regime, Colin Powell was a U.S. army general serving as national security advisor in the Reagan administration and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff during the elder Bush's presidency. The New York Times reported that Colin Powell, then-secretary of state, spoke with Musharraf at least 81 times between the September 11th attacks and the spring 2004.<sup>177</sup> This type of communication between the U.S. secretary of state and the Pakistani president was unprecedented given the previous relations between the United States and Pakistan during the 1990s. Weisman explains that Powell and Musharraf related because they were two former military officers, generals, who grew up in the same global environment.

Lastly, the younger Bush administration's secretary of defense, Donald Rumsfeld, had previously served in the same position in the Ford administration and served under Nixon during the 1971 Indo-Pakistani War.<sup>178</sup> Rumsfeld, who was experienced in dealing with foreign leaders, particularly held Musharraf in high regard because Rumsfeld believed that Musharraf was a "generous host" who was confident and "forthright" in his conversations with U.S. officials.<sup>179</sup> As the U.S. secretary of defense, Rumsfeld's confidence in Musharraf was essential in the U.S. decision to include Pakistan in the GWOT.

## **2. Pakistan's Geopolitical Significance in the GWOT**

The presence and experience of these individuals influenced the second Bush administration's decision to look to Pakistan as a strategic partner. Pakistan's strategic location by sea, air, and land helped sustain U.S. counterterrorism strategy in the GWOT

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<sup>176</sup> Richard B. Cheney, *In My Time: A Personal and Political Memoir* (New York: Threshold, 2011).

<sup>177</sup> Steve Weisman, "For 2 Ex-Generals, a Common Language," *New York Times*, March 1, 2004, A9, ProQuest.

<sup>178</sup> Donald Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown* (New York: Sentinel, 2011), 213–16.

<sup>179</sup> Rumsfeld, 397.

as Pakistan allowed the United States to use several of its ports, airspace, and military bases.<sup>180</sup> In return for the United States using Pakistani military bases, then–secretary of defense Robert Gates states that Coalition Support Fund (CSF) payments were used to supply essential needs to 1,000,000 Pakistani troops and support 100 operations in northwest Pakistan.<sup>181</sup> Secretary Gates also said these payments were used to “compensate Islamabad for coalition usage of Pakistani airfields and seaports.”<sup>182</sup>

Although the least important warfighting domain in this conflict, Pakistan’s maritime domain was necessary to support U.S. military operations during the GWOT. According to then–secretary of state Donald Rumsfeld, “strike fighters from aircraft carriers – the USS Enterprise and USS Carl Vinson [were staged] off [Pakistan’s] coast.”<sup>183</sup> These fighters were critical to crippling Taliban strongholds prior to the U.S.-led coalition ground invasion.

Pakistan’s proximity to Afghanistan was also essential for the U.S. to conduct drone strikes and air surveillance during both the Bush and Obama administrations. Prior to American military engagement in the region in 2001, Predator drones had been conducting surveillance on Afghanistan from bases in Uzbekistan.<sup>184</sup> As the war progressed, not only did the United States use Pakistani bases to launch drones, but Musharraf also gave the United States permission to use Hellfire missile–equipped drones in certain tribal areas within Pakistan that threatened his power.<sup>185</sup>

On the ground, the American military utilized Pakistan’s border region with Afghanistan to provide supply lines for U.S.-led coalition troops fighting extremists to prevent those extremists from seeking haven outside Afghanistan and to deny Pakistani sympathizers the ability to join the fight against coalition forces. By 2004, the United States

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<sup>180</sup> Hussain, *U.S.-Pakistan Engagement*, 6.

<sup>181</sup> Zaidi, “Who Benefits from U.S. Aid to Pakistan?” 106.

<sup>182</sup> Zaidi, 106.

<sup>183</sup> Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown*, 374–75.

<sup>184</sup> Steve Coll, *Directorate S: the C.I.A. and America’s Secret Wars in Afghanistan and Pakistan* (New York: Penguin Press, 2018), 70.

<sup>185</sup> Coll, *Directorate S*, 210–11.

military had 20,300 troops along the border.<sup>186</sup> Zaidi explains that the Pakistani military was also crucial to helping the United States achieve its objectives at the border, as the United States used the CSF to get the Pakistani military to support U.S. border campaigns.<sup>187</sup> In the first year of the Obama presidency, the Pakistan Counter-Insurgency Fund and the Pakistan Counter-Insurgency Capability Fund were established to achieve similar objectives as the CSF, but with a heightened focus on combating displaced insurgents inside Pakistan.<sup>188</sup>

### **3. Musharraf’s Support for the GWOT**

One of the main catalysts behind Pakistan’s contribution to the American war effort was Musharraf, who saw bandwagoning with the United States as an opportunity to consolidate his power after an anti-democratic coup in 1999. In return, Musharraf would receive guaranteed support and resources due to both countries’ common goal of resolving domestic issues in Pakistan by ridding the country of terrorist influence. In the months following the September 11th attacks, he told religious scholars at Aiwan-e-Sadr<sup>189</sup> that he was committed to driving out extremism and that he vowed to resist the resurgence of terrorist groups, which had been banned from Pakistan.<sup>190</sup>

Although Clinton was disappointed in Musharraf’s actions due his involvement in Kargil and for the military coup, which threatened stability in South Asia and democracy in Pakistan, respectively, Clinton later admitted that he was genuinely impressed by Musharraf’s brilliance and poise.<sup>191</sup> In his memoir, Bush says that he, too, “admired [Musharraf due to his] decision to side with America after 9/11,”<sup>192</sup> and Bush recognized

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<sup>186</sup> “Timeline: U.S. Military Presence in Afghanistan,” Al Jazeera, September 8, 2019, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/09/timeline-military-presence-afghanistan-190908070831251.html>.

<sup>187</sup> Zaidi, “Who Benefits from U.S. Aid to Pakistan?” 106.

<sup>188</sup> Ziadi, 106.

<sup>189</sup> Aiwan-e-Sadr is the official residence and workplace for the President of Pakistan.

<sup>190</sup> “Musharraf Vows to Root Out Extremism, Terrorism, XINHUA,” DAWN, December 5, 2003, <https://www.dawn.com/news/print/128137>.

<sup>191</sup> Clinton, *My Life*, 903.

<sup>192</sup> George W. Bush, *Decision Points*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. (New York: Crown Publishers, 2010), 212.

that Musharraf “took serious risks [by battling] Al Qaeda,” as tensions between the Pakistani government and Al Qaeda increased, the latter trying to assassinate Musharraf on at least four occasions.<sup>193</sup>

Responding to imminent American military action in Afghanistan, Musharraf served as an American surrogate as he tried to persuade Afghanistan’s leader, Mullah Omar, to comply with President Bush’s October 7, 2001 deadline to turn over Osama bin Laden or face the consequences of U.S. military action.<sup>194</sup>

To please the Americans, Musharraf made attempts to modernize and reform the ISI before the war started. Coll explains that two hours prior to the war’s beginning, Musharraf had forced the ISI chief to retire and had replaced him with Lieutenant General Ehsan ul-Haq, who Musharraf viewed was more loyal to the American cause than his predecessor.<sup>195</sup> Although he refused to apprehend Pakistani citizens, at the start of the war, Ehsan ul-Haq agreed to turn over to the United States “all Arabs and other foreign radicals” who crossed the border into Afghanistan.<sup>196</sup> USIP analyst Touqir Hussain states that by 2005, Pakistan “launched thirty-eight major successful operations to flush out foreign terrorists.”<sup>197</sup>

#### **4. Pakistan’s Military Contribution to Fighting in the GWOT**

Under Musharraf’s leadership, the Pakistani military played a pivotal role in the GWOT by supporting the United States along Pakistan’s border with Afghanistan, by assisting in the maritime domain, and by providing the United States intelligence information on terrorist networks. Hussain details Pakistan’s cooperation with the United States in his USIP report. He quotes C. Christine Fair, who supports the importance of Pakistani cooperation by quoting U.S. government officials who acknowledge that “Pakistan has provided more support, captured more terrorists, and committed more

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<sup>193</sup> Bush, *Decision Points*, 213.

<sup>194</sup> Pervez Musharraf, *In the Line of Fire: A Memoir*, (New York: Free Press, 2006), 216.

<sup>195</sup> Coll, *Directorate S*, 87.

<sup>196</sup> Coll, *Directorate S*, 87.

<sup>197</sup> Hussain, *U.S.-Pakistan Engagement*, 6.

troops” than any other U.S. partner in the GWOT.<sup>198</sup> In his memoirs, Musharraf wrote that the September 11th attacks provided his government the opportunity to “get rid of terrorism,” and he knew it would be in Pakistan’s best interest to support the United States as the “extremists were too well armed, and too numerous, for [Pakistan] to manage quietly.”<sup>199</sup> In all areas, Pakistan committed its military resources, units, and troops to combat terrorism.

To prevent extremists and terrorist sympathizers from joining the fight in Afghanistan, Pakistani troops deployed to the Afghan-Pakistani border to help U.S. forces. Prior to the GWOT, Pakistan had very few soldiers guarding this border as most of its military was concentrated along its border with India due to prior military conflicts and rising nuclear tensions.<sup>200</sup> If guarded at all, the border had previously been protected by the weak paramilitary Frontier Corps force.<sup>201</sup> To contribute to the GWOT, Pakistan risked weakening its position on its eastern front vis-à-vis India by deploying 140,000 troops along its border with Afghanistan.<sup>202</sup> Musharraf insisted that Pakistan needed to take the lead in ensuring that terrorists and extremists were stopped from fleeing “into the loosely governed, tribal provinces of Pakistan.”<sup>203</sup>

The Pakistani navy was the only navy in South Asia that participated in maritime operations in support of counterterrorism efforts.<sup>204</sup> Coll writes that from 2002 to 2003, Pakistan’s navy “conducted patrols to prevent Al Qaeda members from escaping by sea.”<sup>205</sup> The following year, the Pakistani Navy participated in the U.S.-led Coalition

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<sup>198</sup> Hussain, *U.S.-Pakistan Engagement*, 6.

<sup>199</sup> Musharraf, *In the Line of Fire*, 276.

<sup>200</sup> Soherwordi, “An Estranged Client and an Annoyed Patron,” 59.

<sup>201</sup> The Frontier Corps was comprised of locally recruited tribesmen who were influenced by the same groups that influenced the Taliban; see, for more information: Coll, *Directorate S*, 199.

<sup>202</sup> Soherwordi, “An Estranged Client and an Annoyed Patron,” 59.

<sup>203</sup> Bush, *Decision Points*, 213.

<sup>204</sup> Hussain, *U.S.-Pakistan Engagement*, 6.

<sup>205</sup> Coll, *Directorate S*, 152.

Maritime Campaign Plan, a counter-terrorism operation in the Arabian sea.<sup>206</sup> By 2006, Pakistan's involvement in the GWOT was cemented when, for the first time, the Pakistani navy took command of the multinational Combined Task Force-150.<sup>207</sup>

Finally, the intelligence provided by Pakistan helped prevent terrorists' movement and crippled their network. According to Hussain, by 2005, all of the top Al Qaeda leaders were captured with the help of the Pakistani government.<sup>208</sup> He states that Pakistan "arrested more than seven hundred terror suspects."<sup>209</sup> The Pakistani government continued to support the anti-terrorism efforts by passing legislation aimed to limit the activities of militant organizations. According to Hussain, these actions included the government's decision to freeze "thirty-two bank accounts suspected of belonging to terrorist organizations."<sup>210</sup> He also explains that Pakistan became the first country to install a terrorist-interdiction program in various airports around the country.

## **5. The United States Resumes Economic and Military Aid to Pakistan**

In return for Pakistan's assistance, the United States began pouring financial resources into the country. Zaidi argues that much of the aid the United States gave Pakistan during the war came with little accountability or no strings attached.<sup>211</sup> Coll describes that many U.S. assistance programs served as "legal bribery to Pakistan's generals [so that] Musharraf and [his people] could use the cash for legitimate military purposes, or they could spread it as they wished."<sup>212</sup> He states that the aid money "did not buy love, but it did seem to purchase a certain level of cooperation and tolerance" from Pakistani

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<sup>206</sup> "Pakistan Navy Chronology of Important Event from 1947 to June 2012," Pakistan Navy, accessed April 17, 2020, [https://www.paknavy.gov.pk/chron\\_history.html](https://www.paknavy.gov.pk/chron_history.html).

<sup>207</sup> Combined Task Force-150 is a multinational coalition naval task force that is comprised of 33 nations. Its objective is to monitor, board, inspect, and stop suspect shipping in the GWOT in the Horn of Africa Region; see, for more information: Pakistan Navy, "Pakistan Navy Chronology of Important Event from 1947 to June 2012."

<sup>208</sup> Hussain, *U.S.-Pakistan Engagement*, 6.

<sup>209</sup> Hussain, 6.

<sup>210</sup> Hussain, 6.

<sup>211</sup> Zaidi, "Who Benefits from U.S. Aid to Pakistan?" 107.

<sup>212</sup> Coll, *Directorate S*, 152.

government and military officials — enough for them to support the American counterterrorism strategy.<sup>213</sup>

At the onset of the war, Bush explained that his administration designated Pakistan a major non-NATO ally and therefore lifted economic sanctions that had been in place since his father's administration.<sup>214</sup> He worked with Congress to provide Pakistan with \$3 billion in economic aid, and his administration supported Pakistani goods and services by making them available in U.S. markets. Additionally, he claimed that his administration pushed Congress to appropriate funds to reimburse Pakistan for its operational and logistical support in the GWOT. According to Zaidi, the amount of aid given to Pakistan by the United States between 2002 and 2010 totaled \$19 billion.<sup>215</sup>

The balance of aid allocation during GWOT heavily benefited the Pakistani military. Zaidi shows that between 2002 to 2008, at least 75% of foreign aid money from the United States was “explicitly [allocated] for military purposes,” while 10% funded Pakistani development.<sup>216</sup> In the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) regions, where a majority of the counterterrorism operations occurred, only 1% of U.S. aid, out of the \$5.8 billion, was allocated towards development.<sup>217</sup> The most notable exception to the Pakistani military being the primary beneficiary of U.S. aid was in 2005, when the Bush administration gave Pakistan nearly \$500 million in humanitarian aid relief after 73,000 people died as the result of a 7.6-magnitude earthquake in northern Pakistan.<sup>218</sup>

When the United States lifted economic sanctions in the wake of the GWOT, it also reapproved the sales of arms and military equipment to Pakistan that were suspended when the Pressler Amendment was invoked. Between 2002 and 2007, the United States approved

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<sup>213</sup> Coll, *Directorate S*, 152.

