

US' policies towards Pakistan and India: A Comparative Study of Pre- and post-9/11 Scenario

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Abstract

The United States as a global super power has influenced countries' relations and international decisions on a huge scale. After the end of the Cold War, it has reigned the international community and world order. The dramatic episode of September 11 attacks further exacerbated its position in the world due to its War on Terror. This approach by the US has completely changed the dealings within the international community which are, without a doubt, effective towards all. An extensive amount of work has been done on War on Terror, the US policies and other active countries involved. However, there is a dearth of literature on the regional conditions and the US bilateral relations with countries, particularly South Asia due to its post 9/11 policy. The study focuses on the US policies and actions towards Pakistan and India after the attacks of the 9/11. The research argues that due to the United States' diplomatic affairs with these two countries, the conditions have become worse for Pakistan-India bilateral relations. Through qualitative method, the role of the super power has been interrogated by highlighting a comparison of its India-Pakistan relations, which have been problematic since the beginning and the US factor has played a significant role in it after the 9/11 incident. By the end of the study it has been deduced that dealings of all three countries fall in the domain of structural realism where all are working against fear of stability-loss as well as ambition of absolute gain, a determination point in their relations. This scenario mainly by the virtue of the US has put the future of Pakistan-India relations and South Asian region in jeopardy.

Keywords: 9/11, Pakistan, India, United States, Insecurity, Competition

Introduction:

The end of the Cold War in 1991 transformed the status of the United States as a sole global super power, which also changed its interests and policies. The US, subsequently, became disinterested in regions it got

involved in earlier only to rival with the Soviet Union of which Asia, especially South Asia was an important part, and came forward with the idea of a new world order. Pakistan and India, two important countries of South Asia, witnessed this change of course dearly after 1991. Nevertheless, as a global power, the United States treated India and Pakistan, the two arch-rivals in South Asia, according to its 'new world order vision' by playing the role of a 'balancer' in order to ensure stability of regional and international affairs.

The 9/11 incident brought a major change in the US foreign policy towards South Asia, particularly India and Pakistan. Although after the end of Cold War the US turned its back on South Asia, however, the 9/11 occurrence took the US back to the sub locale of Asia.¹ The US-led War on Terror (WoT) in Afghanistan, and Pakistan being a frontline state, once again unleashed a security alliance between the two allies of the Cold War.

It is argued that the post 9/11 scenario should have been used as an opportunity to unite the interests and actions of the US with that of South Asia's needs (particularly Pakistan and India), instead, American policy towards South Asia in the aftermath of the 9/11 could not bring India and Pakistan on the same page to smoothly carry out the War on Terror.

The two South Asian adversaries remained at loggerheads throughout the two decades of the War on Terror, and each time the crisis was averted due to the American intervention, causing a serious damage to the US' efforts to eradicate the terrorist network of Al-Qaeda. For the United States, an ideal situation would have been to have normal relations between India and Pakistan, which could jointly help the US effectively fight and eradicate the global terrorism, of which Afghanistan was an epicenter.

It is further argued that the US' withdrawal from Afghanistan in August 2021 and as a result the return of the Taliban regime has raised serious questions on the American strategy in dealing with the issue of terrorism and India-Pakistan relations. It is a fact that the US dealt with India and Pakistan through two different commands: Asia-Pacific policy for India and CENTCOM for Pakistan. While Asia-Pacific policy revolves around the United States' strategic goals related to security, diplomacy and economy,² CENTCOM is based on countering and

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¹ S.P. Cohen, *America's Role in Asia* (San Francisco: Asia Foundation, 2004).

² Asia-Pacific Policy (n.d.). thepolicycircle.org.

detering whatever the US deems dangerous.³ The former, of which India is the part highlights its importance for the US which takes it as a partner and, the later, of which Pakistan is the part overshadows its status for the US. These actions of the US have witnessed two consequences: first, the US has made it clear that it considers Pakistan and India on totally different levels and second, it has created a power race boosted by insecurities due to which these long-time rivals are turning bitter towards each other, meanwhile, the US competing its space to other powers such as China and Russia.

Against this background, this research study endeavors to understand the difference between US-Pakistan and US-India relations, to emphasize the role of 9/11 with respect to shifting of interests of Washington and to highlight the consequences, due to its policies on Islamabad and New Delhi. The paper is divided into three parts: The first part deals with the US' policies towards Pakistan and India before 9/11, which included Cold War and post-Cold War eras. The second part evaluates the shift and comparison of the US' policies towards Pakistan and India in the aftermath of 9/11; and the last part gives a concluding analysis by examining the US' policies towards India and Pakistan with particular reference to the changing political scenario of Afghanistan as a result of the US' withdrawal and the Taliban takeover of the state apparatus.

