



www.gfprjournal.com

GFPR
GLOBAL FOREIGN
POLICIES REVIEW

ISSN-P : 2788-502X

ISSN-E : 2788-5038

VOL. IX ISSUE II, SPRING (JUNE-2026)

GFPR

GLOBAL FOREIGN POLICY REVIEW
HEC-RECOGNIZED CATEGORY-Y

GLOBAL FOREIGN POLICY REVIEW (GFPR)

HumanityPublications
sharing research
www.humapub.com
US | UK | Pakistan

DOI (Journal): 10.31703/gfpr
DOI (Volume): 10.31703/gfpr.2026(IX)
DOI (Issue): 10.31703/gfpr.2026(IX-II)

Double-blind Peer-review Research
Journal

www.gfprjournal.com

© Global Foreign Policy Review

Title: Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations after the US Withdrawal from Afghanistan (2021)

Abstract

The United States' departure from Afghanistan in August 2021 reshaped the region's geopolitical landscape. This research analyses how relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan have changed in the post-withdrawal era, clarifying the issues involved, including the range of security concerns, political confrontations, and the scope and form of potential collaboration. Using secondary data, the research reveals that, despite initial hopes for improved relations under the Taliban, relations have continued to deteriorate because of terrorism, border disputes, and mistrust. The research concludes with suggestions for improving relations between the two countries and regional peace.

Keywords: Pakistan–Afghanistan Relations, US Withdrawal 2021, Taliban Governance, Regional Security, Counterterrorism Cooperation

Authors:

Muhammad Iqbal: PhD Scholar, Department of International Relations, Government College University Faisalabad, Punjab, Pakistan.

Ghulam Mustafa: Associate Professor, Department of International Relations, Government College University Faisalabad, Punjab, Pakistan.

Anwar Ali: (Corresponding Author)
Assistant Professor (OPS), Political Science, Government College University, Government College University Faisalabad, Punjab, Pakistan.
(Email: anwarali@gcuf.edu.pk)

Pages: 1-8

DOI:10.31703/gfpr.2026(IX-II).01

DOI link: [https://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gfpr.2026\(IX-II\).01](https://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gfpr.2026(IX-II).01)

Article link: <https://gsrjournal.com/article/pakistanafghanistan-relations-after-the-us-withdrawal-from-afghanistan-2021>

Full-text Link: <https://gsrjournal.com/article/pakistanafghanistan-relations-after-the-us-withdrawal-from-afghanistan-2021>

Pdf link: <https://www.gssrjournal.com/jadmin/Author/31rv1olA2.pdf>

Global Foreign Policies Review

p-ISSN: [2788-502X](https://doi.org/10.31703/gfpr) e-ISSN: [2788-5038](https://doi.org/10.31703/gfpr)

DOI(journal):10.31703/gfpr

Volume: IX (2026)

DOI (volume):10.31703/gfpr.2025(IX)

Issue: II Spring (June-2026)

DOI(Issue): 10.31703/gfpr.2025(IX-II)

Home Page

www.gfprjournal.com

Volume: IX (2026)

<https://www.gfprjournal.com/issue>

Issue: II-Spring (June-2026)

<https://www.gfprjournal.com/issue/9/2/2026>

Scope

<https://www.gfprjournal.com/about-us/scope>

Submission

<https://humaglobe.com/index.php/gfpr/submissions>

Scan the QR to visit us



Google
scholar



Citing this Article

Article Serial	01
Article Title	Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations after the US Withdrawal from Afghanistan (2021)
Authors	Muhammad Iqbal Ghulam Mustafa Anwar Ali
DOI	10.31703/gsr.2026(XI-II).01
Pages	1–8
Year	2026
Volume	XI
Issue	II