<sup>214</sup> Bush, *Decision Points*, 213; Bush waived the Glenn, Symington, and Pressler sanctions under the authority of the Brownback II legislations; see, for more information: Hussain, *U.S.-Pakistan Engagement*, 5.

<sup>215</sup> Zaidi, “Who Benefits from U.S. Aid to Pakistan?” 105.

<sup>216</sup> Zaidi, 105.

<sup>217</sup> Zaidi, 106.

<sup>218</sup> Bush, *Decision Points*, 214.

more than \$9.7 billion worth of weapon sales to Pakistan to be used for military equipment necessary to engage in counterterrorism operations.<sup>219</sup> In 2010, the United States passed a \$2 billion military aid package that specifically allowed Pakistan to buy American weapons and equipment for four years, until the end of the Obama presidency.

## **6. United States' Growing Frustration with Pakistan and the Emerging GPC**

Despite the extensive cooperation between the United States and Pakistan during GWOT, at the same time, not all the cooperation went well; the United States grew frustrated with Pakistan over the course of the war, which fractured and complicated the relationship. The U.S.-Pakistani partnership deteriorated because the United States was concerned about the continuation of Pakistan's nuclear program. Also, the United States felt that by using U.S. aid and by secretly supporting the Taliban and extremist groups, the Pakistani government prioritized its competition with India over U.S. strategic goals. Although the United States was frustrated, it looked past what it viewed as Pakistan's negligence and continued providing it support and funding because the United States needed Pakistan as a partner in the GWOT.

The first source of U.S. frustration in GWOT was the Pakistani government's continuation of its nuclear program. When Bush became president-elect, Clinton told him in his turnover that in addition to Pakistan's ties to the Taliban and Al Qaeda, he considered the nuclear standoff between India and Pakistan the world's biggest security threat.<sup>220</sup> The program's continuation also led to China expanding its influence in Pakistan. In the 1990s, China had already proved itself as a loyal friend by aiding Pakistan financially and helping it go nuclear. The United States wanted to undermine China's growing influence and relationship with Pakistan and, since the beginning of 2003, had accused the Musharraf regime of undermining U.S. strategy, specifically with regards to Pakistan's nuclear program.<sup>221</sup> Musharraf alleges he was embarrassed when, at a UN Summit, CIA Director

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<sup>219</sup> Zaidi, "Who Benefits from U.S. Aid to Pakistan?" 106.

<sup>220</sup> Clinton, *My Life*, 935.

<sup>221</sup> Ishrat Husain, "Pakistan's Economy and Regional Challenges," *International Studies* 55, no. 3 (July 2018): <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020881718796041>.

George Tenet pointed out that “Pakistan’s P-1 centrifuge was found [by] the IAEA.”<sup>222</sup> In Tenet’s opinion, Pakistan’s nuclear ambitions were caused by its obsession with India, which made it clear that the U.S. government could not rely on Musharraf to fulfill all his promises to engage in counterterrorism operations.

Indeed, Pakistan prioritizing its strategic position in relation to India over the U.S. strategic goal of counterterrorism was the second source of U.S. frustration towards Pakistan. Specifically, the United States believed that Pakistan misused U.S. foreign aid because the resources were not used solely to enhance Pakistan’s counterterrorism capabilities. Moreover, the United States felt Pakistan was undermining U.S. strategic goals due to its close relationship with the Taliban and other extremist groups.

The United States was displeased that Pakistan was using U.S. funding to minimize the threat from India rather than concentrating on GWOT. Until the beginning of the Obama administration in early 2009, the United States generally sent funds to Pakistan without setting expectations because it assumed the financial resources the U.S. was giving to Pakistan were primarily being used for U.S. counterterrorism priorities.<sup>223</sup> Zaidi contends that, in actuality, as early as 2007, following a DOD review of U.S. military aid in Pakistan, the U.S. military did not see significant results compared to the amount of aid that the U.S. government sent Pakistan.<sup>224</sup> He points out that the DOD therefore shifted its aid requirements to be exclusively contingent on supporting the Pakistani military’s counterinsurgency operations in FATA, a region that President Bush himself claimed was essential to U.S. counterinsurgency goals.<sup>225</sup> President Bush recalls that this plan was ineffective because in FATA, and other tribal areas, the Pakistani military did not improve its counterterrorism capabilities because it “trained [primarily] to wage a conventional battle” against India, which was a higher priority for Pakistan.<sup>226</sup> The India Times quoted Ronald Neumann, U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan from 2005–2007, who stated that in

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<sup>222</sup> Musharraf, *In the Line of Fire*, 292.

<sup>223</sup> Zaidi, “Who Benefits from U.S. Aid to Pakistan?” 106.

<sup>224</sup> Zaidi, 106.

<sup>225</sup> Zaidi, 105.

<sup>226</sup> Bush, *Decision Points*, 213.

addition to its failure to meet U.S. counterterrorism training expectations, Pakistan misused U.S. aid by purchasing weapons that were to be used to fight India.<sup>227</sup>

Also undermining U.S. strategy and thereby frustrating the United States was Pakistan's decision to partner with the Taliban and other extremist groups, which likewise was motivated by Pakistan's desire to balance India. Markey echoes the analysis of U.S. policymakers and Pakistan scholars who state that not only did the Pakistani government take "billions of dollars of U.S. aid" to compete with India, but it also actively undermined U.S. goals to combat terrorism by not pursuing extremist groups.<sup>228</sup> Aside from the historical relationship between the ISI and extremist groups, Markey argues that during GWOT, Pakistan undermined U.S. efforts against the Taliban and other extremist groups because Pakistan used these groups as strategic assets to balance against India. Bush too bolsters this assertion, as he believes that Pakistan used the Taliban as "an insurance policy in case America abandoned Afghanistan and India tried to gain influence [in Afghanistan]," which would compromise Pakistan's security by leaving hostile neighbors on both sides of its borders.<sup>229</sup>

Pakistan's leniency towards the Taliban during various periods of GWOT enabled its members to flee to Pakistan's tribal regions, allowing sanctuary cities, such as Peshawar and Quetta, to grow by the end of 2006. Markey explains that these sanctuary cities contributed to an increase in insurgency within Pakistan.<sup>230</sup> Bush reflects that even when the Pakistani government tried not to interfere and allowed border tribes to govern themselves to prevent the recruitment of Taliban operatives, the strategy failed: it created windows of opportunity that enabled the Taliban to increase violence in Pakistan, causing

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<sup>227</sup> "Pakistan Used U.S. Anti-terror Military Aid to Fight India: Former U.S. Diplomat," *Economic Times*, August 1, 2014, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/pakistan-used-us-anti-terror-military-aid-to-fight-india-former-us-diplomat/articleshow/39403438.cms>.

<sup>228</sup> Daniel Markey, "A False Choice in Pakistan," *Foreign Affairs* 86, no. 4 (Summer, 2007): ProQuest.

<sup>229</sup> Bush, *Decision Points*, 214.

<sup>230</sup> Markey, "A False Choice in Pakistan."

Pakistan to reduce its support for the U.S.-led coalition in effort to quell this violence, thus increasing tensions between the United States and Pakistan.<sup>231</sup>

By the middle of 2008, the continuation of Pakistan's nuclear program and its focus on India rather than counterterrorism frustrated President Bush. In retaliation, Bush violated Pakistan's sovereignty by authorizing coalition military units to operate within Pakistani tribal areas without its permission. Bush writes that he used innovative ways to disrupt the Taliban in the tribal areas, including the use of Predator drones that were "capable of conducting video surveillance and firing laser-guided bombs."<sup>232</sup> Zaidi suggest that while these actions were publicly condemned by the Pakistani government, Pakistan "turned a blind eye" and allowed the United States to fight Pakistan's battles so the Pakistani military did not have to do it themselves.<sup>233</sup>

Although frustrated, the United States still sought new ways to support Pakistan so as not to lose its partner at the frontline. Rather than give aid to the Pakistani military, the United States increasingly shifted its approach to supporting Pakistani development projects, in hopes that they would stabilize the country and decrease support for extremists. The United States was also responding to civil critique coming out of Pakistan that the U.S. government supported military regimes.<sup>234</sup> Zaidi shows that the Obama administration "changed the way it has thought about aid [and focused instead on] social [programs] in education, healthcare, infrastructure development, poverty alleviation, and the like."<sup>235</sup> He notes the first step was the passing of the Enhanced Partnership with Pakistan Act of 2009, which committed "\$7.5 billion in non-military aid to Pakistan over a five-year period."<sup>236</sup> This marked the clear beginning of a shift in the nature of U.S. aid, wherein a greater allocation of resources benefited Pakistan's civilian sector.

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<sup>231</sup> Bush, *Decision Points*, 216.

<sup>232</sup> Bush, *Decision Points*, 217.

<sup>233</sup> Zaidi, "Who Benefits from U.S. Aid to Pakistan?" 107.

<sup>234</sup> Lionel Beehner, "Musharraf's Taliban Problem," Council on Foreign Relations, September 11, 2006, <https://www.cfr.org/background/musharrafs-taliban-problem>.

<sup>235</sup> Zaidi, "Who Benefits from U.S. Aid to Pakistan?" 108.

<sup>236</sup> Zaidi, 108.

## 7. The Impact of the GWOT on Pakistan

Pakistan's involvement in the GWOT did not come without cost for the country. Over the period of a decade, from the time GWOT commenced until 2011, more than 21,000 civilians and 8,700 Pakistani troops were killed or wounded in an attempt to curb "the menace of terrorism."<sup>237</sup> More Pakistanis died fighting in the GWOT than any other American ally.<sup>238</sup> Zaidi argues that Pakistan's involvement in the war was also responsible for the assassination of Pakistan's former prime minister, Benazir Bhutto, who was killed by an Al Qaeda-affiliated group that opposed her return to Pakistani politics.<sup>239</sup> According to the USIP, Pakistan knew "its strategic overextension in the region, especially its support for the Taliban and, by implication, Al Qaeda, was untenable" and it would need resources to contain these groups.<sup>240</sup> There is no doubt that Pakistan experienced a backlash from Taliban and affiliated institutions for its efforts during the GWOT. At the same time, other pre-existing structural factors also played a role in creating instability in the country.

### C. DECLINING ECONOMY, NEW ALLIANCES, AND INSTABILITY IN PAKISTAN DURING THE UNIPOLAR WORLD

Throughout the Cold War, during the unipolar system of power distribution, Pakistan dealt with economic, political, and security challenges that destabilized its regimes. These structural factors created Pakistan's need for financial aid and resources that incentivized the country to continue to seek aid from great powers. Although Pakistan enjoyed a close partnership with the United States during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, U.S.-Pakistani relations declined after the Soviets left in 1989 because the United States no longer needed Pakistan. GWOT produced an opportunity to reestablish that alliance.

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<sup>237</sup> Soherwordi, "An Estranged Client and an Annoyed Patron," 59.

<sup>238</sup> Hussain, *U.S.-Pakistan Engagement*, 6.

<sup>239</sup> Zaidi, "Who Benefits from U.S. Aid to Pakistan?" 107.

<sup>240</sup> Hussain, *U.S.-Pakistan Engagement*, 5.

## 1. Impact of Declining Foreign Aid on Economic Instability in Pakistan: 1991 to 2001

Two major considerations caused economic instability in Pakistan from the end of the Cold War until beginning of the GWOT: the halt of U.S. financial aid after the Soviet-Afghan War and the Asian financial crisis. As a result of losing American aid, Pakistan searched for new sources of economic support. Agha shows that since the Pressler Amendment sanctions, Pakistan's government had been unable to attract foreign or local investment.<sup>241</sup>

One major source of economic instability, in addition to the provisions under the Pressler Amendment, were the sanctions Pakistan faced as a result of its first nuclear test on May 28, 1998 in Chagai Hills.<sup>242</sup> In response to this test, the Clinton administration imposed additional sanctions on Pakistan. According to Hussain, Clinton invoked "the 1994 Glenn Amendment, which authorized sanctions on nonnuclear weapon states that detonate nuclear explosions, and the Symington Amendment, which prohibits military and economic assistance to any country that [delivered or received] nuclear assistance."<sup>243</sup> Even before this test, Zaidi says U.S. development assistance to Pakistan in 1998 was 1% of the \$452 million Pakistan had received in 1989.<sup>244</sup>

Throughout the 1990s, the negative impact of the lack of U.S. foreign aid on the country's economy became apparent. Khanna states that, entering the 1990s, Pakistan's per capita income was 20% higher than India's.<sup>245</sup> He adds that the average Pakistani was better fed and clothed than the average Indian, as only 11% of Pakistanis lived below the poverty line. After the 1993 Pressler Amendment sanctions, Pakistan saw its first signs of economic decline when its growth was below the regional average for the first time in over

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<sup>241</sup> Ayesha Siddiqa-Agha, "Political Economy of National Security," *Economic and Political Weekly* 37, no. 44/45 (November 2, 2002): 4548, JSTOR.

<sup>242</sup> Khan, *Eating Grass*, 1.

<sup>243</sup> Hussain, *U.S.-Pakistan Engagement*, 5.

<sup>244</sup> Zaidi, "Who Benefits from U.S. Aid to Pakistan?" 105.

<sup>245</sup> Khanna, "Growth and Crisis," 43-4.

fifteen years.<sup>246</sup> He also states that throughout the 1990s, Pakistan became the region's slowest-growing economy, and poverty significantly rose to 18%.

