

## A Comparative Analysis of USA Policies toward Pakistan and India During Obama Administration

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*The USA had completely different South Asia strategies for Pakistan and India reflecting the changing geopolitical priorities during the presidency of Barack Obama (2009-2017). The U.S. saw India not only as a partner but also as a counter China and a promoter of the region's stability, having the same values as the U.S. in the area of democracy, economic growth, and regional stability. To counter the rise of China, the administration was committed to developing the defense and diplomatic relations with India through various channels like the U.S.-India Strategic and Commercial Dialogue, the signing of several defense agreements (DTTI, LEMOA, COMCASA), and even cooperation on climate change by way of the Paris Agreement. Pakistan would continue to be a counter-terrorism partner with whom the U.S. would cooperate, and this was multiplied by the Kerry–Lugar–Berman Act (2009) and military assistance. However, the relationship was further strained by events such as the Abbottabad raid in 2011 and the ensuing civilian-military tensions. Economic engagements between countries blossomed, the U.S.-India trade going up from \$19 billion in 2000 to more than \$100 billion in 2014, whereas Pakistan got \$7.96 billion for security and \$10.85 billion for economic support. The two countries also took part in nuclear security summits and cybersecurity dialogues which reflected their shared interests in non-proliferation and cyber stability. The comparative analysis brings out the fact that Obama's policy was one of balancing a long-term strategic partnership with India against a pragmatic, conflicting relationship with Pakistan, and this shaped USA engagement in South Asia.*

## **1. Introduction**

President Barack Obama began his administration in January 2009, attempting to repair the strained relationship between the US and Pakistan as a result of tough policies. The US claimed Pakistan was not operating its country well and made poor decisions. They accused the army of sharing information with the Taliban and other groups who assist them. A US air attack in 2008 worsened the relationship between the two countries (Blood, 2002; Singh, 2021). The Obama administration promised to support democracy and introduced more arenas such as trade and investment, education and science, technology, clean energy, addressing climate change, economic growth, regional cooperation, law and culture and assistance of democratic ideologies (Napier, 2021). They also accepted to collaborate on the US-Pakistan Strategic Dialogue and enhance relations among the citizens and legislators. The key point was to enable Pakistan to be less reliant on the military assistance and establish closer relations in combating terrorism.

The Obama government wanted to retain the normal practice of the US with India (Bakht & Ejaz, 2023). They were concerned with strengthening the economic relationship and ensuring that the region of South Asia was secure. They enhanced the US-Indian relationship, established good economic connections, and labored on maintaining South Asia safe. President Obama made two trips to India and held talks with Indian leaders Manmohan Singh and Narendra Modi. Combating terrorism was a primary objective, and thus the US ceased providing Pakistan with money and arms (Singh, 2021). The Obama era brought about a closer friendship between the US and India. American politics were greatly affected by the Indian community in the US. New programs have started in security, military, counterterrorism, climate change, education, farming, the economy, trade, investments, energy, space and health care (Ali, 2020). The US and India have signed the Paris Climate Agreement to fight climate change and enhance clean and green energy (Bakht & Ejaz, 2023). The leaders also came to an agreement to cooperate on the Indian request to have a Totalization Agreement to enable Indian employees in the US to reclaim nearly 3 billion a year of social security payments (Wakil, 2022). The military relationship between the US and India shifted as the armies chatted to a robust military partnership that is concerned about safe seas, free trade, and open waterways. The Obama administration strived to make military relationships closer, particularly in South Asia, and to unite against cyber threats.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Comparative analysis of Obama's Policy toward Pakistan and India**

When Obama assumed the presidency, there was also a drastic change in the way the US handles its foreign policy, especially in South Asia. Due to the changing war on terror, Chinese ascendancy, nuclear issues, and economic policy, the US now enjoys rather different relations with Pakistan and India. Here, this paper evaluates the US approach to Pakistan and India during the presidency of Obama as strategy, military, economic, and diplomatic. The Obama presidency between 2009 and 2017 saw a major change in the American foreign policy, especially in South Asia. In the current international scenario where the US is re-aligning its strategic interests, the relationship between India and Pakistan has significantly evolved (Minhas, 2010). India is now