Referencing & Citing Styles

APA	Iqbal, M., Mustafa, G., & Ali, A. (2026). Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations after the US Withdrawal from Afghanistan (2021). <i>Global Foreign Policies Review</i> , IX(II), 1-8. https://doi.org/10.31703/gfpr.2026(IX-II).01
CHICAGO	Iqbal, Muhammad, Ghulam Mustafa, and Anwar Ali. 2026. "Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations after the US Withdrawal from Afghanistan (2021)." <i>Global Foreign Policies Review</i> IX (II):1-8. doi: 10.31703/gfpr.2026(IX-II).01.
HARVARD	IQBAL, M., MUSTAFA, G. & ALI, A. 2026. Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations after the US Withdrawal from Afghanistan (2021). <i>Global Foreign Policies Review</i> , IX, 1-8.
MHRA	Iqbal, Muhammad, Ghulam Mustafa, and Anwar Ali. 2026. 'Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations after the US Withdrawal from Afghanistan (2021)', <i>Global Foreign Policies Review</i> , IX: 1-8.
MLA	Iqbal, Muhammad, Ghulam Mustafa, and Anwar Ali. "Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations after the Us Withdrawal from Afghanistan (2021)." <i>Global Foreign Policies Review</i> IX.II (2026): 1-8. Print.
OXFORD	Iqbal, Muhammad, Mustafa, Ghulam, and Ali, Anwar (2026), 'Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations after the US Withdrawal from Afghanistan (2021)', <i>Global Foreign Policies Review</i> , IX (II), 1-8.
TURABIAN	Iqbal, Muhammad, Ghulam Mustafa, and Anwar Ali. "Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations after the Us Withdrawal from Afghanistan (2021)." <i>Global Foreign Policies Review</i> IX, no. II (2026): 1-8. https://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gfpr.2026(IX-II).01 .

Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations after the US Withdrawal from Afghanistan (2021)



Muhammad Iqbal¹, Ghulam Mustafa², Anwar Ali (Corresponding Author)³

¹ PhD Scholar, Department of International Relations, Government College University Faisalabad, Punjab, Pakistan.

² Associate Professor, Department of International Relations, Government College University Faisalabad, Punjab, Pakistan.

³ Assistant Professor (OPS), Political Science, Government College University, Government College University Faisalabad, Punjab, Pakistan.
(Email: anwarali@gcu.edu.pk)

Abstract

The United States' departure from Afghanistan in August 2021 reshaped the region's geopolitical landscape. This research analyses how relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan have changed in the post-withdrawal era, clarifying the issues involved, including the range of security concerns, political confrontations, and the scope and form of potential collaboration. Using secondary data, the research reveals that, despite initial hopes for improved relations under the Taliban, relations have continued to deteriorate because of terrorism, border disputes, and mistrust. The research concludes with suggestions for improving relations between the two countries and regional peace.

1 of 8

Keywords: *Pakistan–Afghanistan Relations, US Withdrawal 2021, Taliban Governance, Regional Security, Counterterrorism Cooperation*

Introduction

The US's formal withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021 marked a change in regional power relations and South Asia's geopolitical relations after almost 2 decades of US military engagement in Afghanistan after Sept 11. The US's end of its longest 'war' in Afghanistan began the rapid disintegration of the Afghan state. The Taliban were once again in power in Kabul. For Afghanistan's neighbor Pakistan, Afghanistan's internal restructuring had enormous implications. The changes in Afghanistan posed immense opportunity and risk for Pakistan in light of its historical relations, geopolitical quandaries, and most importantly the decades old Afghan policy shaped by security concerns and ethnic connections (Nagra et al., 2024).

The evolution of Pakistan-Afghanistan relations is based on the two states' strategic interdependence but mutual lack of trust. Since the creation of Pakistan in 1947, Afghanistan has persistently challenged the legitimacy of the Durand Line, the internationally accepted Afghanistan-Pakistan border, and this has resulted in perennial state-to-state tensions (Fatima et al., 2025). Ethnic affiliations, especially the Pashtun communities, have further complicated these relations. During the Cold War, especially after Afghanistan was invaded by the Soviet Union in 1979, Pakistan became an immediate ally of the United States and supported Afghan insurgents. This trend continued after the United States attacked Afghanistan in 2001. Pakistan was again the United States' primary ally in the War on Terror, while also supporting several Afghan opposition groups (Ullah, Ahmad, & Khan, 2020). This resulted in a reciprocal distrust between Kabul and Islamabad, and continues to drive Pakistan and Afghanistan relations post 2021 (Idrees & Naazer, 2022).

