

An Evaluation of Islamic foreign policy in Pakistan Challenges & Prospects

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ABSTRACT

This research paper deals with an evaluation of Islamic foreign policy in Pakistan challenges & prospects. One of the main problems of Pakistan is the instability of its domestic and foreign policy, simultaneously it causes to weaken the state due to these major challenges. There is no doubt that foreign relations improve a favorable environment and equity-based relationships, which have a greater connection to our own domestic stability. Some of the basic principles which are formulated, when composing foreign policy in today's world have been discussed in this research which includes strong domestic policy, better relations with the other regional or neighboring countries, and the terms of the global foreign policy. Foreign policy matters along with friendship, and how countries together strengthen each other's interests. Dishonesty, skepticism, and accusation are the politics of mischief that usually cause problems by creating further mismanagement on foreign affairs. This creates reforms because foreign policy is never static and it changes with the conditions. It is also important to understand some major challenges which Pakistan faces in the context of foreign policy. These could be domestic political instability, economic instability, over-reliance on non-civilian military relations issues,

disagreement with the neighboring countries and lack of policy due to consultation with individuals rather than institutions or religion. The problem is not that we, as nationalists, are deprived, but the real problem is the policy of ignoring the religious scholars, intellectuals and lacking the importance of such think tanks.

In this research, we will give a brief overview of an evaluation of Islamic foreign policy in Pakistan. A number of the articles have been written by different authors about the various aspects of the foreign policy of Pakistan i.e. Khursheed Hyder, Fateh ur Rehman, Ibrahim Amini, Rahimullah Yusufzai, Qayyum Nizami, Yuvraj Krishan, Naeem Qasim, Saad Akhter, Salman Abid, Shakeel Ahmed, Ibrahim Amini, and many other books are also available with the title of foreign policy but the purpose of this research is to explore that whether the Islamic foreign policy is going on in Pakistan and what challenges & prospects are in this regard?

Pakistan came into being on the idea of Islam and its foreign policy rules and regulations are thoroughly connected with Islamic Ideology. Islam was at the core of this struggle because Two Nation Theory reinforced that Muslims were a separate nation, with their distinct cultural, ideological and religious values. In the establishment of Pakistan, Muslims actually dreamed of a separate homeland where they could spend their lives according to the religion of Islam.¹

There are many important features of Pakistani society. More than 97% of the population is Muslim in this society while 3 % of Hindus, Sikhs, and Christian minorities are also Pakistani citizens who have full religious, political, economic and social rights. Pakistani society is composed of average citizens. There are many regional cultures rekindling its beauty i.e. Punjabi, Pukhtoon, Sindhi and Baluchi cultures. The misfortune of Pakistani society is that the democratic system is not flourishing in a transparent way. Pakistani people are much habitual to watch Indian movies so that's why drugs and crimes are common in this

society. Consequently, people's wealth and dignity are not protected. Reformation in fundamental beliefs, way of worship for spiritual enhancement and promoting goodness and eradication of evils from the society is necessary for the prosperity of Pakistan.² Although a lot of research has been done on the different aspects for the reformation of Pakistani's society but the purpose of this research is to find out an evaluation of Islamic foreign policy in Pakistan challenges & prospects. The ideology of Pakistan refers to the Islamic principles, which Allama Iqbal has interpreted in Allahabad.³

Quaid e Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah had been running the affairs of the state for a year as Governor-General of Pakistan. He set the guidelines of Pakistan's interior and foreign policy, but regrettably, the rulers thereafter avoided and deviated from the policy principles and Islamic ideology to protect their own and imperialist interests. As a result, Pakistan has been suffering from internal stability and foreign policy crisis till date.⁴ The golden principles on which the Quaid-e-Azam made possible Pakistan's achievement for the Muslims of India, they got rid from British and Gandhian imperialism. The majority of the Muslims wholeheartedly responded to the voice of Allama Iqbal and Quaid-e-Azam. However, it is important to clarify here that the Islamic ideas of the founders of Pakistan are the Qur'an and the Sunnah. As Quaid-e-Azam made it clear in September 1947 in the session of All India Muslim League at Karachi: "Let it be clear that Pakistan is going to be a Muslim state based on Islamic ideals. It was not going to be an ecclesiastical state".⁵

The state of Pakistan is the first state in the modern world that was not founded on the basis of any geographical, linguistic, ethnic or culture of a region, but purely on one ideology of Islam.⁶

What are the requirements of Pakistan's foreign policy? How can be used to address the challenges facing Pakistan? Should relations with the United States deteriorate to the extent that they launch attacks on our

geographical borders with Hinduism? Can China, along with Russia, Turkey, and Iran, protect our interests in the region? ⁷To address all these challenges, we must lay the foundation for the foreign policy of the state on our basic beliefs, which is the mirror of our political geographical, defense, cultural and economic conditions, which is not always the same. However, the basic ideals and national interests remain the same.⁸ We should know that foreign policy should be structured in the light of public opinion and that it is largely human behavior, trends, beliefs, customs arising from traditions and pursuing the ideological directions and foreign policy of any country. Stating the basic principles of foreign policy, Quaid-e-Azam said that:

