



Taliban Annexation of Kabul and the End of US Involvement: Opportunities and Challenges for Islamabad

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ABSTRACT

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Since the middle of the 1990s, Pakistan and the Taliban have maintained a positive relationship. Pakistan's aggressive actions as Afghanistan's eastern neighbor have contributed to the Taliban's recent takeover. After the Afghan government left office, there was a rise in anti-Pakistan sentiment. It is likely that India will end its structural presence and turn its borders against Pakistan. This study seeks to offer a thorough analysis of the effects of Pakistan's post-Taliban rule in Afghanistan. Pakistan is in a precarious position as a result of Afghanistan's quickly changing scenario and worries that terrorist bloodshed would increase if the Taliban are unable to unite other Afghan ethnicity and political parties to form a strong and stable government. For stability and peace in the region, Afghanistan must be stable as the peaceful, prosperous and stable Afghanistan ensures the collective security and stability of a whole South Asia and in particular, Pakistan. Moreover, the study put emphasis on the fact that Indian unnecessary involvement in Afghanistan is acting as a trouble maker to bring peace and stability in Afghanistan. Under the Taliban regime it is more likely that Indian involvement in Afghanistan will be minimized. Secondly when it comes to the geopolitical competition, international powers, in particular China and America will need to act wisely in the international affairs of South Asia.

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Introduction

Islamabad and the Taliban have been maintaining good relations ever since the middle decades of the 1990s. It is claimed that the Taliban's recent conquest has been facilitated by Pakistan's aggressive policies as Afghanistan's eastern neighbor. Anti-Pakistan sentiment has increased with the resignation of the Afghan government. India will probably stop being structurally present and will likely turn its boundaries against Pakistan. In-depth investigation of the consequences of Pakistan's post-Taliban governance in Afghanistan is the goal of this study piece. Owing to Afghanistan's rapidly changing situation, Pakistan is in a perilous position and is much more concerned that a terrorist resurgence would escalate if the Taliban lacked the ability to bring together other Afghan ethnic groups and political factions to build a stable and powerful government.

Despite all of this, Pakistan supported the Taliban against the Afghan government throughout the interwar period. They slowly reemerged and built buildings in the borderlands with assistance from the ISI. They stepped up their strikes in defense of NATO and Afghan forces. The leadership, cadres, and their families found refuge and safety thanks to Pakistani aid. It included training, weapons, specialists, and help with funding, especially in the Persian Gulf states. The Taliban occasionally used Pakistani advisers to help them on missions within Afghanistan. Pakistan has wished for a peaceful resolution to all US-Taliban disputes. Due to this, (Riedel, 2021)

Pakistan has contributed in a positive way to getting both parties to the negotiating table. Due to the involvement of numerous powers in Afghanistan during the 20-year-long war. Pakistan, a neighboring country, was the one that suffered the most in this regard. In the Afghan War, Pakistan suffered an economic loss of 126.79 dollars and made sacrifices of 23,372 civilians and 8,832 security personnel. The United States lost 2,500 soldiers in this conflict, while more than 2.5 trillion dollars were spent on it. The hard work of Pakistan has made the pullout successful. Again, the ISI rapidly changed its support after the cessation of operations by American soldiers, and that assistance is still being provided now. There will be significant repercussions for Pakistan from the Taliban's and ISI's progress in Afghanistan, some of which could prove negative and dangerous. Following the effective withdrawal of US forces, the Taliban quickly overran Kabul in an attack that resulted in the surrender of warlords and provinces. This takeover would not be possible without Pakistan's assistance and protection of the Taliban. This takeover has given rise to some mounting anxieties.

