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Mistrust factor in Pak-Afghan Fluctuating Relations since Beginning

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Abstract

The paper analyzes the fluctuations in Pak-Afghan relations throughout history and impacts of the foreign powers' involvement in their relations. Both have cultural, economic and historical linkages being Muslim and neighbouring countries. Pakistan always tried to strengthen its relations with Afghanistan but the foreign powers' involvement diminishes their mutual trust level. Pak-Afghan relations have never been constant since beginning, although, there are multiple bondage opportunities between them. Afghan President Hamid Karazai once called both states as "Twin Brothers" who do not afford enmity. Terrorism, Durand Line, cross border insurgency and refugee crisis are the main issues between them and both should develop a mechanism to resolve these issues. This mechanism must be too strong that any third country could not interfere. Both should resolve their issues through dialogue and not to blame each other. Bilateral trade and people to people contacts should be increased to enhance their trust.

Key Words: Pakistan, Afghanistan, Mistrust, Bilateral Relations

Introduction

Pakistan and Afghanistan are the two very important Muslim countries of South Asia region and the members of SAARC and both have cultural, economic and historical linkages. After independence, cordial relations with Muslim countries were the top priority of Pakistan especially with Afghanistan because Pakistan is the sole country which has made on the name of Islam. Therefore, Pakistan tried to improve its relations with the Muslim countries in general and Afghanistan in particular. Pakistan succeeded to have cordial relations with a number of Muslim countries except Afghanistan because it did not accept Pakistan's independence on 14 August 1947. Both the countries shared 2430 kilometers border, which is called Durand Line. This border has been established between Afghanistan and British India in 1893 when an agreement was negotiated between Mortimer Durand of British India and Amir Abdul Rehman Khan of Afghanistan. This agreement consists of one paper and there were seven articles of the agreement. In this agreement, it had been decided between both the parties that any country would not make political influence beyond their frontiers. After this agreement, British started construction of railway network on its side which was not acceptable for Afridi tribes, so they started to make issues for British on Durand Line [\(Bajoria 2009\)](#).

On its independence in 1947, Pakistan claimed Durand Line as international border between Afghanistan and Pakistan but Afghanistan did not accept it and claimed that border agreement was signed between Afghanistan and British India. As the British India has disintegrated so, the Durand Line is not international border between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Therefore, Afghanistan wants to extend its border in Pakistan till Baluchistan's Pashtuns dominated areas and till Indus River. Afghanistan wants to take control of every territory, which remained under control of Ahmad Shah Durrani, a founder of

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Durrani Empire. Ahmad Shah Durrani is also known as Ahmad Shah Abdali and he was the king of Afghanistan in 1747. This is the reason Afghanistan did not accept Durand line as international border between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

In 1940, when the British government was leaving India, Afghanistan requested the British government that there must be an option for Pashtun people to make their own independent Pathan state but it was refused. After that, Afghan people started independence movements in Afghanistan to make Pakhtoonistan. Pashtuns claimed that if the British India is divided in Pakistan and India then there must be further division, and Pathan must be allowed to live independently. These are the reasons that Afghanistan did not accept Pakistan as independent country and did not accept the Durand Line as international border. Afghanistan knew that if they accept the Durand Line then it would divide 50 million Pashtuns and thus Afghanistan government had to face a lot of criticism in Afghanistan [\(A. Siddique 2014\)](#).

When Afghanistan did not succeed in making a separate Pakhtoonistan then Afghanistan started insurgency on the Durand Line against Pakistan and supported secessionist movement with the help of India and Russia. Afghanistan also gave military and economic support to Mirzali Khan to destabilize Pakistan who was a Pashtun tribal leader and the supporter of independent Pashtoonistan. These were the reasons that Pakistan-Afghanistan relations remained tense from the very first day and Afghanistan opposed Pakistan's entry to the United Nations in 1947.

After Independence, Pakistan was eager to have friendly relations with Afghanistan but Afghanistan was propagating against Pakistan through radio and press. On 1 May 1948, Pakistan sent Mr. I. I. Chundrigar to Afghanistan as ambassador so that Pakistan could improve its relations with Afghanistan. Pakistan also sent its delegation led by Sardar Abdul Rabi Nishtar in Afghanistan's "Jashan-e-Azadi" celebrations to represent Pakistan. It also tried to improve mutual trust through removing its troops from tribal areas but Afghanistan did not respond positively.

