

**Pak-US Diplomatic and Economic Relations (1988-90) an Overview**

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**Abstract:** Era of Detente was very much difficult for Pakistan foreign policy but Soviet intervention in Afghanistan brought change in the US foreign policy in South Asia and Pakistan became the front line state against Soviet occupation in Afghanistan. Diplomatic and Economic relations between Pakistan and US have great importance since the creation of Pakistan. Development at internal level is one of the priorities of Pakistan, because economy improves the industrialisation of a country. Pakistan is one of the less developed states of the world, even at the time of partition. Keeping in view Pakistan got alliance with US to boost up its economy.

**Key words:**

**Pak-US Diplomatic Relations (1988-1990):**

After to the death of General Zia-ul-Haq in air crash near Bahawalpur Pakistan once again gone through new general elections in November 1988, through which new government was established in Pakistan, these elections were important not only for Pakistan but it have great importance for US too due to war in Afghanistan, because “for the entire history of Pakistan, the relationship with United States has been a love-hate one, at times had mad the most-allied-ally and others axes-of-evil” (Muhammad Anas 2010). due to the US interest in the region. The second major concern of US foreign policy was how to face the so called Islamic fundamentalism, because they (US) were of the opinion that if they have been successful in the aim for which US is funding Pakistan and Afghan Mujahideen (to collapse Soviet Union) then how US will face these Afghan Mujahideen in future, they were of the opinion that these Mujahideen can be trouble maker for US in future, the third concern of US foreign policy in South Asia at that time was how to restore human rights in the region, with this interest government was formed in Pakistan. On other hand Pakistan’s foreign policy goal were set by the new government which were to prevent Pakistan from the hegemonic designs of India. Pakistan was of the opinion that India might attack again on Pakistan because it had never accepted Pakistan’s independence, other major concern of Pakistan’s foreign policy was the permanent solution of Kashmir Problem, which India always denied and because of that two war had already been fought on resolution of Kashmir problem between two countries during 1948 and 1965. Keeping in view Pakistan had always threat from India, so “Pakistan was seeking security and freedom from India’s superiority and at the same time that United States was seeking Asian allies against militant world of communism” (Wayne A. Wilcox 1964). That’s way Pakistan with its strategic location on the Asian map could not escape the attention of policy makers in the State Department of US. “America’s involvement in Asia was therefore certain to get Pakistan involved in the politics of the cold war. The country was in dire need of aid both economic and military for its development and defense”. (Wayne A. Wilcox 1964a).

This was also the period of change of Governments in US administration. Reagan was leaving and George Bush was getting in power, during elections campaign of Bush he had already promised to continue previous government policies especially for South Asian Region. During this period Pakistan have got very prominent place in US foreign policy, due to its strategic location and it had also significance due to the intervention of Soviet Union in Afghanistan. US also look towards Pakistan in the context of its own strategic interest in Gulf region too. Because of that once Robet Oakley was of the opinion that, an appropriate time to review the whole gamut a bilateral relation in the aftermath of these developments, exchange views and also seek to remove mutual misunderstandings that have come to cloud the relationship. After taking oath in her first press conference she was of the opinion that Pakistan’s friendship with US is of the special importance which is based on shared perception of peace and stability in the region. While replying in a question in an interview that why she was agreed to continued General Zia’s Afghan policy and Sahibzada Yaqoob Khan as Foreign

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Minister she replied, "... It was in the interest of Pakistan to continue the same policies in Afghanistan and
Sahibzada Yaqoob Khan, as a Foreign Minister of Pakistan, because he had very much knowledge about
Afghan problem and he can handle the issue in a very sophisticated manner."(Bhutto Benazir 2005)

This was the time, when cold war was almost came to an end and the new Unit-polar world was
emerging, because of that it is said, “Ms. Bhutto had taken over power at a time when the bipolar world of
the post-war era is collapsing and competing centers of power are emerging in the world.”(Pakistan Horizon
1989) Just after setting of new government in Pakistan US congressman Stephen Solarz arrived on good will
tour to Pakistan, he was known as the Indian and Jewish Lobbyist in US congress, while touring Pakistan he
was of the opinion that, United States will not push Pakistan into the Indian arms, though the reasons could
be others, but reluctantly he also talked about the policies of Pakistan and US.