Pakistan would work for the establishment of peace within the country and for world peace.⁹

Pakistan will never be found lacking in extending its material and moral support to the oppressed and suppressed peoples of the world, and in upholding the principles of the United Nations Charter.¹⁰

At a Foreign Policy Advisory Meeting, Quaid-e-Azam said that: Both the United States and Russia are devils, so we should not support the devil we know. He was referring to the United States, which maintained its relations with the leaders of the All India Muslim League. Sadly, instead of being careful with our rulers, the devil began to think of him as a master. They forgot the message of Quaid-e-Azam's self-reliance and began to rely on the United States.¹¹ When the real face of the United States came to light after the 1965 Pak-India war, the founder of Pak-US relations General Ayub Khan criticized the United States by writing the book "Friends Not Masters" and wrote in his diary:

"America weakens Pakistan and wants to be destabilized so that we can be at its mercy. America's thinking is based on deception and misconduct."¹²

General Ayub Khan remained in power for ten years. He had formulated himself a political fatwa and issued it in which he declared the failure of his foreign policy. On the basis of a failed foreign policy, General Ayub Khan missed several historic occasions for the liberation of Kashmir. He had the golden opportunity in 1962 when China and India were fighting on the basis of a border dispute. General Ayub Khan lost the opportunity to liberate Kashmir under US pressure. Yahya Khan laid the foundation of US-China relations but ignored national interests.

Henry Kissinger wrote in his book "Nixon and I were very grateful to Pakistan that the leaders of Pakistan, maintained Pakistan-China relations on the basis of their self-esteem." Henry Kissinger's writings are concrete evidence of General Yahya Khan's failed foreign policy.¹³ Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto created a successful free and active foreign policy in the interest of nationalism, but regrets that the ruling class of Pakistan merged with imperialism and conspired after Henry Kissinger threatened to make Bhutto a parable. Bhutto had rejected the US demand to shut down the nuclear capability program and abandon China's pro-foreign policy. Pakistan's generals, judges, religious leaders, politicians, and privileged sections of the United States and the United Kingdom pushed the nationalist leader Bhutto to the gallows. Pakistan failed to establish an independent sovereign foreign policy.¹⁴ The Pakistani nation has been suffering the brunt of extremism and terrorism during General Zia-ul-Haq's tenure.

Wood wrote in his book 'Bush At War' that "US President Bush believed that the Pakistani government would give a hard time to the United States before accepting US conditions" General Pervez Musharraf's foreign policy has given Pakistan a long fight against terrorism. Ms. Benazir Bhutto, Nawaz Sharif and President Asif Ali Zardari had no control over foreign policy; they sought US assistance to save their governments. How could they formulate a foreign policy?¹⁵ The Foreign policy reflects the international attitude of any nation and it is primarily the part of the interior policy that is concerned with foreign

affairs. That is why if government leaders are in the public mind contrary to trends and thinking, setting foreign policy issues will result in public reaction. For example, the public and security establishment did not like the ties with former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Even Musharraf's surrender to the Americans was not an eye-opener to the public. The people and some political leaders were keen that Nawaz Sharif issued a statement against the Indian spy Kulbhushan but he regarded it as a valid constitution, which did not allow him to reconcile his foreign policy vision with the public's thoughts.¹⁶ Imran Khan and Shah Mahmood Qureshi¹⁷ are once again trying to make Pakistan's foreign policy¹⁸ free and independent with a spirit of nationalism. They also have the support of the Pakistan Army. They are following the National Action Plan with integrity. That is why they are being received by the UN Security Council European Union and international human rights organizations, and Imran Khan's government¹⁹ has exposed India on the Kashmir issue and left the world alone.²⁰ The current political and military leadership of Pakistan will have to acknowledge that in the recent past we have made positive efforts to face the major challenges in our foreign policy. The argument here yielded a powerful result that's Pakistan foreign policy under Imran Khan has been changed, which are due to programs change, adjustment change, problems and goals change. We do not see such kind of changes before that have been occurred under the Imran Khan government.²¹ This is the reason; Pakistan currently stands as an important country in regional and global politics²² in foreign policy.²³

Pakistan has some important external relations. These include basic relations with India, China, the United States, and Afghanistan, while Iran,²⁴ the GCC countries, Russia, the European Union (which still includes the UK), Central Asian states and the United Nations, India is a major rival of Pakistan. While China and Pakistan's only strategic partners for each other. The United States is still the most powerful and the only comprehensive global power in the world. Afghanistan remains a power-enhancing Pakistan's security and insecurity. Iran is a competitor to Pakistan with difficult options. GCC countries are an important source

of shipping and 'brotherly' aid, which always pays a shameful price. Russia's partnership is with China and with the US. Its allies stand as a counter-force for India. In addition, this force has the potential to bring a less inconsistent Russian policy towards India and Pakistan. The European Union is an important market and the Pakistani community in the UK (and the US) can become a foreign policy asset. It can provide 'strategic depth' to diplomacy based on connectivity. Improving cooperation with Russia may also be useful for this task.²⁵ The UN mention here may not seem necessary. But that's not the case. This is where the impression, profile, and voice of the country is known and defended. This is the institution where the credibility of the foreign policy is determined.