Several countries did respond to Pakistan's need at this time. In August 1990, Japan assisted Pakistan after its loss of U.S. aid.<sup>247</sup> Pakistan also leveraged its nuclear program to gain support in the Middle East, specifically from Saudi Arabia, as Pakistan became the first majority Islamic country to successfully test a nuclear weapon.<sup>248</sup> Although the Saudis supported Pakistan, Pakistan's nuclear explosion test caused it to face "another serious balance of payments crisis" as a result of economic sanctions and rising international pressure, including from Japan and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).<sup>249</sup>

Also, at this time, China showed its interest in Pakistan. In the absence of U.S. financial resources, China stepped in and provided Pakistan military assistance, which went toward producing Pakistan's bomb. During the 1990s, while Pakistan prioritized its nuclear ambitions, China aided Pakistan with significant military equipment, becoming Pakistan's leading arms supplier.<sup>250</sup> Specifically, the Monterey (now Middlebury) Institute of International Studies reported that China provided "magnets for producing weapons-grade enriched uranium, a furnace for shaping the uranium into a nuclear bomb core, and high-tech diagnostic equipment for nuclear weapons test."<sup>251</sup> A New York Times article suggests that Chinese scientists and technology were integral in the development of potentially seven to twelve nuclear bombs for Pakistan.<sup>252</sup>

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<sup>246</sup> Husain, "Pakistan's Economy and Regional Challenges," 254.

<sup>247</sup> Zaidi, "Who Benefits from U.S. Aid to Pakistan?" 104.

<sup>248</sup> Khan, *Eating Grass*, 1, 10.

<sup>249</sup> Khanna, "Growth and Crisis," 41.

<sup>250</sup> Jamal Afridi and Jayshree Bajoria, "China Pakistan Relations," Council on Foreign Relations, July 6, 2010, <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/china-pakistan-relations>.

<sup>251</sup> Tim Weiner, "Nuclear Anxiety: The Know-How; U.S. and China Helped Pakistan Build Its Bomb," *New York Times*, June 1, 1998, <https://www.nytimes.com/1998/06/01/world/nuclear-anxiety-the-know-how-us-and-china-helped-pakistan-build-its-bomb.html>.

<sup>252</sup> Weiner, "Nuclear Anxiety."

The Asian financial crisis in the mid-1990s limited the ability of several of Pakistan's economic and military supporters, including China and Japan, to continue providing aid and resources.<sup>253</sup> According to Khanna, the crisis further impacted Pakistan's economic conditions during the second half of the decade, when Pakistani "exports were stagnant at around \$8 billion."<sup>254</sup> Ultimately, the combination of the loss of U.S. aid and the Asian financial crisis at the end of the 1990s caused Pakistan to economically suffer and created Pakistan's need to once again seek new alliances.

## **2. Economic Impact on Political Instability in Pakistan: 1991–2001**

At the end of the 1990s, Pakistan's declining economy, due to a lack of stable foreign aid, was making it weaker in comparison to India. Pakistan's domestic economy alone was unable to stabilize the country, so it once again required foreign partners to help relieve the country from its own economic troubles. The approaches taken by Pakistan's civilian leaders, which took over after Zia's unexpected death in 1988, led to friction between itself and the dominant military institution, culminating in Musharraf's coup against Nawaz Sharif's democratically-elected government in 1999.<sup>255</sup> Musharraf sought a relationship with the United States in order to stabilize the military coup by legitimizing the Musharraf regime, and to resolve Pakistan's political instability by receiving economic resources.

Pakistan's military and civilian institutions blamed each other for the loss of U.S. foreign aid. Zaidi suggests that, just as during other points in its history, ambitions of both Pakistan's civilian and military regimes have caused the country's aid dependency, which continued to affect the government's actions during this time. The initial U.S. sanctions under the Pressler Amendment, which began in October 1990, occurred as the civilian PM Nawaz Sharif came into power.<sup>256</sup> Although the military used the Pressler Amendment as a means of blaming the civilian government with the loss of U.S. aid, scholars suggest that

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<sup>253</sup> Small, *The China-Pakistan Axis*, 168.

<sup>254</sup> Khanna, "Growth and Crisis," 41.

<sup>255</sup> Khan, *Eating Grass*, 319–320.

<sup>256</sup> Khan, 256.

the reason for aid suspension was that the United States no longer deemed Pakistan strategically significant to U.S. foreign policy goals.<sup>257</sup> Additionally, as the previous chapter explains, the military regime prior to Sharif made Pakistan dependent on this U.S. aid, and the United States suspended, due to Pakistan's nuclear development, a program that was controlled by the military.<sup>258</sup> After the Pressler Amendment and Pakistan's nuclear development program led the United States to suspend its aid to Pakistan, the civilian government took three approaches that led to further tensions between Pakistan's military and civilian institutions: changing of domestic economic policies, soliciting further aid from the U.S. or other partners, and decreasing the amount of funding the Pakistani military received in the country's national budget.

The first approach the civilian government took was changing Pakistan's domestic economic policies; however, this plan failed and increased tensions between Pakistan's institutions. McCartney states that the stagnation Pakistan experienced during the 1990s was "linked to deflationary macroeconomic [policies] after the late 1980s," specifically with regards to Pakistan's "industry, banking, and public investment."<sup>259</sup> The military believed Pakistan's weakened economy was self-inflicted by economic policy choices, and therefore deemed the civilian-led government unable to satisfactorily meet the needs of the country. For example, Ahmed shows that the civilian-led government's mediocre energy policies, which focused on "resource destructive imported fossil fuels techniques," resulted in an unsustainable energy situation in Pakistan, because they could not keep up as "energy demands increased."<sup>260</sup> Aftab argues that because the energy crisis has had a lasting impact and remains the "largest single drain on Pakistan's economy," there is some validity to the military's claim that the civilian economic policies during the 1990s failed.<sup>261</sup>

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<sup>257</sup> See, for example: Hussain, *U.S.-Pakistan Engagement*, 4–5.

<sup>258</sup> Hussain, *U.S.-Pakistan Engagement*, 5.

<sup>259</sup> Matthew McCartney, *Pakistan the Political Economy of Growth, Stagnation and the State, 1951–2009*, 1st ed. (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2011), 173.

<sup>260</sup> Salik Uddin Ahmed et al., "China Pakistan Economic Corridor and Pakistan's Energy Security: A Meta-Analytic Review," *Energy Policy* 127 (April 2019): 148, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.enpol.2018.12.003>.

<sup>261</sup> Safiya Aftab, "Pakistan's Energy Crisis: Causes, Consequences and Possible Remedies," NOREF: Norwegian Peacebuilding Resource Centre, January 2014, 1, <https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/177484/ade59fba5daf67a11a1c217434abf440.pdf>.

The second approach the civilian government took was to attempt to regain U.S. aid or to obtain financial assistance from other partners. Due to the ineffectiveness of Pakistan's economic policy, the government attempted to regain U.S. aid to meet the needs of its financial dependency; however, this approach also failed, and thus the military further viewed the civilian government as still more ineffective and blamed civilians for the decline in U.S.-Pakistani relations. PM Benazir Bhutto, daughter of the late-Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and PM from 1988 to 1990 and again from 1993 to 1996, was unsuccessful at soliciting the U.S. aid that was necessary to alleviate Pakistan's economic struggles. Khan argues that the younger Bhutto struggled because she had to balance appeasing Washington with maintaining "the strength of Pakistan's nuclear program" to ensure the country's security.<sup>262</sup> He explains that because Bhutto and the military disliked each other, the Pakistani military portrayed her as incompetent due to her lack of success in soliciting further U.S. economic assistance.<sup>263</sup> Because Bhutto's government struggled to solicit aid from the United States, the following Sharif government's solution was to continue this pattern of aid dependency by seeking foreign assistance from Asian partners. However, Pakistan's approach to relying on Asian partners proved unsuccessful due to the Asian financial crisis in 1997. Just after it became apparent that Asia would no longer be a viable option, the United States placed further sanctions on Sharif's government following Pakistan's 1998 nuclear bomb testing.<sup>264</sup>

As Pakistan's debt rose and it became apparent that it would not be able to rely on foreign partners for economic aid, the third approach that the civilian government took was decreasing the amount of funding the military received and reallocating those funds to other portions of the budget. The Pakistani military viewed this option as an attempt by the civilians to curtail the military's power and influence within the country. Civilian leaders first called for the reduction of defense spending in Pakistan's budget in 1988, when Bhutto suggested to regional leaders that South Asian states focus less on military build-up and

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<sup>262</sup> Khan, *Eating Grass*, 253.

<sup>263</sup> Khan, 255.

<sup>264</sup> Hussain, *U.S.-Pakistan Engagement*, 5.

more on development.<sup>265</sup> Agha explains that the change in budget a decade later was not solely the decision of the civilian government; rather, the IMF and World Bank “forced the Pakistani [civilian] government to cap the defense budget so that more could be spent on development.”<sup>266</sup>

The three approaches by the civilian government to resolve Pakistan’s economic troubles during the 1990s created tensions between civilian and military leaders, which led to political instability as the civilians eventually attempted to limit the power of Pakistan’s military institution. According to Khan, the civilian government, under Sharif, had already threatened Pakistan’s military by ousting three successive army chiefs by the end of the 1990s.<sup>267</sup> He explains that Sharif’s attempt to remove Musharraf as chief of the army<sup>268</sup> (by diverting his plane inbound from Sri Lanka to any other country) was the tipping point and cause of the coup. As Musharraf successfully landed in Karachi, political instability developed as General Headquarters issued instructions for the military to take over government administrative roles from the civilians and the army placed “key [civilian] leaders into custody.”<sup>269</sup> After this, Musharraf seized power and began to reach out to the United States to resolve Pakistan’s domestic issues.

Even under a military regime, Pakistan did not experience the benefits of U.S. foreign aid, and political instability reoccurred as Musharraf was forced into exile in 2008. Shah argues that the United States has supported the “Pakistani military’s frequent interventions in domestic politics” because it has had an interest in keeping Pakistan stable.<sup>270</sup> He concludes that this has failed and that by no means could Pakistan’s military sufficiently meet U.S. counterterrorism expectations, the basis for why Pakistan received U.S. aid under Musharraf. Zaidi concludes that despite receiving U.S. aid, Pakistan did not

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<sup>265</sup> “Bhutto Meets Gandhi, Urges Arms Cuts,” *Los Angeles Times*, December 29, 1988, <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1988-12-29-mn-1579-story.html>.

<sup>266</sup> Siddiq-Agha, “Political Economy of National Security,” 4545.

<sup>267</sup> Khan, *Eating Grass*, 320.

<sup>268</sup> This decision was in relation to the Kargil conflict. See, for more information: Khan, 318–20.

<sup>269</sup> Khan, 320.

<sup>270</sup> Aqil Shah, “Getting the Military Out of Pakistani Politics: How Aiding the Army Undermines Democracy,” *Foreign Affairs* 90, no. 3 (Spring 2011): 69, ProQuest.

benefit as the aid did not relieve Pakistan's instability issues.<sup>271</sup> Farooq shows that because Pakistan did not benefit, despite the intentions of military regimes, under their leadership "internal security [has] weakened and the regimes repeatedly [have] led Pakistan into crises, imperiling in security and cohesion."<sup>272</sup> Therefore, despite the military's rationale for the coup, Pakistan's foreign aid dependency during the 1990s is more complex than simply being the fault of the civilian-led government.

As Pakistan sought external support, Pakistan's military institution blamed and accused the civilian leaders of being incapable of achieving sustainable economic, diplomatic, or even security assurances to address Pakistan's instability concerns. Without these assurances, Pakistan's civilian government was forced to reallocate its internal resources, which created friction between the civilian and military institutions. Ultimately, these tensions led to the 1999 coup and contributed to the political turmoil, and instability forced Pakistan's military to use its credibility to guarantee financial aid and resource assurances and political legitimacy from great powers, specifically the United States. In the end, it became apparent that the military regime could not resolve Pakistan's internal issues, even with U.S. aid, which led to Musharraf's exile in 2008.

### **3. Security Imperatives Caused by Economic and Political Instability**

Economic and political instability in Pakistan during the 1990s led to internal and external security imperatives for the country from 1991 to 2017. Internally, Pakistan faced security concerns due to insurgencies in Baluchistan, while externally, the rise of nuclear tensions in South Asia made the region inherently dangerous and led to further instability and created the need for great power partners.

First, as a result of implementing internal development projects to satisfy its economic needs, the Pakistani government once again expanded its presence in the resource-rich region of Baluchistan and, as a consequence, reignited the Baluchi insurgency that sought rights to control their resources. Adeel Khan states that Baluchi

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<sup>271</sup> Zaidi, "Who Benefits from U.S. Aid to Pakistan?" 108–09.

<sup>272</sup> Sadaf Farooq, "Pakistan's Internal Security Dynamics and the Role of Military Regimes," *International Journal on World Peace* 29, no. 3 (Autumn 2012): 51, ProQuest.

nationalists were “infuriated” when Musharraf announced “mega-development projects,” aimed to stimulate the economy, in Baluchistan — most notably, Gwadar Port.<sup>273</sup> In 2002, according to Khan, an agreement was signed between the Pakistani and Chinese governments, without Baluchi representation, authorizing China to take the lead in building the port. As a result of the United States distancing itself from Pakistan during the 1990s, Pakistan became dependent on China. He continues that this agreement triggered fear of a government take-over amongst the Baluchi population, and, in retaliation, Baluchi nationalists attacked Chinese workers, causing Musharraf to respond militarily to quell the resistance. In addition, Khan explains that even without the Pakistani government actively expanding its influence in Baluchistan, due to ethnic reasons, the “Baloch always [have felt] more alienated when there is army rule because [the Baloch] have [never had] representation in the Punjabi-dominated army.”<sup>274</sup> Domestic insurgency forced Musharraf to launch military action in Baluchistan in 2005 for the fifth time in the country’s history.<sup>275</sup> The end result was the displacement of 84,000 people from their homes and the killing of Akbar Bugti, one of the “three nationalist leaders” whom Musharraf resented.<sup>276</sup> With such large domestic unrest, Pakistan relied on the partnerships with great power during the GWOT to not only successfully end the resistance, but to provide the requisite resources to deal with domestic post-conflict reconciliation.