It was first time when Pakistan allowed US for direct deal with peoples of Afghan resistance movement
(Mujahideen) through the special American envoy, other wise Pakistan had become the third party between
US and Afghan Mujahideen, through which all the dealing was done earlier, it was done only due to the
civilian government came into power in Pakistan. On other hand “Bhutto openly supported the muslim rebels
in Indian held Jammu & Kashmir, who were involved in sporadic fighting against the Indian army”
(www.pakistan4ever.com).The Restoration of democracy in Pakistan no doubt put the positive impacts on the
world generally and on US particularly. That’s why President George Bush personally invites Pakistani prime
Minister on officially visit to US, as we know that the relations between any two countries can be strengthened
through the visits to different delegations and signing the different agreements from time to time, so keeping
in view Prime Minister of Pakistan visited US. The main propose of the visit was seen in the broad perspective
to strengthen the friendship through mutual co-operation, economic trade and with the different type of
agreements will have to be sign, due to which Prime Minister paid an official visit to US in the month June
1989. During this visit she meets with President George Bush and took him into confidence, that like the past
both countries will continue their bilateral relations. She first time talked about to invest on equal sharing basis,
Benazir Bhutto said that, “She looked forward to a new partnership between the two countries.” (Akhtar
Rafique 1989)

Prime Minister’s this visit gave many agreements to Pakistan, through which relations between two
countries became more strengthen. In February 1990, Pakistan wanted to get nuclear power plant from France;
US reacted on the French help to Pakistan against Nuclear power plant, though this problem was settled latter
on in the shape of aid to Pakistan.


The main cause for US massive aid to was to flourish its economy just to threat perception of the
expansion of Soviet Union’s communism in the region in past. But some people believe that Pakistan’s energy
problem is not only impacting its economy but its security as well. There is an urgent need to produce more
energy and meet the industrial and economic demands for today and the future. After the disintegration of
Soviet Union in recent past the reasons behind US were totally changed. Since Afghan refugees came into
Pakistan in a very large number and in the effect of that migration Pakistan’s economy badly suffered. Before
Benazir Bhutto, during General Zia-ul-Haq’s period Pakistan was under economic debts from US. The change
of administration in US did not effect on economic aid to Pakistan, because of that,” George Bush
administration had proposed the assistance of US aid of 5% to 10% and money should be spend
sanctioned for the year 1989-90 by US must be increased from 5% to 10% and money should be spend

Due to which, Pakistan continues its Atomic Energy and Agriculture programs without interruption. Not
only this, but due to the Economic aid, the new Major programs were also initiated in the different fields
Education, Health and Housing too. US continued its economic aid policy and promised for further 245 US
million-dollar assistance to Pakistan. Though some peoples were of the view that after the Soviet with draw
from Afghanistan, US will cut its aid, which can be more difficult to Pakistan through which Benazir Bhutto
government would be weak, this remained only thinking of the peoples, because due to democratic government
in Pakistan after a long spell of 11 years, US send more economic aid to Pakistan.

During this period US invest more and more in the future generations of Pakistan. On the visit of US
Economic Secretary Mr. Solarz to Pakistan, he himself was of the opinion that the aid which have been

especially on Female Education. “During December 1989, Pakistan and US also sign the MoU of restructuring
the Textile accord and lift of restriction from 66 out of 80 categories of man made fiber”. (Pakistan Horizon
1990a)
This factor of continuation of Economic aid to Pakistan by US gave a revolutionary boost up to Pakistan’s
economy; the signing up of different agreements between two countries gave a new life to Pakistan’s economy,
actually, “American aid enhanced Pakistan’s dependence on foreign aid All Pakistan economic planning were
based on foreign aid, so it neglected the total sources of development. Secondly, America’s advisors and
technicians fully mono-polished Pakistan’s industrial and economic circle. Industries were setup which
depended heavily on a regular and unfailing supply of the United States raw material and spare parts”. (Pakistan Time 1959).
According to new agreements which were signed in Islamabad, “United States government provided $ 80 million to Pakistan, under ‘PL-480 food assistance program for 1990’. The funds will be used for financing of the import of Soybean Oil,” (Akhtar Rafique 1989a) which shows how much US
government was sincere to help Pakistan. During Benazir Bhutto’s visit to US in June 1989, both countries
also sign another agreement, “providing 465 million dollars of economic assistance for education and housing
programs in Pakistan”. (Pakistan Horizon 1990b) Though the private sector power projects, along with to
improve scientific and technical research and the training in major Pakistani universities under US aid also
came with the result that Bush administration will not stop economic aid to Pakistan through this period.
So one can argue that, United States offers more and more areas of co-operation for economic assistance
to Pakistan, during this period such as Technology, investment, education and health, through which closer and
mutually beneficial relations were developed between two countries during this period.

Conclusion:
Pakistan always help US instead of US helped Pakistan without its interests, due to which so many ups
and downs came in the relations between Pakistan and US. Pakistan helped US during the odd times of US
especially during Soviet Union’s intervention in Afghanistan, due to which Pakistan got massive economic aid
from US, but as the Soviet Union Collapse the interests of US shifted from bi-polar to uni-polar world. When
Benazir Bhutto after taking oath went to US, she fought the Pakistani case for the economic sanctions and
other problems. Due to the visit US administration agreed to lift sanctions partially and also agreed to return
back the money which Pakistan had paid earlier for F-16 aircrafts.

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