The government of Afghanistan took a lot of initiatives against Pakistan like anti-Pakistan speech by King of Afghanistan Muhammad Zahir Shah in parliament, anti-Pakistan leaflets dropped by Afghanistan air force, creating of Pashtuns parliament in tribal areas of Pakistan and sending of irregular forces to destabilize Pakistan. In 1949, Mirzali Khan created problems for Pakistan on border so, Pakistan Air Force bombed Afghanistan sponsored militant camps in border areas. In this time, bilateral relations were on minimum level so both countries called back their ambassadors. The main hurdle came in the relations of both countries when Afghan national Said Akbar Khan Babrakzai found involve in assassination of first Prime Minister of Pakistan, Liaqat Ali Khan in 1951 in Rawalpindi.

In 1952, Afghanistan government published a Tract in which Pakistani territory of Baluchistan was shown as part of Afghanistan [\(Omrani 2009\)](#). This tract made a heavy blow on Pakistan and Afghanistan relations and diplomatic relations between both countries were on minimum level.

In 1953, Sardar Dad becomes Prime Minister of Afghanistan by removing government of King Zahir Shah without any violence but Pakistan put its reservations on this change of government because Sardar Daud was supporter of Pakhtoonistan movement. Therefore, there were many misunderstandings on both sides and relations of both were hostile.

In Cold War, Pakistan was US ally against Communism so the US decided to give Pakistan military aid but Afghanistan joined India and requested United States of America not to give any military aid to Pakistan as this will create security threats in Afghanistan but the United States of America rejected this request. The relations of both countries reached ground level when Pakistan joined SEATO and CENTO in 1954 and 1955 respectively because Afghanistan claimed that the strong Pakistan will become security threat for Afghanistan.

On 22 November 1954, Pakistan's Prime Minister Muhammad Ali Bogra launched One Unit scheme [\(Singh 2018\)](#). The purpose of this scheme was to make it easy for Pakistan to control all areas

of East and West Pakistan, which had remained on thousand miles gap. Under this scheme the whole western part of the country was merged to become the west province of Pakistan and the eastern part as the east province of Pakistan. Afghanistan's government opposed this integration of Pashtuns and made a lot of protest on this decision. After this event, Afghanistan attacked Pakistani consulate in Jalalabad, Kandahar, and sacked Pakistan's embassy in Kabul and molested Pakistani flag. In this response, Pakistani people also attacked Afghanistan consulate in Peshawar and Pakistan government put some embargoes on Afghan goods. Therefore, in this period, relations of both countries become unfriendly but this situation did not last too long and relations of both countries again became friendly [\(Gartenstein-Ross & Vassefi 1966\)](#). Therefore, in 1955, Pakistan flag again hoisted on its embassy and consulates and Afghanistan flag again raised on its consulate in Peshawar [\(Durani & Khan 1961\)](#)

In 1956, Pakistan and Afghanistan decided to improve their relations so, for this purpose the President of Pakistan Iskandar Mirza made a historic visit to Afghanistan in 1956 and the Prime Minister of Pakistan Hussain Shaheed Suharwardy visited Afghanistan in 1957. In these visits, both of the leaders tried to improve bilateral relations and remove mistrust between the two states. At that time, Government of Afghanistan also responded in better way. Afghan ruler King Zahir Shah visited Pakistan in 1958, and the Prime Minister of Afghanistan made a historic visit to Pakistan in 1959. These visits put very pleasant impacts on Pakistan-Afghanistan relations but still there were many issues, which yet had to resolve [\(Ahmad 2011\)](#).

In this time, relations of both countries were improving very quickly and this phase lasted till 1961. In 1961, Afghanistan again started making border raids on Durand Line. This time again relations of both countries saw minimum level and both countries closed their respective consulate in each other's country. Afghanistan ended transit trade with Pakistan and started to make trade links with Soviet Union. Soviet Union supported Afghanistan against Pakistan because Pakistan was involved in U-2 incident in 1960.

In 1961, Afghanistan sent some Afghan tribesmen to Pakistan to make some problems for Pakistan. So again, Pakistan and Afghanistan relations came on the minimum level. The bilateral trade had finished and consulates of both countries were closed in each other's country. The bilateral trust had finished during this time but, the United States of America and Iran interfered in this issue and forced both the countries to resolve their bilateral issues through negotiations, therefore, once again bilateral trade started between both countries.

