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Role of Pakistan as a Facilitator in the Intra-Afghan Dialogues



Abstract: The Afghan peace negotiations with the United States have established a unified forum for the country's future. Since the Soviet invasions and 9/11, the imbroglio and terrors attacks destabilize the Afghanistan area. Pakistan plays a key role in the resumption of the peace process. Pakistan has taken significant action to open the dialogue and invite the Taliban and the United States to the negotiating table in order to negotiate peace and stability. The Pakistani Foreign Ministry began working to reduce tension, and including Pakistan in a peace agreement would both enhance Pakistan's influence in the region and yield positive benefits as part of the peace talks process. Pakistan's efforts and dedication were important in facilitating the Two Plus Two peace talks, which had been impasses since the 9/11 terrorist attacks, as well as the US and China's roles as observers. In this paper, I will focus to illustrate Pakistan's role and to find out the critical assumption about the role of Pakistan in Afghan Peace Talks.

Key Words: Doha Peace Talks, Stakeholders, Taliban stances, Impediments, Way Forward, Future Prosperity

Introduction

There has never been sufficient impetus for a formal peace process to start and for the settings to return to normal after 19 years of war in Afghanistan under American leadership. The goals of the Afghan peace negotiations have had a significant role in determining the future structure of security, both locally and globally. The United States and China participate in these peace negotiations as observers, and Pakistan, as moderator and facilitator, has a unique opportunity to demonstrate that it is not just a responsible state but is also totally dedicated to bringing about peace in Afghanistan and along its borders. Pakistan and Afghanistan share a common history,

geography, and cultural heritage. The negotiation between the Afghan government and the Taliban was made possible by Pakistan's efforts. There have been a number of unofficial negotiations between the Taliban and Washington. Abu Dhabi hosted the summit that received the most attention. The Taliban's top leadership, a U.S.

representative, and representatives from Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates attend this meeting to address the primary issues surrounding peace negotiations, troop withdrawal, and resolving the tussle among different stakeholders. On the other side of the mirror, Pakistan is attempting to rekindle its economic, political, and social ties with Afghanistan by gaining its trust in order to secure its northern and western borders. The Hina Rabbani travels and the indigenous people's stance led to the stars seeming to be aligned more and more for future discussions.

The fact that Pakistan will directly be impacted by the peace negotiations is a sufficient basis for undertaking a thorough investigation regarding this protracted conflict. It is a persistent issue with several possibilities that could have positive or negative consequences for Pakistan. The paper tries to perceive these probabilities substantially while analyzing the various dimensions of this entire episode will help policymakers in Pakistan and Afghanistan greatly.

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According to the US Secretary of State, if these negotiations are successful in the future, the US will award Afghanistan membership in the UN.

The peace process or MX.3, talks were started on July 7, 2015, after a long civil war between the Afghan government and the Taliban. The major participants in the peace talks meeting were the Afghan government's deputy foreign minister, Hekmat Khalil Karzai, and Mullah Abbas, who serve as the main leaders of Afghan political shura, and Qatar's official representatives, and Aizaz, foreign secretary of Pakistan. Pakistan thinks that the peace in Afghanistan is likely to be linked with Pakistan peace and ultimately to the regional and global. In the same way, the Pakistani foreign office is dedicated to maintaining that the peace process negotiation is solely Afghan-led, Afghan-owned, and free from stakeholders' dissension, external policy engagement, interference, or unneeded influence.

The peace talks were held at MUREE during Ramadan month, the most prominent month of blessing. The reports claim that the overall status was going on the right way, and both sides are agree to discuss and achieve their objective. The Taliban raises questions regarding the complete timetable of foreign troops' withdrawal, the release there Taliban friends who were held as prisoners, the amended Afghan constitution, the removal of Taliban names from the U.S sanction list, and interesting was to establish of an interim government till the new representative government is legally elected. The Afghan government cordially accepts the Taliban's demands except for one demand regarding the interim government. On the other aspect, the two major powers U.S. and China also participate as observers for the purposes of peace and stability in the region.