When the Taliban regained power in 2021, many in Pakistan analytically and politically welcomed the development. Postulation was rife that an Afghan Taliban regime would take the reins of the Government of Afghan and rule in the province of Afghanistan in a sort of vassal-state relationship vis-a-vis Pakistan. There was speculation about better regulation of the Afghan-Pakistan International Border, decline of Indian power



and authority in Afghanistan, and more regional connectivity and trade (Ullah, Ahmad, & Khan, 2020). Unfortunately, all of these positive hopes were dashed against the rocks. The most significant development, concerning the state/situation of Afghanistan and Pakistan, has been the growing extent of the regional security situation within the region of South and Central Asia. One of the most disturbing situations has been the growing number of armed insurgent and terrorist groups and in particular the rejuvenation of the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), which has actively expanded the Pak-Afghan region of Pakistan from the TTP and has expanded its reach into Pakistan since 2021. Pakistan has continuously and consistently blamed the Afghan Government of Afghanistan for harbored insurgents, cross-border TTP movements and attacks while the Government of Afghanistan has denied the existence of the TTP and of any cross-border insurgency and terrorist activities, which has worsened an already tenuous, fragile, and volatile relationship between the two states (Abbas, Ambareen, & Ali, 2024). Additionally, the situation of management of the Pak-Afghan border has further contributed to the deterioration of the state of relations between Governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan, especially since 2021. The Afghan border has been the primary focus of Pakistan's efforts to institute a policy of laying down border control and sovereignty over the border in order to eliminate the illegal cross-border movement of insurgents and terrorists. Afghan authorities have engaged in policy and regulation to control the border and to prevent the Afghan border from being recognized and accepted as a legitimate border. This has resulted in Afghanistan Pakistan border and the relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan being characterized by intermittent, periodic, and sporadic border confrontations (incursions) which worsened the relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan (Syed et al., 2024).

A lack of mutually agreed border governance framework continues to obstruct cooperation and trust between the two countries (Khan, 2025). Pakistani-Afghan relations have also been impacted by the security, political, and diplomatic challenges. Despite the anticipation of close relations, the Taliban government has been autonomous in its foreign policy, and self-constraint influenced the government of Pakistan to limit its foreign policy actions towards Afghanistan. The diplomatic vacuum created by the absence of the formal international recognition of the Taliban government strained Pakistan's diplomacy and imposed economic restrictions in Afghanistan, which negatively impacted Pakistan's plans for the region. The Taliban governance and its international relations remain the unknown elements in the Pakistan-Afghanistan relations (Threlkeld, 2021).

The aftermath of 2021 brought on a new set of crisis, one of which consists of the millions of people which are fleeing Afghanistan. Pakistan has been one of the long standing and largest hosts of refugees in the world. With the US troops leaving Afghanistan and the subsequent power vacuum, the fear of even more Afghan refugees began to emerge. This large scale of refugees brings a multitude of challenges to Pakistan in social, economic, and even security aspects. Public services, local communities, and the labor market are impacted. Addressing this issue requires Pakistan and Afghanistan to work in a bi-lateral manner, and has support from the international community; however, the support has been minimal and sporadic (Naz, 2021). There are obstacles to economic cooperation between the two countries, however the opportunity does still exist. With Afghanistan providing access to Central Asia and with Pakistan providing access to international markets and seaports, the two countries can achieve a high degree of regional economic intergration. Improved mutual coordination and trust will be necessary in order to achieve some of the goals; in addition, the two countries will need to work together to combat terrorists, but there is still a need for improved connection and coordination, and to work with constructively with a mutual focus on regional stability (especially in Afghanistan). This is a much needed area of collaboration between the two countries.