The entire international community is monitoring the Taliban to see how they establish an effective government. because the Taliban lack the qualifications to run the government. Any instability in Afghanistan will increase terrorism in Pakistan, cause a major influx of refugees, intensify regional proxy wars, and worsen relations between the US and Pakistan. There is a chance of civil war in Afghanistan if they are unable to build an inclusive government. If there isn't any control or if there is fighting, it will have a negative impact on Pakistan since Afghanistan is a country where terrorism is susceptible to occurring. The possibility of a refugee crisis then exists for us. As is evident, the Taliban rejected PM Khan's request to replace the current interim

administration. Taliban leader Muhammad Mobeen stated that we maintain the right to establish our own system. Zabiullah Mujahid, the Taliban's deputy minister of information, stated that the group will only address international human rights problems after receiving diplomatic recognition from those nations. Tensions in Pakistan are rising because of this type of behavior.

Objectives of the study

Finding out how Pakistan views the Taliban's reappearance at the negotiation table and what it implies for Pakistan is the main objective of the current study. In addition, this essay will look at Pakistan's shifting opportunities and risks, such as those brought on by regional proxy conflicts, the rise of global jihadism, local militancy, potential refugee influxes, and transnational jihadism. In this study, the Taliban's takeover and its consequences are both independent variables.

This study is very important because it covers the most recent Afghan events, such as the Taliban takeover. Significant aftereffects of Pakistan's pivotal role in the twenty-year war against terrorism. Pakistan's role as a key participant or game-changer has been examined in this study. Pakistan's contribution cannot, therefore, be disputed at any level.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Background

Kenneth Waltz's Neo-Realism in his Theory of International Politics, published in 1975 and 1979. This theory was used in this study to explain the significance of the international system's structure or function as the main factor influencing state behavior. The most important characteristics that can be used in this research are the self-centric strategy, which states always pursue when there is war or anarchy. Another tenet is that the state is a rational actor and that in times of war, the state must survive (Lobell, 2017). If we can use this strategy in this situation, we will learn that both Pakistan and the Afghan Taliban are advancing their own interests.

In fact, the Neo-Realism thesis vehemently asserts that in a time of war (anarchy), both state interest and state survival are essential. As we can see, the United States and Pakistan have adopted a neorealist strategy in response to the Taliban taking control of Afghanistan. Everyone had a different national interest. They all did this in order to advance their national interests and ensure their existence. For instance, the USA approached Afghanistan to eliminate the threat of terrorism. The United States sought to defeat the Soviet Union in the Cold War with Pakistan's assistance and wanted to eradicate terrorism in South Asia. By destroying the Soviet Union, America also hoped to become the only superpower on the globe.

Pakistan wanted to install the Taliban administration in South Asia in order to undermine Indian strategic plans there. On the other hand, Pakistan feared for its existence and territorial security against the Ashraf Ghani administration and India, a potent foe. The Taliban, Pakistan, and the United States each had different objectives in Afghanistan. Pakistan's role was also egocentric because of its concern for the security of its borders.

2.2 Empirical Studies

From all angles, Pakistan is exposed if the Taliban take over Afghanistan. First, once the Taliban are in power, the ongoing institutional Indian presence in Afghanistan will end since it will no longer back Baloch terrorists who have been involved in terrorism inside Pakistan. The

author's second argument is that the Afghan Taliban have made it very clear that no foreign militants will utilize Afghan soil for attacks against any other nation. Thirdly, the newly installed Taliban administration struggles due to its economic and political independence from a lot of the rest of the globe. As a result, Pakistan will become much more dependent on it, giving Pakistan more leverage over the TTP issue. (Karim, 2021) Following their assumption of power in Afghanistan after 20 years of war, there are fears that they may impose an oppressive regime, neglect to provide essential services, and violate human rights (Maizland, 2021). The defeat of the Taliban in Afghanistan has ended India's alliance with that country. First and foremost, Pakistan has backed the Taliban because they do not support the Pashtun Islamist uprising within Pakistan. Second, ISIS is a common enemy of both countries; this conquest has destroyed ISIS's Afghan origins. Thirdly, Pakistan seeks to confirm that the Taliban do not support foreign extremism, including an Islamist uprising in Pakistan, by forming a regional coalition against ISIS with China, Russia, and Iran. Fourth, Pakistan is concerned about Afghanistan because it has a history of dashed expectations from the outside world and derailed well-laid plans (Lieven, 2021).