The US' policies towards Pakistan and India before 9/11

During the Cold War, the US policy towards South Asia had been overshadowed by its Super Power rivalry with the Soviet Union. In order to contain Communism in Asia, the US badly needed Pakistan's support, though India which had inclination towards the Soviet Union, had always been a preferred priority. For the US, India, being the largest democracy, could be presented as a model to the Third World countries. It is evident through history that where Pakistan procured the title of most allied partner of the United States, it was similarly one of the most sanctioned countries. The evolution of the relationship can be understood in a way that the promoter-client relationship that started in 1950s with the affirmation of Pakistan in South East Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO) and Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) changed from subordinate client to an irritated client. The US left Pakistan in a tight spot during the 1965 War just as during the 1971 War, which incited the separating of the State. Similarly, the two sides once again forged an alliance when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in December 1979.

³ CENTCOM (n.d.). centcom.mil

However, with the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan under the Geneva Accords in April 1988, the US' interests in the region changed, thus, left Pakistan unattended to clean the mess of the decade-old Afghan War. In addition to this, the US also imposed sanctions, under the Pressler Amendment, on Pakistan for developing its nuclear program.⁴

In case of US-India relations during the Cold War, India's tilt towards the Soviet Union and impartiality in the international events remained major irritants, thus, did not show adequate connection to raise their relations expeditiously. Although the Sino-Indian war of 1962 brought the US and India closer to each other, however, the honeymoon period between the two states remained short-lived. Four major developments led to a downturn in the US- India relations. First, India-Soviet Union Friendship Treaty in August 1971 that not only ended Indian neutrality in the Cold War rivalry between the two Super Powers, thus, confirmed the Indian inclination towards the USSR, but also dashed the American hope of establishing an alliance with India. Second, India's surprising nuclear tests in 1974 challenged the American interests to achieve the objectives of the nuclear non-proliferation, particularly after the coming into force of the Nuclear non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1970. Third, Pakistan's role in bringing US and China closer to each other further ended the prospects of the US-India friendly relations. Lastly, Pakistan's active role in the Afghan war during 1980s enhanced its strategic significance for the US and it was no less than at the expense of the US-India cordial relations.⁵

Although the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991 changed the whole dynamics of the international politics and the nature of alliance, however, the US-India relations could not touch warmth of cordiality, and, thus, remained cold. This might be due to the fact that India had just opened up its economy and the US' policies were also in the formative phase of the post-Cold.

War, where it was still setting up its priorities in accordance with the new challenges to the American unilateralism in the post-Soviet era.⁶ On the other hand, the US-Pakistan relations had remained in a state of

⁴ M. Hussain, 'Pak-US Relations: An Historical Overview', *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture*, 37:2 (2016).

⁵ D. Ollapally, 'U.S.-India Relations: Ties That Bind?' *The Sigur Center Asia Papers*, The George Washington University (2004).

⁶ A.J. Tellis, *The Transforming U.S.-Indian Relationship and Its Significance for American Interests* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2006).

conflict during the 1990s. Four major irritants had determined US-Pakistan relations during this period. First, Pakistan's role in Afghanistan especially its support to the Taliban regime which had not only violated the basic human rights due to the introduction of strict Sharia laws, but also giving shelter to the Al-Qaeda leadership, including its supremo Osama bin Laden. Second, Pakistan's testing of nuclear weapons in May 1998 in reaction to India's tests in the same month came about as an emergency in the US-Pakistan as well as US-India relations, where the US forced a series of specific sanctions on both Pakistan and India. Third, the Kargil incident caused a bad taste in US-Pakistan relations and at the same time brought India closer to the US in terms of an understanding that a nuclear Pakistan was a threat to the peace of the region and the world at large. Lastly, the US-Pakistan relations further soured when Pakistan's Military ousted the elected democratic government of Nawaz Sharif in October 1999, thus, derailing the democratic process in the country. Consequently, the US imposed sanctions on Pakistan.⁷

It is a fact that the US-Pakistan relations have many a times witnessed ups and downs, and become the victim of mistrust vis-à-vis each other. There are two major reasons to substantiate this argument. One, since 1950s, the US-Pakistan relations have remained issue-based – to contain Communism during the Cold War and to counter international terrorism in the aftermath of the 9/11 incident. Once the issue is resolved, the American interests towards Pakistan have changed. Two, the US-Pakistan relations have never been established on shared values of democracy and human rights. The American interests in the region had nothing to do with the type of government in Pakistan; rather the preferred one had been the military rule.