Secondly, the lack of U.S. economic aid and support during the 1990s forced Pakistan to complete its nuclear weapon development program, as a means to ensure its security against India. Feroz Khan argues that Pakistan’s obsession with building a nuclear bomb caused it to experience a security dilemma, therefore making Pakistan less stable and safe.<sup>277</sup> Jaswant Singh, India’s then–defense minister, defended India’s nuclear bomb test on May 11, 1998, by arguing that the world was nuclearizing and that India felt threatened by Pakistan, which was aggressively trying to go nuclear with the help of another long-

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<sup>273</sup> Khan, “Renewed Ethnonationalist Insurgency,” 1078.

<sup>274</sup> Khan, 1078.

<sup>275</sup> Khan, 1072.

<sup>276</sup> Khan, 1082.

<sup>277</sup> Khan, *Eating Grass*, 1–14.

time India foe, China.<sup>278</sup> This action sparked Pakistan's response seventeen days later when it tested its nuclear weapon. These events made South Asia a nuclear region, and scholars began to question the implications the nuclear tests might have on deterrence theory, since both countries were historically prone to fighting one another.<sup>279</sup> To help lower nuclear tensions in the region, Pakistan relied on great powers for diplomatic support to quell its fears of India.

#### **D. ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION**

In the context of a unipolar system of power distribution, when Pakistan required external support, it ultimately still formed an alliance with the United States to balance India and to alleviate its economic, political, and security stability concerns. Likewise, when the United States needed Pakistan to achieve its strategic goals, it put aside its issues with Pakistan to seek a strategically situated partner that would be essential to the United States' GWOT strategy of counterterrorism. There are three key takeaways from the dynamics between Pakistan and the United States within the context of the unipolar system.

First, Pakistan has the military capability to effectively contribute to U.S. strategic goals, which makes it a desirable partner. Unlike in the Cold War, when the United States primarily needed Pakistan due to its location and influence amongst other groups (e.g., the mujahedeen), during the GWOT, the United States relied on Pakistan's military to actively engage in conflict to defeat and limit the power of terrorists and extremists.

Second, due to previous experience and distrust, Pakistan was willing to undermine its partnership with the United States if the Pakistani government perceived its actions maximized its own strategic goals; as the GWOT progressed, while the United States wanted Pakistan to drive out the Taliban, Pakistan only focused on Al Qaeda, which Pakistan viewed as the bigger threat. Additionally, Pakistan used many of the resources

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<sup>278</sup> Jaswant Singh, "Against Nuclear Apartheid," *Foreign Affairs* 77, no. 5 (Autumn 1998): <https://doi.org/10.2307/20049049>.

<sup>279</sup> Sumit Ganguly and S. Paul Kapur, *India, Pakistan, and the Bomb: Debating Nuclear Stability in South Asia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).

given by the United States to prepare its army to fight conventionally (in response to India), rather than honing military training and doctrine to focus on counterterrorism efforts.

Lastly, Pakistan searched for new partners in the absence of U.S. support. When the United States suspended aid, Pakistan received assistance from Saudi Arabia, Japan, and, most notably, China. After the return of U.S. aid due to the GWOT, China still provided Pakistan economic support. While almost all of U.S. aid benefited Pakistan's military, Chinese aid differed in that it predominantly focused on development of Pakistan — a unique difference to be mindful of in the future.

Pakistan's ability to be an effective partner for great powers, its tendencies to undermine its partners to meet its own strategic needs, and its willingness to search for new powers all have implications for the new emerging competition between great powers. This is important as the world prepares for the multipolar system of power distribution with the resurgence of Russia and the rise of China — the dynamics of which are explored in the next chapter.

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#### **IV. PAKISTAN IN THE NEW ERA OF MULTIPOLAR SYSTEM OF POWER**

While the United States was engaged in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT), Russia and China were able to expand and challenge the American-led world order, giving rise to the multipolar system of power distribution. Their geographical locations and competing interests allowed them to expand their influence throughout the South Asian region, leading to a deepening partnership with Pakistan. Their presence in South Asia threatens the United States' longstanding influence in the region; therefore, the United States has sought to expand its relationship with India to balance out Russian and Chinese influence. The United States' decision to reach out to India has adversely affected U.S.-Pakistani relations, placing Pakistan at the center of these great powers' conflicting interests in South Asia.

This chapter begins by describing the strategic goals of each great power to effectively compete in this new system of power distribution. Next, it describes Pakistan's position in the strategic goals of each great power. Then the chapter examines the continuing instability in Pakistan, which, as in the past, causes its leadership to reach out to great powers for support and resources. Based on these considerations, this chapter concludes that in comparison to the bipolar and the unipolar systems of power distribution, Pakistan is less likely to give its full allegiance to the United States and more likely to balance with Russia and/or China unless the United States supplies it with the resources and support it requires to resolve its domestic and security issues.

##### **A. RESURGENCE OF RUSSIA AND THE RISE OF CHINA**

Russia's and China's strategic decisions to expand their influence threaten the United States' current international system of order. Both countries consider South Asia a region vital to achieving their objectives and, thus, they expand and formalize their relations with Pakistan. During the Cold War, the Soviet Union often offered its assistance to India, but it remained estranged from Pakistan while the country was a U.S. ally, especially during the Soviet-Afghan War. Currently, Russia, under Vladimir Putin, has increasingly sought to

build a relationship with Pakistan. China, meanwhile, has been an ally of Pakistan since the 1960s, but in the past decade it has expanded this relationship. In response to the rise of these powers and their new alignments, the United States “pivoted to Asia” in 2015, prioritizing its relationship with India in an effort to compete with the other two great powers.<sup>280</sup>

### 1. Russia’s Strategic Goals in South Asia

Currently, some experts argue that Russia intends to reemerge as a great power that challenges the United States’ hegemony. Russia’s resurgence is linked to its loss of power and influence after the Cold War, an increased feeling of inferiority to the West, and the sense that the United States’ liberal world order and the spread of democracy are encroaching on its sphere of influence,<sup>281</sup> threatening its interests. Russia views the United States as its primary foe and the great power that most threatens its ability to regain global prominence. Kofman states that Russia measures itself “against the United States [when] seeking recognition, attention, or pursuing a deal” with smaller states.<sup>282</sup> He adds that since the end of the Cold War, Russia has struggled to accept its global standing because it believes its current status was “imposed [by the Western world] at a time of Russian weakness.”<sup>283</sup>

Now, Russia feels confident in its ability to play a major role in the international community. Russia’s current strategy is to undermine the U.S.-led liberal world order.<sup>284</sup> Most recently, in March 2020, Russian foreign minister Sergey Lavrov remarked that the

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<sup>280</sup> “Obama’s Pivot to Asia Remains Unfinished,” *Financial Times*, May 25, 2016, ProQuest.

<sup>281</sup> According to Kofman, since Russia has “no stake in the current European security framework, Russia’s leadership has instead pursued a traditional strategy for attaining security via establishment of buffer states against political-economic or military blocks” because Russian strategists have come to the consensus that “Russia must never be placed in a position again to fight an industrial scale conflict on its own territory.” See, for more information: Michael Kofman, “Drivers of Russia’s Grand Strategy,” *Frisvarld Brief* no. 6 (2019): 2, <https://frivarld.se/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Drivers-of-Russian-Grand-Strategy.pdf>.

<sup>282</sup> Kofman, “Drivers of Russia’s Grand Strategy,” 2.

<sup>283</sup> Kofman, 2.

<sup>284</sup> Tom O’Connor, “Russia: World No Longer Trusts U.S. to Lead, It’s Time Others Step in to Stop ‘Blackmail and Pressure,’” *Newsweek*, April 12, 2019, [https://www.newsweek.com/russia-world-no-longer-trusts-us-1394848?fbclid=IwAR1BXuG4O47dxmqkKJehrjr67\\_OCMCav-QK3R8bK5\\_X6KYRKZm8ei41rG7E](https://www.newsweek.com/russia-world-no-longer-trusts-us-1394848?fbclid=IwAR1BXuG4O47dxmqkKJehrjr67_OCMCav-QK3R8bK5_X6KYRKZm8ei41rG7E).

new multipolar environment is shifting to “East from West.”<sup>285</sup> He stated that this shift has created the opportunity for Russia to regain global influence, as Western-led globalization is “losing its attractiveness and is no more viewed as a perfect model for all.”<sup>286</sup> Therefore, Russia seeks to undermine U.S. influence abroad by promoting its conservative belief that states should retain more control over their sovereign rights, contradicting the view of the liberal world order.<sup>287</sup>

To achieve its strategy, Russia has increased its focus on South Asia. With China’s economic investments in Pakistan and the United States’ strengthened partnership with Russia’s long-time ally India, Russia seeks to re-exert its influence in South Asia to compete in the multipolar world by expanding its relationships in the region.<sup>288</sup>

## **2. China’s Strategic Goals in South Asia**

As with Russia, China’s emergence as a great power is based on its strategy of countering American unilateralism and the liberal world order. During the GWOT, China increased its economic and military presence globally while it relied on the United States to take the lead in combatting terrorism; China’s involvement remained low for fear that participation in the conflict would incite unrest among its Uighur population.<sup>289</sup> At the same time, China used U.S. presence in Afghanistan to expand its trade routes through Afghanistan.<sup>290</sup>

Currently, in nearly every political and economic category China is either leading or second only to the United States in the world; , a Brookings Institute report states that China has the world’s second largest economy, defense budget, and technology sector and leads the

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<sup>285</sup> O’Connor, “Russia: World No Longer Trusts U.S.”

<sup>286</sup> O’Connor.

<sup>287</sup> O’Connor.

<sup>288</sup> Kofman, “Drivers of Russia’s Grand Strategy,” 2.

<sup>289</sup> Afridi and Bajoria, “China-Pakistan Relations.”

<sup>290</sup> Khalid Rahman, “The Challenge of Terrorism and War on Terror: Chinese Response,” *Policy Perspectives* 9, no. 2 (Winter 2012): 12, ProQuest.

world in population, importing energy, and carbon emissions.<sup>291</sup> Based on this evidence, the report claims that China desires “the ability to project hard power [at a global level], in addition to the political and economic influence it can already wield” as the United States did in the unipolar world.<sup>292</sup> According to Jones, under Xi Jinping, China today is “more assertive, more nationalist, and more ideological” in pursuing its desires to project power.<sup>293</sup>

Xi Jinping’s announcement in 2013 of China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) illustrates China’s ambitions. The BRI, China’s grand strategy, is a series of global infrastructure projects designed to expand China’s economic, political, and military influence.<sup>294</sup> The BRI is important for China because the initiative is at the center of Xi Jinping’s foreign policy, as it has opened up China to new markets and energy resources and provided numerous other benefits.<sup>295</sup> Rolland explains that not only is the BRI a “proactive effort [by China] to shape [Asia, and the world,] in accordance with Beijing’s worldview and broader strategic objectives” but also that China uses the BRI to “persuade other countries of the legitimacy of [its] claim to leadership.”<sup>296</sup> Analysts at the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) describe the project as a “vast collection of development and investment initiatives [that] significantly [expand] China’s economic and political influence.”<sup>297</sup> They also explain that other global powers view the BRI as a way for China to expand its military presence overseas, raising the alarm in the United States and throughout Asia.

South Asia is an important region for China as it seeks to achieve its strategic goals through the BRI. Singh explains that because South Asia sits “at the intersection point of the China-proposed Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Maritime Silk Road,” its

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<sup>291</sup> Bruce Jones, “China and the Return of Great Power Strategic Competition,” Brookings, February 2020, 4, <https://www.brookings.edu/research/china-and-the-return-of-great-power-strategic-competition/>.

<sup>292</sup> Jones, “China and the Return,” 7.

<sup>293</sup> Jones, 4.

<sup>294</sup> Nadège Rolland, *China’s Eurasian Century? Political and Strategic Implications of the Belt and Road Initiative*, National Bureau of Asian Research (2017): 148–9, [muse.jhu.edu/book/52595](https://muse.jhu.edu/book/52595).

<sup>295</sup> Rolland, *China’s Eurasian Century*, xi.

<sup>296</sup> Rolland, *China’s Eurasian Century*, 148–49.

<sup>297</sup> Andrew Chatzky and James McBride, “China’s Massive Belt and Road Initiative,” Council on Foreign Relations, January 28, 2020, <https://www.cfr.org/backgroundunder/chinas-massive-belt-and-road-initiative>.

strategic location is important for China's plans to expand its global presence beyond Asia.<sup>298</sup> However, according to Singh, China's increased maritime presence in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) has put it at odds with its longtime rival India, which has made countering China a mutual strategic goal between the United States and India.

### **3. The United States' Strategic Goals in South Asia**

The United States' great power status dates back to the Cold War, during the bipolar and unipolar worlds of power distribution. According to the Brookings Institute, the United States leads the world in its economy, military strength, diplomatic network, and energy exports and maintains the world's premier institutions in the fields of technology, research, and higher education.<sup>299</sup> In the multipolar world of power distribution, the United States' struggle is to maintain its current liberal world order and remain competitive despite the rise of revisionist powers, which seek to challenge its hegemony.

In recognition of this development, at the end of 2017, the Trump administration released its National Security Strategy (NSS), which acknowledged that Russia and China are challenging "American power, influence, and interests, [in an attempt] to erode American security and prosperity."<sup>300</sup> The strategy states that both Russia and China "are determined to make [their] economies less free and less fair, to grow their militaries, and to control information and data to repress their societies and expand their influence."<sup>301</sup> It therefore articulates that to compete in the multipolar world, the United States will "promote American prosperity" by strengthening the country's economy, preserving peace through military strength, and expanding American influence to advance its interests and benefit humanity.<sup>302</sup>

The United States considers South Asia to be an integral part of this security strategy, as South Asia contains a fifth of the world's population, some of the world's

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<sup>298</sup> Antara Ghosal Singh, "China's Vision for the Belt and Road in South Asia," *The Diplomat*, March 1, 2019, ProQuest.

<sup>299</sup> Jones, "China and the Return," 4.

<sup>300</sup> White House, *National Security Strategy*, 25.

<sup>301</sup> White House, 2.