Pakistan provided material and diplomatic support for the Taliban's establishment in 1996. The Taliban mostly operates along the Pakistani-Afghanistan border, where they have an impact on both countries' policies. However, the US started its war against terror in Afghanistan after the 9/11 attack. Pakistan subsequently consented to aid the US in combating the Taliban. Pakistan wants a tranquil Afghanistan. However, if the US were to lose the fight against the Taliban in the future, Pakistan might once again be forced to support the Pashtuns in the administration of Afghanistan (Akhtar, 2008). Pakistan has achieved a strategic win as a result of the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan; for the first time in close to 20 years, Kabul now has a friendly administration. Pakistan, however, might soon come to the realization that forming a partnership with the Taliban won't be that simple (Kugelman, 2021). Pakistan has great hopes for interaction with the Kabul government on economic issues, even if it has not yet formally recognized it. As Kabul began to favor Iranian ports, which were financed by India, during the tenure of former President Ashraf Ghani, the flow of imports into landlocked Afghanistan through Pakistani ports fell by 80%. Likewise, bilateral trade fell from \$2.8 billion in 2011 to \$1.8 billion. Islamabad wants to see bilateral trade and the use of Pakistani terminals for Afghan trade resumed.

Pakistan also believes that the Taliban's heightened security will enable it to expand its economic relationship with Central Asia, which has the potential to experience major growth. The Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipeline's completion would allow Turkmenistan to supply the three South Asian countries with natural gas. As a result of the Afghan government's inability to guarantee security for the project's development on Afghan soil, the building of the pipeline has paused recently. Only if Pakistan and the Afghans establish respect and mutual confidence in the future can Pakistan anticipate a friendly regime in Kabul (Sherazi, 2021). Despite its long history of backing the Taliban, Pakistan is not completely unconcerned with their seizure of Kabul. Over the years, Pakistanis have suffered greatly at the behest of Islamist terrorist organizations that conduct assaults over the Afghan border. Pakistan has a significant stake in seeing that the new Afghan government cracks down on organizations like

Qaeda and the regional branch of the Islamic State, known as ISIS-K. In other words, Pakistan has a stake in the Taliban acting decisively and preventing Afghanistan from becoming anarchic. A refugee issue is Pakistan's other major concern. Due to its damaged economy, the nation cannot support any more Afghan refugees, of which there are currently around three million as a result of earlier wars. (Landale 2021)

This book explains Afghanistan's volatile political history, from the communist uprising of the 1970s to the fallout from the devastating 9/11 tragedy. It examines the region's importance to international powers and explains why conflict and discontent have remained pervasive. The book gives in-depth information regarding the Taliban's founding and the deadly ascent to power of hardline Islamists, notably Osama bin Laden, as a result of the power vacuum caused by the US's withdrawal of help. In addition, the author learns about Afghanistan's growing interest in the Taliban as a third political force to rival extreme Islamists and radical Communists. He also makes suggestions about the support that the international community would require for such a campaign. to survive (Najumi, 2002). The author of this book emphasizes the Taliban's efforts to restore control of Afghanistan after US and NATO operations against Islamist extremists who had secretly supported Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaeda Jihadists were successful. The Taliban regime was overthrown and destroyed by NATO forces, and any remaining members were driven outside of Afghanistan (Abbas, 2014). This has long been known. The ISI defeated the former Soviet Union in Afghanistan with the assistance of America, and then there will be another sentence, whenever history is written. America was vanquished by the ISI with American assistance (News, 2014). This article addresses the post-9/11 policies of the Musharraf dictatorship, including his decision to join the alliance against Al Qaeda. reasons for Pakistan's engagement. Mention further factors that led Pakistan to enter this conflict, such as the NATO airstrikes on two Pakistani military checkpoints, the US mission to kill Osama bin Laden in May 2011, the longstanding Indian-Afghan nexus, and Pakistan boundary violations or cross-border attacks. In conclusion, this article discusses Pakistan's current situation and also focuses on Pakistan's efforts to build positive relationships with the various ethnic groups in Afghanistan. Pakistan also aspires to a peaceful transfer of power within Afghanistan, which is essential for maintaining a stable Afghanistan. Nevertheless, this page covers numerous aspects regarding Pakistan's policies towards Afghanistan in different periods of time, as well as focusing on Pakistan's participation in the Soviet Afghan War (Rana & Sial, 2013).