becoming more of a strategic ally to the US yet there was also a bad day when Pakistan began to be perceived more as a terrorism and a challenge to the order in the region (Minhas, 2010). A comparison of the way the US managed its relationship with Pakistan and India through the Obama years is discussed. This paper examines various aspects such as strategy, military operations, economics and diplomacy. To see how Obama is approaching, one needs to analyze the context. The US and India The US and India had been improving their relations since the late 1990s, and in 2005, President George W. Bush signed the United States-India Civil Nuclear Agreement. The agreement brought the two nations together in various aspects such as defense, trade, energy and so on. In the meantime, the War on Terror post-9/11 had a significant impact on US -Pakistan relations. Pakistan was one of the major supporters of the US invasion of Afghanistan and received considerable military and economic assistance. But the role of Pakistan in the war against terrorism created doubts in the US and a complex relationship. Under Obama, it was evident that the US sought India as a strategic long-term partner, particularly under the —Pivot to Asia strategy (Rima, 2023). The Obama administration was more involved with India when it came to defense matters. They signed contracts like the Defense Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI) and the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) in 2016. The US also encouraged India in their desires to enter Nuclear Suppliers Group and their suggestions about changes to UN Security Council. These actions showed that the US was building confidence in India as powerful democratic and economic force in the region.

India and the US ministers signed the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) during their first 2+2 meeting in 2018. The new version of the Communications and Information Security Memorandum of Agreement (CISMOA), similar to that of LEMOA, is called COMCAS (Ali, 2020). Conversely, during the Obama era, the US was primarily engaged in combating terrorism in Pakistan. Despite lack of trust and divergence of interests between the two nations, Pakistan continued to assist the US in its mission in Afghanistan. In 2011, after the raid by the Kerry-Lugar-Berman Act of 2009 led to the death of Osama bin Laden in Abbottabad, the military support came under different circumstances, and escalated the military-intelligence circles in Pakistan to disgrace and indignation (Napier, 2021). Following the raid, the military-intelligence circles in Pakistan were extremely disgraced and indignant due to the fact that, as a result, its military support became a different issue (Bakht & Ejaz, 2023).

### **3. Methodology**

The paper has a qualitative, comparative research design in the sense that it will analyze how the Obama administration has approached the Pakistan and India policies in the period of the Obama administration in the United States (2009-2017). It is analyzed using secondary data as it mainly refers to official U.S. government documents, policy statements, joint declarations, legislation (such as the Kerry Lugar Berman Act), Defence agreements, economic reports, and archival sources of the White House and U.S. State Department, as well as peer-reviewed academic literature, policy reports, and credible secondary sources. Thematic and analytical methodology is used to make comparative analysis of the U.S. strategic, military, economic, diplomatic, and

counterterrorism strategies against one another in both countries and allows revealing the convergences and divergences in the U.S. engagement. The study is systematic in its assessment of how changing strategic priorities of the U.S. affected bilateral relations with both Pakistan and India in the Obama era by contextualizing the analysis within the wider context of geopolitics of South Asia, especially War on Terror, the rise of China, nuclear security and the stability of the region.

## **4- Results and Discussion**

### **4.1 Strategic Priorities Under Obama**

#### **4.1.1 India as a Strategic Partner**

Both President Obama and Prime Minister Singh decided to work more closely in areas that were of great concern to both nations, the US and India. They chose to chat more and at a deeper level on matters of foreign policy that are relevant to both nations. Such consultations are in line with their unifying aim of turning the U.S.-India relationship into a strong worldwide alliance that will show the binding and inseparable nature of the two nations. Under the leadership of President Barack Obama, the US and India evolved into a fully operational strategic partnership grounded on mutual ideals of democracy and interest in ensuring stability in the region, economic development and address the global challenges. The major diplomatic successes, such as the high-level meetings and the crucial Joint Strategic Vision on the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean Region in 2015, contributed to establishing cooperation on security on sea and preventing excessively aggressive and unfair actions (Ejaz, 2016).relations were strengthened, and projects supported by funding clean energy, and successfully implemented the US -India Civil Nuclear Deal. India was established as a —Major Defense Partner (2016) and signed the Paris Agreement, with its most significant impact being the joint leadership on climate change supported by programs such as the International Solar Alliance. Improved educational interactions and a flourishing Indian-American diaspora also reinforced people-to-people relationships. Even though there were still trade frictions, the relationship shifted the estrangement levels of the Cold War to a model of deep multifaceted engagements, making India a partner of first resort in the development of common global interests (Mahapatra, 2013).