<sup>302</sup> White House, *National Security Strategy*, 4.

fastest-growing economies, and nuclear powers and is a site of tensions that threaten global stability.<sup>303</sup> The United States also remains concerned about the threat of terrorism and sees this region as a safe haven and stronghold for terrorist activities; indeed, nearly a fifth of all terrorist groups listed by the United States are based out of South Asia.<sup>304</sup>

The NSS describes the United States' whole-of-government approach to achieve its goals in the region, including political, economic, and military and security considerations. Politically, the American strategy is to strengthen its partnership with India, which has increased its "leadership role in Indian Ocean security," and to press Pakistan to "intensify its counterterrorism efforts."<sup>305</sup> Economically, the strategy calls for the U.S. government to "promote prosperity and economic linkages that will bolster connectivity and trade" throughout South Asia.<sup>306</sup> Militarily, the strategy states that the United States is committed to supporting the South Asian governments in combatting the terrorism that threatens enduring peace in the region.

## **B. THE CURRENT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PAKISTAN AND THE WORLD'S GREAT POWERS**

Given these global powers' plans to compete in South Asia, how is Pakistan currently situated in and affected by those plans? What is the current state of Pakistan's relationship with the two emerging powers, Russia and China, and the former sole global hegemon, the United States? As this section explains, the answers are uncertain and complex.

### **1. Current State of Russo-Pakistani Relations**

Historically, Russia's relationship with India drove its decisions in South Asia. Moscow's desire for a robust relationship with New Delhi was due to India's rising international stature, brought about by its more assertive and engaged foreign policy under

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<sup>303</sup> White House, 50.

<sup>304</sup> White House, 50.

<sup>305</sup> White House, 50.

<sup>306</sup> White House, 50.

Indira Gandhi.<sup>307</sup> Currently, Moscow struggles to maintain a close partnership with New Delhi due to the rise of the Indo-U.S. friendship, driven in part by India's concern about the rise of Chinese influence in South Asia.<sup>308</sup> In order to balance expanding Indo-U.S. ties and regain its presence in South Asia, Russia now seeks to form a partnership with Pakistan.

Since 2011, as U.S.-Pakistani relations have deteriorated due to the Osama bin Laden raid and other American concerns regarding Pakistan's ability to control various Taliban sects that hide out in Pakistan, Russia has engaged in a partnership with Pakistan. Russia's military capabilities have been the primary enabler of this partnership due to its relative economic weakness compared to the other great powers, which hinders its ability to significantly contribute to Pakistan's economic development.<sup>309</sup> Russia and Pakistan have thus forged a strong military partnership, such that Pakistan relies on Russia for military sales, training, and cooperation.

In 2012, to strengthen the military relationship between the countries, Pakistan's General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani became the first Pakistani army chief to visit Moscow.<sup>310</sup> Kayani's trip was followed by Russian foreign minister Sergey Lavrov's trip to Pakistan.<sup>311</sup> These talks contributed to Russia's decision to lift its arms embargo on Pakistan and begin negotiations to sell Russian Mi-35 Hind attack helicopters to Pakistan two years later, in 2014.<sup>312</sup> This move came at a time when India, then the world's largest

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<sup>307</sup> Igor Torbakov, "The 'Southern Vector': Russia's Strategic Interests in Central and South Asia" in *Does South Asia Exist?* ed. Rafiq Dossani, Daniel Sneider, and Vikram Sood (Prospects for Regional Integration, 2010) 285.

<sup>308</sup> Torbakov, "The 'Southern Vector,'" 276.

<sup>309</sup> Stephen Blank, "Russia's 'Pivot to Asia': The Multilateral Dimension," NBR Working Paper, (Seattle, WA: National Bureau of Asian Research, June 28, 2017), 15, [http://nbr.org/downloads/pdfs/eta/workingpaper\\_Blank\\_062817.pdf](http://nbr.org/downloads/pdfs/eta/workingpaper_Blank_062817.pdf).

<sup>310</sup> Kamran Yousaf, "Shift in policy? Army Chief to Make 'Historic' Moscow Trip," *Express Tribune*, September 3, 2012, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/430434/shift-in-policy-army-chief-to-make-historic-moscow-trip/>.

<sup>311</sup> "Pakistan to Seek Early Rescheduling of Russian President's Visit," *Express Tribune*, October 4, 2012, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/446669/pakistan-to-seek-early-rescheduling-of-russian-presidents-visit/>.

<sup>312</sup> "Russia Lifts Arms Embargo to Pakistan," *DAWN*, June 02, 2014, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1110131>.

buyer of arms, was becoming less reliant on Russian military supplies and buying more Western arms as part of its military modernization plans.<sup>313</sup> Russian arms sales to Pakistan continued, and in August 2017, Pakistan purchased four Mi-35M variant attack helicopters.<sup>314</sup>

Later that year, Russia and Pakistan signed a defense cooperation agreement, marking a “milestone” in the military partnership between the countries and setting the foundation of numerous joint Russian-Pakistani military exercises.<sup>315</sup> Gady states that Russia and Pakistan held their first ever military exercise, Friendship, in September 2016, with over 200 participants from both militaries.<sup>316</sup> He explains that not only did Pakistan gain from the experience, but because the training took place in a mountainous region, it is likely that Russia gained valuable counterinsurgency operations experience from the Pakistanis, who were active participants during the GWOT. The benefit to Russia of a partnership with Pakistan has thus extended beyond gaining influence in the region, and Russia continues to participate in the Friendship exercises.<sup>317</sup>

Moreover, beginning in 2015, Russia and Pakistan’s military cooperation extended into the maritime domain. Both countries’ navies participated in the Arabian Monsoon, a counter-narcotics exercise in the North Arabian Sea.<sup>318</sup> Two years later, the Russians, along with the other two great powers, participated in the 37-nation Pakistani AMAN naval

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<sup>313</sup> DAWN, “Russia Lifts Arms Embargo to Pakistan.”

<sup>314</sup> Franz-Stefan Gady, “Pakistan Receives 4 Advanced Attack Helicopters from Russia,” *The Diplomat*, August 29, 2017, <https://thediplomat.com/2017/08/pakistan-receives-4-advanced-attack-helicopters-from-russia/>.

<sup>315</sup> “Pakistan, Russia Sign ‘Milestone’ Military Cooperation Pact,” *Defense News*, November 20, 2014, <https://www.defensenews.com/global/asia-pacific/2014/11/20/pakistan-russia-sign-milestone-military-cooperation-pact/>.

<sup>316</sup> Franz-Stefan Gady, “Russia and Pakistan to Hold First Ever Military Exercise,” *The Diplomat*, September 14, 2016, <https://thediplomat.com/2016/09/russia-and-pakistan-to-hold-first-ever-military-exercise/>.

<sup>317</sup> Franz-Stefan Gady, “Pakistan, Russia to Hold Joint Military Exercise,” *The Diplomat*, Oct 17, 2018, ProQuest.

<sup>318</sup> “Pak-Russian Navy Drill Arabian Monsoon Concludes,” *Daily Times*, December 9, 2015, <https://dailytimes.com.pk/97097/pak-russian-navy-drill-arabian-monsoon-concludes/>.

exercise.<sup>319</sup> These exercises led to the signing of a naval cooperation agreement between Russian and Pakistan in the summer of 2018, when Pakistani vice admiral Kaleem Shaukat visited Russia to meet with the naval commander-in-chief, Admiral Vladimir Ianovich Korolev.<sup>320</sup> This cooperation agreement coincided with the Russian military for the first time allowing Pakistani military officers to train in Russian institutions, deepening Russian-Pakistani military relations.<sup>321</sup>

Although Russia is economically weaker compared to its military strength, it has still attempted to contribute to Pakistan's economic development by establishing a free trade agreement and currency swap, intended to boost trade between the two countries, and by financing Pakistan's trade and energy projects, such as the CASA-1000 project.<sup>322</sup> Russia has also offered economic assistance in other areas, including the Pakistan Steel Mills, the production capacity of which Russia has helped enhance.<sup>323</sup>

Over the past decade, Russia and Pakistan have improved their relationship, which was nonexistent during the Cold War. While Russia has made economic commitments to Pakistan since 2011, the bulk of this relationship is based on defense cooperation. As U.S.-Pakistani relations soured at the beginning of the decade, Pakistan has turned to Russia as a seller of arms. Throughout the decade, their militaries have been trying to become interoperable, evidenced not only by the number of joint military exercises but also by the consistency with which they have taken place.

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<sup>319</sup> Franz-Stefan Gady, "Pakistan Kicks off Large Multinational Naval Exercise," *The Diplomat*, February 11, 2017, <https://thediplomat.com/2017/02/pakistan-kicks-off-large-multinational-naval-exercise/>.

<sup>320</sup> Vinay Kaura, "Russia Signs Naval Cooperation Deal with Pakistan: Recent Warmth in Moscow-Islamabad Ties May Worry New Delhi," *Firstspot*, August 3, 2018, <https://www.firstpost.com/world/russia-warming-up-to-pakistan-is-the-elephant-in-the-room-in-moscow-new-delhi-ties-india-must-safeguard-long-standing-relations-4888711.html>.

<sup>321</sup> "Pakistan Military Officers to Get Training in Russia," AP News, August 11, 2018, <https://apnews.com/d5f6af6dee9f48a6afaec010669984a2>.

<sup>322</sup> See, for more information on the CASA-1000 project: "Pakistan, Russia to Go for FTA, Currency Swap Agreement," *Express Tribune*, November 8, 2011, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/289029/pakistan-russia-to-go-for-fta-currency-swap-agreement/>.

<sup>323</sup> *Express Tribune*, "Pakistan, Russia to Go for FTA, Currency Swap Agreement."

## 2. Current State of Sino-Pakistani Relations

China's relationship with Pakistan is the most consistent and stable of all three great powers'.<sup>324</sup> This relationship will likely remain consistent due to the shift of alliances in South Asia, specifically as the United States has grown a stronger partnership with India, leading China to take an adversarial posture towards India.<sup>325</sup> China believes that with the weakening U.S.-Pakistani relationship and increased tensions with India, Pakistan will look to China as its primary great power partner.

Since the 1990s, China has been involved in major infrastructural projects in Pakistan, including the construction of the Gwadar Port complex. According to CFR, as China has provided a majority of the labor and capital necessary to build the port, it gains "strategic access to the Persian Gulf,"<sup>326</sup> which, the CFR explains, provides China's Xinjiang Province, a landlocked and natural resource-rich region, access to the Arabian Sea. However, as of March 2020, a Bloomberg article concluded that the port has not lived up to its original expectations, as the airport is three years overdue and there are too few berths at the port to keep up with the heavy flow of traffic.<sup>327</sup>

Nevertheless, China has proved to be a reliable provider of economic and military support to Pakistan over the course of their relationship. The most important manifestation of this support is the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which includes numerous energy and infrastructure projects. CPEC, launched in August 2015, serves as the "flagship" program of China's larger BRI goals. A report on Pakistan's current global affairs, prepared by Pakistan's Institute for Peace Studies, credits CPEC with helping "remove the impression that Pakistan has limited geo-economic choices except [for] the U.S."<sup>328</sup> When the program

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<sup>324</sup> John W. Garver, *Protracted Contest: Sino-Indian Rivalry in the Twentieth Century* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2011), 187.

<sup>325</sup> Small, *The China-Pakistan Axis*, 178.

<sup>326</sup> "The port is just 180 nautical miles from the Strait of Hormuz, through which 40 percent of all globally traded oil is shipped." See for more information: Afridi and Bajoria, "China-Pakistan Relations."

<sup>327</sup> Sheridan Prasso, "One of China's Most Ambitious Projects Becomes a Corridor to Nowhere," Bloomberg, March 2, 2020, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2020-03-02/a-china-belt-and-road-project-becomes-a-corridor-to-nowhere>.

<sup>328</sup> "Pakistan in Changing World Order," Pak Institute for Peace Studies Islamabad, January 2019, 7, <https://www.pakpips.com/web/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Pakistan-in-changing-world-order.pdf>.

was officially launched, its projects were worth \$46 billion.<sup>329</sup> After its initial investment, CPEC investment increased to \$55 billion, and, by 2017, China had approved an additional \$7 billion to bring the program's total investment to \$62 billion.<sup>330</sup> According to Hillman, McCalpin, and Brock, as of April 2020, about 32 out of 122 of China's CPEC projects have been completed.<sup>331</sup>

One of CPEC's most significant contributions to Pakistan's economic development has been in the energy sector. A majority of China's projects in Pakistan are energy sector related as opposed to industrialization projects.<sup>332</sup> China's commitment to Pakistan's energy development dates back to 2010, when it announced that it would build two nuclear reactors in Pakistan.<sup>333</sup> Since then, China has helped build more reactors in Pakistan, with the most recent scheduled to be completed by the end of 2020.<sup>334</sup>

In addition to contributing to development projects, China continues to stimulate Pakistan's economy via various trade agreements. The CFR report states that an initial comprehensive trade agreement, initiated in 2008, gave each country "unprecedented market access to the other" and increased trade between China and Pakistan by \$8 billion in just two years.<sup>335</sup> This agreement set the groundwork for the second phase of the China-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement, signed on December 1, 2019, which deepens trade and protects domestic industries in each country.<sup>336</sup>

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<sup>329</sup> Salman Siddiqui, "CPEC Investment Pushed from \$55b to \$62b," *Express Tribune*, April 12, 2017, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1381733/cpec-investment-pushed-55b-62b/>.

<sup>330</sup> Siddiqui, "CPEC Investment Pushed."

<sup>331</sup> Jonathan E. Hillman and Maesea McCalpin, "The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor at Five," Center for Strategic and International Studies, April 2, 2020, 1, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/china-pakistan-economic-corridor-five>.

<sup>332</sup> Hillman and McCalpin, "The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor at Five."

<sup>333</sup> Afridi and Bajoria, "China-Pakistan Relations."

<sup>334</sup> "China Completes Outer Dome on Overseas Hualong One Reactor in Pakistan," Reuters, June 18, 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-nuclearpower-pakistan/china-completes-outer-dome-on-overseas-hualong-one-reactor-in-pakistan-idUSKCN1TK047>.

<sup>335</sup> Afridi and Bajoria, "China-Pakistan Relations."

<sup>336</sup> Dorcas Wong, "China-Pakistan FTA Phase-II: Reduced Tariffs, New Safeguard Measures," China Briefing, January 8, 2020, <https://www.china-briefing.com/news/china-pakistan-fta-phase-2-reduced-tariffs-safeguard-measures-introduced/>.