Due to rumours that these negotiations were being thwarted inside Afghanistan, the talks were worsening. As a result of cross-border terrorist activities and the public disclosure of Mullah Omar's passing, tensions are rising. However, Pakistan was attempting to restore order and get the sides back to the negotiating table. The biggest barrier was Mullah Akhtar Mansoor's murder during the peace negotiations, which ultimately altered relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Using a drone strike, this targeted incident took place on May 21, 2016, in

Baluchistan, Pakistan. With his death, opinions on the future of the peace process were divided. As by the International NEWS, BBC, This had a good effect on upcoming peace negotiations because Mansoor was opposed to them and didn't want the aforementioned arrangement to advance.

Initial Stages of the Peace Process

We determined that Pakistan's goals for establishing peace and stability in South Asia coincide with those of the international community when we assessed the Afghan Protected Conflict. The previous attempts by the various parties to reduce tension, put an end to the Afghan civil war, and stabilize the region were unsuccessful. Pakistan took an adamant stance to pressure the Taliban into the peace process and developed a favourable position with regard to regional stability, which requires a strong diplomatic effort. Pakistan appears to have stopped showing favouritism in the peace deal and acted as a real stakeholder, which may also strengthen the national interests of Afghanistan and its neighbours. In this regard, Pakistan stays away from the Afghans' internal conflict and their own internal military initiatives in favour of dialogue and compromise. Also, we noted that Pakistan converted its short-term strategy into a long-term strategy. The state benefits greatly from Pakistan's role as a negotiator in the Afghan Peace Process. Pakistan seeks to strengthen its ties with other nations by returning to the bargaining table with the main regional countries. It gives Pakistan the chance to realize one of its main foreign policy objectives with regard to Afghanistan, which is to create a network of regional friends.

Pakistan plays a pivotal role in Afghan peace. Pakistan is an Islamic Republic state, so she should help her Afghan brothers in faith who are facing a powerful US-led invasion for the last 15 years or so. If Pakistan had supported Afghanistan after the USA crossed her territory illegally and bombed Afghanistan, by now the USA would have totally gone bankrupt and neutralized many years ago. Indeed Pakistan would have suffered a lot, but yet that would have been better for her long-term survival and growth.

Of course! Pakistan genuinely supports Afghan peace, we must get things back on track. It is the Afghans who deserve peace. We Pakistanis

don't want our neighbours to hate us more. We will fight for a stable Afghanistan and aspire to it. There are two different facets of a coin, at one side, Pakistan's active stance in this Peace negotiation for Quadrilateral Cooperation and Coordination (QCCM), while on the opposite side, its analyze the Quadrilateral Coordination Group (QCG), which shows the clear demonstration of Pakistan's stance and its deal impact on south Asia region. In December 2019, Pakistan motivated the two parties to further talks, and to participate in Moscow and Bhurban talks. It shows Pakistan has a central role in facilitating the Afghan talks.

Pakistan Should Strengthen Relations with its Stakeholders

In order to improve relations with the parties involved, Pakistan should install a cordial government in Kabul that is removed from its own political and economic unrest at home. Pakistan adopted various positions regarding the peace process because various parties in the negotiations had direct ties to Afghan territory and pursued their own national interests, which ultimately undermined Pakistan's stance and created broader tensions that had a negative impact on Pakistan's political as well as economic participation in the peace process. Pakistan needed to stay out of the domestic disputes between the Taliban and the Afghan government and the Doha negotiations in order to improve the climate. Pakistan should express its determination to work closely with the Afghan economic, political, and cultural administration moving ahead and acknowledge the Taliban Administration as the country's new government. As a result, Pakistan's reputation with the international community has increased in regard to its commitment to securing a successful resolution from the intra-Afghan dialogue. Nonetheless, the peace process has given the area a fictitious sense of security. For Pakistan's national security, the period after the successful conclusion of the peace process and the subsequent US withdrawal from Afghanistan is fraught with difficulties.

Prospects for Pakistan: According to my Analysis and perspective, certain important prospects would be beneficial for Pakistan. The talks process between Afghanistan and the Taliban

on a positive note, which could bring major benefits to Pakistan. The ideological, and cultural similarities with Afghanistan and now act as a mediator in the diplomatic position, naturally provides an opportunity to reinforce its standing in regional politics. Some of the benefits that can achieve are; eradicating terrorism, peaceful neighbours, creating Pakistan's positive image, rebuilding mutual trust, mitigating Indian influence, and strengthening national security and Defense.