Although the material mentioned above covers the majority of topics in Pakistan-Afghanistan relations, it emphasizes Pakistan's attempts to bring stability and peace to Afghanistan. But the underlying views of this takeover that need to be explored are still not addressed in this literature. like what the Taliban regime in Afghanistan will look like in the future. Is Afghanistan likely to experience peace in the future? Will the Taliban make amends for their past transgressions? Will Pakistan benefit from the Taliban government or not? Will the international community still consider Afghanistan to be a peaceful nation in the future? Regarding the ongoing Taliban control in Afghanistan, these are among the most pressing questions. These issues will be covered in this study, which will also offer a comprehensive answer.

3.0 Methodology

This study adopts a descriptive approach, delving into the multifaceted dynamics surrounding the subject matter. It embraces an exploratory research design, leveraging a comprehensive blend of primary and secondary data sources. The investigative framework involves a meticulous examination of diverse literary resources, encompassing books, articles, research papers, and journals that span both national and international domains. By synthesizing insights extracted from this extensive array of materials, the research aims to construct a nuanced understanding of the complex interplay of factors related to the Taliban takeover and its subsequent implications for Pakistan.

The methodology employed for this research involves a thorough analysis of the wealth of information derived from the selected literature. The examination encompasses an array of perspectives presented in books, articles, research papers, and journals at various levels, contributing to a comprehensive exploration of the Taliban's ascendancy and the multifaceted challenges and opportunities it presents for Pakistan. Through a systematic evaluation of this diverse range of sources, the researchers seek to unveil the intricacies of the geopolitical landscape, shedding light on the potential consequences and intricacies that Pakistan may navigate in the aftermath of the Taliban's takeover in Afghanistan.

4.0 Results Following a thorough examination of the problems and opportunities presented to Pakistan by the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan, the analysis is presented below (Bacon, T. 2018). Since 1996, Pakistan has been an Afghan-Taliban supporter. Due to the interests of the United States, their relationship has since fluctuated. America was the Taliban's, called Mujahidin, who shared the similar ideology of saving a greater Afghanistan to serve as the bastion of Islam, their main support in Afghanistan prior to the collapse of the Soviet Union, but after that point, the United States lost interest in that organization. Then, the abrupt events of 9/11 changed everything and led to the United States returning to Afghanistan in 2001. For the next 20 years, up until the time of the peace agreement, the conflict was at its height. Following the loss of army lives and the wasting of billions of dollars, The US set up three puppet regimes to oppose the Taliban. But to combat the Taliban, these regimes have failed. Similar to the Afghan puppet government that received US support. They were not associated with Afghans. The previous administration was bitterly contested by Afghans. The Taliban were supported by the Afghan people as opposed to Ashraf Ghani's administration. Throughout these 20 years, Pakistan in general and the KPK in particular suffered greatly. During this time, Pakistan's history, culture, economy, and social ties were severely impacted. We need an Afghan administration that is supportive of Pakistan's national interests, since Pakistan is a peaceful country. As a significant player in Afghanistan, the Taliban's government will be shown to be far superior to that of Abdullah Abdullah, Ashraf Ghani, and Karzai. RAW and NTS were used by the former administration against Pakistan. They propagated the idea among other nations that Pakistan is to blame for all crises. The vast majority of authors think that the Afghan Taliban will ultimately seize control of Afghanistan. They can only promise the world an Afghanistan that is safe and secure. Because the US expected a promise from the Taliban rather than the Ashraf Ghani government after wasting 20 years in Afghanistan.