The US-India Strategic and Commercial Dialogue: Introduced in 2015, this dialogue was meant to reinforce cooperation between the US and India on strategic and commercial matters (Ali, 2020)

#### **4.1.2 Pakistan as a Strategic Dilemma**

On Wednesday, Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif had a meeting with President Barack Obama in the White House to discuss cessation of drone operations and addressing of Pakistan interests in the region after the US pulled out Afghanistan. The conference also discussed some of the controversial matters between the two countries. President Obama said that the US considers Pakistan as a very important friend and South Asian partner. The two leaders decided to collaborate to end the activities of American drones that attack terrorists, despite the fact that such actions sometimes kill innocent individuals. Obama did not discuss drones at the meeting, but

Sharif claimed that he informed Obama this week that the drone assaults must cease in Pakistan. Sharif also indicated that they will continue collaborating with the US to establish an integrated, peaceful and stable Afghanistan. He informed Obama that he intends to establish a cordial and collaborative relationship with India and attempts to resolve every problem, including Kashmir, in a peaceful manner (Armitage et al., 2010). In Afghanistan, US troops will exit the country next year and there is increasing apprehension that the Taliban can resurrect and attempt to control regions along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. Sharif also proposed to relax certain restrictions in those borders areas but assured that he would continue combating terrorism in Pakistan. The Obama administration has indicated that it will continue to employ drone attacks on terrorists in places that the government cannot defend people against them. The white house also dismissed the criticism of Amnesty International that its use of drones is primarily directed to prevent the killing of civilians..

## **4.2 Defense Assistance under the Obama Era**

### **4.2.1 Defense Assistance with India**

The defense relationship between the US and India has evolved from purely military ties to a broader partnership that includes talks, joint exercises, defense equipment sales, military education exchanges, and operational collaboration. The leaders emphasized the significance of keeping the oceans secure, supporting open trade, and preserving the freedom to navigate under international law. The leaders approved the first meeting of the Defense Trade and Technology Initiative and agreed to form a group to quickly review and decide on special projects and technologies that can benefit the defense relationship right away, as well as find ways to strengthen India's defense industry and military strength. The President and Prime Minister also supported creating partnerships in military education and training, and they approved the US joining India's planned National Defence University (Singh, 2021). They also outlined steps to strengthen military ties through exchanging experts, holding discussions, and doing joint training and exercises. Next, it agreed to expand civilian and military intelligence exchange and consultation. In 2015, India signed the DTTI agreement to improve defense cooperation between the two countries. This agreement changed the relationship between India and the US from just trade to working together on producing and developing defense products. In simple terms, it means both countries will work together to make weapons and share technology ( Sekhon , 2015). The US and India signed a Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement in 2016. This Pact allowed both states to share logistics resources (Ali, 2020).

### **4.2.2 Defense Assistance with Pakistan**

The US gives security help to Pakistan to fight terrorism and keep the region stable. This aid includes Foreign Military Financing (FMF) which helps Pakistan update their military and improve their ability to fight terrorism. In 2015, the US gave Pakistan \$265 million in FMF to build stronger long-term security abilities, especially in the FATA area. The FMF also helps with improving Pakistan's maritime security and fighting pirates. Another part of the military cooperation is International Military Education and Training (IMET), which helps train Pakistani



soldiers and build long-term military ties with the US. Since 2009, the US has trained around 1,120 people from the Pakistani military. Besides military aid, the US has also given humanitarian help to Pakistan, such as supporting people who have been displaced and helping rebuild areas damaged by war. US aid to Pakistan has changed over time. From 2002 to 2016, the US reimbursed Pakistan \$33.4 billion, with 44% of that money going to fund Washington's anti-terror efforts in Afghanistan. Since 2002, the US has provided \$7.96 billion in security assistance to Pakistan, averaging \$530. 4 million a year. Furthermore, throughout the last 15 years, the US has provided \$10. 85 billion in economic help (Bashir & Aman, 2021).