In 1963, both countries signed Tehran Accord and their relations again became friendly. After Tehran Accord, bilateral trade of both countries increased and both took many initiatives to increase bilateral trust. Both countries opened their borders and worked together to solve their outstanding issues. Main reason behind these improved relations was resignation of Sardar Daud in 1963. According to Pakistan, the main hurdle in bilateral relations was Sardar Daud because he had anti-Pakistan background and was in favor of Pashtoonistan. In this time, both the countries enjoyed very friendly relations [\(Keddi 1966\)](#). The bilateral relations had improved to that extent that in 1965, Indo-Pakistan war, Afghanistan supported Pakistan openly. Afghanistan Government clearly told Pakistan that we would remain out of this war and Pakistan should not be worry about the security of its western border.

In 1968, King Zahir Shah visited Pakistan and the two countries improved their relations. In this visit, both the countries made some historic decisions. They decided to increase bilateral trade and mutual understanding. Pakistan, on other hand, decided that Pakistan would disband One Unit in tribal areas. The actual disband of One Unit program was made in 1970 by Yahya Khan. This put very pleasant effects on Pakistan-Afghanistan relations.

In 1971, during Indo-Pakistan war, Afghanistan decided to remain neutral so, this put a very good impact on the minds of Pakistani authorities. In 1971, President of Pakistan Zulifqar Ali Bhutto made historic visit to Afghanistan to improve their relations. This was first visit of President Zulifqar Ali Bhutto to

any country. This was a very successful visit and relations of the two states started to improve. After this visit of President Bhutto, first lady Begum Nusrat Bhutto visited Afghanistan and signed some agreements for economic cooperation between both countries.

The relations of both countries were improving day by day after Tehran Accord in 1963. This dreamtime did not last too long, because Sardar Daud again came to power after throwing out King Zahir Shah in 1973, when King Zahir Shah was staying in Italy for his medical treatment. This development put some bad impacts on Pakistan-Afghanistan relations. According to the perception of the Pakistani authorities, Sardar Daud will again increase secessionist movements in Pakistan and this happened too when Sardar Daud provided shelter to Marree and Bugti insurgents in Afghanistan and used them against Pakistan and started secessionist movements with the help of Russia. Therefore, in Pakistan, two separatist movements started, first Baloch's and second Pakhtoonistan. Sardar Daud also sent some threatening message to Pakistan that now Afghanistan should recover Pakhtoonistan because it is "the lost land" of Afghanistan [\(H.-u.-R. Khan 1961\)](#). The relations of the two countries became more complex; when Sardar Daud government faced three coup attempts, which he believed that were backed by Pakistan.

This was very complex condition for Pakistan so it started supporting people against Sardar Daud to counterbalance his proxies in Pakistan.

In 1973, Afghanistan again supported secessionist movements in Pakistan with Soviet support. Pakistan always blamed Afghanistan that they had supported secessionist movement in Pakistan. Although relations of the two countries had remained tense in the past but Hamid Karzai, President of Afghanistan said that Pakistan and Afghanistan are inseparable friends. President of Pakistan, Ayub Khan said that there are two misconceptions between the two countries, which have affected the relations between them. First, Pakistan did not have enough infrastructures to survive so, it will not be able to live for too much time. Therefore, Afghanistan decided that they must delay Pakistan acceptance because it will be disintegrated in the near future. Second, if Pakistan will prosper then it will be dangerous for Afghanistan. On other hand, Pakistan claimed that Durand Line is international border between Pakistan and Afghanistan and the voice of Pakhtoonistan is illegal. There were perceptions that Pakistan is misbehaving with Pashtuns and not giving them their due rights. This was very sensitive issue so Pakistan decided to end that perception because if it would be delayed then it can be destructive for both of the countries.

In this period, there were many misunderstandings between the two countries that's why in 1974, Afghanistan refused to attend Islamic Summit Conference held in Pakistan. Afghanistan sent its representative to Pakistan and raised the question of Pakhtoonistan. In this way, Afghanistan tried to highlight Pashtoonistan issue but Afghanistan did not succeed in this mission [\(Rahman 2012\)](#).