The whole scenario benefitted the Indian longing of good relations with the US. The time between 1991-1998 reestablished endeavors on the two sides, to be specific the United States and India, to restart cooperation unconstrained by the weights that were predominant during the Cold War. In spite of the fact that the US-Indian relations during this time were shadowed by the new US pressures on restraining India nuclear program however the two sides endeavored to keep their contradictions on this issue from obstructing the rapprochement in two-sided relations. Thus, the frustrating episode in reciprocal relations of the US-India was about to end, and when the Bush Administration took the office, the US- India relations were, now and then, on a way to progress.

⁷ U. Javaid and I. Mushtaq, 'Historical Perspective of Pakistan USA Relations: Lessons for Pakistan', *South Asian Studies*, 29:1 (2014).

The US' policies towards Pakistan and India in the aftermath of 9/11
The 9/11 incident made South Asia the underlying center for the US-led War on Terror, which actually reordered the United States relations with the region. The most unmistakable and prompt initial step was the appearance of the US as well as the NATO security forces in Afghanistan. In the post-September 11 scenario, South Asia had seen witnessing a balance in US-Pakistani and US-Indian relations, anyway unaltered by India-Pakistan relations with respect to the regional dynamics. The premise of these relations, in any case, was exceptionally unusual. It adjusted an association with Pakistan as a frontline state in the overall war on terrorism; while continuing to make key relations with India, which it viewed as a power in making.

It may be said that the new courses of action produced by the US with Afghanistan, Pakistan and India since 9/11 had been charged as a component of a vital move of the US strategy intended to counter psychological warfare, however, every one of these connections [had] confronted exceptional difficulties over a period of time.⁸ The US might have satisfied if India and Pakistan had established friendly and normal relations, where they could jointly work together and help the US to counter Al-Qaeda and Taliban in the region. However, India-Pakistan relations, in the post-9/11 scenario, continued to remain under the shadow of their old rivalries and mistrust, thus, became the most significant stumbling block in the success of the War on Terror. The occasion of 9/11 dealt with the expense of Pakistan the event to re-establish itself among the comity of nations and ward off what it acknowledged would be an Indian effort to abuse Pakistan precarious position. By getting along with the United States in its War on Terror, Pakistan was transformed from an overall outsider to a worldwide deliverer receiving countless benefits.⁹ Yet, as the time cruised by, doubt expanded between the two nations because of Pakistan confounded strategies and the US' one-sided approaches, further, bringing about

⁸ P. Nayak, 'U.S. Security Policy in South Asia Since 9/11: Challenges and Implications for the Future', *Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, Occasional Paper Series*, 2005.

⁹ C.C. Fair, *Afghanistan, Pakistan and Strategic Change: Adjusting Western Regional Policy* (Edited by Joachim Krause and Charles King Mallory) (United Kingdom: Routledge [Asian Security Studies], 2013).

disappointment and miscommunication, making the two-sided connection dangerous.¹⁰

Meanwhile, to search after its necessary and public interests, the US has changed its methodology towards South Asia in post 9/11 period and reshaped its game plans to achieve its goals and is reconsidering its political, financial, military and vital association with India. This key affiliation is engaged with a broad extent of territories for shared joint effort which involves trade, space, nuclear development, security, nuclear innovation and financial collaboration. Likewise, a couple of arms and nuclear agreements have been set forward between them after 9/11, consequently, making vital relationship more concrete.¹¹

Moreover, if the case of Pakistan and India are specifically concerned then it is evident that both countries pledged to the US in its fight against terrorism but on different domains. Pakistan was made a frontline state to fight terrorism where it was used as a door to keep the US movement easy in Afghanistan. Pakistan also provided access to its military bases and intelligence. The US provided military aid to Pakistan to upgrade its weapons while lauded its recognition as an ally in WoT. On the other hand, India was partnered in various deals and pacts related to defense, technology, economy etc. which were not directly related to WoT. It is important to note that the United States, as a part of its WoT, gave Major non-NATO ally status to both Pakistan and India; which was readily accepted by the former whereas rejected by the later. But India's enigmatic economy attracted the US towards it unusually as compared to the past due to which their connection actively flourished in the midst of the WoT. The relations of US and India have been on a higher note in the same time period where the cooperation between them has worked for the US to make India as a counter power against China and new technological giant. The US has openly endorsed India for its place in Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), UN Security Council and others related which are of crucial value for the international community and especially Pakistan. India also supports the US in its interests like Israel, targeting China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) among others. When WoT was reaching its intensity, Pakistan-US relations fell into shadows of distrust as the US started to term Pakistan as a double gamer and supporter of what it called as terrorists. Pakistan blamed the US for