The Taliban are a concern for all major international players, including the US, China, Iran, and Russia. They are assuring the world community that no nation will use its turf against them.

The majority of analysts think that Pakistan will gain more benefits from this takeover. When deleting two-way fractions, this can be useful. Pakistan has always worked hard to maintain peace in this area. Pakistan has supported the Taliban administration against the Afghan government since 1996 and continues to do so now. The security of Pakistan may be seriously threatened by the anti-Pakistan government. After this triumph, Pakistan will never again face significant danger on Afghan territory. The Taliban are now making wise judgments in Afghanistan solely for the good of society and to please the rest of the world. Despite the fact that these actions appear successful from Pakistani perspectives, On the other hand, Pakistan's story about the recognition of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan is very clear. Pakistan must make it clear that the Taliban will only form an inclusive (representative) regime in Afghanistan if they guarantee the rights of the people, uphold the law, and promise not to use their territory against any other country. Pakistan will then decide whether to recognize it after seeing the global position. Another myth is that because Musharraf's administration turned over many of the Taliban's Afghan allies to America, including Mullah Zaeef Islam, they never managed to maintain good relations with us during the course of the 20 years. Pakistan has been negotiating with the United States using the Afghan Taliban. The US repeatedly pressured Pakistan to influence the Taliban and make them comply with the key demands. These folks are untrained in system administration and lack management abilities. There is therefore a risk that they may soon cause a catastrophe, which the US will once again attribute to Pakistan, just like in 2001. Due to their fan base, if they are successful in Afghanistan, the Taliban model will soon be introduced in Pakistan. As a result, we shouldn't be pleased with anything happening in Afghanistan. We will also need to exercise caution outside of the border situation. The majority of nations, including China, Azerbaijan, Russia, Uzbekistan, Turkey, Azerbaijan, and Iran, are currently watching the situation in Afghanistan with curiosity.

All of these nations are aware that the Taliban of 2021 are far more advanced than they were in 2001, with more sophisticated weapons and the satisfaction of having defied superpowers. They are attempting to protect themselves from the Taliban, nevertheless. They will therefore be significantly more destructive than the preceding one. Pakistan suffers greatly from this condition as well. Pakistan is engaging in risky behavior by supporting the Taliban. Its goal of establishing a Pakistan-friendly administration in Afghanistan in order to stifle Pashtun pride and defend India ignores both the Taliban's distinctive conduct and the competing religious fundamentalist factions within Pakistan. There is still a chance that the Taliban's control in Afghanistan will end one day with a message of joy, peace, and harmony.

The Taliban government's current predicament in Afghanistan and its consequences for Pakistan are the subject of numerous comments and ideas. The surrounding nations and all parties involved must take these proposals seriously if Afghanistan is to experience long-term peace. The following are the main suggestions: During the transition of Afghanistan's government from Ashraf Ghani to the Taliban, neither the opposition nor the country's youth, which are considered

to be the nation's future, were represented. The peace in Afghanistan cannot endure for very long without the participation of all these parties. The rights and status of women and the liberty of minorities are still questions that need to be considered and safeguarded, as we know the Taliban holds very harsh views about them.

The best method for peacefully resolving any conflict is negotiation. Without resorting to actual violence, diplomacy will assure peace and stability. After 20 years in Afghanistan, the United States finally reached a peace agreement with the Taliban. The likelihood of catastrophe will gradually disappear if all states pursue cordial relations with one another through mutual understanding.

