

FIZZA RAZA

C.A MOCK 2

- 1- The relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan has always been a troubled one but the recent escalation in the form of cross border conflict has threatened the peace of the region. Analyse the reasons behind the current escalation and present the way forward for a workable relationship.

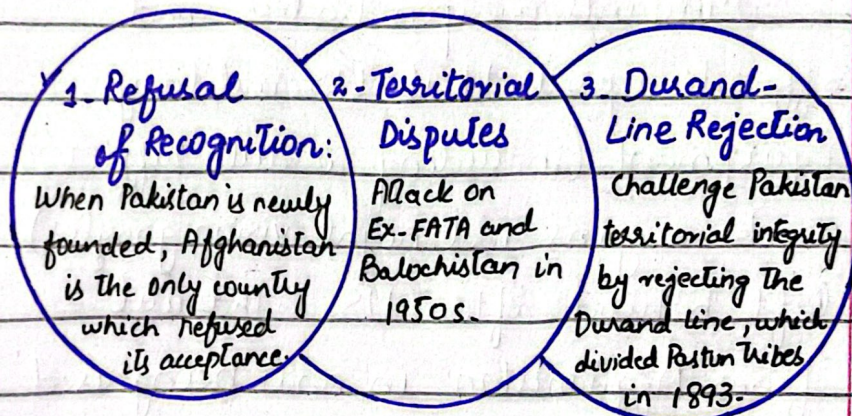
Introduction:

The relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan has always been a troubled one but the recent escalation in the form of cross border conflict skirmishes has threatened the peace of entire region. The reasons behind the current escalation are deep rooted in historical and political faultlines, post-2021 security crisis and cross border terrorism, humanitarian and internal Afghan instability and Narcotics and drugs

trafficking. The way forward for a workable relationship lies in securing peace through engagement and policy reform, strategic political and diplomatic leverage, economic interdependence and incentivization and fostering soft power and people-to-people contact.

1. Analysis of reasons behind the current escalation

Following are the reasons:



A- Deep Historical and Political Faultlines

B. Post-2021 Security Crisis and Cross-Border Terrorism:

1. Afghan Taliban Support for TTP:

Ideological Affinity

between Afghanistan based Taliban and Pakistan based TTP as both are fellow jihadist and both promote Shariah-law. As this gives political leverage to Afghan-Taliban and use TTP as a leverage against Pakistan and fear that suppressing TTP would undermine its own legitimacy in Afghanistan.

2. Use of Military Equipment by TTP:

Militants, weapon traders and officials report that US-military equipment (including assault rifles, machine guns and night-vision goggles) left behind after US-withdrawal from Afghanistan is now being used by TTP to destabilize Pakistan.

3. Other Security Threats:

The presence of a potent group like IS-K (Islamic-State Khorasan), estimated at 3000 to 4000 fighters poses

a significant military threat and their rise would endanger Pakistan's security.

C. Humanitarian and Internal Afghan Instability:

1. Internal Afghan Divisions:

Haqqani Network and Afghan Taliban are currently fighting for power in Afghanistan. Haqqani Network is a powerful, family based militant and terrorist organization in Afghanistan and semi-autonomous body currently holding significant power within Afghanistan's government.

2. Refugee Management Crisis:

The
Movement of Afghan Refugees (AR)
and illegal trade/terrorists across
the porous border requires management

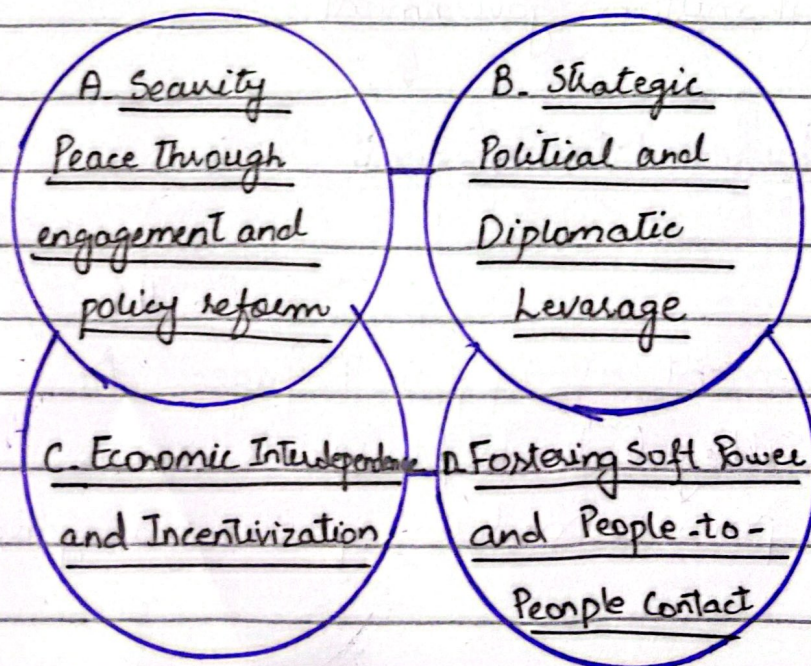
and amicable resolution.