Stakeholders in the Peace Negotiation Process

Whether in the current Afghan Peace Process or the preceding War on Terror, Pakistan has become too significant a state to ignore due to its geographical location and social ties to the Afghan fraternity. After around 20 years of dragged-out fighting and losses of almost \$1 trillion USD, the US has now agreed with Pakistan's position, which it had been repeating for the entire time. War "is not a solution to achieve peace in Afghanistan," according to this. The US war had really made the Taliban in the state stronger. It additionally forced the US government to change its goals, from eradicating the Taliban to inviting them to the negotiating table.

If Pakistan's involvement in the region hadn't been acknowledged, the peace process would not have been conceivable. Pakistan has suffered the most from the worldwide War on Terror's enormous refugee influx and terrorist infiltration due to its lengthy and porous Western border, second only to Afghanistan. The American settlement with the Taliban in February 2020 and the subsequent intra-Afghan peace talks were made possible thanks in large part to Pakistan, according to Washington. Nevertheless, when President Joe Biden assumed office in January 2021, these conversations came to an end.

The alliance of these terrorist organizations spells disaster for Pakistan's national security, especially in light of the absence of a defined strategy in the wake of the US military withdrawal. A full-fledged civil war could break out in Afghanistan, pushing Pakistan to engage in armed combat as a result of the support of several factions from nearby nations like India and Russia.

Strengthening the Peace Process in Afghanistan

Islamabad's relations with Kabul and Washington would deteriorate if the Afghan peace process continued to sputter or completely failed. Deepening insecurity in Pakistan, especially in its tribal regions along the Afghan border, could result from more instability or Taliban victories in Afghanistan energizing Pakistani militants who are allied with their counterparts in Afghanistan.

Western tolerance for the country's never-ending strife and its quarrelling groups is likely to wane once foreign forces depart. If Pakistan wants to reach a political agreement that allows its Taliban friends a path to legitimate power sharing and stops the Afghan conflict from jeopardizing domestic security, time is of the essence.

Eradicate Terrorism: Terrorism was stuck in Pakistan in the late 1970s when there was a menace of attacks in Afghanistan. After that brutal incident, Pakistan has actively involved in a war against terrorism as a front-line ally of the U.S. The brutalism approach could make a negative image of Pakistan globally, but Pakistan would strive to eradicate terrorism and normalize the situation and take a positive role in the Afghan peace talk process. As per BBC News, Pakistan is facing a serious threat from terrorism activity inside Pakistan. The Terrorism Activities include enormous obstacles, that has directly linked with the Taliban war of the late 1970s, religious extremism, the proliferation of Madrasah culture, the zeal for unnatural jihad spirit, the Indian spy, the Kalashnikov, Afghan Refugee influx, and the drug and smuggler activities, these are the main factors that pulled Pakistan has fallen into a quagmire of security-related social, political, and economic issues. With the above-facing hurdles, Pakistan is still trying to minimize the tension and bring the Afghan and Taliban to the negotiation table.

Peaceful Neighbor: It is well known that peace in Pakistan guarantees peace in Afghanistan. Pakistan faces a hostile neighbour India in the East, but both countries use their largest budget in the defence sector. In this drawback, Pakistan cannot afford to detach another neighbour on its western border. In addition to these peace talks, the relationship between India and Afghanistan would be suicidal for Pakistan's security stability as

well as for the whole region. For the internal or external stability concern, Pakistan needs a solidification policy with respect to Afghan and Indian neighbours, if there is any weakness or crackles in their relations and policies orientation that would directly have consequences that affect Pakistani soil. If these peace talks will succeed in future then terrorism would not affect other regions, especially Pakistan.