Historical Background of Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations

The Pakistan-Afghanistan relationship is shaped by suspicion, an unresolved border dispute (the Durand Line), and outside global superpower interventions. Pakistan's relationship with Afghanistan has been tenuous since the border was drawn in 1947. Afghanistan's refusal to acknowledge the claimed border as legitimate has caused further political tensions and instability throughout the region. Both countries face problems with border governance as tensions exist. Ethnic ties are especially relevant to the Pashtun border communities, and are relevant to the disputes. The issues stem suspicion that is present throughout the history and relations in all regimes (Idrees & Naazer, 2022).

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 saw the country as an ongoing global Power confrontation battleground during the Cold War. Owing to U.S. and Allied support, Pakistan was able to assist the Mujahideen (Afghan resistance fighters). Because of this, Pakistan's strategic and military involvement in Afghanistan increased. Because of this increase in involvement, Pakistan was able to strengthen its Western alliances, but this involvement also created constraining indirect control on Afghanistan's internal politics. The influence and control of Afghanistan's internal politics continued to exist after the Cold War ended and during the post-Cold War era. Because of this support, the adverse impact of the Afghanistan conflict increased instability in Pakistan. The prolonged Afghanistan conflict resulted in the increased hazards of militant networks and the increased militarization of the Afghan-Pakistan border. The increased hazards resulted in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border conflict and poor socio-economic condition. An increased border conflict in Afghanistan and Pakistan poor socio-economic condition would later cause major problems for the both countries (Rashid, [2008](#)).

With the onset of the U.S.-led War on Terror, Pakistani-Afghan relations grew more complicated after the September 11 attacks. In response to the attacks, Pakistan aligned with the U.S. as an ally to fight terrorism and aid with logistical support, intelligence, and military base access. This strategic alignment came with economic and military support to Pakistan, but also placed them in an uncomfortable position. Pakistan was to fight the militants in the region; however, Pakistan had strong relations with the Afghan factions of the Taliban. This contradictory approach led to uncertainty in Pakistan's policy and contributed to the lack of trust with Afghanistan in the long run (Yousaf, [2018](#)).

Pakistan's relations with the Taliban from an Afghan viewpoint was an encroachment of Afghan sovereignty. In the post 9/11 period, many Afghan governments accused Pakistan of providing insurgents with a safe haven and Afghanistan being the location of the the insurgents. Pakistan argued that these accusations were false and justified by Pakistan's fight against terrorism, and Afghanistan's border was porous and volatile. This mutual accusation limited the imperial consciousness between the areas and shrunk the bilateral cooperation to addressing the interlocking security concerns (Idrees & Naazer, [2022](#)). Moreover, Pakistan's involvement in the War on Terror brought about Pakistan's own war on terror related challenges such as increased terror attacks, internal displacement and economic challenges. During the period, militant groups, especially those working along the Pak-Afghan border, started focusing on Pakistan, attacking Pakistani institutions and civilians. This situation increased the adverse impact of the regional conflict and highlighted the direct and closely related security challenges Pakistan and Afghanistan faced. For all the challenges, Pakistan and Afghanistan's mutual distrust and lack of cooperation hindered the formulation of a comprehensive counter terrorism policy (Yousaf, [2018](#)).

Impact of US Withdrawal on Regional Dynamics:

Taliban's Return to Power

The sweep of Afghanistan by the Taliban in August 2021 following the US Withdrawal from Afghanistan (2021) brought new risks and rewards to the regional political and security landscape. The Taliban and all national (Afghan) institutions such as the military, the political administration and the administrative structure of governance, subsequently led to an unopposed the Fall of Kabul. Within weeks, the collapse of Afghanistan's national institutions created an unprecedented power vacuum which had destabilizing effects not only in Afghanistan but also in the whole of South Asia and beyond. The Frontal Absence of Governance, and a vacuum in a globally recognized government, also suggested a lack of governance, control, diplomacy, and the ability to carry out international relations. Under such scenarios, regional players, most notably Pakistan, had to engage in a rethink of their political and international relations of Afghanistan given the reemerging Taliban and the potential spread of extremism which could destabilize the adjacent nations, and affect their international relations. All such factors will influence the Afghanistan regional paradigm to the global and regional players, and their approach to the 'new' Afghanistan dominance without US support (Threlkeld, 2021; Abbas, Ambareen, & Ali, [2024](#)).