In this period, relations of the two countries remained tense and soon Sardar Daud came to know that anti-Pakistan feelings in Afghanistan are doing more harm than good so, Sardar Daud decided to improve its relations with Pakistan. Sardar Daud invited President of Pakistan Zulfikar Ali Bhutto to visit Afghanistan [\(Taylor 2014\)](#). Therefore, the President of Pakistan Zulfikar Ali Bhutto made a visit of Afghanistan in 1976. In same year, Sardar Daud visited Pakistan in August 1976. These two high level visits put very good impacts on Pakistan-Afghanistan relations. In this visit, Afghanistan decided to accept Durand Line as a frontier between Afghanistan and Pakistan. On other hand, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto decided to release political leaders of National Awami Party, who were involved in Pakhtoonistan movements. Therefore, rapprochement process started in the two countries. In 1976, Pakistan sent its musical and dancing team to Afghanistan to perform on Afghanistan national day celebrations. Nevertheless, this rapprochement again halted with overthrow of Bhutto regime in 1977 and in Afghanistan elimination of Sardar Daud by Communist forces in Saur Revolution in 1978.

The Communist forces took control of Afghanistan and tried to increase their control till hot waters and Pakistan felt threat of it. This was very complex condition for Pakistan so it supported anti-Communist forces in Afghanistan to counter this threat. In 1979, Soviet Union took control of Afghanistan and it had bad feelings for Pakistan. Pakistan felt threat from Soviet presence in Afghanistan so it decided to stop Soviet expansion in Afghanistan. Pakistan used Islamic leaders to act against Communism. Pakistan directed the perception of people that this war is against Muslims so they must join this war against Communism. Pakistan took economic and military aid from the United States of America and fought against Communist forces (Gall 2009). Pakistan defeated Soviet Union and in 1988 and Pakistan and Afghanistan signed a peace accord in Geneva. The United States of America and Soviet Union was co-guarantor of this agreement.

After Soviet disintegration in 1989, many powers had changed in Afghanistan. In 1994, professor Burhanuddin Rabbani became President of Afghanistan. Pakistan accused that Rabbani had betrayed Peshawar accord. In war against Soviet Union, there were good relations between Pakistan and people of Afghanistan but this love vanished after Soviet disintegration. The people of Afghanistan started considering Pakistan as enemy of Afghanistan. In this period, trade relations between both countries had finished and borders were closed.

After some time, Taliban decided to make the government in Afghanistan which lead to friendly relations between Pakistan-Afghanistan. Taliban were in good position so they started taking control of maximum areas of Afghanistan. On other hand, India was providing military and economic aid to the groups against Taliban so that Taliban cannot control Afghanistan. Both India and Pakistan took Afghanistan as security threat for their sovereignty (Burke 2008).

In 1996, Taliban took the control of Kabul and they made a government in Afghanistan in 1997. Pakistan wholeheartedly accepted Taliban government in Afghanistan. This was the first time that there was pro-Pakistan government in Afghanistan; so, Pakistan gave economic and political support to them to attain "Strategic Depth" in Afghanistan. Pakistan provided \$6 million to Afghanistan in 1998. Initially the United States of America supported Taliban government in Afghanistan but after some time changed its policy. Taliban were involved in imposing Islamic laws, which was not acceptable for America so it passed a resolution against Taliban government.

At that time, in Afghanistan, there were issues about legitimacy of Taliban government and different parties were trying to make government in Afghanistan. Pakistan tried to regularize Taliban government and tried to find political solution of Afghanistan issue. Pakistan tried to unite Taliban and opposition parties but failed in its mission.

At this time, the United States of America put pressure on Pakistan to end Taliban support because Taliban had involved in violating human rights and women rights. Therefore, Pakistan started to distance itself from Taliban. At this time, Pakistan and the United States of America made many meetings with Taliban to solve Afghanistan issue through peaceful ways but they did not succeed. After these meetings, Pakistan ended its support to Taliban and closed Taliban training camps in three different cities in Pakistan. This was the time when America had some good feelings about Taliban and Pakistan but situation changed dramatically after 9/11 attack on world trade centre and Pentagon in America (Mukerjee 2005). The United States of America blamed Osama Bin Laden for that attack, who was commander of Al-Qaeda and decided to attack him in Afghanistan after Taliban's denial to hand him over to the US. After this attack, the US asked Pakistan to work with the US or with Taliban and Pakistan joined the US. This American attack was so effective that within eight weeks maximum Taliban were killed and few of them run in other countries. Therefore, Taliban government had fallen in Afghanistan on 13 November 2001.