Creating a Positive Image: Pakistan show full efficiency in the Afghan peace talks to create a positive image to the world because, after terrorist attacks and DE stability in Afghanistan, everyone pointed to the Pakistan image. For that purpose, Pakistan is devoted its full strength to minimising the tension and taking a solid stance towards Peace development in the entire region and also to robust the economic front, to boost its favourable reputation there. On the international stage, Pakistan's advanced efforts as a mediator in these discussions have already gained wide acclaim. It is a fact that peace talks in Afghanistan are not possible without Pakistan's involvement. So these peace talks brought Pakistan as a peace promoter.

Restore Mutual Trust: The peace process talks (Abu Dhabi, MUREE, and Qatar) obviously pointing Pakistan's legitimate intentions to lead to stability in Afghanistan. Simply Both groups need to revise one another's intentions and build trust between them. Pakistan can assure Afghanistan has open access for cooperation, building trust and comparing their national interest. This would be beneficial for both countries along with the region. This could be accomplished by more confidence-building steps, and by ensuring that they are enforced and addressed positively.

Alleviate India's Influence: It is important to counter and neutralize Indian influence in Afghanistan. As quoted by CNN; the reason behind India's influence in Afghanistan was the direct challenge to Pakistan's security, because of that; India has provided Afghanistan with development and economic aid with a view to exercising its military influence and pursuing a much greater political presence in Afghanistan. India also trained Afghan militants and use them for the sake of their national interest. For that reason Pakistan support and promote peace talks and weaken the Indian influence which is totally against Pakistan soil.

Impediments

Despite the above benefits, there are some impediments to the Afghan peace process. Which put pressure not only on the Afghan and Taliban but also on the region and resulted in insurgency inside the country. Due to some impediments, the peace talks process is postponed a couple of times. The following are the obstacles that have weakened the stakeholder positions and slowed the peace process down:

Internal Problems: The internal problem of Afghanistan is the main obstruction in the peace process talks. Such obstructions are corruption, problems in a unity government, security challenges and a weak/fragile economy. At the regional level, the stakeholders are engaged with the Afghan government and Taliban and their internal tussles along with the baseless challenges have gripe the Political structure under the umbrella of democracy. To minimize this threat, with the help of the United States, secretary John Kerry, the two political entities of Ashraf and Mohammad Abdullah signed a peace agreement, to settle the future dissension among them. To handle such problems both parties agreed on a constitution amendment.

Indian Factor: It is a fact that India is trying to damage Pakistan's image. The purpose of strengthening relations with Afghanistan is the main reason to stay in Afghanistan and to counter Pakistan's interest. The prime objective of India is to try to isolate Pakistan from Afghanistan political and diplomatic.

Distrust between Pakistan and Afghanistan: Distrust among the parties involved and the border tension between Pakistan and Afghanistan have ignited the wrong fuel, allowing various non-state actors to travel freely and openly to and from both sides. The Afghan government and its citizens believe that Pakistan trained the militants and meddled in Afghanistan's internal affairs, which has led to mistrust between them. Pakistan's role in the Taliban talks and during the Soviet involvement in Afghanistan has provided the space for foreign occupation. Sanctions, abuse, and suicide attacks both inside and outside the region have raised doubts about Pakistan's intentions.

Killing Taliban leaders: The continued counter-action against Taliban leaders is the

foremost obstacle to the progress of the peace process talks in Afghanistan. The death of Mullah MANSOOR blow sinister air in Afghanistan and resulted in a breaking in the peace process. However, after the death of MANSOOR and the leadership is replaced by HAIBATULLAH leader, the talks again resumed. As we know that the ex-leader policies were against the talks. Furthermore, the death of Mullah Omar's also an obstacle to the peace process.

Pakistan Involvement in the Peace Talks

As a neighbouring country, Pakistan has a long history of involvement in Afghan affairs. Pakistan has played a significant role in the Afghan peace talks. Since the Taliban regime was ousted in 2001, Pakistan has been a key player in the peace talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban. The country has hosted several rounds of talks between the two sides and has also facilitated negotiations between the Taliban and the United States. Pakistan's involvement in the Afghan peace talks is motivated by several factors. Firstly, Pakistan shares a long and porous border with Afghanistan, and instability in Afghanistan has spillover effects on Pakistan's security situation. Secondly, Pakistan has historical ties with the Taliban and has used them as a proxy to exert influence in Afghanistan. Thirdly, Pakistan seeks to counter the growing influence of India in Afghanistan, which it perceives as a threat to its own security. Pakistan has played a critical role in bringing the Taliban to the negotiating table. In 2015, Pakistan brokered the first round of peace talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban in Murree. The talks were later scuttled when news of Taliban leader Mullah Omar's death was announced. However, Pakistan continued to push for peace talks, and in 2018, facilitated direct talks between the Taliban and the United States in Doha, Qatar.