According to the CFR report, the various sources of Chinese economic support to Pakistan are essential, as Pakistan “continues to face economic woes with falling foreign investment, a weakening currency, and an underperforming stock market.”<sup>337</sup> The think tank asserts that China’s financial power, due to its large foreign-exchange reserves and ability to serve as a creditor, can help relieve Islamabad’s financial issues, specifically by fulfilling its need for cash to relieve its deepening balance-of-payment deficit.

In addition to providing economic support to Pakistan, China also supports Pakistan’s military by selling it equipment and strengthening it through participation in joint military exercises. According to Afridi and Bajoria, many of the ballistic missiles in Pakistan’s arsenal are “modifications of Chinese imports.”<sup>338</sup> They note that many Chinese parts are also used in some of the aircraft in Pakistan’s air force. Most notably, the two countries worked together to produce the JF-17 Thunder combat aircraft, the Block III variant of which made its maiden flight on December 15, 2019, and thereafter entered the Pakistani fleet.<sup>339</sup> As of late 2019, China has also mentored Pakistan to become an affordable arms exporter itself, servicing growing militaries such as Turkey and Myanmar.<sup>340</sup>

Furthermore, China and Pakistan participate in joint military exercises. Like the Russians and Americans, China participated in Pakistan’s AMAN naval exercise in 2017.<sup>341</sup> In early 2019, Pakistan completed the Warrior-VI, a three-week special forces joint training with China focused on counterterrorism operations.<sup>342</sup> As recently as January 2020, the states completed a joint naval exercise, focused on terrorism and crime. The level of

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<sup>337</sup> Afridi and Bajoria, “China-Pakistan Relations.”

<sup>338</sup> Afridi and Bajoria.

<sup>339</sup> Franz-Stefan Gady, “Pakistan’s JF-17 Block III Fighter Jet Makes Maiden Flight,” *The Diplomat*, January 6, 2020, ProQuest.

<sup>340</sup> Farhan Bokhari, “With China As its Mentor, Pakistan Triples Arms Exports,” *Nikkei Asian Review*, November 9, 2019, <https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/With-China-as-its-mentor-Pakistan-triples-arms-exports>.

<sup>341</sup> Gady, “Pakistan Kicks off Large Multinational Naval Exercise.”

<sup>342</sup> “Warrior-VI: Pakistan-China Joint Military Drills Culminate Near Kharian,” *Daily Pakistan*, January 7, 2019, [http://english.pladaily.com.cn/view/2019-01/07/content\\_9397803.htm](http://english.pladaily.com.cn/view/2019-01/07/content_9397803.htm).

complexity of the exercises highlighted that they were more than just a symbol of friendship.<sup>343</sup>

China's relationship with Pakistan, however, does not come without concerns. China continues to struggle with extremism inside Pakistan that targets Chinese workers: in 2012, a Chinese woman was shot by the Pakistani Taliban in Peshawar; in 2013, a bomb in Karachi killed Chinese engineers; in 2017, two Chinese nationals were executed by the Islamic State; and in 2018, Pakistani separatist militants stormed the Chinese consulate in Karachi.<sup>344</sup> China is also concerned that Chinese Uighurs could use Pakistani tribal regions as a safe haven to radicalize, threatening China's internal security.<sup>345</sup> Pakistan seeks to address China's fears by cooperating with the Chinese government and helping it prevent Uighurs from using Pakistan as a launchpad for potential attacks on the Chinese homeland. In 2009, Islamabad handed over nine Uighur militants to China who were operating in Pakistan.<sup>346</sup>

These concerns, though, seem not to affect the prospect that Sino-Pakistani relations will continue to grow. Unlike other leaders in the international community, Pakistani Prime Minister (PM) Imran Khan has refused to criticize China for its treatment of the Uighur population.<sup>347</sup> Pakistani ambassador to the United States Husain Haqqani explains that Pakistan provides China "a low-cost secondary deterrent to India [while providing Pakistan] a high-value guarantor of security against India."<sup>348</sup> From China's perspective, the closer India moves to the United States, the more willing China is to overlook its concerns with Pakistan. Not only does Pakistan's location along the Arabian Sea provide China with a

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<sup>343</sup> Rajeswari Pillai Rajagopalan, "China-Pakistan Naval Drills: More Than Just Symbolism," *The Diplomat*, January 10, 2020, ProQuest.

<sup>344</sup> Small, *The China-Pakistan Axis*, 115, 171; "Islamic State Claims It Killed Two Chinese Nationals in Pakistan," *Dow Jones Institutional News*, June 8, 2017, ProQuest; Diaa Hadid, "Militants, Police Killed in Failed Attack on Chinese Consulate in Karachi," NPR, November 23, 2018, <https://www.npr.org/2018/11/23/670369796/militants-police-killed-in-failed-attack-on-chinese-consulate-in-karachi>.

<sup>345</sup> Afridi and Bajoria, "China-Pakistan Relations."

<sup>346</sup> Small, *The China-Pakistan Axis*, 147.

<sup>347</sup> Sadanand Dhume, "Pakistan Gives a Pass to China's Oppression of Muslims; Prime Minister Imran Khan Denounces Western 'Islamophobia' but Shrugs at the Uighurs' Plight," *Wall Street Journal*, October 3, 2019, ProQuest.

<sup>348</sup> Afridi and Bajoria, "China-Pakistan Relations."

western water outlet, but China also has interests in Kashmir due to its border: China has not directly engaged in conflict in Kashmir since 1962; however, a Pakistan Institute for Peace report suggests that China's border agreement with Pakistan gives China "a direct stake in [resolving] the Kashmir dispute."<sup>349</sup>

Although Beijing has the capability of providing Pakistan with military support, the primary focus of Sino-Pakistani relations is economic development. Beijing has a vested economic interest in a stable and developed Pakistan, and it does not view Pakistan as critical to its military defense.

### **3. Current State of U.S.-Pakistani Relations**

Due to the Trump administration's increased pressure on Pakistan to engage in counterterrorism operations, and as the United States has become more critical of Pakistan's tolerance of militant extremists, U.S.-Pakistani relations have grown more tense and distant. Likewise, the United States has prioritized its growing relationship with India to balance China. As a result of these tensions and shifting alliances, the United States has reduced military aid, training, and weapon sales and eliminated foreign aid to Pakistan; however, at times, it has still used Pakistan to achieve its strategic goals.

The Congressional Research Service (CRS) report explains that since 2011, the sentiment amongst U.S. lawmakers has been that Pakistan's "intentions [and] capacity to be an effective partner" have weakened, thus initiating congressional inquiries into whether Pakistan should be a recipient of U.S. foreign aid appropriations.<sup>350</sup> In the first eight months of his presidency, Donald Trump condemned Pakistan and said that the U.S. government could "no longer be silent about Pakistan's safe havens for terrorist organizations, the Taliban, and other groups that pose a threat to the region and beyond."<sup>351</sup> The next year, the U.S. president took a tougher stance by threatening to "take further punitive action" if

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<sup>349</sup> Pak Institute for Peace Studies Islamabad, "Pakistan in Changing World Order," 14.

<sup>350</sup> Alan K. Kronstadt, *Pakistan-U.S. Relations*, CRS Report No. IF11270 (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2019), 1, <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/IF11270.pdf>.

<sup>351</sup> Krishnadev Calamur, "Trump and the Pakistan Problem," *The Atlantic*, August 22, 2017, <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/08/trump-pakistan-afghanistan/537564/>.

Pakistan continued to fall short of taking decisive action against terrorism.<sup>352</sup> In 2019, the U.S. director of intelligence, Dan Coats, testified before a U.S. Senate committee that Pakistan's ties to militants remained problematic for the U.S. government, as Pakistan was not fully cooperating in counterterrorism operations with the United States.<sup>353</sup>

Pakistan's tolerance of militant extremists has led to a drastic reduction in U.S. foreign aid. After the 2017 NSS was released, the United States cut nearly \$300 million in aid to Pakistan.<sup>354</sup> In January 2018, the first \$500 million of Coalition Support Fund (CSF) aid was cut.<sup>355</sup> A few months later, in September, in response to a tweet by President Trump expressing his growing displeasure with Pakistan, the DOD redirected an additional \$300 million of CSF aid away from Pakistan.<sup>356</sup>

Additionally, as was the case during the 1990s, the United States' emergent relationship with India threatens Pakistan. According to a CRS report on U.S.-Indo relations, the relationship is built on the states' similar democratic values, and United States values India's "vibrant economy, pluralist society, and cultural influence, and growing military power."<sup>357</sup> Both countries are concerned with China, and each views the other as an essential partner to contest China's rise.<sup>358</sup> Therefore, many of the security guarantees the United States once gave Pakistan are now enjoyed by India. The United States has decreased arms

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<sup>352</sup> Sebastian Rotella, "Trump Takes a Tougher Line on Pakistan, but the 2008 Mumbai Attack Goes Unpunished," ProPublica, November 26, 2018, <https://www.propublica.org/article/trump-pakistan-lashkar-e-tayyiba-2008-mumbai-attack>.

<sup>353</sup> Kronstadt, *Pakistan-U.S. Relations*, 1.

<sup>354</sup> Clark Mindock, "Pentagon Cancels \$300m in Aid to Pakistan over Failure to Tackle Militants," Independent, September 1, 2018, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/pentagon-300-million-aid-pakistan-militants-afghanistan-donald-trump-a8518876.html>.

<sup>355</sup> Mindock, "Pentagon Cancels \$300m in Aid."

<sup>356</sup> Amy Sullivan, "U.S. Cuts \$300 Million in Aid to Pakistan; Says It's Failing to Fight Militants," NPR, September 2, 2018, <https://www.npr.org/2018/09/02/644117490/u-s-cuts-300-million-in-aid-to-pakistan-says-its-failing-to-fight-militants>.

<sup>357</sup> K. Alan Kronstadt and Sonia Pinto, *India-U.S. Security Relations: Current Engagement*, CRS Report No. R42823 (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2018), 1, <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R42823.pdf>.

<sup>358</sup> K. Alan Kronstadt and Shayerah Ilias Akhtar, *India-U.S. Relations: Issues for Congress*, CRS Report No. R44876 (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2017), 1, <https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=801952>.

sales to Pakistan, whereas Bowman and Gabel report that, by 2019, U.S. arms sales to India reached their highest amount ever.<sup>359</sup> Most recently, during a February 2020 trip to India, President Trump announced that his administration would sell India \$3 billion worth of American-made arms.<sup>360</sup> Although the United States and Pakistan still conduct joint military exercises,<sup>361</sup> the exercises between the United States and India have become more robust than current U.S.-Pakistani exercises, creating the need for Pakistan to seek security assurances through other alliances and hindering U.S.-Pakistani relations.<sup>362</sup>

Like the previous administration, the Trump administration has shown that it is prioritizing an alliance with India in South Asia to achieve its goals in the multipolar system of power distribution. Montague echoes this sentiment by quoting Daniel Kliman,<sup>363</sup> who believes that the Trump administration is “less concerned about alienating Pakistan” than merely trying to work with it in GWOT.<sup>364</sup>

Recently, however, the United States has softened its rhetoric towards Pakistan. Just two months after Coats’s Senate testimony, the United States became less critical towards Pakistan in response to President Trump’s request for Pakistan’s assistance in the Afghanistan peace talks.<sup>365</sup> During the same February 2020 trip to India, President Trump

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<sup>359</sup> The reporters support this by explaining that the United States helped India modernize its air force from Soviet-era equipment by selling India its first eight Apache attack helicopters; see, for more information: Bradley Bowman and Andrew Gabel, “US, India Bolster Their Military Partnership in Tiger Triumph Exercise,” *Defense News*, November 13, 2019, <https://www.defensenews.com/opinion/commentary/2019/11/13/us-india-bolster-their-military-partnership-in-tiger-triumph-exercise/>.

<sup>360</sup> As the United States and Pakistan grow further apart, there is opportunity for growth in China providing military support to Pakistan; see, for more information: Carol E. Lee, “Trump Praises Pakistan While Announcing \$3B India Arms Deal,” *NBC News*, February 24, 2020, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/trump-praises-pakistan-while-announcing-3-billion-india-arms-deal-n1141491>.

<sup>361</sup> Gady, “Pakistan Kicks off Large Multinational Naval Exercise.”

<sup>362</sup> Zach Montague, “U.S.-India Defense Ties Grow Closer as Shared Concerns in Asia Loom,” *New York Times*, Nov. 20, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/20/world/asia/india-military-exercises-trump.html>.

<sup>363</sup> Daniel Kliman is the Director of the Asia-Pacific Security Program at the Center for New American Strategy.

<sup>364</sup> Montague, “U.S.-India Defense Ties Grow Closer.”

<sup>365</sup> Michael D. Shear and Salman Masood, “Trump Tries Cooling Tensions with Pakistan to Speed Afghan Peace Talks,” *New York Times*, July 22, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/22/world/asia/trump-pakistan-afghanistan.html>.

stated that the United States had a “very good” relationship with Pakistan and that his administration was “beginning to see signs of big progress” in U.S.-Pakistani relations, very likely as a way to show China that the United States has strong relationships with both India and Pakistan.<sup>366</sup> These comments alarmed the Indian government and the crowd listening to President Trump’s speech, which led to further confusion about U.S. intentions regarding the formation of alliances in South Asia.<sup>367</sup>

### **C. ISSUES CURRENTLY CONTRIBUTING TO INSTABILITY IN PAKISTAN**

Since the emergence of the unipolar world in 1991, Pakistan has been politically stable, as it has not experienced a military coup since 2008, when it became a democracy. However, Pakistan’s economic and security concerns continue to provide it imperatives to seek great power partners. Internally, Pakistan suffers from energy and other resource concerns, as well as from developmental issues, such as low education rates, unemployment, and underdeveloped infrastructure. Likewise, while domestic terrorist attacks have decreased, Pakistan still struggles to contain dissident ethnic groups linked to historical insurgencies. Externally, although there is reason to believe that on one side of its border, lasting peace can be achieved in Afghanistan, on the other side, tensions between Pakistan and India remain unchanged. Primarily, the provocative behavior of PM Narendra Modi and the rise of Hindu nationalism makes Pakistan feel further threatened by its perennial foe, and it continues to rely on great powers to balance India. Due to the United States’ shift toward India, Pakistan is increasingly driven to rely on China and Russia to obtain resources and support to address its stability concerns.