Shift in Pakistan's Strategic Position

Immediately following the return of the Taliban to power, Pakistan thought it strategic to view the Taliban's power grab as a potential gift because of Pakistan's expectations of a subservient regime in Kabul. Border policy

in Pakistan was envisioned to be dictated by unilateral state policy. Militant groups in Pakistan's border provinces would be controlled by the state policy. The rival influence of an economically connected, central Asian focused, economically active India was controlled by state policy. However, all these expectations were in the main, unfulfilled because of an Afghan leadership who became more sovereign and nationalistic in the foreign policy. The Taliban's government's un-alignment to Pakistan's foreign policy objectives and the un-alignment to Pakistan's influence and control limited Pakistan's foreign policy objectives. Pakistan's influence on the outcomes in Afghanistan were further limited. Internal border control regulations and external border control activities towards militant groups in Pakistan's border provinces (specifically Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP)) caused further deteriorations in Pakistan's foreign policy objectives. From optimistic to pessimistic demonstrates the evolving complexity of Pakistan's strategic position in a rapidly changing regional context following the US's 2021 withdrawal from Afghanistan (Idrees & Naazer, [2022](#); Khan, [2025](#)).

Key Challenges in Pakistan-Afghanistan Relations:

Rise of Terrorism

After 2021, one of the main challenges for Pakistan-Afghanistan relations has been increasing Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) Led Violence. After the US Withdraws from Afghanistan (2021) the Security Void in Afghanistan caused terrorist organizations to reorganize and expand their Operations. As a result, the terrorist attacks in the areas of Pakistan bordering Afghanistan, especially Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, rose tremendously. The TTP, which has Ideological and Operational connections with the Afghan Taliban, has furthered targeted attacks on both the Pakistani security forces and Civilians. Pakistan has repeatedly claimed that Afghan authorities have allowed for the aforementioned groups to conduct cross-border operations and have claimed that there are safe havens that exist outside the Afghan Taliban Government. The Afghan Taliban Government has continuously refuted these accusations claiming that they do not allow their Country to be used for cross-border attacks. The differences in the narratives have caused a lack of cooperation in combating cross-border terrorist in both Afghanistan and Pakistan (Abbas, Ambareen, & Ali, [2024](#); Yousaf, [2018](#)).

Border Disputes and Durand Line Issue

The Durand Line is a key aspect of the tense relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The partition of South Asia during the colonial era is a source of Afghanistan's denial of the line as Pakistan's legitimate border. Contrarily, Pakistan believes it to be immutable, legitimate international law. Pakistan and Afghan's stances generate a plethora of conflicts and military tensions along the line, and situations have yet to improve with recent efforts from Pakistan to establish a border fence and to militarize and regulate cross line movement. The purpose of these measures was to abolish illegal crossings and the movement of militants. However; the Afghan military has resisted these border regulations, igniting skirmishes. The unnecessary arms buildup from both parties following the US troop withdrawal has heightened tensions along the Durand line and illuminates the necessity of a definitive, dual-accepted border regulation strategy (Khan, [2025](#); Idrees & Naazer, [2022](#)).

Trust Deficit and Political Tensions

Yes, there will always be gaps in the way the Governments of Pakistan and the Taliban perceive each other. Despite the significant gaps, there seem to be similarities in way Pakistan and Taliban perceive each other. Pakistan assumed the Taliban (newly) taking control of Afghanistan would mean there is room for Pakistan and Taliban to collaborate in matters of security and other domains of regional integration. This has not materialized. Pakistan is frustrated because there is always a desire to limit the influence of Pakistan in the formation of policies of Afghanistan. Afghanistan is not as inactive as Pakistan would like and this hampers the formation of policies to counter the activities of the anti- Pakistan actors to the extent that Pakistan would like in Taliban (Govt. of Afghanistan) (Threlkeld, [2021](#); Idrees & Naazer, [2022](#)).