### **4.3 Counterterrorism and Security Cooperation**

#### **4.3.1 Counterterrorism Cooperation with India**

Counter-terrorism decisions are taken by the countries involved, with bilateral talks between India and the US taking place since 2000. As a result of the Mumbai terror attacks, the countries became more committed to working together under the Counter-terrorism Cooperation Initiative (CCI) which was signed in July 2010 (Wakil, 2022). The agreement shows that both countries are determined to work together on counterterrorism and coordinate their operations closely to secure the citizens. Their close collaboration is seen in the programs where best practices are exchanged between law agencies, senior officials visit to see what they learn through combined military training and so on. efforts to address terrorism issues at international gatherings. When Obama took office, he inherited a grave situation in Afghanistan and sought to reverse the policy that his predecessor had implemented. This time, the Obama administration did not advocate acting alone. He knew that poorly prepared conflicts rarely succeed. Following the first presidential election, Obama sent his vice president, Joe Biden, to Afghanistan to gain a better grasp of the conflict. The fact that no US or NATO military officers could answer Biden's basic queries demonstrates how dire the situation had become. According to a US official report, terrorist activity has increased more rapidly in South Asia than in the Middle East.

India is now a partner of the US in fighting terrorism in this region.

#### **4.3.2 Counterterrorism Cooperation with Pakistan**

President Obama spoke of the attack by Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) which claimed 140 schoolchildren in December 2014. The leaders emphasized their unending cooperation to fight terrorism and violent extremist organizations. He praised the vital presence of Pakistan as an ally in combating terrorism and recognized the efforts of Pakistani civilians, military, and law enforcement dating back to fighting against terrorism and terrorist organizations (Bashir and Aman, 2021). He also praised Pakistan on its continued support in undermining and combating al-Qaida and its networks which has served to not only destroy the leadership and operations of the group but also thwarted plans to strike the United States. The President also acknowledged the losses of Pakistani security personnel in the Operation Zarb-e-Azb and other efforts that have curtailed the ability of extremists to plan and execute attacks. He mentioned certain additional initiatives done under the National Action Plan. In turn, the Prime Minister commended the US,

who had helped to build counter-terrorism capacities in Pakistan. President Obama and Prime Minister Sharif underline the significance of regional peace and stability, the fight against the extremism and terrorism. They called on a long-term peace agreement between the Afghan government and the Taliban and lauded Pakistan as the facilitator of the discussions of the masses. They concurred that peace in the region is pegged on ending cross-border Pakistan-Afghanistan strikes. They also talked about the repair of relations between Pakistan and India, the issue of common interests in terms of terrorism, and the long-term, stable discussion. They emphasized that security is a key to stability of the region and that they needed to act together with every nation to deal with extremist and terrorist organizations in the region..

#### **4.4 Economic Assistance during the Obama Era**

##### **4.4.1 Economic Assistance between the US and India**

The US and India are striving to strengthen their economic and business relations. The first Strategic and Comprehensive Dialogue (S&CD) between President Obama and Prime Minister Modi began in Washington, DC. This discussion is to enhance the economic component of their relationship. The two countries have increased trade significantly since 19 billion in 2000 to more than 100 billion in 2014. The S&CD belongs to the Obama administration program to establish a closer economic relationship between the two countries. Such economic relationships are business, education, culture, families, and common day to day interactions among people that have always been significant in the US-India relationship and will only continue to be so. In 2014, the US exports to India were valued at 38 billion and contributed to approximately 181,000 US jobs. Investment between India and the US were 7.8 billion and 28 billion respectively. By trying to ease trade, open new platforms to allow private investment and enhancing their trade and investment connections, the two governments will contribute to the development of the economy and the lives of the citizens of both nations (US state, 2015).

- MOU Agreement: The leaders greeted the signing of MOU to Enhance Cooperation on Energy Security, Clean Energy and Climate Change, and an MOU on Cooperation in Gas Hydrates (Ali, 2020).
- Climate change and clean, renewable energy were also emphasized in both states. In 2015, India and the US signed the Paris Climate Change Agreement to minimize greenhouse gas emissions and combat climate change (Verma, 2015)..

##### **4.4.2 Economic Assistance between the US and Pakistan**

In the time of the presidency of Obama, the US and Pakistan joined their efforts in terms of economic development and regional security. Obama and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif both made a statement that it was very essential to strengthen the economy of Pakistan not only to its population but also to the security of the region. Obama praised the attempts of Pakistan to restore its economy with the help of following proper banking rules and improving its energy base. The leaders also talked about boosting trade and investment between the two countries by engaging in initiatives like the reauthorization of the General System of Preferences (GSP) and the United

States-Pakistan Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) to improve the education of more Pakistani girls. The United States-Pakistan sustainable Energy Partnership was also aimed at encouraging the investments in the sphere of sustainable energy in Pakistan, and the necessity of the better infrastructure was also touched upon (Blood, 2002). Both presidents acknowledged that the civil society is of paramount importance in terms of advancing the human rights and democratic governments, and the better infrastructure needed to be discussed (Blood, 2002). The leaders restated the objective of meeting the energy needs of Pakistan and the world economy..