Points that are Converging

The Doha peace process is being hampered by a number of factors, including the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan without a timetable and without proper management, the presence of militant Afghan and tribal groups, the absence of a comprehensive policy, the conflict between Sunni and Shia Muslims, the Taliban and the Afghan armed forces, suicide bombings, and political

instability. The main factors that are convergent with one another and weaken the Peace Talks are India's sponsorship of terrorism with regard to weakening Pakistani security, the International Economic Body's economic freeze, and the deficient Afghan educational system. These factors have negative effects on the entire region as a whole, not just on one country.

Contextual Analysis

However, Pakistan's involvement in the peace talks has not been without criticism. India has accused Pakistan of supporting the Taliban and using them as a proxy to exert influence in Afghanistan. The Afghan government has also accused Pakistan of supporting the Taliban and providing them with safe havens on its soil. The accusation has strained Pakistan's relations with Afghanistan and has also raised concerns about the country's commitment to the peace process.

Despite the criticism, Pakistan has remained committed to the peace process in Afghanistan. The country has continued to facilitate talks between the Taliban and the Afghan government and has pushed for a peaceful resolution to the conflict. Pakistan has also called for an inclusive government in Afghanistan that includes all stakeholders and reflects the aspirations of the Afghan people.

Pakistan plays a vital role in the relationship between Afghan peace talks and tries it is best to communicate with Afghan and neighbouring countries while talking about Afghan peace talks. Pakistan cannot be neglected due to its efforts towards peace. Pakistan is also facing terrorist attacks and fighting for peace among countries as well it shows a positive image of Pakistan regarding Afghan peace talks. Pakistan's role in the peace talks has been praised by the international community. The United States has acknowledged Pakistan's efforts in facilitating the talks and has lauded the country's support for the peace process. Similarly, the Afghan government has also welcomed Pakistan's role in the peace talks.

Conclusion

Here I summed up; Pakistan serves as a mediator

and facilitator in the peace process to ensure peace and stability both domestically and regionally. The purpose of peace talks in Afghanistan has been an important step in deciding the future pattern of security not only in the region but also globally. The talks also minimize the Indian influence in Afghanistan because it's a direct threat to Pakistan. The current scenario of the Afghan Government and the Pakistan official poses a serious threat to the future Political, and Economical spectrum, which further deteriorates the situation and shackle the entire region very ruthlessly. They both need to get down at the negotiation table and resolve their differences amicably so that they may pursue an effective foreign policy in light of the strengthening of their economic, political and cultural. Pakistan has played a significant role in the Afghan peace talks. The country's involvement in the talks has been motivated by its own security concerns, historical ties with the Taliban, and its desire to counter India's influence in Afghanistan. While Pakistan's involvement in the peace talks has been praised by the international community, it has also faced criticism from India and the Afghan government. Nevertheless, Pakistan remains committed to the peace process and will continue to facilitate talks between the Taliban and the Afghan government. A peaceful resolution to the conflict in Afghanistan is in the interest of both Pakistan and the region, and Pakistan will continue to play its part in achieving this goal. Pakistan has played a significant role in the Afghan peace talks. The country's involvement in the talks has been motivated by its own security concerns, historical ties with the Taliban, and its desire to counter India's influence in Afghanistan. While Pakistan's involvement in the peace talks has been praised by the international community, it has also faced criticism from India and the Afghan government. Nevertheless, Pakistan remains committed to the peace process and will continue to facilitate talks between the Taliban and the Afghan government. A peaceful resolution to the conflict in Afghanistan is in the interest of both Pakistan and the region, and Pakistan will continue to play its part in achieving this goal.

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