For Pakistan, two issues are of paramount importance, one being that the progress of Kashmir's solution should be in accordance with the aspirations of the Kashmiri's people.²⁶ Secondly that the worst situation of human rights violations in Kashmir should be improved, While India says that Pakistan is behind the 'terrorism' that is taking place there.²⁷ Yemen war, Afghanistan war, The tussle between China and the US, alignment of India with the US, unrealistic ambitions of India in the region, Iran and the US relations.

Pakistan's foreign policy has always remained Islamic Influenced since Pakistan has maintained friendly and brotherly relations with all Muslim countries. However, relations with Afghanistan have been criticized due to Pakistan's support to US and NATO forces during the Invasion of Afghanistan.

The PTI Government has brought a paradigm shift in diplomatic relations that has projected its positive image worldwide.²⁸ It is the responsibility of all to defend and strengthen the national framework. It is also necessary to break out of the grouping and eliminate or reduce the stiffness distribution.

These days the internal challenge is that, the Parliament, the judiciary, the army, the administration, the media, social media all are major influential factors, but they all are not at one level. None of them play a meaningful role in their customary, political.

Undoubtedly, corruption is the most important challenge in this country, and it is important to address it, but it requires a great deal of discipline and mature ideology.

Pakistan can come out of the economic crisis after having a sound economic policy. For this, we need to be very clear about our vision and our destination, and we need to struggle within it. Regardless of the disagreement we have, it would be appropriate to work hard and struggle in a climate of unity and tolerance and understanding and give the present government the opportunity to be a member of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

The Quaid-e-Azam assembled all these in three words: faith, unity and organization.²⁹ It is also argumentative whether faith comes first or unity comes first. To some extent, Quaid-e-Azam has used it both ways but most of the faith has come first, the unity is after that and the organization is at the end. These words are interrelated, reinforce each other, and are equally important.

The basic principles and objectives of Pakistan that we have forgotten need to be taken into account. These challenges always keep Pakistan on its toes and its foreign office has to be alert at all times.³⁰ Pakistan's defense must have political and economic stability in Pakistan. Let the people of Pakistan become a nation so that we can unite and face the challenges.

Here is no mention of the reasons for which we have seen various problems during the last 72 years, but the few core goals of Pakistan were to be taken into consideration. The first and foremost goal is the establishment of a true Islamic state. Secondly, according to the spirit of

Islam, the establishment of a democratic system in which the people are responsible for their destiny, future and play their role in the formation and construction of their elected representatives, and these elected representatives need to be responsive in front of the people. The third goal is to govern the country according to the customs, laws and regulations. And fourth, the purpose of the government is to raise the standard of people along with their well-being and their standard of living. It requires the acquisition of world-class resources and modern technology, so as to provide effective forces for development.³¹

In the foreign policy, few elements play a decisive role that covers our strategic, cultural and national security: i.e., priority list of national needs, strategy for achieving national goals, overcoming potential obstacles to achieving goals, the presence of friendly governments in neighboring countries and understanding the international environment to achieve national interests, etc.

Although the first two elements are ideological, they are concerned atomically with the security of the country, and their decision has to do with the perception of the threats, the nature and the will of the nation for how to deal with that threats. And the other three elements are related to the implementation of foreign policy and the conceptual design of this policy which being helpful to each other.³² So if a clear definition of foreign policy is intended, then it is a thought-provoking statement of a nation that looks after its security and its national interests.

Religion is another area that also plays a key role in defining the foreign policy of a country. Pakistan came into existence in the name of Islam.³³ All Muslim countries must build cordial relations with Pakistan.³⁴

With regard to the reformations of Islamization of foreign policy, challenges and opportunities in Pakistan, if we look at Islam,³⁵ the Holy Prophet (SAW) has given us the principles and rules of basic foreign

policy for the welfare of humanity on the basis of governance and the foreign policy as the state of Medina, which are equally applicable today.

Following are some principles of Islamic ideology that deals directly with foreign relations which may guide us for the reformation of Pakistan's foreign policy in the present era.