#### **1. Economic Stability: Sustainability and Development**

Economic instability in Pakistan is driven by its low economic growth, which has not kept pace with its population growth. The 2019 CRS report on U.S.-Pakistani relations describes Pakistan as still being “a poor country [that experiences] high rates of inflation and

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<sup>366</sup> Lee, “Trump Praises Pakistan.”

<sup>367</sup> Lee.

unemployment” and that at times also experiences a shortage of resources.<sup>368</sup> Pakistan’s economic state forces it to rely on great powers, which provide financial aid and foreign investment, for economic support.

In particular, Pakistan’s economy constantly struggles with a balance-of-payments crisis, which Imran Khan inherited upon taking office as prime minister in July 2018.<sup>369</sup> From 2017 to 2018, Pakistan’s budget deficit increased 45%—from \$12.4 to \$18 billion.<sup>370</sup> Schwemlein points out that this raised alarms because it was Pakistan’s third balance-of-payments crisis in the past decade.<sup>371</sup> He states that although Pakistan wanted to reach out to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for support, the U.S. government stated that it would not endorse the use of IMF tax dollars for Pakistan due to its concerns over “China’s increasingly assertive behavior” in Pakistan.<sup>372</sup> Nevertheless, the IMF gave Pakistan a \$6 billion loan (in addition to the \$5.8 billion it already owed), its 13th loan in 30 years, in May 2019, only after Pakistan had received loans from China and Middle Eastern partners.<sup>373</sup> The uncertainty of financial support from great powers and Pakistan’s continuous reliance on the IMF has created concerns in the international community over the instability of Pakistan’s economic situation.

Pakistan’s 2018 rise in debt and economic crisis are due to problems related to its trade deficit; domestic economic policy; technology, employment, and education; and climate change. First of all, Pakistan’s trade deficit had risen from \$2.7 billion in 2015 to \$18.2 billion in 2018, a trend that continues to this day.<sup>374</sup> Runde argues that the trade deficit

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<sup>368</sup> Kronstadt, *Pakistan-U.S. Relations*, 1.

<sup>369</sup> Daniel F. Runde and Richard Olson, “An Economic Crisis in Pakistan Again: What’s Different This Time?” Center for Strategic and International Studies, October 31, 2018, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/economic-crisis-pakistan-again-whats-different-time>.

<sup>370</sup> Runde and Olson, “An Economic Crisis in Pakistan Again.”

<sup>371</sup> James Schwemlein, “Pakistan’s Economic Turmoil Threatens China’s Ambition,” *Foreign Policy*, August 16, 2018, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/08/16/pakistans-economic-turmoil-threatens-chinas-ambitions-cpec/>.

<sup>372</sup> Schwemlein, “Pakistan’s Economic Turmoil Threatens China’s Ambition.”

<sup>373</sup> Afridi and Bajoria, “China-Pakistan Relations.”

<sup>374</sup> Shahroo Malik, “Pakistan’s Economic Woes: The Way Forward,” *The Diplomat*, April 18, 2019. ProQuest.

is a product of Pakistan's high imports relative to its low exports, its overvalued exchange rate, and the country's "loose" monetary policy, which has created an unusually high demand for domestic goods — contributing two-thirds of its economic growth.<sup>375</sup> Meanwhile, Husain points to trade failures—in particular, its lack of intraregional trade—as the source of present economic struggle in Pakistan.<sup>376</sup> Husain argues that because the Indian subcontinent is the world's least integrated region, intraregional trade has decreased by 14% since before the partition of British India.<sup>377</sup> Additionally, although Pakistan is an attractive market for the three great powers, a CRS report blames the Pakistani government's current barriers to trade and investment for international companies' limited ability to conduct business in Pakistan, thus preventing them from contributing to its economic development.<sup>378</sup>

Secondly, Pakistan's domestic economic policies have encouraged corruption and tax evasion, which have contributed to economic instability in Pakistan because they have deterred foreign investment. Weak tax policy has led Pakistan to have one of the lowest tax-to-GDP ratios compared to other countries in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, whose taxes are on average 25% more of their total GDP than are Pakistan's.<sup>379</sup> Additionally, a CRS report on U.S.-Pakistani relations points to corruption as a "major obstacle" for Pakistan, as corruption has had a negative impact on foreign investment in the country, weakening its economic development.<sup>380</sup>

Third, Pakistan struggles to embrace technology and to find effective ways to incorporate it into the country's development. Husain states that this failure is caused by Pakistan's lack of skilled labor, its ineffective education system, and its meager research and development and that these shortfalls have constrained Pakistan from being economically

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<sup>375</sup> Runde and Olson, "An Economic Crisis in Pakistan Again."

<sup>376</sup> Husain, "Pakistan's Economy and Regional Challenges," 267.

<sup>377</sup> Husain, 267.

<sup>378</sup> Kronstadt, *Pakistan-U.S. Relations*, 2.

<sup>379</sup> Afridi and Bajoria, "China-Pakistan Relations"; Runde and Olson, "An Economic Crisis in Pakistan Again."

<sup>380</sup> Kronstadt, *Pakistan-U.S. Relations*, 2.

competitive in the current global environment.<sup>381</sup> According to Husain, Pakistan's poor education system results from its lack of "qualified and competent teachers" and a poor curriculum that is "outdated and has [minimal] linkages with industry," causing technical and vocational training to be 9% lower than the global average.<sup>382</sup> He states that this dynamic has led to a reduction in productive jobs in Pakistan, and he concludes that the lack of skilled workforce has constrained the use of technology in Pakistan, causing a disparity in "growth and human development" and economic instability in a technology-dominated world.<sup>383</sup>

Finally, Pakistan's increased energy needs, as it strives to develop, have further contributed to its economic instability. Husain explains that as Pakistan continues to develop, it will continuously seek more energy for its already large population compared to other states its size.<sup>384</sup> He states that the electricity and energy consumed by Pakistanis will release more carbon emissions into the air, which will contribute to climate change — a challenge for Pakistan because it has an impact on sustainability in the realms of "agriculture, food production, and energy supplies," all sectors associated with the rising quality of life Pakistani citizens desire.<sup>385</sup>

Pakistan's trade deficit; poor economic policies; failure to embrace technology due to a lack of an educated, skilled, and employed workforce; and inability to resolve issues caused by climate change have perpetuated its economic instability. In the multipolar system, continuing economic instability requires Pakistan to seek great power partners as it has done in the past to overcome its economic and development shortfalls. To that end, Pakistan joined the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which provided it an economic alliance with Russia, China, and other regional states.<sup>386</sup> Unlike previous systems, which were characterized

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<sup>381</sup> Husain, "Pakistan's Economy and Regional Challenges," 268.

<sup>382</sup> Husain, 268.

<sup>383</sup> Husain, 268.

<sup>384</sup> Husain, 268.

<sup>385</sup> Husain, 268.

<sup>386</sup> Alyson J. K. Bailes and Pál Dunay, "The Shanghai Cooperation Organization as a Regional Security Institution," Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, May 1, 2007, JSTOR.

primarily on bilateral agreements, in the multipolar system, Pakistan has engaged more heavily in multilateral cooperation to address its economic concerns.

## 2. Internal and External Security Threats

As in the bipolar and unipolar systems, Pakistan continues to suffer from internal and external security threats, which increase its need for great power partners. Internally, Pakistan has become more domestically stable due to the Taliban being treated by the international community as a legitimate political entity as this recognition has lessened its recourse to violent political expression within Pakistan. Akhtar makes the case that the decline of militant extremists may also be due to the Pakistani military becoming more effective in counterinsurgency operations, as evidenced by the decline of insurgency in Pakistan's Federally Administrated Territories (FATA).<sup>387</sup> Nevertheless, issues in Baluchistan have persisted. As of April 2019, Baluchistan's northern belt, a region that is predominantly controlled by Pashtuns, still faces attacks on government security forces, and aspects of the region's cultural identity have been banned.<sup>388</sup> Violence in Baluchistan is not just limited to security forces, however, as exemplified by a suicide attack at a vegetable market in Quetta on April 12, 2019, that killed Pashtun civilians.<sup>389</sup>

Externally, Pakistan appears to have moved past its concerns that Afghanistan poses a security threat.<sup>390</sup> Goodson argues that Afghanistan will always inherently be threatening to Pakistan's national interest.<sup>391</sup> However, with the United States ending its combat operations in Afghanistan and as the U.S. government appears to have reached a sustainable

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<sup>387</sup> Shahzad Akhtar, "Decline of Insurgency in Pakistan's FATA: A Counterinsurgency Perspective," *Asian Survey* 59, no. 4 (Autumn 2019): <https://doi.org/10.1525/as.2019.59.4.693>.

<sup>388</sup> Muhammad Akbar Notezai, "Fear and Loathing in Balochistan," *The Diplomat*, April 25, 2019, <https://thediplomat.com/2019/04/fear-and-loathing-in-balochistan/>.

<sup>389</sup> Notezai, "Fear and Loathing in Balochistan."

<sup>390</sup> Larry P. Goodson, "The New Great Game: Pakistan's Approach to Afghanistan after 2014," *Asia Policy* 17, no. 1 (2014): 33, <https://doi.org/10.1353/asp.2014.0019>.

<sup>391</sup> Goodson, "The New Great Game," 38.

peace deal with the Taliban to bring the group into the Afghan political system, Pakistan is less fearful of its western neighbor.<sup>392</sup>

India, however, still presents a threat to Pakistan because as it has started to play a larger role in the global stage, India continues to grow into a regional hegemon. Pakistan's four primary tensions with India are India's increasing regional economic power, rising Hindu nationalism, the Modi government's recent actions in Kashmir and consequent military conflict between the two states in early 2019, and its threatening of Pakistan's water supply as it competes for resources.

India's increased regional economic power is best exemplified by its membership in Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS), an organization comprising five of the world's largest emerging markets. This membership helped India gain its membership into the Group of Twenty, an international forum that focuses on protecting and promoting global financial stability. India's membership as the only South Asian state in these groups places it as an important decision-maker on the global economic stage and gives it more international connections, thus giving it more global influence than Pakistan. In an attempt to undermine India's increased global stature, Pakistan "rejected a declaration by the BRICS" nations, after these nations claimed that Pakistan was a safe haven for terrorist groups.<sup>393</sup>

Tensions between India and Pakistan are also rising; as Shamim argues, the Indian government "is using state structures against Muslims" as a method to "gain political and ideological legitimacy," leading to Modi's successful election in 2014.<sup>394</sup> To consolidate his power, Modi has continued to push pro-Hindu rhetoric and to increase non-secular policies

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<sup>392</sup> Mujib Mashal, "U.S. and Taliban Have Framework for a Peace Deal," *New York Times*, January 29, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/29/world/asia/us-taliban-deal.html>.

<sup>393</sup> "Pakistan Rejects BRICS Declaration; Says No 'Safe Haven' on its Soil," *Economic Times*, September 5, 2017, [https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/pakistan-rejects-brics-declaration-says-no-safe-haven-on-its-soil/articleshow/60379451.cms?utm\\_source=contentofinterest&utm\\_medium=text&utm\\_campaign=cppst](https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/pakistan-rejects-brics-declaration-says-no-safe-haven-on-its-soil/articleshow/60379451.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst).

<sup>394</sup> Fareeha Shamim, "The Kashmir Quagmire, Rising Islamophobia and Hindu Nationalism," *The Diplomat*, October 17, 2019, ProQuest.

that have deepened tensions between Indian Hindus and Muslims.<sup>395</sup> Pakistan believes that the Modi government's actions against Indian Muslims have led to greater Islamophobia in the region and that India's aggressive and oppressive behavior could lead to an increase in violence toward all Muslims in South Asia.<sup>396</sup> The internal conflict in India amongst its two largest religious groups has made Pakistani Muslims feel threatened and has contributed to Pakistan's reliance on great powers to balance India.

As India's policies further infuriated Muslims in the region, Lalwani and Tallo explain that on February 14, 2019, a Pakistan-based Islamic jihadist military group, Jaish-e-Mohammed, "killed 40 paramilitaries in Indian-administered Kashmir" when a suicide bomber drove a vehicle filled with explosives into a bus.<sup>397</sup> With the national elections in less than a few months, the bombing forced Modi and his Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP)<sup>398</sup> to respond forcibly.<sup>399</sup> Therefore, Mir states, India launched airstrikes, and, on February 26, Pakistan further escalated tensions by shooting down "an Indian Air Force plane and [capturing] its pilot."<sup>400</sup> In retaliation, the BJP revoked the provisions of Kashmir's Article 370 and 35A.<sup>401</sup> According to Shamim, the BJP made this decision in order to push its "Islamophobia manifesto" by bringing about "a demographic shift in Kashmir to create

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<sup>395</sup> Jeffrey Gettleman et al., "Under Modi, a Hindu Nationalist Surge Has Further Divided India," *New York Times*, April 11, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/11/world/asia/modi-india-elections.html>.

<sup>396</sup> Shamim, "The Kashmir Quagmire, Rising Islamophobia and Hindu Nationalism."

<sup>397</sup> Sameer Lalwani and Emily Tallo, "Did India Shoot down a Pakistani F-16 in February? This Just Became a Big Deal," *Washington Post*, April 17, 2019, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/04/17/did-india-shoot-down-pakistani-f-back-february-this-just-became-big-deal/>; Christopher Clary, "After Terrorist Attack in Kashmir, Will India Seek Vengeance or de-Escalation?" *Washington Post*, February 25, 2019, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/02/25/after-terrorists-attacked-kashmir-will-india-see-vengeance-or-de-escalation/>.

<sup>398</sup> The BJP is a right-wing party, the policies of which are generally associated with Hindu nationalism. It is the current ruling party in India, and, along with the Indian National Congress, it is one of two major political parties.

<sup>399</sup> Clary, "After Terrorist Attack in Kashmir."

<sup>400</sup> Asfandyar Mir, "Why India and Pakistan Are Fighting Again -- and the Risks That Remain," *Washington Post*, March 7, 2019, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/03/07/india-pakistan-tensions-escalated-last-week-this-is-why/>.

