

In the interest of its
sovereignty, pakistan
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In the interest of its sovereignty, Pakistan should sever its ties with the United States and look towards china for whatever support it needs. Pakistan and The United States' (US) relations have always been greatly affected by the conflicting or common national interests of the two countries. Recently however the tides have become more and more turbulent. Although United States has been assisting Pakistan monetarily, Pakistan should sever ties with the United States in the interest of its sovereignty and seek support from China instead, because the United States has little support from the general public, it would help protect innocent civilians from drone strikes and China is a more reliable and beneficial ally to Pakistan. As Pakistan's relationship with the US continue the favorability of this relationship amongst the general public decreases in both the countries. A survey in 2012 shows 74% of Pakistani people call America an enemy (" Concern About Extremist Threat Slips in Pakistan"). This number increased from, 64% in 2009. As long as US-Pakistan ties persist, anti-Americanism will continue to increase in Pakistan. In fact a cool-off period could actually lead to renewed ties in the future with more realistic expectations from the relationship (Kugelman). It is in the best interest of both countries to break their alliance at least on a temporary basis and find a common ground. This will also allow them to rethink reasons as to why this relationship faced so many problems. Former Pakistan Ambassador to the United States, Hussain Haqqani said " A post-alliance future would allow both countries to hold more realistic expectations of each other, cooperating where possible but perhaps without the sense of betrayal, which has become acute in Pakistan" (" US, Pakistan Must Divorce

as Allies: Haqqani."). In Pakistan, a common misconception is that many of the problems Pakistan faces today is because of the US. The people cling to ideas of propaganda and conspiracy theories, hiding behind them and refusing to believe in their own flaws and faults. At the same time many people in the US hold a very negative opinion about Pakistan. In a stark contrast 84% of the general public, in Pakistan, considers China to be a partner (Concern About Extremist Threat Slips in Pakistan). Hence it can be seen that breaking the Pakistan and US alliance is actually mutually beneficial. Meanwhile, Pakistan can focus on strengthening ties with China which already has widespread public support. A more pressing concern for Pakistan's sovereignty is the drone attacks on Pakistani soils carried out by the US in order to eliminate potential and known terrorist groups such as the Taliban. Not only is it a grave infringement of Pakistani sovereignty but also the collateral damage from such bombings have caused a large number of ever increasing civilian casualties. The Bureau of Investigative Journalism reports between 2, 534 and 3, 573 fatalities from CIA drone attacks in Pakistan from 2004 to 2011. Out of this 411 to 884 have been civilians. " The fact that the administration's criterion for identifying combatants is limited to " all military-age males in a strike zone" means innocent civilians will inevitably be targeted when the militants hide amongst them"(Shazad and Jillani). Referring to the Salala incident where a US ordered air raid accidentally killed 24 Pakistani soldiers, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said " I would like the American public to consider what their reaction would have been if American troops were killed in such an attack on their border with Mexico... The

continuing unilateral US drone attacks on Pakistani soil are a constant irritant to Pakistani public opinion — both as a clear violation of our sovereignty and the toll of collateral damage to innocent victims, " (Bilawal urges Obama to 'show courage', apologise for Salala attack). However this has failed to garner enough concern from the US and drone strikes continue regardless. The only way to put an end to drone strikes is for Pakistan to discontinue its relations with the US and take back the consent previously given to allow drone strikes in the first place. That way the US threats of ceasing financial and military aid to Pakistan would not work and any further drone strikes would be a direct violation of international law. Under international law, states are prohibited from using force in the territory of another state unless the target state has consented, or the attacking state is acting in legitimate self-defense (Legality of U. S. Drone Strikes in Pakistan). As long as the US continues to carry out drone strikes on Pakistani soil, Pakistan can never protect its sovereignty so it's in Pakistan's best interest to break its alliance with the United States. On the other hand, China is one of Pakistan's strongest allies to date. Pakistan was the first Muslim and the third non-communist state to recognize the new People's Republic of China in 1950 which lead to the establishment of diplomatic ties in 1951 (Azeemi, 109). Both the countries give great importance to this alliance. For more than 60 years, China and Pakistan have developed friendly political, economic and military relations despite the shifts in the international community. Both the governments usually describe the relationship as an " all weather friendship" (Irshad). At the same time Pakistan's relationship with the United States is