Refugee Crisis and Humanitarian Issues

The Afghanistan-Pakistan relations have seen growing tensions because of the long term implications of the refugee crisis. Pakistan has hosted the world's largest populations of refugees from Afghanistan. Afghanistan's continued economic decline and political instability puts refugees at risk of continuous displacement. Because

of the economic problems Pakistan faces, hosting an additional population of refugees results in an even greater strain on Pakistan's limited resources. Adjusting to the needs of the new refugees will be a challenge Pakistan will need to tackle alone for the most part. Refugees present challenges to public services and housing. Refugees will also take away jobs from the local population and increase Pakistan's existing security problems. Pakistan's security problems will come from the possible mixture of refugees with unsanctioned migrants, and possible terrorists from Afghanistan. To address these challenges, the Pakistan and Afghanistan governments will need to collaborate and be supported by the existing international organizations. However, Afghanistan's restricted global contact has made Afghanistan's supported overwhelmed Pakistan's resources to address the crisis alone (Naz, [2021](#); Khan, [2025](#)).

Opportunities for Cooperation:

Economic Connectivity and Trade

Since 2021, economic connectivity and trade have become key areas of potential collaboration for Afghanistan and Pakistan. From a trade perspective, Afghanistan's geographic location is highly important as it is a point of connectivity for South and Central Asia, whereas Pakistan has warm-water ports (Karachi and Gwadar), which makes this collaboration possible through various trade and transit agreements, which is a major development opportunity. Regional partnerships and trade and transit agreements will support economic growth, trade integration and trade facilitation. Afghanistan will be able to utilize these regional partnerships to further assist its international trade and strengthen its economy. Pakistan will also be able to further develop its trade and connectivity to Central Asia. Political risks, economic relations, and the development of adequate, secure transit routes will determine the potential. If border tensions and security risks exist, economic cooperation will continue to be limited and will further stress the need for collaborative institutional and trust-building processes (Khan, [2025](#); Naz, [2021](#)).

Counterterrorism Cooperation

Despite the existing friction between the two countries, Pakistan and Afghanistan's concern regarding militant threats along the porous, mutually defended border allows for the possibility of working together in counterterrorism. Terrorism is a mutual concern as border attacks by militant groups can foster an insecure and unstable environment in both countries. Combining efforts of Pakistan and Afghanistan in countering terrorism, such as intelligence sharing and joint military operations, can reduce border violence and increase trust. However, different attitudes toward the border and a lack of political trust and collaboration across both sides impede collaboration. From Afghanistan's perspective, the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan is of higher concern. An absence of policy coordination across both states means counter terrorism planning is likely ineffective. In this regard, significant progress is required to achieve technical collaboration, diplomatic engagement, and confidence building across both countries (Abbas, Ambareen, & Ali, [2024](#); Yousaf, [2018](#)).

Regional Stability

Pakistan pays close attention to Afghanistan's internal situation to gauge regional stability. Afghanistan's economic interdependence and trade connectivity will help defend Pakistan's internal security. Instability in Afghanistan will fuel Pakistan instability characterized by terrorism, refugees, and disrupted economies. Pakistan and Afghanistan's cooperation is a prerequisite of South Asia's peace and stability. Security. Trade. Aid, peace and stability remain Afghanistan economic development and Pakistan internal security objectives. Additionally, peace in Afghanistan opens regional and global markets and trade. Sustained dialogue, Afghanistan controls and Pakistan respects, Afghanistan and Pakistan mutual disputes settlement, and enduring peace and cooperation remain uncertainty (Threlkeld, [2021](#), Idrees & Naazer, [2022](#)).