To sum up, the Taliban must now recognize and steer clear of the repeated errors made during the Bonn process, which led to their elimination, only to allow for their eventual comeback as a more powerful stakeholder twenty years later. A strategic error would be to interpret Kabul's swift fall as a declaration of their supreme might. The Taliban would have to give up their exclusive approach at the expense of inclusion in order to demonstrate adaptability to the detriment of other interests. Pakistan is the country most influenced by any negative effects from Afghanistan due to its proximity to Afghanistan, shared long border, and cultural ties with its people.

A stable Afghanistan is also necessary for Pakistan's geoeconomic strategy of territorial connectivity. Pakistan is advocating for a transition that is acceptable to all parties in light of the current circumstances and is calling for regional action to connect with the Taliban's future leadership in Afghanistan. The current situation calls for a stable government. The responsibility to assist the Taliban must fall to the international community. Because of their need for international acceptance. The Taliban must, on the other hand, make sure that their homeland won't ever again be used as a weapon against another state. While establishing authority is one thing, sustaining that control and running a country require different abilities, which the Taliban, as a hardline organization, lacks.

Therefore, Afghanistan's secure future can only be carried out by a stable administration. The Taliban would also face greater difficulties in delivering on their promises of internal equilibrium and outside guarantees. Pakistan believes that the Taliban would uphold their commitments to minorities' and women's rights as well as acknowledge the concerns of the international community on transnational terrorism. Pakistan will benefit from adopting a proactive and multifaceted approach to dealing with the current crisis because both success and failure have severe repercussions.

1. A stable Afghanistan is needed now more than ever, so all of its neighbors must act favorably toward Afghanistan. Since governments are independent in the age of globalization, concerns and problems affecting one country, such as the conflict-like scenario in Afghanistan, affect all of its neighbors, both directly and indirectly.
2. Pakistan will have the opportunity to resolve all outstanding issues with the Afghan side as a result of this takeover. This takeover will ultimately be beneficial for the entire global community.

Discussion and Conclusion

Challenges for Pakistan

The Afghan Taliban have a strong anti-Shiite stance and are supported by the majority of the religious orthodoxy in Pakistan. Already, violent incidents have occurred, putting a human liver tool on both sides (Ahrari, M. E., 2000). As a result of this, tensions in Pakistan, with a larger Shiite population than Afghanistan, have risen for their rights and got more aggressive day by day. Pakistan has received little trust from the Biden administration, as they doubt the very commitment of Pakistan to the war against terrorism, especially in the post-US withdrawal era. Regular communications with the military, diplomatic personnel, and spies have resumed; however, President Biden continues to disregard the nation led by Imran Khan, the prime minister of Pakistan, with whom he has not formally spoken yet. Similar to the conclusion of the Cold War, the US takeover of Afghanistan posed a serious risk to Pakistan in the form of a massive influx of migrants and a rise in terrorism. Also, this takeover does not lessen the threat posed by anti-Islamist militancy and, in fact, may even inspire Pakistani separatists of the ethnic Pashtun group and Islamist extremist forces.

In the meantime, Western rage at Pakistan's ties to the Afghan Taliban could only grow in the coming weeks. These changes will move Pakistan farther away from a situation where it is dependent on China and harbors animosity toward India. The main threat following the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan was the expected resurgence of local terrorist organizations in Pakistan like the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and the rogue cells of other transnational terrorist organizations like the Islamic State (IS) and al-Qaida. The Taliban's declaration that Afghan soil cannot be utilized against any other country presents another difficulty; they make the claim that it assuages international pressure; nevertheless, it remains to be seen whether they can actually manage terrorist organizations inside Pakistan. However, gradually, the impression developed that the TTP has its own agenda inside Pakistan and, at some point, is in contradiction to the Afghan Taliban. As the Taliban supported Pakistan's stance on the Durand Line, the TTP recently warned that an irredentist approach to removing the Durand Line or the Pakistan-Afghanistan boundary may potentially find more adherents there. Given how vehemently the TTP has commanded to mend itself in Afghanistan over the past several years, the problem is probably more one of power than the TTP's desire to restrain organizations like the TTP. Thus, Pakistan's interaction with the potential Taliban government may once again run into problems related to the question of terrorism. Indirectly, Pakistan's security issues have already increased exponentially as a result of the Taliban's control over towns and the subsequent release of hundreds of thousands of detainees from prisons. Because of the abrupt exit of the Biden administration from Afghanistan without reaching a political agreement with Pakistan, another major anxiety is being expressed from the American side. Washington's unilateral withdrawal, according to Islamabad, would jeopardize Doha.