considered to be an "opportunistic relationship" where the US always had the upper hand (Ijaz). There have been many occasions where Pakistan needed support from the US but was disappointed. For example NATO's war in Afghanistan; according to the government of Pakistan, the direct and indirect costs which began on October 07, 2001 has reached over \$68 billion. These economic losses are a lot greater than what the US offered in economic and military assistance to Pakistan (Haider). Furthermore Pakistan has a lot to benefit from a close relationship with China. China is an emerging power in the international community both in economic and military terms. China has a large store of investors who are willing to invest in projects within Pakistan. In fact projects like Karakoram Highway, Gwadar Port, and Chashma nuclear reactors were established with Chinese assistance (Ijaz). Developmental projects like these in the future can lead to economic stability within Pakistan and solve issues like unemployment and poverty. China can also help Pakistan with the power crises that it faces today by helping it build dams or nuclear reactors. Through such projects it can be seen that China has been helping Pakistan become self-reliant and strengthening its sovereignty. Pakistan and China have become major trading partners and through its economic cooperation with China, Pakistan can manage to "reposition itself as an important trade route in South Asia" (Azeemi, 114). Furthermore, China is considered to be Pakistan's most trustworthy military ally. Both the countries have had several joint military operations in the past indicating strong ties between the military of the two countries. China was a key player in bringing nuclear technology in Pakistan

and its military support to Pakistan has been unwavering. More so Pakistan and China have many common strategic interests in the region which could potentially bring the two countries closer in the future serving the national interest of both Pakistan and China (Azeemi, 124). So with time it has become more and more apparent that Pakistan has a more trustworthy and valuable ally in the form of China when compared to the US. It can be argued that Pakistan needs to maintain close ties with the US because of the monetary aid provided is essential for it to achieve economic growth and stability. Going through facts and figures it is evident that " by far the largest single contributor of aid to Pakistan is the United States" (Khan, 349). However if Pakistan breaks ties with the US, it would find a replacement donor in China. In fact, China could even help fill the gap left by military aid cuts (Kugelman). Murtaza Haider, Ph. D from Ryerson University says that the development aid business is such that the donor country usually receives back a huge portion of the donated money, in the form of contractual payments to consultants and manufacturers. For example Pakistan ends up buying US-made weapons and fighter jets from the billions of dollars of military support it receives from the US. It can also be argued that Pakistan is actually better off without Financial and Military assistance from the US. Over the years Pakistan has become financially dependent upon foreign assistance and as a result Pakistan's economy has suffered. " The billions of dollars in aid have distorted markets in Pakistan and have subsidised the civil and military elite. Pakistan's foremost economists, such as S. Akbar Zaidi and others at the Planning Commission in Islamabad, have argued for a

secession of aid as a precondition for restructuring Pakistan's economy to make it self-sufficient over time" (Haider). Hence it can validly be claimed that Pakistan does not really need US aid as China can easily fill the monetary gap left behind in a post alliance scenario and Pakistan is actually better off without aid from the United States. The US has been a great ally to Pakistan in a number of important and critical moments in its history; however, its support has not been consistent. At this moment in time Pakistan would benefit more from breaking ties with the US than with trying to maintain it. Instead Pakistan can look towards China, for any monetary or military support it needs. Breaking ties with the US is a sensible option because of the general public resentment of the US, the need to safeguard its civilians from drone attacks and the unwavering support China has to offer. Works Cited Azeemi, Haris R. " 55 Years of Pakistan-China Relationship." Pakistan Horizon (n. d.): 109+. JSTOR. Pakistan Institute of International Affairs. Web. 24 Mar. 2013. . " Bilawal Urges Obama to 'show Courage', Apologise for Salala Attack." The Express Tribune Bilawal Urges Obama to Show Courage Apologise for Salala Attack Comments. APP, n. d. Web. 24 Mar. 2013. . " Concern About Extremist Threat Slips in Pakistan." Pew Global Attitudes Project RSS. N. p., n. d. Web. 24 Mar. 2013. . Haider, Murtaza. " HEADLINES." DAWNCOM Can Pakistan Survive without US Aid Comments. N. p., n. d. Web. 24 Mar. 2013. . Ijaz, Aymen. " China: A Better Strategic Ally than USA!!" The London Post. N. p., n. d. Web. 24 Mar. 2013. . Irshad, Muhammad K. " Pak-China Relations Post 9/11." Pak-China Relations Post 9/11. N. p., n. d. Web. 24 Mar. 2013. . Khan, Mustufa A. " THE IMPACT

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