Pakistan’s Relations with the United States During Ayub Khan’s Period

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Pakistan-United States Relations:

General Muhammad Ayub Khan after taking over the government in a bloodless coup, 1958 made an announcement regarding the foreign policy of Pakistan and mentioned that we are “the most allied ally” of the United States. This shows that during this era Pakistan became more pro-west. Ayub Khan believed that Pakistan could not make progress unless the Kashmir problem was solved, which was not possible without the help of the Western Bloc. That’s why Ayub Khan depended on Western Bloc, especially United States. At that time Pakistan was facing two major problems: the unresolved Kashmir issue and the perceived Security threat from neighbor country, India. On the other side the United States aims were to help Pakistan and to maintain her independence in an area threatened by communism.

On 5th March, 1959 Pakistan and the United States signed the bilateral agreement of Defense for bilateral cooperation. According to this agreement, United States agreed to cooperate with Pakistan to deal with its security threats and its defense requirements. At the same time the Government of the United States was promoting its national interest by maintaining the peace in South Asia and especially by the preservation of the independence and integrity of Pakistan. Pakistan reaffirmed its determination to resist the aggression, when United States promised “that in accordance with the constitution of United States, it will take such appropriate action to promote peace and to combat the communist’s stability in the Middle East and also in Pakistan.” The United States also declared that any attack on Pakistan would be considered as attack on America. This United States-Pakistan alliance, during the height of the cold war, promoted world peace instead of communist aggression and upgraded defense of Pakistan against all aggression including the possible threat from India.

Actually, India adopted a hostile attitude towards the pact signed between Pakistan and United States. India felt threatened from this pact. So, United States Government approached the Indian authorities for modification or clarification of their point of view according to which the defense pact cloud not used against a
security threat for India. Another reason of bilateral agreement was that when Iraqi Revolutionaries withdrew from SEATO Pact, America leaned towards Pakistan and agreed to sign bilateral agreement with Pakistan. United States also desired to establish a base in the North West of Pakistan to monitor Russian military research centers. China, however, felt threatened by these developments as the bilateral agreement was seriously against the policies of China, Russia and Afghanistan.

On 30th April, 1959 American National Security Council arranged a meeting under the secretary of State Douglas Dillon about the possibility of the Indus waters settlement. Thus United States supported Pakistan’s point of view on the distribution of Indus river waters and provided aid for new projects. In May 1959, United States sent fresh supply of arms to Pakistan. Ayub Khan demanded for F-104 Fighter aircraft and also informed the United States about the problems created by the United States intelligence activities against Soviet Union from Badaber American base for Pakistan. He also told Ambassador Langley that the Soviet Union and India were security threats for Pakistan, but he did not receive the desired response.

On 7th December, 1959 Eisenhower became the first United States president to visit Pakistan. Ayub Khan wholeheartedly welcomed him. Ayub Khan considered the visit of the United States president a major event in the history of Pakistan. During this visit Ayub Khan also informed the United States president about his own planned visit to India for the solution of Kashmir issue.

Ayub Khan also informed Eisenhower that the United States aid to India would be a great threat to Pakistan. On the military assistance to India, American president said that “these problems were already very much in his mind.” Ayub Khan also informed Eisenhower that Pakistan also felt threatened by China (because at that time Pakistan’s relations with China were not so cordial) and demanded F-104 American aircraft immediately. Thus, Eisenhower promised, that he would review the issue and “give the matter further thoughts.” Then Eisenhower went to Kabul and later visited India. After he came back to India, Eisenhower found Ayub Khan to be ready to negotiate, but the Indians were not willing to not to yield an inch on the solution of Kashmir. He warned both the countries to go slowly and avoid to war, but Eisenhower’s hopes trashed when war of 1965 was started between India and Pakistan.

On 5th May, 1960 Soviet Union captured a spying U-2 aircraft of America. The USSR’s Premier Nikita Khrushchev announced that “the United States spy plane bases could be in the Turkey, Iran or in Pakistan. He warned these countries that place their territories at the disposal of aggressive forces (of SEATO and CENTO) and thus making it easier for those forces to act against USSR. He added that in fact these countries are playing with fire.
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Ayub Khan replied (at that time he was in London) that the Americans were Pakistan’s friends. The United States planes flew over Pakistan frequently. Pakistan did not know about the activities of the United States planes after they took off from their bases in Pakistan. Ayub Khan also said that if any aircraft took off from Peshawar in the direction of Soviet Union, Pakistan would protest about it to the United States. Above all statements, it needs to be mentioned that the policies of military Government of Ayub Khan during 1958-60 were completely pro-American.