¹⁰ Z. Guihong, 'U.S. Security Policy Toward South Asia After September 11th and its Implications for China: A Chinese Perspective', *Henry L. Stimson Center*, 2003.

¹¹ Y. Nazir and S.A. Bhat, 'Post 9/11 Indo-US Strategic Relationship: An Analysis', *International Journal of Research in Social Sciences*, 5:1 (2014).

breaching sovereignty, not respecting its people lives and property as well as making it prone to attackers.

The Af-Pak policy also created a buzz regarding the US approach towards War on Terror. The Obama Administration introduced this unique policy with a mindset that Afghanistan and Pakistan be viewed in a single domain because of the problematic border between them, the Durand Line, and terrorist movement in that area (safe havens). The US presumed that the theatre of war was singular and it needed to make its forces work accordingly, especially NATO. But the policy was not successful among the countries and policymakers and was subsequently converted into South Asia policy during the Trump Administration.

South Asia, because of its geo-vital position has been significant for the United States after the Cold War and 9/11. The consideration further spins around enormous populace, capital, support of majority rule government, states arrangement, terrorism, safeguarding of authority with local actors, monetary ascent, social issues are good examples. Also, Pakistan and India have an extraordinary position under the United States radar because of nuclear capability, non-state actors and ongoing Kashmir issue. On reciprocal level, the US has kept a solid and vital connection with India because of its rising status; on the other hand, it has kept a hot and cold however persistent connection with Pakistan because of its area and War on Terror. Therefore, it tends to be reasoned that, the United States needs to safeguard its capacity in South Asia on expense of keeping others under control; it needs to have a cordial and solid association with India while it plans to have a vigilant eye on Pakistan.¹²

The relations of the US and India have been going on a fast track of cooperation and support for each others' interest after 9/11. The US trying to make a huge room for India in international community for the sake of support and benefits and India working as a counter power against China to preserve the US interests are some of the many strategic interests which are keeping them together. But there have been issues as well like stance on Kashmir, economic issues and India's military equipment deals with Russia which make them show some distaste for each other in times. For the current times, South Asia has become a focal region in international politics and the US is working to handle its position and interests in it, of which its important targets include

¹² U. Javaid, 'Intensive US Engagement for Enhanced Role in South Asia', *A Research Journal of South Asian Studies*, 25:1 (2010).

Pakistan, India and the hard relation between these two countries, hence, making things further complicated.¹³

In the changing regional dynamics of the South Asian region, one may not overlook the inclusion of China factor in understanding the triangle of relations between the US, India and Pakistan. It is a fact that Pakistan's closeness with China is mainly due to the US' inclination towards India, where Beijing is a major factor in bringing Washington and New Delhi closer to each other. It must be noted that this aspect of relations among these countries – the US, China, India and Pakistan – has its roots in the Cold War politics, where: i) the US had been embarking upon containing not only the Soviet Communism, but also the Chinese Communism; ii) the Sino-Indian war of 1962 that re-shaped a new alliance system, based on the US-India and China-Pakistan dyad of cooperation, while witnessing a deterioration in relations between the US and Pakistan; and iii) India-Pakistan rivalry since their independence in August 1947.

It is critical for the United States policymakers to comprehend the more broad key targets that exist in the current India-Pakistan emergency. Performing simply brief adhoc crisis management could lead the two: India and Pakistan to move towards more military muscle and bear more risks. Also, it is important that the White House adequately unravel the internal components in both Islamabad and New Delhi and not get stuck in old policy frameworks. A boosting economic market in India and a slow economy in Pakistan may further flame national sentiments, while the business sectors of both countries will feel the blows of conflict. The India-Pakistan crisis have been increasing overtime and should not be relegated by the US through its policies of War on Terror or state sponsored terrorism framework. The weights among India and Pakistan could provoke swift change in their responses, along these lines, which could reach unintentional intensity. Third, mindfully managing the US-Pakistan relations could direct changed perspectives in Islamabad that think about the United States as restricting, allied to India and un-engaged to Pakistan. As an alarm call, if the United States fails to pronounce appealing clout to reduce the India-Pakistan emergency, other huge powers like China and Russia will conclude that the US does not have the will or capacity. In this way, these powers will fill the vacuum in South Asia. Such movement, at whatever point grasped, will undermine Washington's legitimacy as a strong player and cast question on the Afghan peace talks, regional