Agreement 2020's (Pilster, 2020), initial accomplishments and even led to a civil war in Afghanistan. Geographical connections between Pakistan and Afghanistan make it a popular route for trade, connectivity, and tourism. At the same time, there is growing apprehension in Islamabad that some of the growing resentment over US policy failures in Afghanistan will likely be directed

at Pakistan. Undoubtedly, Afghan Taliban fighters will offer refuge in their newly captured territory and are in contact with their Pakistani allies. The Pakistani Taliban, who have been at war with the Pakistani army for so long, are also to blame for the fall of the Afghan government in Kabul. The Pakistani Taliban and their Afghan counterparts are close allies.

Opportunities for Pakistan

Islam, with its ideological force during the 19th and 20th centuries, was viewed as a binding force that would hold together many different groups with distinct linguistic (Smith, A. D., 1979) and ethnic backgrounds. Pakistan was founded in 1947 as a Muslim republic; however, it was the result of battle; unfortunately, this project failed very soon. Following a bloody civil war, a sizable chunk of eastern Pakistani territory occupied by the Bengali-speaking population seceded to create Bangladesh in 1971. As a result of this defeat, the government of Pakistan was under pressure to worry about the western provinces of Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which are home to sizable Pashtun or Pashto-speaking populations, lest there be a separatist movement. Pakistan established madrassas in these areas with the aim of eradicating Pashtun nationalism by emphasizing and teaching a particularly stringent type of Islam. Because Afghan governments have rejected the Durand Line, which recognizes Pakistani Pashtun-dominated areas as a part of "Pushtunistan," or the traditional Pashtun homeland, since 1947, Pakistani officials believe the Taliban may reduce border-related tensions. The Taliban's philosophy, according to the Pakistani government, favors Islam over Pashtun ethnicity.

Third, Pakistan needs an Afghan administration that is supportive of Pakistan. Pakistan accuses India of using linguistic and ethnic differences to destabilize and fragment the nation. By offering a safe haven and sanctuary for Islamist groups opposed to India, a Taliban government could help Pakistan in its fight against that country. Pakistan has spent millions of dollars over the past few decades to impose and define the border, demonstrating its attachment to the Durand Line. However, neither the Durand Line nor Pakistan's efforts to physically define it have been recognized by the Taliban, in line with earlier Afghan governments. Additionally, the Taliban have never criticized or rejected the Afghan desire for a Pushtunistan. The fact that the Afghan Taliban maintain strong relations with Pakistan's Tehrik-e-Taliban (TTP) further complicates the situation. The TTP is made up of tiny Pashtun and Punjabi militant groups that are friendly with the Taliban, operate along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, and threaten to go to war with Pakistan until Pushtunistan is granted independence to be merged with the greater Islamic state of Afghanistan. The TTP operations in Pakistan resulted in the deaths of thousands of civilians. According to reports, General Bajwa informed Pakistani parliamentarians that the TTP and the Afghan Taliban are "two faces of the same coin" by demonstrating the connection between the two organizations. Moreover, Pakistan would have to deal with yet another wave of refugees if Afghanistan were to re-enter its civil war. Last year, there were a projected 1.4 million Afghan refugees living there. Last but not least, Pakistan's relations with China may once again be in jeopardy if Afghanistan (as well as Pakistan) becomes a refuge for Muslim separatists, particularly disgruntled Uyghurs from Xinjiang.

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