According to Dennis Kux, on 7th May, 1960 when all the leaders of the United States, Soviet Union, France and Britain were gathered on one table for summit in Paris, Washington announced a false statement about captured aircraft. The statement declared that a weather reconnaissance aircraft was lost while flying over the Soviet Union. But in reality that U-2 aircraft was used for getting secret information about Russia and Pakistan had provided the base for such activities in return for military and economic aid.

Resultantly, Pakistan got a lot of aid from western countries, especially for the five year plan in 1960. The United States wanted to provide military aid to Pakistan for strengthening Pakistan’s armed forces, which was the greatest stabilizing force in the region and also encouraged Pakistan to participate in concluding defense agreements with other countries. When Kennedy became the United States president, he ignored the interest of Pakistan. Seeing this change in American attitude, Ayub Khan stated that America was most allied ally in Asia where Pakistan was the only Asian country who was a member of both SEATO and CENTO pacts. In 1960, Kennedy decided to give aid to India to assist in their third five year plan. Ayub Khan felt threatened by this American policy shift; he felt this aid would be used against Pakistan. In May 1961 Kennedy decided to send Vice President Lyndon Johnson on a visit to the Philippines, Taiwan, South Vietnam, Thailand, India and Pakistan. The aim of this visit was to strengthen SEATO and to reaffirm the resolve of the United States to help those countries that felt threatened by China and Communists Subversion. American Vice president, Lyndon Johnson, reached Karachi in May 1961. Ayub Khan and Johnson met. Ayub Khan highlighted the importance of Kashmir issue to Johnson and Johnson agreed to try to solve the Kashmir problem. Ayub Khan also expressed his desire for the U.S economic aid and informed Johnson that American aid to India was a direct threat to Pakistan. At a public reception, Karachi Municipal Corporation Chairman, H.M. Habibullah, who spoke in Urdu, criticized the poor American policy on Kashmir issue. At the end of this trip Johnson concluded that the United States wanted to see the modernization of Pakistan’s army.

On 7th March, 1961 Ayub Khan accepted an invitation from President Kennedy to visit the United States. Ayub Khan had first planned that visit in November
1961 but later on the schedule was changed, and Ayub Khan was invited earlier in July 1961 by Kennedy.\textsuperscript{21} Even before the meeting, an exchange of views started between the Pakistani and American Presidents. In these statements both leaders showed a desire for a ten year mutual cooperation program. At this point Ayub Khan stated:

On this occasion I wish to pay special tribute to the enlightened people and leaders of the United States of America, who have been in the forefront in promoting programs of mutual assistance and security amongst free nations.\textsuperscript{22}

Kennedy replied:

United States has deep interest in the success of second five year plan of Pakistan and reiterated his country’s firm intention to support Pakistan’s determined efforts to make a plan success.\textsuperscript{23}

To this Ayub Khan replied:

We in Pakistan are dedicated to the creed of individual liberty, free institutions and independence for all, we want to live in peace and friendliness with all nations of the World and want economic betterment of Pakistan.\textsuperscript{24}

James S. Killen, Director of the United States operation mission to Pakistan, in a statement issued on the occasion of the completion of ten years of United States-Pakistan friendship, in which Pakistan had received $1.5 billion in aid, said: “After nearly four years in your country, I look over that time and see the great achievement that you have been gained here in Pakistan through the determined effort of the Government and the people of Pakistan.” President Kennedy stated “we are proud to have the privilege of working with the people of Pakistan. We have made known our deep interest in the success of second five year plan.”\textsuperscript{25}

On 6\textsuperscript{th} July 1961, six days before his visit to United States, Ayub Khan said: “Pakistan was concerned, upset and disappointed over the . . . United States policy in the region.” On the eve of his departure for Washington, Ayub Khan said that the increased aid to India poses a great threat for Pakistan.\textsuperscript{26}

On 6th July, 1961 when Ayub Khan threatened that “Pakistan might pull out of United States backed SEATO pact if United States will continue its heavy aid to India.”\textsuperscript{27} Ayub Khan also mentioned, “India has purchased 350 tanks and non recoil guns from United States”. The United States State Department replied on this is-
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sue on 7th July by saying that over a period of last 10 years India has purchased a limited quantity of military equipment from the United States. Mr. White, Secretary of State, also assured Ayub Khan that “United States Government ready to help Pakistan, in the field of defense and economy.”

When Ayub Khan reached England, he used these words in a T.V. interview in London: “If India became too powerful, its smaller neighbors would have to seek China’s protection and China could not reject for providing protection.”