Islam has strongly advocated during the war is adherence to the pledge,³⁶ Commitment, Integrity, Justice, Peace, Tolerance, Reconciliation, Patience, Services, Respect and Excellence etc.³⁷

It is unfortunate that our politicians are neither concerned about the integrity of the country nor the ideology of Pakistan nor the democracy by which they access national resources and protect their interests and business.³⁸

The standard of justice envisaged by the Quran.³⁹

Holy Prophet (SAW) made friendship agreements with different nations, respecting the neutrality of the nations who preferred to be neutral. There is also a pattern for rulers of countries to implement Quran and Sunnah.^{40, 41, 42}

Humans have always wished that the war between human beings should end, but "War has entered into the nature of man. It has left no nation vacant nor any race."⁴³

Islam for the first time regularly taught world peace, security and presented with it a lasting code of conduct, called "Islam" the religion of eternal peace and everlasting security. There is a clear statement of tolerance.⁴⁴ Holy Prophet (SAW) demonstrated this rule during his time.⁴⁵ With regard to religious tolerance in the world's morality, it is rare that any religion other than Islam has made it obligatory to treat people like enemies, especially on the basis of certain religions and beliefs.⁴⁶

For foreign policy, the Holy Prophet (SAW) laid the foundations for public and international ⁴⁷ unity.⁴⁸ Holy Prophet (SAW) considered in the foreign policy as a major tactic that in Medina when He (SAW) formed a joint state with the Jews as "Covenant Medina" on which the Jews were unable to break the bargain, all three tribes of the Jews were banished i.e. Bannu Qanqa, Bannu-Nazir, and Bannu-Karezza at Medina, after which they started preparations for the war against Muslims by centering Khyber. Muslims began to see this decisive war with the Jews. On this, the Prophet (SAW) silenced the frontier by making a "treaty of Hudaibiya" with Quraysh before the war of Khyber, and shortly afterward attacked Khyber and resolved to deal with the Jews with patience which is a masterpiece of war and diplomatic deception.⁴⁹

Islam prepares his followers' for the development of a higher level of morality in such a way that their existence overflows with goodness.⁵⁰, Their physical and intellectual faculties and their material resources⁵¹, should be useful to all.⁵².

Islam is considered to be a universal religion in which there is no territorial inheritance, neither the frontiers of the empire nor the pandemic of nationality nor the disease of racism, nor its border. There is no specific siege in fact, Islam holds enormous breadth and depth in its essence.⁵³

After the consolidation of the Islamic State in Medina, He (SAW) wrote letters for inviting to the most prominent rulers of the world at that time.⁵⁴. There were small governments that thought of themselves as the superior of the empire, so relations with the tribes were formed. His (SAW) foreign policy was so impressed that the delegation and agreements started and so many delegations came in that time.⁵⁵ Keeping in view the external dependence of Pakistan's national policy in the contemporary era, it is estimated that Pakistan cannot achieve its objectives without a foreign policy, which is based on Islamic Ideology.

For the development of a positive attitude of Islamic foreign policy in Pakistan, can be outlined as under: to defense the national security of the country, to alignment the current international relations with the commandments of Islam, to enhance the economic interests abroad, to shield the image of the country as a progressive modern and democratic Islamic country, to establish peace and stability and friendly relations with neighbors countries specially with Afghanistan, to find the solution of all disputes with India including the issue of Kashmir, to forward friendly relations with all countries and the larger international community, to fulfill its obligations as a responsible member of the international community, to respond to threats and capitalize on opportunities and to promote the interests of the Pakistani diaspora.⁵⁶

Conclusion:

Pakistan came into being on the concept of Islam. It is the need of the time that our foreign policy must be fully aligned with the objectives of Islam. Pakistan's foreign policy must serve our national interest, its internal and external defense, and its regional standing. In the contemporary era, there has to be a balance in our relations with Pakistani commitment for being neutral with our neighbors as well as within the region.⁵⁷ With regard to the evaluation of Islamic foreign policy in Pakistan, challenges and Prospects, it is clear from the evidence that the international relations of Pakistan are based on peace. It indicates that all matters of the Islamic government should be settled down on the basic principles of peace as well as with other nations. It should not involve any kind of aggression, extremism and aggressive intentions, but at the same time. It should be noted that international policy should not be weak and cowardly because it will take on a level of equality when establishing non-national relationships. Rights are essential for the preservation of peace, but if the enemy does not recognize the language of peace than Jihad according to the Islam is evident.

Recommendations:

1. Pakistani state should take into account the principles of Islam when formulating of foreign policy so that the Islamic State can play a key role in determining the evolutionary process as well as in the establishment of world peace. Pakistani rulers will have to implement Islamic foreign policy on Pakistan to solve all challenges and prospects.
2. The state of Pakistan will have to strengthen the foreign office through human and financial resources. It should strengthen old practices and adopt new dynamics. It must apply the tools of digital, economic, and development diplomacy.

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