D. Narcotics and Drug Trafficking:

As the border is still porous in some regions especially in mountainous regions which facilitates the trafficking of Afghan drugs, with about 70% of Afghanistan's opium grown in five provinces bordering Pakistan.

II The Way Forward for a Workable Relationship

The way forward are enumerated below:



A. Securing Peace through Engagement and Policy Reform:

Peace can be secured through engagement and policy reforms by taking following measures:

1. Adoption of an Anti-Terrorist Policy:

Afghanistan must announce a clearly defined anti-terrorist policy to remove a stigma of being a 'terror sponsor' state in order to improve relations with its neighbours.

2. Denial of Soil:

Pakistan and Afghanistan should deny their soil for use against each other which requires mechanism of non-interference and joint border mechanism. Afghanistan must deny its soil to be used as safe heavens for TTP.

3. Border Management and Security Co-operation:

It requires installation of fences, radars, sensors and check posts to restrict illegal trade and terrorism and facilitation of movement of 17 divided tribes under agreed mechanisms "Eastment Rights".

B. Strategic Political and Diplomatic Leverage:

1. Adherence to International Demands (Conditionality):

Recognition of Afghan Government should be tied to fulfilling commitments made in Doha Agreement, installing an inclusive government, expelling banned organizations and respecting human and women's rights.

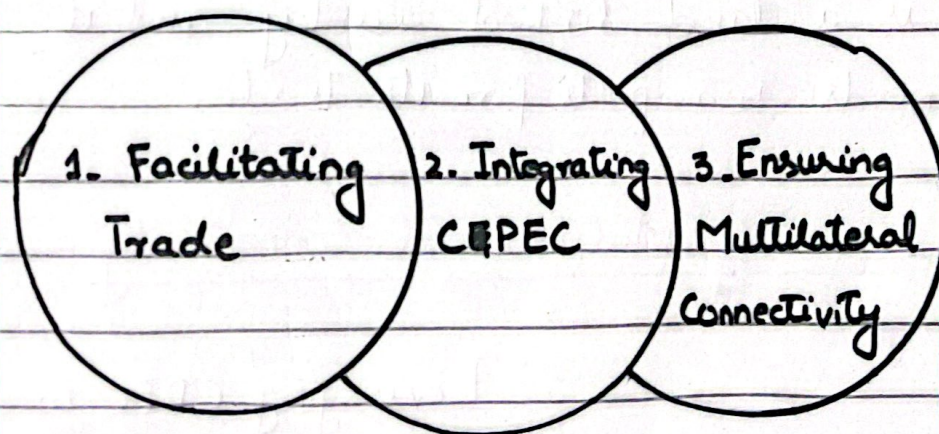
2. Engagement with All Factors:

Pakistan must adopt a broad-based approach involving all Afghan factions and regional stakeholders like Russia, Iran, China to achieve holistic political stability.

3. Refugee Management:

Illegals should be registered or pushed back and international community reminded of its obligations under The 2013 SSAR Agreement; legal Afghans should be facilitated, as they represent humanitarian leverage.

C. Economic Interdependence and Incentivization (The Carrot Policy):



1. Facilitating Trade:

Pakistan should facilitate Afghan imports and exports by reducing tariff rates and infra-structural development to stabilize Afghanistan's economy, contingent upon a commitment to peace.

2. Integrating CPEC:

Developing Afghan stakes in China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) provides Afghanistan access to Gwader which would incentivize cordial relations with Pakistan and deny space for India and TTP to operate, as Afghanistan is a land-locked country and it needs sea-ports for its trade.

3. Ensuring Multilateral Connectivity:

Leveraging CPEC to transform into a multi-lateral framework

(CAICAP: China, Afghanistan, Iran, Central Asia, and Pakistan) would secure financial and diplomatic support for Pakistan's influence.

D. Fostering Soft Power and People-to-People Contact:

1. Strengthening Intellectual and Mutual Co-operation:

Pakistan should initiate joint ventures, mutual co-operation programs and intellectual co-operation would strengthen people-to-people contact.

2. Providing Aid and Facilitating Capacity Building:

Pakistan should provide aid to Afghanistan especially when disasters like earthquake and drought hit and encourage Afghan's student scholarships in its own universities to facilitate capacity building.

Conclusion:

The relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan has always been a troubled one which is marked by recent escalations. The reasons behind are deep rooted in history and political stringent relations, security crisis and humanitarian and internal Afghan instability. The way forward lies in securing peace through engagement and policy reforms, economic interdependence, fostering soft power and people to people contact.