¹³ Z.A. Awan, *A visible shift in US policy in South Asia* (Modern Diplomacy, 2019).

dependability issues and money related interests in the South Asian zone.¹⁴

The contemporary situation created by the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan after the US withdrawal in 2021 has created challenges and opportunities for Pakistan, former related to controlling cross border extremist networks while later regarding improving position in front of the US. The US, on the other hand is also looking forward towards Pakistan for effectively working on handling terrorism and stabilizing Afghanistan.¹⁵ Meanwhile, the US relations with India are gaining momentum overtime due to the strategic partnership agreements between the two countries unaffected by the Afghan pullout.¹⁶

Discussion

The issues with respect to the US-Pakistan-India relations in the scenario of 9/11 are dominated by threats, problems and insecurities especially in the case of Pakistan and India relations towards each other. Similarly, it can be observed that the United States relations with these two countries are, overpoweringly, formulated on the basis of competition for the sake of hegemony and alignment to fulfill its interests. Pakistan and India are also involved in competition and alignment, separately, in the name of balance of power.

Pakistan and India are both South Asian nations with nuclear power, wide population, contrasting views (especially based on religion) and old animosity. Following the same long time distaste for each other since 1947, witnessing their current hatred and distrust for each other makes populace, governments and international community to think carefully and properly in their stances and matters.

The United States dealings with Pakistan and India, as a global leader and as a country, have influenced them both with respect to policies, affairs and international image building. Due to the US, these two countries have modified policies, arbitrated issues, accepted stances and managed friendships for the sake of signaling the importance of the US authority for them. The actions of the United States before 2001 regarding Pakistan and India affected them in the dimensions of

¹⁴ Q. Huda, 'India-Pakistan Conflict & the U.S. Strategy for South Asia', *The Navigator, Center for Global Policy*, 2019.

¹⁵ E. Threlkeld, 'U.S.-Pakistan Relations after the Taliban Takeover', *Stimson Center South Asia Program*, 2021.

¹⁶ J.T. White, 'After the Foundational Agreements: An Agenda for US-India Defense and Security Cooperation', *Foreign Policy, The Brookings Institute*, 2021.

diplomacy, bilateral relations, economy etc. which somehow were on a normal note, although, the US own relations were falling with Pakistan and growing with India. The main shift in the affect scenario came after 9/11 when the US put Pakistan and India in completely different circles. The consequences, due to this approach, which have come forward and are still prevailing which include, but are not limited to; increased animosity between Pakistan and India, and Pakistan witnessing cold shoulder of the US regarding its insecurities posed by India, as well as Afghanistan becoming an area of competition with the surmounting humanitarian crisis. These consequences have become a red alert for South Asian stability within the international community. In a broader context, the escalating rivalry between the United States and China, which has spread beyond South Asia, has created an environment where there is an eminent fear of a new cold war. The US and China are simultaneously trying to counter balance each other by virtue of alliances in economy, military, technology etc. which is somehow mapping the friends and foes visible for them. One Belt, One Road (OBOR) initiative by China is inviting a counter collaboration among the US, India, Japan and Oceania. Similarly, as expected at international level, these powers are rushing for new alliances based on past associations one of which can be anticipated to be in the making as that of China, Russia, Pakistan, Turkey, Iran vs the US, India, Saudi Arabia, Japan. This is going to highly impact the critical triangle comprising of the US-Pakistan-India, Pakistan-India and the US-South Asia relations. If such conditions take a quick pace towards reality, then among these countries Pakistan would be hit most hard (due to its current standing) and it will require the country to make some swift big decisions. Pakistan will either have to take complete side of China or the United States (if polarity scenario strikes) or it has to balance these powers diplomatically, keeping in mind the influence both of them have on it. The biggest challenge for Pakistan, however, is to balance the US-India enigmatic partnership. It can either become more attractive for the US by improving its politics, economy and human rights or it can become more open to the US international actions and decisions. As of now, Pakistan has the ball in its court in the face of Afghanistan peace process. But it will need to transparently work on terrorism movements and unbiased Afghanistan governance conforming to the US vision.