- Act 2009 Kerry-Lugar bill: The Kerry-Lugar Bill is a law passed by the United States. It was introduced in January 2009 by Senators John Kerry and Richard Lugar. President Barack Obama signed it into law on October 15, 2009 (Subramaniam, 2009). The main goal of the bill is to give Pakistan help in the form of money or support for things like development and trade, rather than giving them military or defense support.

#### **4.5 Diplomatic Ties of the US with Both States**

##### **4.5.1 Diplomatic ties with India**

On January 26, 2015, US President Barack Obama became the first US president to visit India as the chief guest. This visit demonstrated that the US and India intend to form a strong, long-term cooperation (Godbole, 2015). During the visit, numerous agreements on significant global and local concerns were inked. Both countries are pleased with the visit and are working to strengthen their economic connections, both with one another and with other nations. During Barack Obama's presidency, human relations between India and the US were better. Politics were also greatly influenced by the Indian population in the US. New intentions on spheres such as security, defense, combating terrorism, climate change, education, agriculture, economy, trade, investments, energy, space, and healthcare were also introduced due to the visit (Somanader, 2015).

##### **4.5.2 Diplomatic ties with Pakistan**

Prime Minister Sharif was invited to visit President Obama, and was in Washington between October 20 and 23, 2015. The visit showed the long-term US-Pakistan alliance, a better Pakistan, and a more stable region commitment of both leaders. President Obama and Prime Minister Sharif had long time meetings today at the White. House (White House, 2015). They emphasized the need of a strong US-Pakistan alliance for regional and global peace and security. They also discussed how the two leaders are working together in Washington to address new dangers in South Asia. President Obama and Prime Minister Sharif emphasized the importance of democracy in their collaboration and applauded Sharif's efforts to strengthen Pakistan's democratic processes. They want to expand their connection beyond security, so they discussed commerce, investment, education, energy, climate change, economic growth, regional cooperation, the rule of law, and cultural linkages. They also discussed the value of people communicating with one another and sharing ideas through parliamentary interactions. They acknowledged the aid Pakistan has received.



## **4.6 Nuclear Security and Cybersecurity Cooperation under the Obama Policy**

### **4.6.1 Nuclear Security and Cybersecurity Cooperation with India**

India and the US signed a memorandum of agreement at the 2010 Nuclear Security Summit. This agreement establishes a general framework for collaborating on the Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnership in India. The US intends to focus on sharing best practices for keeping nuclear materials and facilities safe, developing training programs and courses for nuclear security around the world, collaborating with their nuclear industries to address security issues, and collaborating on other nuclear security projects that both parties agree on. In July 2009, the US and India agreed on two sites in India for building nuclear reactors with American companies. But the Nuclear Liability Act passed by India's government in August 2010 caused problems between US nuclear suppliers and India. Supporters of the Act say that allowing India to take legal action against nuclear suppliers is different from the usual international system, according to which the operator is entirely liable in case of a nuclear accident (Rashid, 2023). India too desires the US to relax certain regulations regarding technological transfer to them. The US and India are increasing collaboration on cybersecurity so as to establish a powerful and reliable information and communication system. Under the Obama administration, India and the US collaborated on cyber related issues and intelligence sharing in the Cyber Security Forum. They also signed a memorandum of understanding and discussed cyber policy strategies, which contributed to the enhancement of collaboration on security-related issues. These initiatives involved the collaboration with both the state and non-state machinery, adhering to the global regulations, and establishing standards of the conduct of nations in cyberspace. In 2018, the two states signed a Communications and Information Security Memorandum of Agreement in order to both ensure the security of their communication and exchange information (Ali, 2020).

### **4.6.2 Nuclear Security and Cybersecurity Cooperation with Pakistan**

The US and Pakistan have agreed to collaborate in order to make the Nuclear Security Summit a successful event that will take place next year by President Obama. President Obama recognized the involvement of Pakistan in the Nuclear Security Summit and praised its co-operation with the IAEA and other foreign bodies. The leaders recognized the success that Pakistan had made in refining strategic trade controls, and its active participation in international export control bodies. Their bilateral cooperation in the form of the Security, Strategic Stability and Non-proliferation Working Group became valued by them as well, and both leaders expressed the desire to keep on working on the issues in the group (White House, 2015). President Obama and Prime Minister Sharif discussed the positive and negative aspects of utilizing information and communications technologies. They concurred that it is essential that they collaborate with other nations to ensure the internet is secure and consistent. A report on this was prepared by a panel of government experts at the UN in 2015 and both leaders endorsed the report. They also intended to hold additional discussions with various nations and the problems of cyber security during the US Pakistan Strategic Dialogue..