After the fall of Taliban, United Nations arranged a meeting about the future of Afghanistan. In this meeting, interim government was decided by United Nations under rule of Hamid Karzai on mandate

of six months. Pakistan supported this interim set up and both countries decided to improve bilateral relations. For this purpose, President of Afghanistan Hamid Karzai visited Pakistan on February 2002 (Gall 2003). Pakistan gave political, economic and moral support to Hamid Karzai's government and the President of Pakistan Pervez Musharraf made a historic visit to Afghanistan in April 2002 and President Musharraf became first head of the state to visit Afghanistan after elections in Afghanistan.

Pakistan also provided full support to Afghanistan in their parliament and presidential elections in 2004 and 2005. In this time, bilateral relations were very friendly but this dream period did not last for too long and once again, relations of both of the countries started deteriorating. This time secret plans of northern alliance were the reason behind this and Afghanistan again started pointing fingers on Pakistan that it is interfering in their internal affairs.

In Bonn conference, Pakistan was kept out of peace process in Afghanistan so Pakistan blamed India and Afghanistan on this action and blamed that they are making issue in Baluchistan and tribal areas of Pakistan. At this time, Afghanistan provided opportunities to Indians to open consulate in border areas near Pakistan, which became source of friction between both countries.

The relations of the two countries remained mistrustful and both blamed each other of supporting terrorists in each other's territories. In 2006, Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai visited Pakistan and met Prime Minister of Pakistan Shaukat Aziz. In one-to-one meeting with Afghanistan President, Pakistan Prime Minister complained that some terrorists are infiltrating in Pakistan from Afghanistan and they are making problems in here (Shah 2019). Pakistan complained that Afghanistan is supporting Pakhtoon nationalist leaders in Pakistan to liberate tribal areas of Pakistan. It can be sure from event when President Hamid Karzai and other forty leaders of Afghanistan attended funeral ceremony of Pakhtoon nationalist leader Abdul Wali Khan in Pakistan.

At this time, bilateral relations were on minimum level. Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai threatened Pakistan that Afghanistan Government would order its forces to cross Durand Line and attack on Pakistan. In this response, Pakistan openly stated that if Afghanistan did this then Pakistan would act aggressively (A. Siddique 2008). The relations of both countries did not improve and there were many minor skirmishes between both countries when both of the countries attacked on terrorist who tried to cross the border.

In 2007, relations of the two countries remained very tense, so trust level was very low. In this period, Pakistan was constructing military posts on Afghanistan border. According to Pakistan officials, these posts were in Pakistan territory. On the other hand, Afghanistan official claimed that these posts were in Afghanistan territory so we did not allow Pakistan to construct such posts. The tension on construction of post arises between both countries and both exchanged fire on border. In this event, one Pakistani soldier injured and 32 Afghanistan soldier were killed.

At this time, the relations of the two countries were very tense so both decided to improve their relations through negotiations. Therefore, in 2007, President Hamid Karzai visited Pakistan and met his Pakistani counterpart. In this visit, both countries tried to improve their bilateral relations. Both leaders made a detail discussion on bilateral issues and their solutions. Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai also met Prime Minister of Pakistan Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali. In this meeting, both leaders signed many agreements on economic, culture, trade and banking sector. At this time, relations of the two countries started to improve (Sufi 2018). In this visit, both countries decided that they would not allow terrorists to use their territories against each other. Pakistan also assisted Afghanistan in different areas like road construction, media development, postal services, telecommunication and power generation.

In 2008, Pakistan invited Hamid Karzai on special visit to witness swearing-in ceremony of Asif Ali Zardari, who became President of Pakistan. The relations of both countries improved a lot when Asif Ali

Zardari became President of Pakistan and both made efforts to enhance bilateral trade and to remove misunderstandings.

Both countries made a lot of efforts to improve bilateral relations, therefore, in 2010; both countries signed Memorandum of Understanding on Afghanistan-Pakistan transit trade agreement [\(Cordesman 2012\)](#). The trade agreements between the two countries were good sign. In this agreement, both countries decided to increase cooperation and decided to start cooperation in multiple areas and to make close links between print and digital media. It was decided between the two countries that Pakistan would on air some music and other cultural programs in Pashto language. the two countries decided to enhance cooperation in railway sector. In this agreement, both countries decided to create a link road from Pakistan to Central Asian countries through Afghanistan.

Pakistan is always eager to improve its relations with Afghanistan so Pakistan announced 2000 scholarships to Afghanistan students. Main purpose of these developments was to increase bilateral trust and to increase people to people contacts.