On 11 July, 1961 Ayub Khan paid his official visit to the United States as the president of Pakistan; he was welcomed by President Kennedy. At that time Kennedy declared Pakistan “a powerful force for freedom in its area and praised Pakistan as a first country who offered support to United States during Korean War.” In the evening Ayub Khan was entertained to a dinner on rolling Lawns of the White House. At dinner time president Kennedy said that “Ayub Khan had come to United States at a time of hazards and the people of the United States valued friendship in hard times.”

In his address to the Joint session of the United States Congress, Ayub Khan expressed his views on friendship with America in the following words:

We value our friendship with you and we also take deep interest in your affairs.” He made an appeal to congress for economic aid and America today has world agreement. If America feel any difficulty there is no country in Asia where you will be able to put your foot in. we are the only nation who will stand by you.

Then again in private discussions Ayub Khan informed Kennedy that India was a great threat to his country, but the United States administration still wanted to provide military aid to India. Ayub Khan warned President Kennedy that “if United States adopts this policy we would withdraw from Pacts and alliances. Kennedy gave assure to Ayub Khan that United States would not lose her friend and Pakistan would receive economic aid, and the United States agency for international development. (AID) offered $ 500 million over a two year period. After that Ayub Khan also informed Kennedy about poor drainage irrigation system in West Pakistan. A few days after Ayb Khan’s visit, Kennedy sent a high level team to Pakistan which prepared a comprehensive plan to attack the problem. Afterwards economic aid played a major role in funding of large scale and successful projects to improve the drainage and irrigation system. Ayub Khan requested Kennedy to increase aid from $500 million to $945 million, but Kennedy refused and told Ayub Khan that “Pakistan would have to increase its own missionary work in this field.” When asked, at National press club in Washington, about “How would Pakistan react if arms aid was given to India?” Ayub Khan replied:
We have made our position clear to the United States and to the whole world. We want to live in peace with India. If India would use American aid for economic development we have no objection, but it will use for military purposes, the Pakistan had to prepare herself to meet the threat.\textsuperscript{35}

Ayub Khan returned to his country after his visit to the United States on July 19, 1961. In a news conference in Karachi, he declared his visit a success. He also stated: “Kennedy assured me to solve Kashmir problem and also provide military aid to Pakistan.”\textsuperscript{36} On 15\textsuperscript{th} January, 1962 President Kennedy stated in a news conference in Washington: “We want that both countries (India and Pakistan) to live in peace, and improve their economy.” He also said: “We want Kashmir settlement and not want to blame both countries.”\textsuperscript{37}

On 24\textsuperscript{th} January, 1962 President Kennedy wrote a letter to Ayub Khan and Nehru suggesting that they should accept World Bank president Eugen Black as mediator in the dispute; Ayub Khan accepted that proposal but Nehru rejected it.\textsuperscript{38} When Kashmir issue was ultimately taken up by the Security Council in February 1962, India requested that Kashmir case should be opened after Indian General Election, but Security Council discussion continued up to June and nothing became of it. Kennedy wanted to solve this problem, but the Soviet Union vetoed the resolution on 22\textsuperscript{nd} June, 1962 ending that session of UN Security Council without any results. After the end of that session, Kennedy assured Ayub Khan that the United States will continue its efforts to solve the Kashmir problem.\textsuperscript{39}

Ayub Khan and President Kennedy met a second time when Ayub Khan visited United States on 24\textsuperscript{th} September, 1962 to attend the UN session. Ayub Khan again emphasized that large scale United States economic aid to India posed a security threat to Pakistan and Kennedy gave same the statements as his previous ones. At that time Kennedy added that United States economic aid would work as a lever to press India to negotiate on Kashmir issue.\textsuperscript{40} The Pakistan Foreign Minister, Muhammad Ali Bogra, met the secretary of State, Dean Rusk, on 13\textsuperscript{th} October, 1962 to discuss the United States aid to India and once again demanded to find a solution to the Kashmir problem. Dean Rusk replied that “the Kashmir problem was irrational and one that had cost Pakistan and India a great deal of money and development. We cannot stake our entire policy in Asia on the settlement of Kashmir.”\textsuperscript{41}

On 27\textsuperscript{th} October, 1962 Kennedy sent a message to inform Ayub Khan about his decision to provide military aid and assistance to India and his wish was that Pakistan should help India in Sino Indian war of 1962. Ayub Khan replied that Pakistan would not attack Chinese border to help out India. Sino-Indian war started on 12 October, 1962 and ended on 21 November, 1962 with Chinese success. On 21
November China declared a cease fire, after which Indian army surrendered, about
two thousand square miles territory in Ladakh (Kashmir) and Chinese surrendered
15000 square miles territory in Kashmir on Indian side.43