It can be deduced that the US has not properly handled the Pakistan-India relations, and, after 9/11, has further exacerbated their already fragile relation by dealing with them in different manners, giving them different statuses. South Asia has got an increased importance over the period of time, which needs the US to reconsider its ways of dealing

with these two countries in a sense that the other does not feel insecure because it will make room of influence for the emerging powers like China and Russia. It is to be noted that India and Pakistan relation is a juggernaut and the US needs to play its needed role accordingly.

Pakistan-India relations are not only important to themselves but for the South Asian region as well as the whole world. Pakistan and India have their own separate crucial roles and positions in international affairs and that is what makes them a point of interest for other countries and, especially, powerful countries. The United States being an outsider in their region but a global super power has proven its active role playing time and then, separately with Pakistan, India and as third party in their relations. It has played role as a partner, as an imposer, as a global leader and as an arbitrator among others in the case of Pakistan and India. No doubt, its role as a global leader with respect to these countries, after the Cold War, was played well to manage peace in the region. But the problem came with the advent of War on Terror where the United States shifted its interests towards completely different directions regarding Pakistan and India. After 9/11, the US has dealt its relations with them on one on one basis and not as a global leader who needs to balance the situation between two rivals.

If the US-Pakistan and the US-India relations after 9/11 are assessed in the theoretical framework of Neo-realism (maintaining position through hard power, alliances, absolute gain), then it can be said that the US has always handled its relations with them only in order to retain its position in the region, keep them under its influence as well as to preserve its international and national interests. For the US, Pakistan is seen as an indispensable country for War on Terror, to keep an eye on Afghanistan and balance China effect. Similarly, India is seen as an emerging power gaining influence, counter regional power and a country with boosting market, in the eyes of the United States. Pakistan sticks itself to the US to be on a safe side while assuring its stability in the region (especially keeping India at bay). India manages its affairs with the US to counter China which will assure its power in region and to move its international ambitions towards practicality. Pakistan and India also practice relations on realistic mindsets of hatred, competition and counter actions due to which long term cordial relations have not been witnessed. Thus, all three states practice structural realism where connections are managed only for the sake of mutual interests and absolute gain. However, in the present scenario, Pakistan seems to be struggling in the current structure where India is on high terms with the United States, therefore, Pakistan is moving further towards China. But the main actual benefit/loss is directed towards the US interests by the

virtue of its status as the sole super global power at the expense of one of the most deadly rivalries in international politics.

Until 2021, the United States has not taken significant steps to address Pakistan and India to such a way which could have helped them to come on good terms for the sake of regional stability. Instead, it has acted in a way that both countries' animosity has increased, Pakistan-US relations have been damaged due to increase in friendship between India and the US. As a consequence, Pakistan has got further closer to China, which is taken as a threat by the US in world power game. The US has responded by making India to be a counter power to China. These all such neo-realistic actions have brought hegemony problem, regional polarity, insecurities, arms race and balance of power which is not helping South Asia in anyway and all these current issues can be traced back to the US policies after 9/11. It can be surmised that, if it were not the US actions post 9/11, conditions of South Asia specifically that of Pakistan and India as well as relation between them would have been distinct as compared to the present times.

The United States needs to reconsider its perceptions and actions with respect to its position globally and regionally. As a sole global superpower having a strong hold on decisions made within and for the international community, it needs to expand its world view which should be beyond American exceptionalism and assimilate values of other states too so that the situations can be handled on equal terms and unanimously. 9/11 has impacted the whole world and has brought new challenges for all countries and not only for the US which needs to be dealt properly and collectively. The foreign policy of the US needs a review as to increase global interests and decrease aggression.

Conclusion

The region of South Asia is becoming an important area for international politics, thus, its stability is crucial in order to let the international system work effectively. Pakistan and India are an integral part of this scenario; hence, they need to be brought together in affirmation, a role that can be played by the US. The United States recent actions, specifically in Afghanistan, give a message of its disinterest in South Asia for active policymaking but it also makes room for it to consider Pakistan-India relations improvement agenda important, mainly, because of ongoing power rivalry, as it will impact the US interests, efforts and position in South Asia. The United States needs to play a responsible role in the region specifically with respect to the urgent matter of insecurities between Pakistan and India posed by virtue of their history and differential approaches of the United States, especially, after 9/11, as it will define the future of the US global status and conditions of South Asia.