In 2010, both countries made a joint chamber of commerce to expand bilateral trade. In this period, the countries made many sincere efforts to improve bilateral trade. In these agreements, the United States of America facilitated both states to increase trust level.

In 2011, relations of the two countries were improving and trust level was enhancing. The increase in trust level took them close and they again signed new transit trade agreement to improve bilateral trade.

The relations of the two countries were friendly but again became tense on 3 February 2011, when there was a minor skirmish between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Pakistan official claimed that Afghanistan forces had opened a fire on army check post in Gurbuz District. In this incident, one Pakistan and seven Afghanistan soldiers were killed. The relations of both countries did not improve in this time and there was another skirmish between both countries on 28 April 2011. In this fight, 1 Pakistani and 12 Afghanistan soldiers were killed [\(Usman 2017\)](#). The fight started just after one Afghan soldier crossed Durand Line and killed two Pakistani security guards. According to Pakistani official, Afghanistan had opened unprovoked fire on Pakistanis forces and damaged markets in Pakistan. Pakistan claimed that Afghanistan is acting on the will of coalition forces.

There were tensions between the two countries but the relations became tenser on May 2, 2011, when Osama Bin Laden was killed by the United States of America in Pakistan (Hussain & Elahi, 2015). After this event, once again, Afghanistan blamed Pakistan for supporting terrorism in Afghanistan and claimed that Pakistan is providing safe heavens to the terrorists. After this event, trust level was decreased between the two countries so whenever there is any terrorist attack in Afghanistan instantly they blame Pakistan and vice versa. Therefore, these misperceptions became very high between the countries.

In 2014, Afghanistan-Pakistan relations took different sides when coalition forces announced that they would leave Afghanistan. In this period, all the neighbouring countries of Afghanistan tried to preserve their interest in Afghanistan so the situation in Afghanistan became very complex.

In 2014, Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani decided to improve its relations with Pakistan. Afghanistan President gave a bold statement in Beijing conference that Afghanistan had made some changes in its policy, now Afghanistan have made five circles of its foreign policy and Pakistan is in its first circle. This statement put very pleasant effects on Afghanistan and Pakistan relations. Afghanistan President put India in forth circle. After this statement, relations of both countries started improving and leaders of both countries made visits of each other's country. In 2014, Pakistan gave \$2 million aid and started supporting in infrastructure development in Afghanistan.

The relations of both countries again became tense when terrorists attacked Army Public School in Peshawar on 16 December 2014. Pakistan claimed that the terrorist came from Afghanistan and they crossed Torkham border to reach Peshawar. Pakistan stated that onward no Afghan could come in Pakistan without authorized travel documents [\(Synovitz 2006\)](#). The tensions between the two countries arose when Pakistan demolished Afghanistan people houses in Torkham. After these events, Pakistan closed border with Afghanistan. The tension between the two countries was very high at that time. Pakistan decided to construct gate at Torkham border and Afghanistan was not happy on this decision.

The relations of both countries remained tense till 2015 and main reason of these relations was mistrust between them. Pakistan blamed Afghanistan that Afghanistan has been favoring India in every matter and works against Pakistan on will of India (Shah, 2019). The first impact of tense Afghanistan-Pakistan relations came on trade. In 2015, bilateral trade between both countries drops to minimum \$1.5 billion. Main reason behind low bilateral trade was closure of border due to minor skirmish on border. As on 23 August 2015, four Pakistani soldiers were killed in a rocket attack from Afghanistan.

In 2015, Ashraf Ghani became President of Afghanistan and he showed his will to improve its relations with Pakistan. President of Afghanistan invited Prime Minister of Pakistan to visit Afghanistan, so Prime Minister of Pakistan Nawaz Sharif visited Afghanistan and tried to remove the misunderstandings between the two countries. In this visit, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif met President Ashraf Ghani and said, "I assure you, Mr. President, that the enemies of Afghanistan can never be friend of Pakistan". In this meeting, both leaders decided to make intelligence and military cooperation between the two countries so that they can work against terrorists in comprehensive way. President of Afghanistan sent a group of army cadets for training in Pakistan training camps to start the military cooperation between the two countries. In this visit, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said, "any effort by any militant or group to destabilize Afghanistan will be dealt with severely and such elements will be outlawed and hunted down". These statements by both leaders put pleasant effects on relations of both countries.