Ayub Khan called the National-Assembly’s emergency session in which
he discussed his policies and asked members of the National Assembly to criticize
SEATO and CENTO Pacts. He alerted them against extremism and said, “Pakistan
had to be grateful to the United States for economic and military assistance. At
the same time he was also criticizing the pacts as “Although SEATO and CENTO
Pacts had lost much of their meaning or importance.”44 Then about Kashmir he
pointed out that “We have two options to solve Kashmir problem through war or
by negotiations,” but later on he proffered negotiations. His opinion was that if we
withdrew from these Pacts, we will be deprived of Western aid for the construction
of Tarbella Dam project, which was essential for the future economic prosperity of
Pakistan.45

According to Dennis Kux Harriman and Sandy’s, American representa-
tives met Ayub Khan on 28 November 1962, and went afterwards to New Delhi
to see Nehru. Pakistani leaders agreed to negotiations on Kashmir problem but
India refused to do so. In the discussion, Ayub Khan also appeared to agree that the
plebiscite was not the best way to settle the Kashmir dispute and Pakistan could
not receive all of the Kashmir Valley.46 After Sino-Indian war, Kennedy again put
pressure on India to solve Kashmir problem. In those days Nehru told the Indian
Parliament that he was under great pressure from President Kennedy to solve the
Kashmir problem. Kennedy also followed his efforts with six rounds of talk started
between both countries, but the talks ended with no solution. America could not
succeed in solving the Kashmir dispute.47 Pakistan signed the border agreement
with China on 29th March, 1963 along with other agreements. After these agree-
ments, American response towards Kashmir dispute was lukewarm as the United
States wanted to strengthen India as a regional ally against China. When Pakistan
appointed ambassador G. Ahmad on 11th August, 1963 to America, Kennedy said to
the new Pakistani ambassador:

We are conditioned by our history. I can well understand your reaction to
our extending military aid to India, but allowance must be made for the
special circumstances which occasioned our assistance.48

After Sino-Pak Agreement on 29th August 1963, Kennedy Administration respond-
ed by imposing a restriction on Pakistan for the first time, postponing indefinitely
a $ 4.3 million loan to build a new airport at Dacca, from which Pakistan Interna-
tional Airline was to launch a flight to China. This was a silent protest by America49
Then a meeting was held from 3rd September, 1963 to 6th September, 1963 between American and Pakistani secretaries. In the final round, Ayub Khan delivered a speech in which he clarified: “American aid to India is a main cause to increased Indian threat to Pakistan. We want to normalize our relations with neighboring countries India, China and also USSR” 50. Ball; the American secretary, tried to criticize Ayub Khan’s decision to build friendship with China. Ayub Khan said, “Although we are poor, but we are proud to be Pakistani.”51 Ayub Khan concluded his speech by saying he was not urging a radical change in United States policy, but wanted to put a safety limitation on their assistance to India.”52

On 12th September, 1963, Kennedy replied to United States press conference against Ayub Khan’s suggestion to Ball. Kennedy said “Although we provided so many aids to India against China but now America whole heartedly wishing to solve Kashmir settlement.”53 But Kennedy’s this dream could not complete due to his sudden death on 22nd November, 1963. After Kennedy’s death, Johnson became the new president of United States. He sent General Taylor Maxwell, chairman of United States Joint Chiefs of Staff to visit Pakistan in November, 1963. He met Ayub Khan and asked and tried to realize that in July, 1961 he promised to be with United States and now he has shifted his sympathies to China. Ayub Khan replied this change is result of United States’ changing policy. Taylor complained to Ayub-Khan about Pak- China relation and also asked the problems of region. Ayub Khan said that Pakistan is facing a tragic situation, due to changed policy of United States which provided aid more and more to India. Resultantly Pakistan had to seek the Chinese protection.54

Ayub Khan was the pioneer of Pakistan’s multilateral55 policy with all the countries. Ayub Khan visited China in March 1965 and USSR in April 1965. These visits were the results of his bilateral policy. During discussion in the National Assembly civil military official member asked him, Pakistan is a small country like a lamb and beside big powers that are like Lion. How can lamb face a lion?56 Ayub Khan accepted that “Pakistan is a lamb and major powers are loins. Now we have to decide how to live peacefully among the lions by setting one lion against another.”57 He also said that Pakistan would remain membership of CENTO and SEATO Pacts as well as would maintain good relations with China and Soviet Union.58