<sup>401</sup> Article 370 exempts Kashmir from the Indian constitution and Article 35A permits the local legislature to determine permanent residency rules; see, for more information: "Kashmir Special Status Explained: What Are Articles 370 and 35A?" *Al Jazeera*, August 5, 2019, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/08/kashmir-special-status-explained-articles-370-35a-190805054643431.html>.

Hindu majority.”<sup>402</sup> He continues that by capitalizing on anti-Muslim sentiments in India, these actions proved successful for the BJP and led to the party’s landslide victory in the 2019 elections. He concludes that the BJP has further used its election mandate to solidify Hindu nationalism and encourage attacks against Kashmiri Muslims.

Another consequence of this conflict is that India has threatened Pakistan’s water supply. Pakistan’s water supply is already meager due to the impact of climate change.<sup>403</sup> India heightens this threat because as tensions have increased between the states, it has used actions against the water supply to retaliate to other unrelated scuffles. Johnson points to the February 2019 terrorist attack in Kashmir as yet as another reason why India has threatened Pakistan’s downstream water supply.<sup>404</sup> He notes that an additional source of conflict creating security concerns between the perennial rivals, Pakistan and India, is the dam along the Ravi River.

Pakistan’s security issues with India have the potential to lead into an all-out war, creating an unstable environment and intensifying its need for great powers to balance against India.

#### **D. ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION**

Unlike during the bipolar system of power distribution, Pakistan does not solely rely on the United States in the multipolar world to resolve its issues of economic and security instability. As Russia reemerges and China rises, they have both increasingly aligned with Pakistan to help resolve its instability. In return, Pakistan’s relationship with these great powers has helped them achieve their strategic goals to compete in the current system of power distribution.

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<sup>402</sup> Shamim, “The Kashmir Quagmire, Rising Islamophobia and Hindu Nationalism.”

<sup>403</sup> Its default water source is the Himalaya mountain region, which is threatened by the prospect of global warming: Husain says that “with rising temperatures, the ice mass of the Himalayas [is] retreating more rapidly than the global average, posing an unprecedented threat” to Pakistan’s water supplies; see, for more information: Husain, “Pakistan’s Economy and Regional Challenges,” 268.

<sup>404</sup> Keith Johnson, “Are India and Pakistan on the Verge of a Water War?” *Foreign Policy*, February 25, 2019, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/02/25/are-india-and-pakistan-on-the-verge-of-a-water-war-pulwama-kashmir-ravi-indus/>.

There are three major takeaways in the multipolar system. First, Pakistan has been less likely to give its full allegiance to an alliance with the United States to balance India and resolve its domestic instability issues, so as long as it can fill the gaps in the resources and support it receives from the United States with other willing great powers. In the absence of the United States, Pakistan has increasingly sought arms and military support from Russia, while China has provided financial support and has invested in the economic development of Pakistan.

Second, although the United States favors a relationship with India in the multipolar system, it has still maintained a cordial relationship with Pakistan when it is strategically advantageous. The United States slashed aid and training to Pakistan near the beginning of the Trump administration, and then, just over a year later, it sought Pakistan's help in resolving the Afghanistan peace process.

Finally, the shift of U.S. alliances in South Asia, as the United States has strengthened relations with India, defines great power relations in South Asia today. The increased Indo-U.S. relationship has put further strain on Sino-Indian relations, leading China to strengthen its partnership with Pakistan, and it has led Russia to rely less on India and more on Pakistan to balance the other great powers.

As the United States continues to ally with India to compete for power, it has still shown interest in maintaining a relationship with Pakistan, as needed. How the United States forms relations is a consideration for other great powers, which will affect which power Pakistan decides to partner with and will define how it decides to balance the sources of its external instability. Based on these conclusions, the next chapter explains what can be expected of Pakistan's relationship with great powers as the world continues in a system of multipolar power distribution.

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## V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research has sought to explain how Pakistan forms alliances with great powers during various systems of power distribution by examining how it is situated in the competition amongst great powers and by determining how Pakistan has leveraged great powers to address its stability concerns. To that end, this thesis has analyzed three phases of Pakistan's relationship with great powers since its establishment in 1947: during the Cold War (bipolar system of power distribution), Global War on Terrorism (unipolar), and the emerging competition between great powers (multipolar). The investigation has revealed that Pakistan's geographic significance, colonial ties, religious influence in the region, and strong military institution have driven great powers to incorporate Pakistan into their strategic goals. Additionally, it found that Pakistan uses its economic, political, and security concerns to attract foreign partners to help resolve its instability. These trends make it clear that Pakistan will continue to play a critical role in the emerging competition between Russia, China, and the United States.

A multitude of factors have affected and will likely continue to affect how Pakistan will align with great powers in the developing multipolar competition. First, the research shows that in each system of power distribution, Pakistan has required partners that can provide it with both financial support and military resources. As Chapters II through IV observe, when Pakistan does not receive adequate support from its partners, it seeks out other partners that can fulfill its needs. Chapter IV explains that both China and the United States currently have the ability to do so, but, while Russia can provide Pakistan with the military support it requires, Russia's relatively weak economy compared to those of the other great powers' constrains it from being able to provide Pakistan with the economic support it requires.

Second, while Chapter II shows that great powers have deemed South Asia a geographically strategic region since the start of the Cold War, Chapter III concludes that great powers could not align with both India and Pakistan due to the discord between them. Therefore, Pakistan is unlikely to form a serious partnership with any great power that it feels is undermining its security by forming a strong alliance with India. China is the only

great power that has always shared with Pakistan a distrust of India and has had no interest in forming a relationship with it.

Third, although Pakistan has the ability to be a strong military partner for great powers, it is willing to undermine the strategic goals of its partners if it believes such actions can help meet its strategic objectives. This behavior has caused tensions with great powers: Chapters III and IV show that the United States grew disgruntled with Pakistan for this reason. Still, in the unipolar and the current multipolar world, there are signs that the United States intends to look past this perceived betrayal by Pakistan.

## **A. FINDINGS**

Shifting partnerships between great powers and other South Asian states will very likely play a stronger role than in the past in determining alliances between great powers and Pakistan. These dynamics will also influence which power other powers are most concerned about in this developing multipolar system. Chapter IV explains that China deepened its relationship with Pakistan to compete with the United States, while Russia shifted its focus from India to Pakistan because it believes the United States to be its greatest threat. These reactions are unsurprising as these resurging and rising states wish to challenge U.S. global hegemony. The United States' growing relationship with India suggests that China is its major concern, which has shifted the center of gravity in the emerging competition to Asia, whereas under the bipolar system, the United States' greatest concern was control of Europe because of the threat of the Soviet Union (Russia).

In this context, based on this research, Pakistan will likely not pick one country with which to align in the emerging competition between great powers. Instead, because Pakistan stands to benefit from its relationship with each great power, it will likely pursue relationships with all three great powers.

Of the great powers, China is best positioned to forge the strongest partnership with Pakistan. Unlike in previous systems of power distribution, China can now offer Pakistan the economic support and military resources it desires. Also, China and Pakistan share a dislike of India, which makes them natural strategic partners; this may outweigh a relationship based on convenience, as is the case with Russia.

Accordingly, Pakistan is least likely to pursue a significant relationship with Russia; Pakistan and Russia historically, and recently, have not shared many mutual interests, and Russia still desires a relationship with India. Additionally, Russia is likely to remain the least able of the three great powers to meet Pakistan's economic needs. Russo-Pakistani relations have succeeded as much as they have only because Russia is a revisionist state that desires parity with the United States amidst the growing Indo-U.S. relationship.

As for the United States, it does not need to worry about Pakistan's growing relationship with other powers, or even the fact that China might be Pakistan's preferred partner in the current global environment. The United States has been through this situation before—after 1965 and 1989, as Chapters II and III indicate—and each time has reclaimed a strong partnership with Pakistan, which has been in the strategic interest of both states. Pakistan is open to partnering with whatever state can give it resources, and its past behavior suggests that it might even be willing to undermine China if it can receive more or better resources from somewhere else. So long as the United States has the means and is willing to provide Pakistan with economic and security resources, the United States will be able to form a strategic partnership with Pakistan, despite its current relationship with Pakistan's nemesis, India.

## **B. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR FUTURE ENGAGEMENT**

The fact that Pakistan is one of the world's few nuclear-powered states and has longstanding animosity with another nuclear-powered state (India) must not be ignored. The instability in Pakistan, and South Asia as a whole, places it at the forefront of concern for great powers affected by the potential for a catastrophic security threat should these trends continue. A worst-case scenario would be that extremist groups could benefit from the instability in Pakistan by gaining access to its nuclear arsenal. Therefore, it is in the interest of great power states to ensure the stability of Pakistan and the region.

Also, based on his speech in India described at the end of Chapter IV, President Trump appears to be interested in maintaining a relationship with Pakistan as a means of

showing China that the United States is very much present in South Asia. Additionally, his remarks seemed to suggest that he is confident that he can leverage a strong relationship with both Pakistan and India. If the Trump administration and the United States are serious about strengthening this partnership with Pakistan, the United States should primarily consider two policies in the near term. First, unlike in the past when U.S. foreign aid benefited the military establishment in Pakistan, the United States should provide assistance to Pakistan that is allocated for economic development. Supporting development in Pakistan could alleviate some of its economic woes rather than bolstering the military institution that has contributed to Pakistan's political instability. Stability in Pakistan is a good policy for the United States because it will make Pakistan a strong partner in the multipolar world and will reduce extremism in Pakistan, which has frustrated the United States since GWOT, thereby allowing the United States to move past GWOT and focus on expanding the liberal world order to compete with China and Russia.

Second, the United States militarily should consider Pakistan as an Asian state in its strategic plans rather than as a Middle Eastern state. Currently, the Indo-Pacific region is defined by the United States as the area between the United States' west coast and India's eastern coast.<sup>405</sup> It does not include India's western coast on the Arabian Sea nor the western parts of the Indian Ocean, which makes Pakistan geographically distant from this region, despite its numerous interests in the Indo-Pacific.

While its reasons for considering Pakistan part of the Middle East are understandable given the context of the unipolar world and Pakistan's engagement in GWOT, given the current global environment, the U.S. Department of Defense should move Pakistan from U.S. Central Command to U.S. Indo-Pacific Command. This will allow the Commander of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command to take Pakistan into consideration when making strategic regional decisions regarding India and China, without having to coordinate with another combatant commander. Other U.S. agencies, particularly the State

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<sup>405</sup> "USINDOPACOM Area of Responsibility," U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, accessed May 4, 2020, <https://www.pacom.mil/About-USINDOPACOM/USPACOM-Area-of-Responsibility/>.

Department, should also make this change to ensure there is a whole-of-government approach to partner or coordinate with Pakistan in the context of the developing GPC.

It is true that there are costs and will likely be protest to this recommendation. Currently, as part of the area of responsibility of U.S. Central Command, Pakistan, as the region's largest Islamic country, plays an integral role in the United States' strategy combating terrorism and its operations in the Middle East. It is an important state in this region, and U.S. Central Command leaders are unlikely to let Pakistan go without opposition. Nevertheless, the recommendation should be considered given that the center of gravity in the new system of GPC is Asia, and that Pakistan, a nuclear-power state, nemesis of India, historic partner with China, and new ally of Russia, also plays an increasingly important role in South Asian regional politics, especially as the Global War on Terror continues to decline and come to an end.

### **C. LIMITATIONS AND AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

This research found that Pakistan has used its instability to gain great power partners; however, since Pakistan has been politically stable in recent times, the next step should be to investigate whether Pakistan is actually on track to becoming more stable in the long term or if Pakistan will likely continue to use instability as a means of obtaining great powers' support, which might affect how great powers approach Pakistan as a strategic partner. With this in mind, further research could also examine what strategies great powers can use to obtain a stronger relationship with Pakistan. Also, given that Pakistan will attempt to pursue relationships with all three great powers, will the various great power states accommodate Pakistan's desire? Or, how close can Pakistan get to one great power without alienating another?

Additionally, although this research has argued that the United States could pursue a relationship with Pakistan, the question remains whether or not the United States should take this section or if it should instead focus on its relationship with India.

Finally, given that Asia is the center of the multipolar system, further research should examine which other countries play a significant role in the developing GPC between Russia, China, and the United States.

#### D. PARTING REMARKS

Skeptics should not fear the potential for a decline of United States influence in Pakistan. According to the Brookings Institute, “The U.S.-led system of alliances encompasses 15 of the top 20 militaries in the world” and even during difficult times in the past and current U.S. presidential administrations, “it is not yet broken and still constitutes a weighty fact in international affairs.”<sup>406</sup> The Institute further argues that when it comes to the “network of bilateral alliances in Asia,” the United States just “lacks an effective operational structure.”<sup>407</sup> Even in the presence of global crises, such as the current COVID-19 situation, traditional international structures associated with the West, such as the IMF and the World Bank, have come to Pakistan’s assistance: on April 16, 2020, the IMF announced its Executive Board had approved of \$1.386 billion dollars to address Pakistan’s COVID-19 pandemic. Also, the following day, the *India Times* reported that the United States provided Pakistan with \$8 million in aid for the same reason.<sup>408</sup> Therefore, there are signs that the United States might already be placing itself in a position to rekindle its relationship with Pakistan. However, even if this relationship fails to reach its previous prominence, the United States still has a strong foothold in South Asia to compete with Russia and China because of its growing relationship with India. However, because the United States has this relationship on which to rely, it will need to be attentive to the other great powers’ relationships with Pakistan if it is going to compete effectively.

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<sup>406</sup> Jones, “China and the Return,” 4.

<sup>407</sup> Jones, 4.

<sup>408</sup> “US Provides USD 8 Million Aid to Pakistan to Help Fight Coronavirus,” *Economic Times*, April 17, 2020, [https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/international/world-news/us-provides-usd-8-million-aid-to-pakistan-to-help-fight-coronavirus/articleshow/75205907.cms?utm\\_source=contentofinterest&utm\\_medium=text&utm\\_campaign=cppst](https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/international/world-news/us-provides-usd-8-million-aid-to-pakistan-to-help-fight-coronavirus/articleshow/75205907.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst).

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