In 2016, Pakistan took more initiatives to improve bilateral relations and announced \$500 million aid to Afghanistan to improve infrastructure but Afghanistan President Ashraf Ghani rejected this aid by saying that Pakistan is involved in making terrorist attacks in Afghanistan. President of Afghanistan accused Pakistan of being "Taliban centre" and he abounded the thought of settlement with Pakistan [\(Zaafir 2019\)](#).

At this time, level of misunderstandings was very high and both of them blamed each other whenever there is any terrorist attack in any country. For example, in 2017, two suicide attacks on Afghanistan parliament killed hundreds of people and Afghanistan blamed Pakistan on first instance without any formal investigation. This is very disappointing side of the coin that any country blamed other without any evidence. Therefore, relations of both countries remained tense for most of the time [\(Rasmussen 2017\)](#). There was a minor fight between the two in February 2017. According to Afghanistan officials, Pakistan armies fired many shells in Afghanistan and many people became homeless due to these shelling. Pakistan claimed that we could end this type of minor fighting if, Afghanistan takes actions against Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan which is making terrorist attacks in Pakistan and Pakistan also put its concerns over millions of refugees in Pakistan which are security concern for it. Pakistan conveyed its wish to Afghanistan officials to regulate Pakistan-Afghanistan border.

Pakistan and Afghanistan have seen this type of situation in their relations so they realize the importance of dialogue process to improve their relations, therefore, they started negotiations on track two and three level. Pakistan and Afghanistan decided to enhance trust between their militaries therefore they decided that director generals of military would meet on regular basis to keep peace on border and form working groups to enhance trade and to sort out border issues.

There are many issues between the two countries, which are making problem, however, main issues are drug trafficking, refugee's crisis, entry of Taliban in Pakistan tribal areas, terrorists' cross border

infiltrations and Durand Line. There are few checking points on the border and Pakistan wants to increase number of those checkpoints (Gul 2002). According to Pakistan, a lot of smugglers and terrorists' cross border and create many issues in Pakistan. Both countries had many issues from each other. The main problems between them arise due to foreign involvements in their bilateral relations. Main problem is caused by the United States of America and India. On many occasions, the United States of America and India dictated Afghanistan according to their own wishes and interests. Whenever Afghanistan and Pakistan tried to improve their relations, both United States of America and India put pressure on Afghanistan to act against Pakistan (Ghazanfar 2016).

Another problem between both countries is terrorism. Pakistan is acting against terrorists on its territory and has conducted many operations. Pakistani forces have launched largest operation Zarb-e-Azab against terrorists in Pakistan on other hand, there is instability in Afghanistan. Durand Line is very long border and it is too tough to control this border; therefore, millions of refugees are living in Pakistan which is main cause of problems in Pakistan. According to Pakistani officials, these refugees are involved in terrorist activities in Pakistan. There are many pending issues between both countries which need urgent actions. Therefore, both countries should work together to find out solution of those issues. There must not be involvement of any third country in their bilateral relations. Both countries should work at their own to find solution of their problem and both have capabilities to do this.

Conclusion

Pakistan-Afghanistan relations are very complex therefore; relations of both states have passed through many good and bad phases. Both countries are facing terrorism and extremism which is creating issues for them. Both countries are making individual efforts to end terrorism and extremism in their respective territories but if both countries want to end extremism and terrorism in region, both have to work together. Although individual efforts have paid off in case of Pakistan but results will be maximized if both will work together. The most important thing, if the world wants to see end of extremism and terrorism in the world then they must not guide the relations of both countries according to their wishes rather they must provide better environment to both countries so that they can get better solution of their issues. Both countries should develop a strong mechanism to remove mistrust and to solve the unresolved issues between them. This mechanism must be too strong that any third country cannot interfere in their relations. There are issues between them but both have a lot of similarities and options to solve those issues. Both countries must improve their bilateral trade and should not allow closure of borders in any case. Both countries should work to find solution of Durand Line issue because this is the main cause of instability between them. Both countries should forget past and should make comprehensive policies for their future so that people of both countries can live peacefully.

Recommendations

1. Both countries should start uninterrupted negotiation process and no third country should be allowed to affect that process
2. Both countries should handle issue of terrorism and extremism on table and no one should blame each other on any terrorist attack in any country rather both should share information with each other so that proper action can be taken against the defaulters
3. Bilateral trade must be enhanced between both countries according to their potential and they should not stop trade in any case and both countries should facilitate trade on all trading routes
4. Both countries should find a neutral country which can mediate between them to find the solutions of their problems

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