Pakistan’s relation with United States reached at the lowest ebb, when President Johnson cancelled Ayub Khan’s visit to Washington in April, 1965. A few weeks later he also stopped Pakistan’s funds for the third five year plan. During Indo- Pak war, which was started, 6th September, 1965, United States stopped the supply of weapons for both India and Pakistan. On 15th September, 1965 Ayub Khan requested to Johnson for the solution of Kashmir issue. He replied that the United States would work through the United Nations.59 Ayub Khan visited Amer-
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ica in December 1965, and United States President Johnson met him in Washington, White House. Although Ayub Khan wanted help from Johnson for solution of Kashmir issue, but received poor response. According to Abdul Sattar when Ayub Khan visited London and Washington in December 1965, before going to Tashkent, Johnson told him that the alliances between the United States and Pakistan is over. He said if Pakistan wants military aid from United States in future then you would have to avoid relations with China.

In January 1966, Vice President of United States visited Pakistan, and he announced a loan of $50 million to Pakistan for import of commodities of its need. The export import Bank also agreed to provide aid and a loan of $152.3 million to Pakistan. On 17th March, 1966 Secretary of State Rusk issued a statement:

We have just announced our willingness to negotiate on certain economic development loans with India and Pakistan. We are prepared to continue the help if these two countries demonstrate their willingness to take necessary self help measures in the fields of agriculture and other priority areas and find a way to live at peace with each other.

In April 1966, Secretary of State Dean Rusk even asked foreign minister Bhutto for Pakistan’s help to arrange a meeting with Chinese foreign Minister for discussions on Vietnam War. But he did not succeeded in his aim as Bhutto, by then, had resigned. In April 1967, United States President Johnson decided to sell spare parts to both India and Pakistan, but decided not to provide military assistance and financial credit. Although Ayub Khan was pleased to receive spare parts, he did not succeeded in getting military assistance from United States.

On 22nd December 1967 President Johnson met Ayub Khan at Karachi airport on his way back home from a trip to Vietnam. He agreed to help Pakistan with additional supplies of vegetable oil and wheat. Bhutto resigned from Foreign Ministrihship and Mian Arshad Hussain was appointed as the new foreign Minister. He said, in the National Assembly On 28th June 1968:

With a change in the world situation these Pacts SEATO and CENTO have lost a good deal of their importance. If we are continuing our membership of Pact CENTO, it is out of difference to wishes of other members especially Iran and Turkey.

In January 1969, Johnson Government ended and Ayub Khan was also in trouble of his poor health and law and order situation in Pakistan. Nixon took the charge as new President in January 1969, while Ayub Khan resigned in March 1969.
Conclusion

During his whole era, Ayub Khan was fought for a solution of the Kashmir issue on one hand and on other side he was secured western aid for the betterment of economic and military sectors of Pakistan. During the same period while Pakistan was a member of SEATO and CENTO, non-communist pacts, it was also emerging as a strong ally of China, one of the two major communist powers. Pakistan was also on good terms with the Soviet Union. The credit for this leadership in a complex period of world powers goes to Ayub Khan and his vision for Pakistan.

Notes:

7. United States made this agreement with Pakistan after the reservations of the neighboring countries of Pakistan were over. Moreover, the neighboring countries like India, USSR and China etc, were feeling threat from this bilateral agreement between Pakistan and United States.
10. Ibid., 104.
20. Cited in Kux, 118.
27. *Pakistan Times*. 8th July 1961
32. Kux,*The Pakistan and United States*, 122.
34. Dennis Kux,*The United States and Pakistan*, 123.
35. Muhammad Ayub Khan, 137.
38. Farhat, 159.
43. Syed Sami Ahamd. *History of Pakistan and Role of the Army*. Karachi: Royal
46. Dennis Kux, *The United States and Pakistan*, 134.
50. Ibid, 143.
52. Ibid.
55. Multilateralism is meant that kind of foreign policy in which a balance is maintained between the relations with other powers. Ayub Khan was the Pioneer of Pakistan’s Multilateral Policy. He said, “We want to establish normal relations with three powers i.e. America, USSR and China.”
57. Ibid, 63.
58. Ibid, 63.
60. Abdul Sattar, *Pakistan’s Foreign Policy*, 99-100.
63. Ibid., 173.
64. Ibid., 174.
65. Rais, Ahmad Khan, 52.
66. Ibid., 52.