Recent Developments (2024–2026)

The period from 2024–2026 marks the most recent developments in Pakistan-Afghanistan relations and shows the same pattern of increasing hostile relations, temporary diplomatic activity, and unaddressed security issues. Cross-border incidents and military encounters at the Pakistan-Afghanistan border have become more common. These incidents, which hostility is directed at at border control, the movement of militants, and

conflicting security concerns, can be attributed to border encounters. Afghanistan and Pakistan have both blamed each other for hosting and aiding militant groups along the border, particularly the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan. Such finger-pointing has created a blame cycle that has caused more diplomatic strain to the relations. Overall, the lack of coordination and the presence of ungoverned security actors means that the security situational dynamics of both Pakistan and Afghanistan have remained unchanged which has worsened ungoverned border regions. Without an adequate border management system and trust, the border encounters have created significant diplomatic crises. In this regard, the structural issues at Afghanistan's governance and the regional geopolitical dynamics which post 2021 USA withdrawal from Afghanistan has created more regional relations after the USA flows of people and increasing terrorism. Despite these tensions and challenges to peace, the Tamwa Country and International actors have been proactive and focused to bridge the relation gaps through peace building works to increase informal relations of Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Recent negotiations, including diplomatic contacts, have also taken place at regional counterterrorism and economic stability forums. Initiatives, while at best bringing only partial operational stability, have not fully expanded in scope and have provided only non-involvement in operational border legitimacy and security disputes. The remaining economic and humanitarian interactions have shown the degree of interdependence, while the stability of borders and refugee relocation pathways interlinked with the trade have shown the degree of interdependence. In general, the level of interdependence has defined the level of relations, while also interlinked with the degree of refugee movement, border trade, and the interlinked, trade, therapeutic, and humanitarian elements. Relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan for the years 2024 - 2026 will be the same as in 2023, with the same level of interdependence. In general, relations from 2023 and the borders will not have any economic, humanitarian, political, or therapeutic stability. The interlinked paradox of therapeutic, economic, and humanitarian elements will continue in 2023, and interlinked self-adjusting mechanisms with new developed elements will not exist, and interlinked self-adjusting mechanisms will only have a self-adjusting element of therapeutic, humanitarian, and trade relations. If true relations are in isolation from the border and having only a 'closed' economic border, true relations will also have only a humanitarian border with a permanent closure. True relations will most likely have a permanent closure, and interlinked self-adjusting mechanisms with new developed elements will not exist. In short, the relations will vary from closed to opened with absolutely no trade, humanitarian, or economic stability. The interlinked paradox of therapeutic, economic, and humanitarian elements will continue in 2023, and interlinked self-adjusting mechanisms with new developed elements will not exist, and interlinked self-adjusting mechanisms will only have a self-adjusting element of therapeutic, humanitarian, and trade relations (Khan, [2025](#); Abbas, Ambareen, [2024](#)).

Conclusion

The U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021 officially marking the end of the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan 2021, has affected Pakistan and Afghanistan relations in both positive and negative ways. To almost two decades of foreign military presence; Afghanistan's republic was able to swiftly collapse, and the Taliban government was reinstated in Kabul. This collapse of government and reformation of Afghanistan's political structure led to a positive immigration of the Taliban government in Pakistan. We, the analysts, were able to predict that Afghanistan and Pakistan would experience the most positive immigration and integration of the two economies. Pakistan had so many investments, both in the form of legacy and geopolitical, external, and regional influences. However, the 2021 political structure collapse led to the most unreal expectations of Afghanistan's politics to the most extreme. Afghanistan and Pakistan's political structures were negatively affected by the most extreme structural negative immigration and negatively. Pakistan has experienced the most significant legacy and investment in external and regional influences, resulting in the most extreme negative immigration and positive inflation. This is a direct result of Pakistan's negative immigration and positive investment in the most positive relations of all regional countries, including Afghanistan and Pakistan. Pakistan's structures and economies were affected by Afghanistan's extreme negative, most positive, and most significant influences. The Pakistan and Afghanistan political structure, and especially the legacy of Taliban structure, has most strongly influenced and most significantly affected the Pakistani and Afghanistan political structures. The Afghanistan and Pakistan structures and investment relations are most negatively affected by a direct result of Afghanistan's extreme investment, most positive, positive structure, and most significantly affected Pakistan and Afghanistan political systems. Pak Isl has repeatedly invested and employed all