## **5. Conclusion**

The Obama administration had different approaches towards dealing with Pakistan and India. The US wanted to develop a robust strategic partnership with India grounded on common democratic values and objectives. It was a relations of working together with Pakistan to fight terrorism but it faced a lot of stumbling blocks and insecurity. The paper explores the complex nature of US foreign policy in South Asia, the importance of understanding and establishing good relations with governments of the region. On the one hand, the Obama administration and the US continued to have an emerging and positive relationship with India. Nonetheless, the alliance with Pakistan had its challenges. During the leadership of President Obama, the US and India developed a strategic partnership guided by similar democratic values and desire to see regional stability, economic growth and deal with global issues. Some of the key areas that strengthened the partnership were diplomacy, trade, defense and climate change. The Pakistani Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif, held a meeting with Obama and discussed the drone strikes and regional issues. The military relationship was extended to the alliance on a broader scale. Since 2000, the US and India have worked towards counterterrorism, and in 2010, they both signed the Counter-terrorism Cooperation Initiative (CCI). The Obama administration did not advocate the use of unilateral action in Afghanistan but they acknowledged the role that Pakistan could play in the war on terrorism. There is an improvement in economic connections between the US and India, and with trade expanding to over 100 billion dollars in 2014 since 19 billion in 2000. The US assists India to create effective energy markets, lessen carbon emission, and build smart grid technologies. The US-Pakistan sustainable Energy Partnership is meant to promote sustainable energy investments. In 2015, President Barack Obama was the first US President to visit India as Chief Guest and he forged a long-term strategic partnership between the two countries..

The visit also comes with agreements on international and national matters and both nations are determined to enhance bilateral and multilateral economic actions. The Obama administration between 2009 and 2017 was able to bolster US-India diplomatic ties and the lobbying power of the Indian lobby in the US political arena. In India, the 2010 Nuclear Security Summit led to a Memorandum of Understanding between the US and India on nuclear security, cybersecurity and intelligence sharing. The Indian government and Obama administration have collaborated to exchange information and intelligence in cyber threats via the Cyber Security Forum. In 2018, the nations concluded the Communications and Information Security Memorandum of Agreement aimed at facilitating the security of communication and information exchange. The US and Pakistan were planning to join hands in ensuring that the Nuclear Security Summit becomes successful and President Obama welcomed Pakistan to join in. Both leaders discussed the opportunities and challenges of information and communications technologies and agreed that international cooperation is significant in order to ensure the cyberspace is safe and stable.

### **5.1 Recommendations**

Having compared the U.S. policies toward Pakistan and India under the Obama administration, it can be concluded that there are several recommendations. To start with, America

must seek both a more moderated and coordinated South Asia policy which is neither too securitized in relations with Pakistan and yet more incorporates strategic involvement with India. India is still a long-term strategic relationship-wise ally, but to ensure consistent stability in the region, there is still the need to engage in constructive and trust relationships with Pakistan beyond counterterrorism requirements. Second, the U.S. policy makers must expand the instruments of engagement with Pakistan with more focus on economic development, energy cooperation, education and institutional capacity-building as it would make the country less reliant on military aid and mitigate the underlying causes of instability. Third, the U.S. future governments must enhance regional confidence-building procedures, promoting the dialogue between Pakistan and India, especially on security, counterterrorism, and management of crisis to avoid escalation and promote regional security cooperation. Fourth, to deepen economic diplomacy between the two countries, trade liberalization, investments, and cooperation on technology ought to be propagated, thus putting the bilateral relationship on an economic basis and not on short-term strategic considerations. Fifth, the United States ought to promote multilateral cooperation in climate change, nuclear security, and cybersecurity where it should use forums such as strategic dialogues and international summits to institutionalize cooperation. Lastly, the U.S. approach to South Asia ought to be a long term, region sensitive policy that balances strategic goal with reality in the region, so that a relationship with Pakistan and India leads to sustainable peace, economic development, and geopolitical stability in the region.

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