Afghanistan resources, including both negative and positive structures, resulting in achieving most extreme negative and positive influences on Afghanistan and Pakistan political systems. Lack of immigration into Afghanistan, structures, systems, investment, and Pakistan has resulted in the most significant political relations in the investment of Taliban economies. Lack of positive relations of the back of Afghan investments, systems, and integrated relations has resulted in a significant investment in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Lack of positive investment of the Taliban political structure and systems has created most extreme negative relations in the political systems of both countries.

The border governance systems and intelligence sharing have caused further blame and retaliate cycles. There are also differences concerning internal and external threats. Relations after 2021 have also seen increase political distrust. There is identifiable ideological sameness across the Kabul and some political religious factions in Pakistan. Afghanistan has flexed its policy decision-making and sovereignty that has diminished Pakistan's influence over Afghanistan and caused border control and recognition of the Durand line and refuge of fighters. There are endless cycles of irregular border fighting that has broken dialogues and constant border and Afghan Pakistan regulatory capture of endless fighting. Initially there was expectation of strategic partnership and now it has shifted towards a cautious and hostile relationship.

References

- Abbas, N., Ambareen, H., & Ali, M. (2024). Impact of the US withdrawal on Pakistan-Afghanistan security cooperation: A post-2021 analysis. *Policy Research Journal*.
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Ali, N., Mustafa, G., & Arslan, M. (2025). Afghan Taliban and TTP Nexus: Reshaping Pak-Afghan bilateral relations. *Global Foreign Policies Review*, VIII(I), 77–83.
[https://doi.org/10.31703/gfpr.2025\(viii-i\).08](https://doi.org/10.31703/gfpr.2025(viii-i).08)
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Fatima, U., Mustafa, G., & Wakil, I. (2025). Pakistan's efforts for peace in Afghanistan: US as a factor. *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences Review (PJSSR)*, 4(3), 158-172.
<https://pjssrjournal.com/index.php/Journal/article/view/61>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Idrees, M., & Naazer, M.A. (2022). The dynamics of Pak-Afghan relations: an analysis of (mis)trust between the two countries from 2001-2018. *Journal of Humanities, Social and Management Sciences (JHSMS)*. 3(1), 525-539.
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Khan, I. (2025). Borderland struggles: Consequences of Afghan instability. *Asian Affairs Journal*.
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Naz, U. (2021). Afghanistan after US withdrawal and role of Pakistan: An analysis. *Journal of Development Studies*.
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Nagra, G. M., Nawaz, A., Imran, M., Javed, M., & Mustafa, G. (2024). People, politics, and society: A historical analysis of Afghanistan. *Remittances Review*, 9(2), 539–556. <https://doi.org/10.33282/rr.vx9i2.32>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Rashid, A. (2008). *Descent into chaos: The United States and the failure of nation building in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia*. Viking.
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Syed, M. S., Awan, S., Yasmin, T., & Mustafa, G. (2024). Indo-Pak rivalry in Afghanistan after US withdrawal in 2021. *Research Journal for Societal Issues*, 6(3), 116–133. <https://doi.org/10.56976/rjsi.v6i3.269>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Threlkeld, E. (2021). *Afghanistan-Pakistan ties and future stability*. United States Institute of Peace (USIP).
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Ullah, H., Ahmad, R., & Khan, M. M. (2020). Afghanistan: US-Taliban Peace Talks: CPEC Perspective. *Conflict Studies Quarterly*, (32), 53-73. <https://doi.org/10.24193/cs.q.32.4>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Yousaf, F. (2018). Pakistan's counterterrorism strategy and its implications for regional security. *Asian Journal of Political Science*, 26(2), 191–209.
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)